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MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

MAY, 1901.

PRINCESS PUCK.

CHAPTER I.

It was in March that Bill Alardy went to Ashelton. She was sent there "to grow up," Polly said, and added some sceptical remarks with regard to both place and person. "Poor little Wilhelmina," said Miss Brownlow, "she has never had a fair chance among us all; the best possible thing for her would be to go to Ashelton with Theresa." And Miss Brownlow should have known, for she was acquainted with Ashelton, and even better acquainted with Bill, having had the doubtful pleasure of her charge and company from early childhood. Polly did not know much about Ashelton; she had only been there once to spend the day with Theresa, which was a grievance in itself, for Theresa had lived there ever since her marriage last June. That, however, was beside the point; Polly did not so much base her doubts of the efficacy of the plan on Ashelton as on Bill, and she had known her as long as Miss Brownlow, for she was the eldest, as Bill was the youngest, of the four nieces Miss Brownlow had taken into her household. Polly's opinion and Miss Brownlow's were not identical on the subject of Bill; but when the matter of the going to Ashelton was being discussed Polly did not consider it necessary to give undue prominence to the difference,

thinking Bill might as well go even if it did her no good.

It was a Monday evening when the plan was first mentioned, and Miss Brownlow was making up her accounts at the time. She always made up her accounts on Monday evenings. In her opinion there was no other time half so satisfactory, because, as she said, there was Sunday just before, and it was so easy to remember forgotten things on a Sunday. Perhaps it was not right to think of such things then, and of course she never did so on purpose, only one cannot help things flashing across one's mind. Occasionally the things flashed away again before she had time to secure them on Monday evening; occasionally also, the flashes were delusive and baseless; but on the other hand, sometimes they did chance to be correct, and then it was most satisfactory. This did not make any material difference to Miss Brownlow's accounts, which never by any chance came right; they never had come right since she first began keeping them in her girlhood, more years ago than she ever mentioned.

"My father always insisted on our keeping an account of our money, and how we spent it," she used to say to her nieces. "It is an excellent plan, my dears, for then you know where you are and how you stand." These desirable results did not always occur

in her own case, though that did not deter her nieces from following the suggestion, each according to her nature,—Theresa with neatness and some success, Bella with results not unlike her aunt's, Polly—there were commercial instincts in Polly's blood and her untidy books were kept with an accuracy which might have savoured of sharp practice to any one who could comprehend them. Bill, of course, was too young to be considered, and too penniless to keep a record of her non-existent income; moreover, she was only "Poor little Bill—Wilhelmina"—Miss Brownlow invariably made the correction in mind and sometimes in speech. She sighed as she thought about the girl,—she had just come to the item *one shilling, a bottle of Stephens's blue-black writing-ink*. Bill had on Thursday upset the last bottle on the school-room-floor, in class, too, with all the little girls looking on. How they giggled! Polly said afterwards that Bill made them, but Miss Brownlow did not think so. Bill was too old to do anything so wrong; she was seventeen now, though she seemed such a child. Polly, who was perhaps not without authority on the subject, was of opinion that age had little to do with iniquity, but Miss Brownlow was not convinced. In any case she had to pay the shilling for another bottle of ink. The column of figures she was now counting up did not come to the total she expected: "Now what have I forgotten?" she said.

Bella and Theresa glanced up but did not hazard a suggestion; they knew the remark was not addressed to them, and they went on correcting French exercises in silence. These French exercises were really Bella's work, but Theresa was helping her with them to-night. A year ago they were Theresa's own, but when she

married her sister had taken up that part of her work. Theresa was on a visit to Miss Brownlow, and finding herself back among the familiar surroundings it came quite natural to her to take up some part of the old duties; besides, she liked to help Bella.

As the two tall sisters sat close together, sharing the same dictionary and sometimes bending over the same page, Miss Brownlow thought they made a beautiful picture; possibly even a less prejudiced observer might not have entirely disagreed. Polly was certainly not a prejudiced observer, yet even she admitted the sisters' beauty in a general way. She did not look in their direction now, for she was busy with her needlework. She sat opposite to Miss Brownlow, close to the lamp, her dressmaking scattered around her. She possessed a perfect genius for what is technically known as "doing up" her clothes; consequently some of them were always undergoing alterations and repairs, and none of them kept the same appearance for long together.

"I cannot account for sixpence," Miss Brownlow said at last; "on what can I have spent sixpence?"

"Cabbages," Polly said briefly.

"Cabbages! My dear Polly, one cannot buy cabbages at this time of year, nor hardly anything else either; vegetables are so dear and scarce, it is really quite dreadful."

"Sweep," was Polly's only comment.

But it was not the sweep, Miss Brownlow said. "We have not had him this fortnight past," she declared. "Don't you remember, the last—"

"Then we ought to have had."

"Oh, I am sure we do not need him yet, don't you remember the last time he came—"

Polly did not remember and she showed no interest in the reminiscence; but Theresa, who did not like

to hear Miss Brownlow treated so cavalierly, encouraged her aunt to describe the last coming of the sweep and the delinquencies of the maid-servant who overslept herself on that occasion. "And I really do believe he would never have got in at all if it had not been for Bill; she heard him ringing and went down and let him in,—in her nightdress too!"

"That sixpence is for mending Bill's boots." This was Polly's remark.

"What a memory you have!" Miss Brownlow exclaimed, and Polly showed signs of remembering the incident of the sweep. "Bill did go down to him," she said, "in her nightdress and *nothing else*. I should like to know how long she stopped down with him!"

Polly had a habit of talking in italics; her treatment of the English language made it acquire an almost double value, her intonation giving the words an additional worth and meaning. Her last speech was an admirable example of her methods; there were many more things implied in it than were said. It was the implications which made Bella exclaim, "You are hard on the child."

"Oh, well!" And Polly shrugged her shoulders and bent over her work again.

"Poor little Bill, poor little Wilhelmina!" Miss Brownlow sighed softly.

Polly sniffed and Theresa asked: "How much longer are you going to let her be in the school?"

"Oh, a long time," Miss Brownlow answered readily; she had not begun to contemplate the problem of Bill's future, nor even to admit its existence. Polly knew that and her small dark eyes showed that she knew it as she remarked: "I began to teach the little ones before I was seventeen."

Miss Brownlow looked distressed,

but Bella said cheerfully: "That was long ago; Auntie wanted help then. Now it is quite different; if Bill were ever so able to teach there would not be the slightest need for her to do it; in fact I don't see whom she would teach."

This speech, though perhaps hardly likely to fulfil its comforting intention, was unfortunately only too true. It was indisputable that Miss Brownlow's school was not what it had been, that its best days lay behind it. At one time it had been almost an Establishment, the recognised school of Wrugglesby, the place to which the country clergymen and gentlemen-farmers of the surrounding districts sent their daughters. The boarders were so many then that it had been necessary to have a *mademoiselle* and a visiting English governess. That was some time ago, but even when Theresa first began to help with the teaching, things were more prosperous than they were now. Gradually they had changed; times had changed, boarders had fallen off one by one, new ones did not come; girls went farther now,—to Brighton, to Bourne-mouth, even to France and Germany. Mademoiselle left, and it hardly seemed necessary to fill her place, for Theresa was a very good French scholar. The English governess married, and Bella was found equal to doing all that was left of her work. Then, rather more than a year ago, Theresa married, and though Miss Brownlow talked of finding some nice well-educated girl to fill her place, nothing came of it. Theresa used to take the elder girls, and they were so few now that Bella could quite well help Miss Brownlow with them, especially as she was rather clever; she had passed the Cambridge Local Examination and attended some history lectures. Polly, of course, still taught the little ones; she always

had done so, and had always contrived to drill a certain amount of information into them. It is to be feared that she did not know very much herself; even Miss Brownlow was obliged to admit that; yet she possessed a far greater faculty for teaching than did the more accomplished Bella. As the school was chiefly composed of little girls, it really was important that they should be well taught. Sometimes Miss Brownlow felt a passing regret when she saw them struggling for their overshoes in the lobby; they were not what her old pupils had been, not of the same social position, not of the same age; most of them were "reductions" on account of sisters past, present, or to come; none of them were likely to remain any length of time, none of them were even weekly boarders. There were only two boarders besides Wilhelmina, who could hardly be counted since she belonged to the household.

Miss Wilson, the principal of the High School two stations up the line, thought of Miss Brownlow when, in her able paper on the education of girls, she had written of teachers of the past. Miss Brownlow was of the past, not highly educated, not clever, but kindly, simple, pleasant, well loved by those pupils of long ago, a gentle power for good in those past best days,—and in the present? Ah, well, the school was going; there were no boarders to be influenced one way or the other now, and the little girls who came daily did not trouble about Miss Brownlow. She was of a race of schoolmistresses fast disappearing from the earth, vanishing under the inexorable law of the survival of the fittest. She was not the fittest. Inefficient? Yes, that was it; inefficient for modern needs, modern wants; growing old, just a little past the work she once did, not at all fit for the

work now to be done; never a very wise woman, thank God, not wise enough to know that she was a failure.

"Wilhelmina will teach somewhere else," Miss Brownlow said, after she had mentally reviewed the prospect called up by Bella's words; and mercifully the prospect she reviewed was not quite that which other people saw.

"Where?" Polly asked casually, as if the matter were of small moment.

Miss Brownlow did not know. She had not thought, and the question was embarrassing.

Bella came to the rescue. "Mrs. Caxton will want a governess if her little girls are leaving at Easter. They are leaving because they always catch colds from the other children, so she is sure to want a governess."

"Yes, of course," Miss Brownlow said enthusiastically; "it would be the very thing for Bill; she never has a cold."

"H'm! What is she to teach? How not to catch cold? It is about the only thing she knows, and she does that by accident."

"They are so young," Miss Brownlow went on, delighted with the plan and regardless of Polly's interruption; "they will only want elementary teaching, reading and writing and spelling."

"Bill can't spell, not that that matters so very much though"—Polly perhaps knew by experience that it was possible to teach a subject in which you were not very deeply learned. "It certainly would not matter to Bill, nothing would matter. If she could spell every word in the dictionary, do you suppose any one would have her for a governess?"

"I don't know why not,—when she is a little older of course. She is such a child yet; wait till she is grown up."

"We have been waiting," Polly observed grimly.

"She is very young for her age ; I am sure I don't know how it is."

"She was born without gumption," said Polly with conviction, "and she has never been able to acquire any general knowledge."

"She is not clever," Miss Brownlow admitted sadly.

"Cleverness has nothing to do with it," Polly retorted. "If you start in life lacking what Bill lacks, you must do what you can with common-sense. That will teach you a few things, —what not to say and how to say it, and—and all that. Bill has no common-sense."

"We have always treated her like a child ;" and here Miss Brownlow sighed again.

It was then that Theresa suggested that Bill should come home with her to stay at Ashelton for a little while. Miss Brownlow was delighted with the suggestion ; it was just the thing, she was sure. No doubt the girl would develope ; Theresa would use her influence, and her young cousin had always been so fond of her, had always respected and admired her so much ; such a visit would be the best possible thing. Theresa herself did not anticipate very great results, but she promised to do her best, and after some discussion of details regarding the proposed visit, Miss Brownlow returned to her accounts and the sisters to the exercises, interrupted only now and again by a repetition of the elder lady's satisfaction with the plan. After the third interruption Polly yawned aggressively. When there was silence again she bit her cotton and looked thoughtfully across at Miss Brownlow, at the kindly face, the thin hair, the black stuff gown she knew so well. She did not approve of the whole effect ; she thought it "snuffy," and as such unlikely to create a favourable impression on the parents of possible scholars. She

looked beyond Miss Brownlow to the wall behind,—to the pale-toned paper with faint gold lines and fainter grey flowers, to the old-fashioned water-colours in shabby gilt frames, the white marble mantel-piece with red glass candlesticks upon it, and to the rosewood chairs covered with green rep, standing one on either side of the fire-place. The room was no more attractive than Miss Brownlow's dress, she thought ; it was terribly old-fashioned in comparison with Miss Wilson's flatted walls and artistic green cushions. Polly had a poor opinion of art-colours, but she seriously considered the advisability of draping some of the household gods with the best of the shades of yellow. She was, in her own mind, reckoning the quantity of material necessary, when Miss Brownlow again broke in on her reflections.

"Are you sure Robert won't mind?" she asked for the fourth time.

"Quite sure," was Theresa's answer.

"That's all right ; I should not like to put him about at all. You are quite certain?"

Theresa was quite certain, and the subject was dismissed. Polly breathed a heavy sigh, and once more fell back on her own thoughts. These now turned from the art-materials to Robert Morton, Theresa's husband. Polly had not a very high opinion of Robert Morton ; she liked him well enough, but considered him a bad speculation. "He'll die of apoplexy—poor Theresa—I'm sorry for that poor girl. He'll certainly die of it, and I expect he'll die young." So she had once said to the indignant Bella, and she thought of the verdict again this evening as she glanced at the sisters and mentally dressed Theresa in widow's weeds. She would make a handsome widow, though perhaps not so effective as Bella. Polly glanced meditatively at Bella ; a widow's cap

would look well on that golden head. Theresa was darker, and older too by nearly four years; she would be twenty-six in the summer and she looked her age; in fact, Theresa was almost too dignified. Bella was not dignified, though she was tall. They were both tall and graceful and clear-skinned; both had blue eyes, Theresa's grave and sweet, Bella's holy, innocent, suggesting a madonna's eyes to the observer until he became aware of the turned-up nose between; "a flirt's nose," Polly called it. Theresa's features were better though less attractive; she had not a flirt's nose, but also she had no tantalising dimple in her chin. Still they were both undeniably beauties, and Polly was nothing of the sort.

CHAPTER II.

TERESA and Bella Waring were beauties when they came to Miss Brownlow's seven years ago, well-educated, well-informed, used to the ways of society (of small professional society), and possessed of sixty pounds a year between them. Their father had been dead some years then; it was their mother's death which sent them and their sixty pounds to Langford House. Theresa came to help with the teaching, Bella to finish her education first, and afterwards to fill her sister's place. Of course Miss Brownlow received them gladly, loved them warmly, mothered them to the best of her ability. She would have done that for any number of nieces, and she did it heartily for these four. Polly felt angry as she thought of their numbers, and thought contemptuously of the Brownlow family and its faculty for dying. There had been five Miss Brownlows originally; one died young, three married first and then died at their earliest convenience, leaving their children as a

legacy to the remaining sister who neither married nor died. She, possessed of short views, a large heart, and an inexhaustible supply of hope, welcomed them with open arms. Two of them she had to adopt entirely; the other two, Theresa and Bella, came to her better endowed, better equipped, and at a more convenient age.

And what had they done with their advantages? Polly put the case to herself with contemptuous irritation. Bella, so she summed it up, Bella at twenty-two had done nothing; Theresa at twenty-six had contrived to marry a small farmer. No doubt his family had originally been good, but one cannot live on a good family, especially if it is all but extinct; and the goodness did not prevent Robert from being a farmer in a small way, and an unsuccessful one too. He was undoubtedly a poor speculation: his tastes were expensive, his inclinations horsey, his income small, his tendencies apoplectic; he would soon, no doubt, die, and die suddenly, leaving Theresa no better off than she was a year ago. Really these two girls were stupid, as stupid as the Brownlow family. And yet their mother had been the best of the five sisters, according to all accounts; the strongest as well as the prettiest, for she had managed to live to quite a respectable age. Possibly her daughters were like her; they were sensible enough for any ordinary occasion but they were not, in Polly's opinion, able to take advantage of adverse circumstances. "They would die off easily," she thought, "and they haven't an idea between them worth mentioning."

Polly was not like the Brownlow family. She took after her father, a dubious advantage, and she flattered herself that she had ideas worth,—well, something, although perhaps they were not always quite suitable

for public mention. She also had an easy conscience, and in her youth some little acquaintance with social byways. She had a tenacious hold on life, and was not likely to follow her mother's and aunts' example and die easily. "So has Bill," she thought; "she is silly and she is ugly, but she won't fade out of the world in a hurry, though I can't see what good she will ever be in it."

This last sentiment found something like an echo, albeit unexpressed, in the minds of two other inmates of Langford House, the two boarders Carrie and Alice. They were quiet, inoffensive girls, a year or two younger than Bill, and forced by circumstances to have more of her company than they desired. The greater part of the day the three were together, and for the night they shared one room so that the sisters' nocturnal confidences had to be held in common with their companion. It must be admitted that Carrie and Alice did not altogether like Bill, though they felt a sort of superior pity for her which was not all unpleasant. On the evening when Miss Brownlow and her nieces were planning Bill's future good, Carrie and Alice were giving her a little advice while going to bed. It was on the subject of hair-dressing, Carrie thinking it was time Bill coiled her hair on the top of her head.

"It's quite time," she concluded. "Are you going to wait till you are eighteen? When are you going to do it up?"

Bill considered: "To-morrow," she said at last.

"To-morrow?" Carrie repeated, and Alice added: "You can't, you haven't got any hairpins."

"I'll get some of Bella's."

"You can't," Carrie said again, and turning to the glass began to arrange her own hair.

"Miss Waring has gold-coloured hairpins," Alice remarked; "you could not use them."

"Why not?"

"Because it would look horrid to have brass hairpins sticking out of your hair."

"Is that all?" Bill did not seem impressed.

Carrie turned away from the glass. "That is how I shall do my hair," she said. "I shall do it up the day I leave school, the very day."

"I like plaits better," Alice observed; but Bill examined the head-dress thoughtfully, and then asked: "And what else will you do when you leave school,—besides your hair, I mean?"

"Besides my hair? How ridiculous you are!" Carrie did not seem displeased by the question. She condescended to answer it rather fully, and as she took off her shoes and stockings talked of the possibilities of evening parties, the certainty of afternoon calls, the charms of long dresses, and of the young men who stayed at the Rectory. Alice joined in this explanation, and in fact the sisters were soon talking to and for each other only, having almost forgotten Bill's presence until she exclaimed suddenly: "Men! It's all men! Why are they nicer than women?"

She was sitting on her pillow in her favourite position, her knees drawn up, her elbows resting upon them and her chin framed in her hands; she was looking straight in front of her and only turned her eyes on the sisters when she spoke. They objected to her method of looking round without turning her head; that, in addition to the impropriety of the remark, made Carrie answer severely: "Men are not nicer than women; nobody thinks so except those who are fast."

"Yes, they are nicer. You think

so, Polly thinks so, Bella thinks so, every girl thinks so, though I don't see why."

"You don't know any men;" this was said with great contempt.

"No, nor any girls either, except you two, and you are nice!" Bill had an enormous mouth and the beginning of a smile curved it as she spoke.

"Then it is more than you are," Alice retorted with irritation, "or you would not talk about men like that."

"Men aren't half so amusing as women," Bill went on, ignoring the last speech; "and women aren't half so amusing when men are there. I can't see where the attraction comes in with any of them—the rector, the curates, the masters at the grammar-school, Robert Morton, any of them."

"Of course they don't take any notice of you," Carrie said, and Alice added: "You only think about people being amusing; you like people whom you can imitate."

"That's why I like you," Bill said sweetly. "Why do you like people—men?"

"I don't like men; you have never heard me speak of them!"

"Heard!" Bill laughed. "I have felt; I have felt you crinkle up for a boy!"

"You haven't! How dare you say such things!"

"Why not? Where is the harm? You talk about men to each other, why not to me? You never have before, but I see no reason why you should not. Do you consider it wrong to like men? How queer it is; you all like men and you all pretend you do not. There is a deal of humbug about it."

"Some people," Carrie said with severity, "have a sense of decency."

"A sense of decency? That's what Adam and Eve had when they hid

themselves; a sense of decency often seems to mean hiding something."

"You are very wicked!" Alice said scandalised, and would have nothing more to say to Bill for some time, though after the light was out and all three were in bed the sisters continued to talk to each other about the wonderful future, the first ball Carrie would attend, and the events that would follow.

"And after that," came the voice from Bill's bed,—“what are you going to do after that?”

"Oh, I don't know," Carrie answered; "marry I suppose. There is a use for your despised men; you can't marry without them."

"Marry—h'm!—Yes, I expect you will marry."

"Do you really think so? I don't know—and yet,—yes, I suppose I should rather like to; not yet of course, but by and by, to marry and to have several children."

"Oh, you are sure to; you are like the old white hen with feathers down her legs; you would make a splendid sitter."

"Bill!"

"Now what's the matter? Is it the sense of decency again?"

But the sisters would not answer her question and, having told her so, went on to say that, as it was forbidden to talk after the light was out, they were not going to do it any more, especially to her. Then they went to sleep, leaving Bill to her own reflections. She, thus left, rolled over on her back and lay staring up into the darkness above her and thinking. At her age one does not always think with a definite coherent clearness; dreaming is more to the mind of seventeen. Bill dreamed, fancies and thoughts flitting to and fro in her mind.

About marriage, for instance; last year Theresa had tried the great ex-

periment to which Carrie looked forward. Carrie would try it by and by; she would become Mrs. Somebody and grow staid and stout and placid; she would talk about "my house" and "my husband"; she would bound the universe, almost the Kingdom of Heaven by those two; she would wear a black silk dress and a heavy gold chain like Mrs. Bodling; she would get fatter, and fairer and calmer; she would entirely lose sight of her feet——

Bill stretched out her own feet, and then lay still to listen. The wind crept in at the open window and stirred the curtains; the cloth on the toilet-table flapped idly, reminding her of quiet, slumberous summer afternoons, of a certain Thursday afternoon in June especially,—it was in June that Theresa had entered on the great experiment. In the first freshness of early summer she left the school and the old routine-work and the narrow, cosy, feminine life and went out to try a wider, fuller, new life. She was to have a house of her own and a servant; there had been a lot of talk about the house (here Bill built an ideal house for herself), a lot of things to be bought, a lot of new clothes for Theresa. Miss Brownlow and the girls had pinched and scraped and worked; Bill had been allowed to help a little, though her work was more strong than neat. Evening after evening Bella and Polly and Theresa had sat at work with Miss Brownlow—how they seemed to enjoy it! Theresa must have missed that when she went to her new home; Bill wondered what she did during those first evenings of the new life. Then the great day had come; Bill recalled every detail of it. There had been excitement and bustle and people and flowers, Theresa in her bridal gown, and

everywhere the scent of the little white roses—the white roses which made Bill think of funerals, though she did not know why.

Then Theresa had gone away. She kissed them all and cried, and smiled and cried again, and went. Robert Morton looked rather cross during the kissing and crying, but nobody seemed to mind. They were quite sure Theresa was happy, quite sure she had attained to all that she desired; only Bill thought she must be very lonely. She had also an inward conviction, founded on nothing, that Theresa would be desperately disappointed in her venture. There was no reason for these thoughts, and Theresa had said nothing to suggest them; she seemed happy, and they all thought her so except Bill, and Bill was so childish that she could not be expected to know anything about the matter. She had only once been to Theresa's home at Ashelton. They had all driven there one September day and enjoyed it greatly. Bill could recall every detail of the expedition, her memory was vivid and her experiences few. She had never been again to Ashelton; she had never been on a visit——

She was growing very sleepy now, and her thoughts became confused with the words of the cousins who were speaking just outside the door.

"I shall be very glad to have her."

"You will be more glad to be rid of her; besides, she has no clothes."

At the Day of Judgment Polly would still be considering her clothes—she would probably want to let out her garment of righteousness if—but sleep mastered Bill here.

CHAPTER III.

It was September,—rich September, with its warm lights and red shadows—when Bill went first to Haylands,

Robert Morton's farm. It was March when she went again; a grey afternoon, level light, and dead stillness over the bare ploughed land and the low white house. She drove from Wrugglesby with Theresa, a tedious drive along winding lanes,—not that she found it tedious, for nothing was tedious to Bill. Theresa, too, had enjoyed her homeward journey more than usual. She had talked gaily all the way until they turned in at her own gateway; then somehow her spirits flagged, and in silence they drove up the long chase which meandered across a grassy field, passed a duck-pond where grey geese waded, and so on to the little gate which shut in the overgrown garden. Bill looked quickly at the garden. It had been a flowery, weedy wilderness when she was there in September; it was bare now, so dry that the earth rose in dust at the touch of Theresa's skirts, so bare that the leafless raspberry canes, still though they were, seemed to shiver in their nakedness.

There was no one about; Robert, no doubt, was busy somewhere on the farm. For a moment Theresa hesitated with the reins in her hand, then a man appeared from the stables and took the pony away. Theresa led the way into the house covertly casting an anxious glance at Bill.

"It is very cold," she said, as she pushed open the door of her favourite room and went to the fire.

"Yes, I suppose it is," Bill answered cheerfully. "I'm not cold though. What a jolly room! It is cubby, T.!"

"Do you like it? You saw it when you were here before," Theresa said, feeling somehow a little warmer and very glad that Bill was with her. If it had been Polly or Bella they might have thought Robert neglectful, but as it was only Bill it did not matter.

By and bye Robert came in. He did not know that Bill was coming

back with his wife and when the guest was safely shut in her room he asked, "Why on earth did you bring her?"

"Do you mind?" Theresa asked in distress. "I am sorry; I did not think you would mind; she won't trouble you much."

"No, she won't trouble me; still I don't see what you wanted to have her for."

"We thought—I thought, it might do her good."

"Ill?" Morton asked looking up sharply. "If she is ill, we certainly don't want her here."

"She is not ill. She does not get on very well at school; I mean—" Theresa felt the matter was difficult of explanation—"I mean, she is very young for her age."

"She is very ugly," Morton said, beginning to unlace his boots.

Theresa flushed. "She is my cousin," she said.

"That don't make her handsome, my dear," he observed without looking up.

"I don't think her at all ugly." Theresa's voice showed that she was hurt. "If she were, it would not be her fault. Do you wish me to send her home at the end of the week?"

"I? No, please yourself as to that. Keep her as long as you like, as far as I am concerned."

And he left her to take his boots to the wash-house with no idea that there were tears in her eyes. She forced them back, turning to the fire as she did so. It was certainly cold, a dreary, dreary afternoon. She was still standing by the fire, standing stiffly with something of unapproachable dignity about her, when Bill came down a few minutes later; but Bill was not troubled by the dignity, and curled herself up in the big chair on the other side of the fire evidently quite satisfied. She

spent the evening helping Robert to mend whips, quite satisfied with that too; possibly she found it an improvement on learning grammar with Carrie and Alice.

Theresa was relieved to find that Bill and Robert showed so much inclination to friendliness; indeed, at the end of two days she came to the conclusion that they were better friends than ever Robert and Bella had been. It was a very good thing, she thought, as she watched Bill wandering about the cow-yard and investigating the pig-styes. Bill took the keenest interest in pigs and poultry, cows and butter; her interest extended to the dairy, the kitchen, and the store-room; she seemed anxious to do any work she could. Theresa gave her dusting and churning, and she worked with a will, though when the churning was done Theresa was rather horrified to find her young cousin scrubbing the dairy-floor.

"Bill! What are you doing?"

"Clearing up,—I upset some butter-milk." Bill was kneeling on the bricks and she did not cease scrubbing to give the answer.

"But, my dear child, there is no necessity,—get up."

"I like it, I like clearing up. I did the old fowls' house just before I came in here; you should see it; it's beautifully clean. This afternoon I am going to lime-wash it, and then I shall put in the biggest family of chickens. They have not half enough room where they are; Robert said I might move them if I liked."

"Yes, but,—surely you need not lime-wash the house yourself; one of the men can do it. You must not do it; you will make yourself in such a state."

"I am afraid I am rather a dirty worker."

Theresa glanced at Bill's present condition and saw that the statement

was only too true. "You must leave off," she said; "the soapsuds are all up your sleeves; besides, I want to speak to you."

"All right, I can hear; you sit down on that wooden tub; I'm just done, and I can finish while you are talking."

Theresa sat down in spite of her protestations. "I want to talk to you about the prayer-meeting," she said. "You know, during Lent Mr. Johnson holds meetings once a week, a kind of Bible-reading. We meet at different houses and read passages from the Bible, and he explains them and gives a little address. They are really rather nice, and not too long. We meet at seven and it is all over quite early; we usually have supper about half-past eight."

"Yes?" Bill was working industriously at the last corner.

"I meant—do you think you would care to go?" Theresa asked this somewhat doubtfully. Bella and Polly had been amused by the idea of the Ashelton prayer-meetings, and Bill, according to Polly's account, was not likely to treat them more respectfully. However, to Theresa's satisfaction, Bill answered with enthusiasm: "I should like it tremendously; is it to-night?"

"No, to-morrow. To-day is market-day at Wrugglesby, you know; nothing here is ever fixed on a market-day."

"I see," Bill said, taking up her pail of water; "then it's to-morrow? I'll come if you will take me," and she went away to empty the pail.

Theresa watched her go, and then went into the house feeling that her guest was easy to entertain, and gave really very little trouble, in spite of Polly's prognostications. Indeed she had been very glad of her company ever since her arrival, and especially so to-day as Robert had gone to

market and was not likely to be back till late. The day seemed all the shorter for the girl's presence in the house. The weather was gray and cloudy, and Theresa had a headache; she was very glad Bill was with her in the afternoon. Later on, in the evening, when her headache became bad, she was persuaded by her young cousin to go to bed and leave her to wait for Robert.

"I hardly like to go; you don't think it will seem unkind?" Theresa offered this last protest standing by the door, her candle in her hand.

"No, of course not, I'll explain."

Bill somehow knew, though Theresa did not, that Robert did not view things in the same light as his wife did; so she persuaded her to go to bed and settled herself by the fire until the servant was ready to go up-stairs. After that she went round the house and fastened the doors, standing a moment in the hall curiously impressed by the silence of the place. "I have never been up alone in a sleeping house before," she meditated as she put out the light and stretched out her hands in the darkness as if to feel to the full the sense of solitary night. At that moment she remembered that she had fastened the back door which Theresa had told her particularly to leave unlocked, as Robert always let himself in that way.

She went back and unfastened it, turned the handle to see if it were really unbolted, and stood a moment looking out. The night-breeze stirred her hair; the moist fragrance of the earth came to her; she drew her breath in deeply, slowly, turning her head from side to side, listening to the intense stillness; it seemed to her that she could almost hear things growing. Her heart began to beat faster; the blood in her veins stirred in unison with the moving sap in the

hidden trees; some wild creature of the woods was waking in her, bidding her go forth into the darkness. A board creaked; it was only the timbers settling down for the night, but it recalled her to the house and to her task of waiting for its master's return. With a last glance at the cloudy sky, she went in and shut the door.

There was another that night who found it dark, so dark that more than once he missed his way in the deep lanes which lay between Sales Green and Ashelton. More than once he anathematised the business which led him to come home from Wrugglesby market by way of the little village; the cross-roads were intricate and in bad repair, and under the darkness of the trees it was impossible to see so much as the hedgerow elms on either side. At last he heard the sound of wheels away on the left; he was clear of the lanes and out on the high road now; just as he emerged a vehicle without lights passed, or rather, nearly collided with him.

He pulled his horse up and demanded angrily: "Where the devil are you going? If you want the whole road you might at least carry lights so that one can see what you are doing!"

"Where—going 'self?" a thick voice retorted. "Damn your clumsiness! Wha'—what 'yer mean by running a man down li' that?"

"Where are you trying to go?" The man was evidently too drunk to be argued with.

"Home;—that'sh if—if can get there. Brute pulls li'—like the devil."

"You had better let me drive you home, Morton—it is Morton? I expect I can see better in the dark than you can."

Morton raised no objection and the other dismounted as he spoke and climbed up beside him. "Pleashed,

"I'm sure," Robert muttered. "Been to market? Oh, forgot,—saw you there myself, but you lef' early; very cred'able, Mr. Harborough, you' shober young man."

He laughed in a maudlin way, and they started on a straight course in the darkness, Harborough's horse, fastened by the bridle, trotting behind. A straight road lay before them, the ground rising clear from the shade of the trees, just showing paler against the blackness, then sloping gently downwards to deeper shadow until the turning by the village; there the road forked, now to the left, through the open gateway, up the chase, and so to the stables and home.

"Come on, ol' chap, come in and have a—a glass of whisky,—don't b' unsociable."

Harborough hesitated and thought of Mrs. Morton. He glanced up at the house; there was a light in one of the lower windows, the rest were dark—was she sitting up for her husband? He thought of the young wife with her serene, unconscious face, waiting for this, and yielding to the affectionate pressure on his arm he went in.

"There does not seem to be any one up," he said, as he opened the door and paused on the threshold.

"Oh, yes, sure to be, sure—confound—"

As Morton stumbled, Harborough held him up, and then stood listening a moment. The house was very quiet except for the chirping of crickets in the kitchen. Guided more by instinct than by his companion he made his way to Mrs. Morton's favourite sitting-room and opened the door, expecting yet dreading to meet the sweet face of the young wife. But she was not there; involuntarily he breathed a sigh of relief and braced himself to face her substitute. There was a substitute, someone curled up

in the big chair by the fire, a slim young girl. She had been reading, and apparently had but just discovered their presence in the house, for she only looked up from her book as they entered.

"Theresa has gone to bed," she said, rising as she spoke. She did not seem at all surprised to see them both. Harborough wondered if she understood, or if Morton returned in this condition so often that she was prepared for it. "Poor Theresa's head was so bad that I persuaded her to go, and to let me sit up," she added.

"That 'ch al'right, you'n I—quite happy without her," Morton said thickly, smiling upon the girl.

"You won't want to disturb her to-night," she went on. "Her head is ever so bad; you will sleep in the blue room, won't you? That will do nicely."

"That'll do—we won't dish'turb her, poor—poor T."

"Is the room ready?" Harborough asked quickly.

She shook her head, and flitted away with light noiseless feet. Morton stretched out a hand to detain her but she passed him like a shadow and was gone.

"Make her sing when 'comes back—sing to you,—cap'tal song."

Harborough turned away abruptly. Evidently she had not expected this sort of home-coming, or surely the room would have been ready. Probably it had not occurred before, to Mrs. Morton's knowledge at least; if it had, she would never have left this child to face it alone; for a child she was, fifteen, sixteen perhaps, but a child certainly. A great anger rose in Harborough's heart against the man who had brought his beastliness home here. He glanced round the room, which impressed him as daintily feminine, doubtless arranged by the bride nine months ago. Her work-

basket stood on the table, a few spring flowers were on the mantelpiece; the whole place was pathetically eloquent of her presence. Harborough picked up a book which lay on the table and looked at the title—ROMANCES AND DROLLS OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND—an old book of West Country legends and folk-lore, fairy tales of a primitive order, the book that the girl, who had just left the room, had been reading. Pleasant to call a child from her fairy-stories to meet a drunkard!

"Now come to bed." She had returned as noiselessly as she had gone.

"Bed? Not 'f I know it!"

"Yes, come along."

"I will see Mr. Morton to bed," Harborough said. "Which is the room? No, tell me, don't trouble to come."

"Second door from the top of the stairs," was the direction she gave, and Harborough, coercing his charge, went up-stairs. With the door safely shut on them he used more force than persuasion, feeling heartily sick of the whole business. When he came down again the girl was in her old position, reading her fairy-book as before.

"Is he in bed?" she asked.

"Yes. Are you alone here—I mean, are you going to shut the house up?"

"Yes, all that is still open. I must, you see, there is no one else. You can't do it when you are outside, and you won't want to stop in to do it; it is not difficult."

"No. You are rather young to be left alone.—I won't keep you up; good-night."

She went to the door with him, the one opening on to the yard by which he and Morton had entered a little while before. On the step he hesitated; he was standing in shadow, she in the light of the lantern she had brought that she might see to fasten the door after him.

"If I were you," he said doubtfully, "I should not disturb Mr. Morton more than I could help. I would not pass his room unless it were necessary."

"No."

Nevertheless, after he had gone she stole noiselessly to the door and turned the key outside for fear the sleeper should awake and disturb Theresa in the night. But then that was quite necessary in her opinion, and no one was the wiser for she unlocked it again between four and five in the morning.

As for Harborough, having given the caution, he felt satisfied and after repeating "good-night" went down the yard. He looked back once before she closed the door. She was still standing in the same position, the lantern in her hand, an elfin thing in its glow against the brown shadows of the passage, herself all brown and red, skin and hair and eyes, colours such as Rembrandt loved. She moved, scattering splashes of light from her lantern, then shut the door; and Harborough mounted his horse and rode a good mile home to Crows' Farm.

CHAPTER IV.

Nobody could make farming pay, at least no one about Wrugglesby. This was an axiom in the Ashelton district, which no one attempted to confute though each had an explanation for it, according to his political opinions and education, or want of education. But one and all believed it, though they continued to farm and to grumble, both the small men and the great. The small men were very small, little more than peasant tenants with neither the capital nor the ability to farm their small holdings with any show of justice to the starved land, living

from hand to mouth, employing no labour, themselves and their families practically doing the work, and doing it indifferently. The great men were quite another class, a cross between a landed gentry and a yeoman squirearchy, socially ranking with the professional classes and for all practical purposes supplying the place of the county-families, now for the most part either impoverished or else removed to more congenial centres. The greater farm-owners undoubtedly did make some profit out of the land, or appeared to do something very like it, though possibly they might have done so more successfully had they inclined more towards the yeoman squirearchy and less towards the landed gentry in their tastes and habits.

At least such was the opinion of one who, a little more than six months previous to Bill's advent in the Morton household, had come to settle among the yeoman-farmers and to prove to himself and to them some of the theories he held with regard to farming. His theory-in-chief was a short one, and could be summed up in one word,—work. A working farmer could make it pay; there were one or two of the old-fashioned sort of large working farmers still left, who made it pay, even though they had no social position and wanted none. Their net profits were small, it is true, but then they had not the benefit of a modern education; they were also abnormally pigheaded, and, in spite of experience, would do as their fathers had done in the palmy days of Protection. Young Gilchrist Harborough was of opinion that, were it only possible to unite the work in detail of these men with the knowledge and capital of the gentleman-class, results of surprising grandeur could be obtained.

He held this theory long ago, before ever he saw the English farmer

at work; he held it still more firmly now that fate had given him an opportunity of putting it to the test. The opportunity had come unexpectedly in the shape of a legacy from a friend of his father's, a man who had at one time stayed in the bush-home where Gilchrist was reared, and who, half amused and half pleased by the young man's earnestness, had left him Crows' Farm and a sufficiency on which to try his theories on a small scale.

An unpretentious, whitewashed building was the farm, not unlike two cottages knocked into one. For many years it had been inhabited by a bailiff who farmed the adjoining land, the owner, frequently absent abroad, only coming down for the partridge-shooting. Ashelton was fond of this man, and genuinely sorry to hear of his death; he was the kind of man those good folks understood, and was sadly missed at the social functions which always took place in September and in which he usually joined. But the new owner, the young Australian to whom he had left the farm, was something of a puzzle to them. Of course he had a right to his theories: everyone has in these highly educated days; but it is not every one who tries to put his theories into practice, nor who, moreover, has such uncomfortable ones. Harborough lived the life of a working farmer in his little old house; lived, so report said, almost like Robinson Crusoe, doing his own cooking and cleaning, rising early and sharing even the most menial toil with his few labourers. This was not all strictly correct, but it was near enough to the truth to satisfy Ashelton, and the parish talked and wondered, and said dubiously that the experiment might answer, questioning for a while how Mr. Harborough would be received. But in

the winter the question was settled by Mrs. Dawson who, perhaps, alone was capable of settling it finally. She, under the influence of her son Jack, decided that Mr. Harborough was as one of themselves, notwithstanding his theory and his colonial origin,—a decision which scarcely did justice to Harborough, but gave great satisfaction to everyone, even including Mr. Dane, the old rector. He, indeed, had seemed particularly to appreciate it, and had even listened to Mrs. Dawson's judgment on the case with a faint smile flickering in his gray eyes. It is true he made Harborough's acquaintance without waiting for Mrs. Dawson's decision, but then, as she said, the rector, of course, knew everybody. Mr. Johnson, the curate, being only a curate, had waited for her decision.

But none of these matters troubled Harborough. He lived his life in his own way, working hard as long as he was able, smoking hard when work was done; reading sometimes, and the books had nothing to do with the theory, neither were they such as Jack Dawson would have chosen; dreaming sometimes, in spite of the theory, in spite also of the pure reason with which he was still young enough to believe he governed his life. Of his neighbours he thought little; he was friendly when he came across them, but with the friendliness of the self-contained man who regards the rest of his kind as supernumeraries, necessary parts of the world-play, but as well filled by one set of actors as by another. He knew about his neighbours, of course, since he could not well live in Ashelton without doing so; but he did not care greatly about them, nor was there any reason to care; nothing to his knowledge had gone seriously wrong or seriously right in Ashelton until that night when he took Robert Morton home.

That night there had been something seriously wrong, and the more he thought about Morton, the more wrong the whole matter seemed. Drunkenness looked such a beastly thing in this quiet little village, in that peaceful home with that fair young wife. "The man's a brute," was his disgusted verdict, "coming home to a wife like that! Lucky it wasn't her. By the way, I wonder who the girl was, queer little thing."

But he did not wonder very much, for he was too sleepy that night and too busy the next day till the time when the girl revealed her identity to him. It was somewhere about noon when he saw her, as he was returning by a lane which bordered one side of the Haylands property. He had been that way once before during the morning, but was not aware that anyone had been watching him. As he came back, however, he met the girl of last night's adventure evidently waiting for his return. The Morton's orchard was here; an old untidy orchard, with old stooping apple-trees, lichen-covered and unpruned, a thicket of nuts and pollard quinces and, beyond, a briery tangle of blackberries. As yet there was neither flower nor leaf, except for one plum tree near the gate white as snow in its blossom.

It was in the orchard that Harborough saw the girl. She was sitting on the gate deliberately waiting for him, and when he came in sight she made the fact known.

"I want to speak to you," she announced. "I have been waiting ever so long."

"I'm sorry," he answered, in some surprise; "now I have come, what can I do for you?"

"It is about Robert, Robert Morton—is he often drunk?"

If Harborough had any delusions as to her not grasping the situation last night, they were now dispelled.

"I don't know," he said; "I have never seen him so before."

"Do you think he often is?"

"I really cannot tell you; I am only very slightly acquainted with him."

A little smile crept round the corners of the girl's mouth. "I didn't suppose you were great friends," she said.

Harborough bit his lip. His tone had not implied it, yet he was conscious that there had been a slight feeling of annoyance at the suggestion of intimacy conveyed by her words; there was now a second feeling of annoyance that she should have discovered the first.

"I am a comparatively new comer in the place," he said somewhat stiffly; "you would perhaps do better to ask someone who has lived here longer."

"Umph!" As she made the oracular answer she drew her legs up to the top bar of the gate and clasped her hands round them in a position Harborough considered most unsafe. As he watched her, fascinated, wondering which way she would fall, she turned a little towards him.

"Take care!" he exclaimed.

"Theresa does not know," she said, answering her own thoughts. "She has no idea; but she will, you know."

Harborough thought it possible, but he only said: "I suppose her husband told her he did not wish to disturb her last night?"

"Yes."

"Then I do not see how she is to know, if you do not tell her."

"No, not this time; but next,—I may not be here then."

"How do you know there will be a next time?" he asked. "You have no reason to suppose this was anything but,—but an accident which might happen to any of us."

"You, for instance?"

Her blandly innocent eyes were turned on him. "Any man," he answered briefly. The eyes showed neither surprise nor disgust; in fact they did not seem much convinced, and he went on. "There is no reason to say it must occur again; why do you?"

"Why do you?"

"I do not," he answered; "I should be very sorry to give such a definite opinion on the subject."

"Well, then," she replied cheerfully, "that is the difference between us. I give the opinions, you only have them, but we mean the same thing."

"I have not formed any opinion."

"No, but you know him,—not very well, I dare say,—but you know other men. I don't know him very well either, better than you do, of course, but not well. I came here on Tuesday, and to-day is Friday; before that I don't think I saw him more than six times; but, all the same, I know he will get drunk again."

"Pray, did you expect him to be drunk last night?" Harborough asked.

"No," she answered; "I had never thought about it. Until I saw him last night I never thought about his drinking; now, of course, I know."

"I must say you took it very coolly," he observed, "that is, if it was a revelation to you."

She shrugged her shoulders, till he thought she must inevitably fall off the gate; she did not, but turned to him, asking, "What would you have had me do?"

"Nothing different from what you did. I meant that you did not seem at all upset."

"No, I don't think I can be upset easily." He unconsciously looked at the squirrel-like perch on the gate.

"You see," she went on, "there was a good deal to be done till you went; after that I thought."

"Yes?" He wondered what she thought, what sort of brain she had under that thatch of copper-brown hair.

"It is about Theresa," she went on to explain; "she does not know, and she must sooner or later; he is bound to let it out some time. He may have got drunk and hidden it in the past: he may do so in the future; but sooner or later there will come another time like last night and she will find out."

He drove his stick into the ground thoughtfully. "Well," he said at last, "if this is all as inevitable as you say, if this takes place, I suppose Mrs. Morton will have to bear it, as other women have borne it before. There is nothing else for it; we can't help her; she will just have to bear it."

Harborough felt this was cold comfort. It was easy talking out here in the spring sunshine, easy adjusting the burden to the accompaniment of the thrushes' love-songs; but to bear it was another matter, and the girl evidently thought so.

"You don't know Theresa," she said. "She just can't bear it; I think it would kill her."

Harborough repressed a smile. "I don't think it would do anything of the kind," he said, from his wider knowledge of mankind. "Mrs. Morton by this time knows, what you, too, will find out some day, that the world is peopled with men not heroes, and that you must take men, even husbands, as you find them, and not despair and die because they are not heroes of romance."

"That's just what Theresa has not found out," Theresa's cousin persisted, "at least not properly. She and Robert don't quite understand

one another, I'm afraid. It's an awful pity for people to get married; they can't really know one another unless they have lived together for a long time first. You see, T. has lived such a different life. It was a kind of she-life, quiet and dainty and small, and nice as nice could be,—weak tea in old china and wash the cups up carefully afterwards—that is how we lived. The pity is she married Robert; it might have answered if she had married some other man, better, perhaps, or more,—more watered down, or something; I don't know how to say it, but you understand how it is. They just belong to different kinds of people."

Harborough leaned against the gatepost, the one opposite to the end of the gate on which the girl sat; he was careful not to give her the least jar as he considered the connubial problem presented to him. "Of course you think Morton is to blame," he said at last. "You would blame him far more than your sister—cousin is it?—your cousin then. He is, I suppose, a low hound, drunken and all the rest of it?"

"Well," she answered slowly, "it isn't so much that; he has his good points of course, though I don't altogether like him. It isn't exactly a case of right and wrong; it's how the thing seems to the other person, and it'll seem bad to T. For myself, I don't think I should like getting drunk, but I don't so much mind about things; I can understand how it is in a way, and besides, it is not such a sin to his nature; it isn't nice, but it is all of a piece with himself."

Harborough nodded. "That's so," he said and added: "To come home drunk is not, after all, such a dreadful thing from a man's point of view; it is not nice, as you say, but it is not the most awful thing in the world. Life's entire happiness does not cease

because of it; it is not the end of all things."

"No," she said thoughtfully looking past him into some fancy picture. "No, there is always the necessity to get up and have breakfast next morning, even after a big tragedy; things don't end."

He laughed a little. "Naturally not, and a good thing too on the whole, though perhaps it is not dramatic. Why not induce Mrs. Morton to take your truly judicial view of the case?"

"My view? It couldn't be done."

"Why not? I think I understood you to say that she had lived in the same circumstances as yourself; if the view is possible to you, why not to her?"

"I don't know, but it is not." Bill spoke with absolute conviction. "Besides, I can't speak about it to her; I can't even warn her what to expect. If she had been with me when you brought him home last night, I should have been obliged to pretend I did not know what was the matter, and I should have kept up the pretence afterwards."

"Would you?" he said, eyeing her curiously. "I suppose you would, and she would have helped you; women always try to hide the shortcomings of their loved ones. She won't admit it when she finds him out; she will stand by him with a sort of proud deceit to the end."

"Of course," Bill answered simply; "he is her family now, and you must stand by your family, right or wrong."

"I suppose that is what you call loyalty," Harborough said with a laugh. "I was born in a land where we don't think so much of our families, where we have not always reason to think much of them."

"Mine isn't much to boast of," Bill admitted. "But that has nothing to do with it; I must stand by them all

the same,—why, I should bolster up Polly. But we are no nearer the settling of Theresa; I suppose we never shall be, so there is no more to be said. Thank you for telling me all you knew."

"All I didn't know; that is what it amounts to."

She moved as if she were going to get off the gate, then stopped in the act and said suddenly: "Polly said Robert would die of apoplexy,—die young. What do you think?"

"I think it is a solution of the difficulty I should not dwell on, if I were you."

"Why not? Isn't it likely?"

"I should say it was at least uncertain; also it is not usually considered decent to think about such things, at all events to talk about them."

"Oh, decent!" she said, and laughed softly as she remembered Carrie's and Alice's lecture. Then she dropped off the gate and was immediately lost among the orchard-bushes. He stood for a moment, half expecting her to come back, though he did not know why. As she did not, he went on, smiling a little.

Gradually the smile died away. It was all very well to smile out there in the sunshine, all very well to talk under the apple-boughs, but the fact remained, the grim, stern fact. It was no concern of his, it is true, but he could not help thinking about it. Of course he knew that Morton drank, not desperately, nor enough to do any serious harm, not more than did plenty of other men, nothing more than occasionally a little too much; so serious an affair as last night's occurrence would probably be an exception. It was not exactly a cardinal sin, it was just part of his nature, as the little brown girl had said, a kind of nature for which Harborough had a tolerant contempt when regarded as

a detached specimen; as a personal acquaintance it naturally wore a different aspect. "If a man drinks, he drinks, and it is his affair. One can forgive lapses; we are none of us exactly bread-and-butter saints when we are nearing the thirties." Harborough emphasised the words with his stick; he had almost said them aloud, not quite but loud enough for the man, who that moment joined him, to guess part of the speech.

"Who is not a saint when he is nearing the thirties?" he asked. "Forgive me for surprising your thoughts, Mr. Harborough; you really should not think so loud, you know."

"I will forgive you more easily than I fancy you would forgive me for thinking them." So Harborough answered, for he had certain very definite notions as to what was and what was not acceptable to the clergy, and it was a clergyman who had accosted him, the rector of Ashelton on his way to the rectory by a field-path well known to at least one of his parishioners.

Perhaps Harborough misjudged this clergyman; at all events he promised forgiveness for all sins of thought before they were expressed. "I give absolution beforehand," he said; "now confess the whole."

"The whole? I am afraid I was speech-making to myself, a bad habit I have got from living so much alone; still you shall have it all. Here goes,—If a man drinks, he drinks, and it is his affair. One can forgive lapses; we are none of us bread-and-butter saints when we are nearing the thirties. But a man whom the divine wisdom has, it would seem, for its own purposes made something of a beast should keep his beastliness for suitable places. There is a lot done

'somewhere east of Suez' and in other places nearer at hand, which one does not blame a man for doing there; but when he does it in his wife's drawing-room,—when he is such an egregious fool, such an unmitigated brute—why then he wants kicking, and he should be soundly kicked."

Mr. Dane laughed a little, but whether at the length of the speech or the unconscious earnestness of its delivery did not appear. "Yes," he said, "yes, brutes want kicking; I'm not sure we don't all want kicking sometimes. Poor little wife; God help the wife, whoever she is!"

Harborough acquiesced. "And yet," he said doubtfully, "if she understood, it would be easier, much easier; a good woman is a hard judge."

"Ay, possibly." The rector's cold gray eyes seemed to summon up the memory of some good woman who had judged hardly. "They were not made to understand some things."

"Not all women," Harborough interposed.

"Not all; are you sure she was a good woman, this exception of yours? But perhaps we had better not start a controversy now; it is too late. I suppose the good women will judge the bad men, and love them too, to the end of the story. Bad men? No, I beg pardon, average men, neither good nor bad, just human, no bread-and-butter saints—good-bye."

They parted at the rectory-gate. Just as it closed after Mr. Dane he turned to call after Harborough: "How about the beef and beer saints? What of them?"

"Are there any?"

"Yes, and they're good for three-score years and ten."

(To be continued.)

HISTORY AT PLAY.

THE hundred years which lie between the Jacobite insurrection of 1745 and the schism in the Scottish Church in 1843 form, as everyone with a care for good literature should by this time know, the period covered by Sir Henry Craik's *CENTURY OF SCOTTISH HISTORY*. Between these two points, whether from a social, a political, or a literary point of view, lies a field of inexhaustible interest. The Waverley novels first awakened the curiosity of Englishmen with regard to the manners, customs, and habits of what had hitherto been to the majority of them an almost unknown region, and created that demand for a more intimate knowledge of it which so many amusing writers have since endeavoured to supply. Among the names that will occur to everyone are Lord Cockburn, Dr. Alexander Carlyle, Dean Ramsay and Dr. Somerville; and to these must also be added the name of Mr. Henry Graham, whose *SOCIAL LIFE OF SCOTLAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY*, published only two years ago, has to some extent anticipated that portion of Sir Henry Craik's book which relates to the domestic habits and characteristic humours of the Scottish people. But Sir Henry has given us a more comprehensive work than any of the above-named authors, embracing as it does the religion, literature, and politics of the whole period, and necessarily relegating its social aspect to a comparatively subordinate place. We can scarcely ever expect to see a more valuable work upon the same period, or one in which the due proportion between its component parts

is more carefully observed. Its merits, however, have been sufficiently recognised by the public press, and we have no intention of adding another to the numerous reviews of which it has already been the subject. We propose only to note a few of the instances in which the serious annalist shows us the originals of those imaginary characters which have delighted three generations, and to amuse ourselves with identifying in the pages of history the faces and figures which have so long been familiar to us in the domain of fiction.

Sir Henry has pointed out that the success of the Act of Union left the Jacobites no alternative but an appeal to arms. After its accomplishment the alliance, which might have prevented it, between the Jacobites and those who agreed with them only in resisting it, was broken up, and the former were left to themselves. It is this, he says, "which binds 1707 to 1745 so closely in the chain of cause and effect." This is very true, and it is a truth which we do not remember to have seen so clearly expressed by any other writer. While the Union was a danger to be averted, a vast majority in Scotland, with the Jacobites at their head, could have been arrayed against it. After it became a fact, the parties to the alliance had no longer any object in common: the Jacobites felt that a peaceful restoration was impossible; and the immediate result was that preparation for civil war to which Scott introduces us in *THE BLACK DWARF*. We see Sir Frederick

Langley, Ellieslaw, and young Mareschall-Wells drinking King James's health in many an old Scotch manor-house, and many a Hobbie Elliott rushing in with the announcement that "Byng had banged the new king off the coast." In the new House of Commons, Lockhart of Carnworth was at this time the manager of the Jacobite party which numbered forty-five members, and Sir Henry's portrait of him is a masterpiece. But we must pass this over to make room for another of still greater interest and insight. We leap over a quarter of a century and find ourselves face to face with Prince Charles Edward, much as we see him in both *WAVERLEY* and *REDGAUNTLET*.

His education had been neglected, his range of experience had been narrow, but he had the rare power, which in spite of all other blemishes gives the stamp of greatness to its possessor,—that of discerning, and rising to the height of a great opportunity. That the aims of the band of which he was the centre should be mistaken and foredoomed to failure; that history had already written an adverse verdict in characters only too clear upon the cause which he represented,—nay, even that he was himself to decline into a discredited and degraded age—all these do not rob him of the glory of seizing the right moment for acting a hero's part in the last struggle of a lost, but still romantic cause.

About the verdict of history we are not sure that we should agree with Sir Henry Craik, that is to say so far as the immediate success of the expedition was concerned. But fact and fiction, romance and history are so inextricably woven together in the record of this memorable enterprise that it is difficult, if not impossible, to say where the one ends and the other begins.

We can only notice one or two points on which Sir Henry's judgment seems open to question. He says of the

Prince's situation at Derby: "Three armies were now on foot, one just in front of them, one to their rear under Wade, and one in London under the King; against not one of these could they expect a victory." It is, in the first place, doubtful whether the Duke of Cumberland was at this moment in front of Charles; and as for the army at London under the King, when we consider what it was composed of, the Highlanders might, we think, have confidently expected a complete victory over that portion of the defensive force. In the second place Charles's entry into London would almost certainly have roused the English Jacobites; and there is every reason to believe that had he continued his march on the metropolis he would have been joined by a large body of Welsh cavaliers under Sir Watkin Wynn. We quite agree with Lord Stanhope that, had he gone on, nothing could have stopped him from reaching St. James's Palace. How long he would have stayed there is another question. To the later fortunes of the Jacobite party we shall recur when we come to the Scotland of Sir Walter Scott's youth,—the Scotland of *REDGAUNTLET* and *GUY MANNERING*. For the present we will conclude what little we have to say of Sir Henry's judgments on public affairs and public men, by calling special attention to his account of Henry Dundas, the friend of Pitt and Walter Scott, and the pillar of Scotch Toryism for a quarter of a century.

It has often been asked what was the secret of Scotland's sudden conversion to Radicalism after 1832, and the question has often been answered by saying that it was the natural reaction against the Tory yoke which sat so heavily on the country during the fifty years of Tory ascendancy in England. Of this yoke Dundas was the representative. In England the

constituencies soon became pretty evenly balanced again between Whig and Tory; in Scotland they never did, not at least till times altogether outside the scope of this article. Sir Henry, however, would not, we suppose, endorse this view of the subject. He admits that during this period Scotland was governed by a close oligarchy, and enjoyed nothing which could fairly be called popular representation. But then he says that the oligarchy represented all that was best in the Scottish nature and Scottish character. This may be quite true; the question is what the people outside the oligarchy thought about it. Sir Henry would have us suppose that on the whole they were well satisfied with it.

We will now turn from politics to what will probably be much more interesting to the majority of our readers, the character, namely, of the old Scottish society in all ranks so long as Scotland kept herself jealously apart from English ways and manners. Sir Walter Scott has a passage in the last chapter of *WAVERLEY* which may well serve as a text to all that follows.

There is no European nation which within the course of half a century, or little more, has undergone so complete a change as this kingdom of Scotland. The effects of the insurrection of 1745, the destruction of the patriarchal power of the Highland chiefs—the abolition of the heritable jurisdiction of the Lowland nobility and barons,—the total eradication of the Jacobite party, which, averse to intermingle with the English, or adopt their customs, long continued to pride themselves upon maintaining ancient Scottish manners and customs,—commented this innovation. . . . Such of the present generation as can recollect the last twenty or twenty-five years of the eighteenth century, will be fully sensible of the truth of this statement; especially if their acquaintance and connections lay among those who, in my younger time, were facetiously called

“folks of the old leaven,” who still cherished a lingering, though hopeless attachment to the house of Stewart. This race has now almost entirely vanished from the land, and with it doubtless much absurd political prejudice; but also many living examples of singular and disinterested attachment to the principles of loyalty which they received from their fathers, and of old Scottish faith, hospitality, worth, and honour.

With the help of Mr. Graham we shall endeavour to place some of the realities of Scottish life alongside of the fancy picture drawn by more than one Scotch novelist.

Edinburgh in those days represented Scotland far more closely than London ever represented England. “One effect of the smallness of the country,” says Sir Henry, “was the concentration of social and political influence in the capital. . . . Within this narrow circle was comprised every type. . . . None deemed that poverty was an indignity.” And he gives the following vivid picture of the High Street where the national traditions and old customs still lingered.

Between Holyrood and the Castle that serves as the most august monument of the nation’s history, there ran one long street, flanked by lofty tenements to which access was gained by grim, narrow, and noisome passages. Along that street the pageants of centuries had passed; high festival and darkest tragedy had been enacted on its causeways; struggles that had shaken all modern nations, had seen many of their most exciting episodes transacted there; and the annals of some of the most illustrious houses of Europe must recall that street in telling of the fates of their most conspicuous members. And in the middle of last century the very houses which had been tenanted by the nobility of previous centuries, and which in their almost barbaric grimness drew a faithful picture of medieval times, still housed the aristocracy, the landed gentry, and the great lawyers of the Scottish capital, who were slow to alter even the outward semblance of that life

that had been handed down to them by their ancestors, and who clung to the sordid surroundings that a few years later would have been despised, as habitations, by their own menials. There, in houses piled storey upon storey, whose only access was by a foul-smelling common stair, in airless filth, and in darkness to which the sun could rarely penetrate, there congregated a proud, albeit a poor aristocracy, a gay and most sprightly society, one of the most learned and witty professional circles of which Britain could then boast.

In these confined quarters ladies turned their bed-rooms into drawing-rooms and there received their guests at tea. This custom may perhaps have been partly borrowed from France; but with the Scotch ladies living in these flats it became a necessity. The fashion was not limited to Edinburgh, for we find Mrs. Crosbie, the wife of the Provost of Dumfries, receiving Alan Fairford and Pate-in-Peril in her bed-room when they had emptied the last punch-bowl. Belonging to the poor aristocracy mentioned by Sir Henry were the quaint old dowager ladies of rank and poverty, among whom we suppose we must reckon old Lady Kittlebasket, cousin five times removed to Nanty Ewart of the JUMPING JENNY, who lived at the head of the highest stair in the Covenant-Close, with her silver posset-dish, her silver-mounted spectacles, and her Cambridge Bible bound in embroidered velvet. She was, it will be remembered, ejected from her airy habitation by Peter Peebles (on whom a just retribution fell afterwards) and perished in the workhouse.

The young ones were no doubt glad to descend from their nests as often as they could, and there were some outdoor amusements for them. There were the balls where, says Mr. Graham, each gentleman was expected to present his partner with an orange "which she sucked during pauses of

conversation or intervals in the dance." Poor Captain Clutterbuck, in the Introduction to THE MONASTERY, recalled this fashion with some bitterness. When he went to the dancing-class as a boy, his aunt always gave him an orange for his partner, which greatly against his will he was obliged to bestow on her, though, says he, "had I dared I would certainly have secreted it for my own private use." Nor was the tavern-life in those days confined to men. The ladies also enjoyed much innocent freedom; they would sometimes adjourn with a party of gentlemen to an oyster-cellar, where they ate oysters, drank porter, and danced till midnight, Jean Maxwell, afterwards Duchess of Gordon, being conspicuous on such occasions. But we have no acquaintance in fiction with these young ladies. Catharine Seyton might have enjoyed such a romp, and would have found a fitting partner in Roland Græme. Of the Jacobite remnant so frequently mentioned in Sir Henry's pages we are introduced to one member in GUY MANNERING, old Miss Bertram to wit, among whose repositories were found "a promissory-note for £20 by the Minister of the non-juring chapel (interest marked as paid to Martinmas last) carefully folded up in a new set of words to the old tune of *Charlie over the Water*." Another member of the same loyal and luckless brotherhood was Mr. Maxwell of Summer-trees, familiarly known as Pate-in-Peril, whose appearance and conversation are sketched by Sir Walter with inimitable truth and humour.

Scottish conviviality and Scottish hospitality have long been proverbial. One habit peculiar to Scotland was the meridian, a gill of brandy or a can of ale taken regularly at half-past eleven in the morning. The citizen shut his shop, or sent his wife to attend it, when St. Giles's bells rung out half-

past eleven. The learned Mr. Saddle-tree and his friends took their meridian on their way back from the gallows where Porteous was not hanged. Old Saunders Fairford rid himself of Peter Peebles, when it was desirable to get him out of court on the day of trial, by asking a friend to take him away and give him his meridian at John's Coffee-House. The tavern-life of Edinburgh, of which all these books are full, flourished together with the life in flats which has already been described, and disappeared along with it; but it died hard. Neither lawyers nor merchants nor doctors could see clients, customers, or patients in their own rooms, and consequently they made their appointments at the tavern. In GUY MANNERING we see the old system still lingering. Mr. Pleydell, a scholar, a gentlemen, and a lawyer in high practice, still adhered to it, though he lived in a house with plenty of accommodation for clients. "They got me down to Clerihugh's," he said of some lawyers who wanted him to draw an appeal case much against his will on Saturday evening, "and there we sat birling till I had a fair tappit hen under my belt, and then they persuaded me to draw the paper." A tappit hen, it should be said, held three quarts; "men were men in thae days." The original of Mr. Pleydell was Andrew Crosbie, a great man at the Edinburgh supper-parties, where ladies were often present, and perhaps joined in *We be three poor Mariners* as Mr. Pleydell did with Julia Mannering and Lucy Bertram after the supper on the wild ducks at Woodburn. The men habitually dined or supped at taverns after the day's work, leaving the bedrooms on the flats for the use of their wives and visitors who came to tea. But both Mr. Pleydell, and twenty years earlier Saunders Fairford, entertained their friends at their own

houses; the latter having "some choice old wine in his little cellar of which on such occasions he was no niggard." When Allan puts on his gown he gives a "bit chack of dinner" to his friends and acquaintances likewise at his father's table. It must be remembered, however, that the dining at taverns was not peculiar to Scotland. It was a feature, though not so pronounced a one, of London life all through the eighteenth century; and men, when called to the Bar at the Temple or Lincoln's Inn, often gave their call-parties at a tavern as late as the middle of the last century and perhaps later. The revelry at Edinburgh, however, seems to have been more fast and furious. Burns said on his death-bed that the tavern-life of Edinburgh had killed him.

Scotch hospitality could not have had a better representative than Guy Mannering found at Ellangowan, or Waverley at Tully-veolan. The histories show that none of this is exaggerated. Hosts prided themselves on filling their houses to overflowing. The young men often reposed in the barns and out-houses, and the girls two or three in a bed. The old Duchess of Gordon once entertained so large a house-party that there was no washing-room for the young ladies where they slept, and they were sent out to make their ablutions at the brook. But a marked peculiarity of Scotch hospitality was the excessive display of it at funerals. Indeed, both at marriages, christenings and burials, says Sir Henry, there was much lavish display, and large sums were laid out on bridal dresses. Mrs. Macshake (in Miss Ferrier's MARRIAGE) had a poor opinion of more modern customs.

They may call them what they like. But there's nae weddin's now [says the old lady, and then proceeds to give an account of her mother's wedding]. I canna tell you how mony was at it; mair

than the room wad haud, ye may be sure, for every relation and friend o' baith sides was there, as weel they should; an' a' in full dress; the leddies wi' their hoops on, an' some o' them had sat up aw night to have their heads drest: for they had nae they pooket-like taps ye hae noo, [looking with contempt at Mary's Grecian contour]. An' the bride's gown was a' sewed ow'r wi' favours, frae the tap down to the tail, an' aw round the neck, an' about the sleeves; and as soon as the ceremony was ow'r ilk ane ran, an' ragget an' rave at her for the favours, till they hardly left the gown upon her back. Then they didna run awa' as they do now, but six an' thirty o' them sat down to a grand dinner, an' there was a ball at night, an' ilka night till Sabbath cam' round, an' then the bride an' the bridegroom drest in their weddin' suits, an' aw their friends in theirs wi' their favours on their breasts, walked in procession to the kirk.

We know that when the Baron of Bradwardine was married, he was attended by "three hundred horse of gentlemen born, besides servants and some score or so of Highland Lairds," and he was much annoyed because only thirty could be mustered at the marriage of Rose and Waverley. The marriage of Bucklaw and Lucy Ashton was celebrated on a similar scale. "Glancing wide over hill and dale, the fair bridal procession at last reached the Parish church which they nearly filled, for besides domestics, above a hundred ladies and gentlemen were present on the occasion." There was the grand dinner, and the grand ball at night, with all the relations on both sides. There was no harm in this, if people could afford it; but funeral expenses, when they could not, seem to have been very unreasonable. Scott gives us two instances, one at the funeral of Steenie Nuclebacket in *THE ANTIQUARY*, the other at that of Ravenswood's father in *THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR*. He says that a sumptuary law was passed by the

Parliament of Scotland prohibiting the grandees of the kingdom from indulging in such lavish expenditure; but the taste remained engrained in the peasantry, who would deny themselves the necessaries of life to be able to gratify it. Nor was the Master of Ravenswood deterred by any fear of the law. When the church-service was interrupted a hundred swords glittered in the air, prepared to punish the intruder and protect the clergyman; and when it was over they all returned to the Tower "to consume deep healths to the memory of the deceased and to diminish by the expense of a large and profuse entertainment the limited revenues of the heir of him whose funeral they thus honoured." But such was the custom; and two years' rent of Ravenswood's few remaining acres would scarcely have defrayed the cost of it.

But what strikes one more than anything in the social life of Scotland at this period is the combination of austerity with intemperance, and even immorality, which we constantly encounter. The clergy affected no singularity in the matter of meridians, and when a minister was present he was requested to ask a blessing on the dram. Dr. Alexander Webster, the leader of the more serious party in the Church, the most unctuous of preachers, and the idol of the Saints who frequented the Tolbooth Kirk, had the strongest head and the most elastic conscience in all Scotland. "He was the life of the supper-parties in Edinburgh," says Mr. Graham, "from 1760 to 1780, could join over a magnum of claret on Monday with gentlemen of not too correct lives whom he had consigned to perdition on Sunday, and could pass with alacrity and sincerity from devout prayer by a bedside to a roystering reunion in

Fortune's Tavern, and return home with his Bible under his arm, and five bottles under his belt."

It may be that Thomson, who was a Scotsman, had some sound divine of the like kidney in his eye, when he drew the "Doctor of tremendous paunch," who saw the whole party under the table after the fox-hunting dinner, and went away sorrowfully lamenting the degeneracy of the age. We at once recognise the Reverend Duncan MacDow as an old acquaintance in *DESTINY*, though eating rather than drinking seems to have been his strong point. But we suppose we have no right to include Mr. Blattergowl in this goodly fellowship, though he did consume the Antiquary's chicken-pie and bottle of port, while engaged (worthy man) in pointing out to Miss Grizzel, who was alarmed for the safety of her brother, the duty of submission to Providence.

In spite of their addiction to good cheer, the Saints had a pious horror of profane amusements, and as such they considered both promiscuous dancing and play-acting. The pulpits rang with denunciations of both. Our old friend David Deans was a good hand at this kind of cursing. "Dance," said he, to his daughters, "dance, dance, said ye?" as the abominable word caught his ear on crossing the threshold. "I daur ye, limmers that ye are, to name sic a word at my door-cheek!" And David went to the root of the matter at once by referring to "that unhappy lass wha danced off the head of John the Baptist," as the prime historical example of the sin in question. "Upon which chapter," he added, "I will exercise this nicht for your further instruction, since ye need it sae muckle, nothing doubting that she has cause to rue the day lang or this time, that e'er she suld hae shook a limb on sic an errand." As for the

stage, that was still worse. The pit, said that model of propriety Dr. Webster (usually known as Dr. Magnum Bonum, because of his great goodness and his unquenchable thirst), only led to the pit that was bottomless. As for actors and actresses, they were considered, says Sir Henry Craik, as the scapegoats of society.

But if this was the case in Edinburgh, still more was it so in Glasgow, where as it so happened an Episcopal clergyman and a company of strolling actors made their appearance at the same time. This was in 1728, and if Bailie Nichol Jarvie was alive then, he must have wondered what sin the city could have been guilty of to bring down this double visitation on its head. He thought at first that young Frank Osbaldistone was a stroller; but when he found out he was "nane o' that play-acting and play-ganging generation that his saul hated," he asked him to eat "a reisted haddock wi' him the morn." The Bailie's dislike of such incentives to vice extended of course to poetry, though the only poet he had ever known was "Allan Ramsay, the periwig-maker." The society of Edinburgh, however, as well as of Glasgow, was pretty safe from the contamination of the theatre, as even the best educated classes understood very little high English, as it was called, and for a long time prided themselves on adhering scrupulously to the old Scottish diction. When an English company came to Edinburgh in those days they were not understood, and a young lady who had been taken to an extremely improper play saved her modesty by declaring that she did not understand a word that was spoken.

The belief in fairies and witches survived for a long time in Scotland. Mr. Graham gives an interesting account of these superstitions; and

we know that Bailie Nichol Jarvie was not altogether easy in his mind as he approached the banks of the Forth by moonlight, and looked on the thickly wooded hills which were supposed to be a haunt of the *Daoine Schie*, "Whilk signifies as I understand, men of peace; and we may as weel ca' them that too, Mr. Osbaldistone, for there's nae gude in speaking ill of the Laird within his ain bounds." But he added afterwards, as he saw a light or two tremble in the distance, "It's all deceits o' Satan!" Hobbie Elliott's father saw them sometimes when he was coming home from market, "with a drap drink in his head, honest man." Of witches and evil spirits of various kinds it is needless to say that Scottish records are full, and as they are fit materials for poetry and fiction, so of course we shall find abundant mention of them in that class of Scottish literature. Scott of course makes frequent use of them. The two old hags in *THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR* are the two most ghastly and revolting specimens of the class, as Norna, in *THE PIRATE*, is the most imposing of the number. But Auld Janet in *WAVERLEY* was believed to be a witch by the neighbours, and even by Bailie Macwheeble himself; that limb of the law declined to go down to her hut in the evening on the ground that there was something "no that canny" about her.

The Laird [Bradwardine] he'll no believe thae things, but he was aye ower rash and venturesome, and feared neither man nor deevil—an' sae's seen o't. But right sure I am Sir George Mackenzie says that no divine can doubt there are witches, since the Bible says thou shalt not suffer them to live; and no lawyer in Scotland can doubt it, since it is punishable with death by our law. So there's baith law and gospel for it. An his honour winna believe the Leviticus, he might aye believe the Statute-Book—but he may tak' his ain way o't; it's a' ane to Duncan Macwheeble.

Scottish inns for a long time had a bad name. Mr. Graham speaks of the wretched hovels and miserable hostelries which did duty for inns in the middle of the century; and this is curious, because Sir Henry Craik informs us that Scotch inns were often kept by the younger sons of good families. "The calling," he says, "strange as it may seem to our ideas, retained enough of the dignity of the Boniface exercising a genial hospitality with something of independent authority to enable it to claim some social consideration." Gentlemen and ladies, too, may be found among the inn-keepers of the West of England to this day,—but that by the bye. If one may check the historian by the novelist, there must have been many exceptions to the miserable hovels here described. Scott himself, indeed, seems in one place to justify these harsh words. When Mr. Pleydell, on his arrival at Woodburn, is asked whether he has dined, he replies, "Yes, that is, as people dine at a Scotch inn;" and that, says Colonel Mannering, "is indifferently enough." Yet what would his friend, Mrs. MacCandlish of the Gordon Arms at Kippletringan, have said to this? Mannering himself had stayed there, and, as the landlady said, had "everything comfortable for gentlefolks."

Only a very little later, the Antiquary and Lovel dined well at the Hawes, and had a magnum of capital claret afterwards. The Cleikum Inn at St. Ronan's, kept by Meg Dods, was clearly a house where first-rate cooking and wine could be obtained, and though the date at which we are introduced to it was in the first year of the nineteenth century, it had a reputation of much longer standing, and must have been a flourishing establishment a quarter of a century before that. The

Clachan of Aberfoil was a miserable hovel no doubt, though the landlady knew how to do venison collops, but that was in 1715; and the inn at which Waverley stayed on his way to Tully Veolan, thirty years later, seems to have been no better: "The landlady had neither shoes nor stockings, and the landlord, who called himself a gentleman, was disposed to be rude to his guest because he had not bespoke the pleasure of his society to supper." Very likely, judging from what Sir Henry says, he was a gentleman, and the circumstance of gentlemen taking to this mode of life may have had something to do with the custom of which Waverley was probably ignorant. It was usual even in Scott's youthful days for the traveller to invite the landlord either to share his dinner, or at least to drink a bottle with him afterwards. Thus the "dignity of the Boniface," to quote Sir Henry again, was kept up, and the guest got all the gossip of the neighbourhood in return; a requital, however, for which Waverley would probably have cared very little. We had nearly forgotten Father Crackenthorpe who kept the inn on the Solway, which certainly, early in George the Third's reign was far from a miserable hovel.

The popular feeling in Scotland, which long ran mountain-high against the union with England, is of course discussed by Sir Henry at some length.

The benefits of the Union were of slow growth and gradual development; its evils were quick to show themselves, and were within the observation of all. The emblems of independence suddenly vanished; the Parliament House no longer echoed to strains of indignant eloquence; the streets of the capital were no longer crowded with the members of the Scottish estates and their retainers, and it seemed as if the profit which their presence brought was transferred for ever

from the pockets of the Edinburgh to those of the London tradesmen.

The dialogue between the two servants in Dr. Moore's *ZELUCO* is an excellent illustration of the above. The advocate of the Union employs all the usual arguments in its favour, but is utterly overborne by the impetuous Highlander, who eventually wounds him and disarms him in a duel. Increase of trade, says the victor, only means increase of luxury, which in turn only means effeminacy and national degeneration,—with more to the same effect. But by far the finest satire on the enemies of the Union is Scott's Andrew Fairservice, who imputed to the "sad and sorrowful Union" every change for the worse which he detected among his countrymen, particularly the augmentation of reckonings and the diminution of pint-stoups. A horse could not cast his shoe without the Union being held responsible for the misfortune. On one such occasion during their journey to the Highlands, the Bailie found it necessary to rebuke him: "Whisht, sir, whisht! It's ill-scraped tongues like yours that make mischief atween neighbourhoods and nations." But it was useless to tell him that nothing was ever likely to make Glasgow flourish like the sugar and tobacco trade. The magnanimous Andrew scorned such base considerations. "He 'wadna for a' the herring-barrels in Glasgow and a' the tobacco casks to boot, have gien up the riding o' the Scots Parliament, or sent awa our crown and our sword and our sceptre and Mons Meg to be keepit by thae English pock-puddings in the Tower o' Lunnon. What wad Sir William Wallace or auld Davie Lindsay hae said to the Union, or them that made it?" Such was the very general feeling, and honest Andrew's enlightened views on this subject were by no means confined to the

class to which he belonged, but were shared alike by high and low. It must have been a servant of the type of Andrew Fairservice who waited at the lady's tea-table and joined in the conversation.

The brilliant literary and scientific society for which Edinburgh was famous during the latter half of the eighteenth century of course occupies a large space in Sir Henry's pages. Scott's notice of it is almost confined to GUY MANNERING. Mr. Pleydell gives the Colonel some notes of introduction while he himself is for a few days otherwise engaged, and the Colonel finds them addressed to the chief leaders of literature and philosophy in the Scottish capital,—Hume, Ferguson, Robertson, Lord Kaimes, Adam Smith and others, a circle, says Scott, "never closed against strangers of sense and information and which has perhaps at no period been equalled, considering the depth and variety of talent which it embraced and concentrated."

The process by which the Scotch Jacobitism of the first half of the century gradually glided into the Scotch Toryism of the second is well described by Sir Henry, who points out what has not been generally observed, that as the abuse of Lord

Bute and the Scotch interest in general chiefly proceeded from the friends of the Whig party, or at all events the enemies of the King's government, it was only natural that Scotland should throw herself into the opposite scale and regard the Tories as her friends. After the death of Charles Edward, and still more after the outbreak of the French Revolution, the lingering Jacobitism of the Scottish aristocracy found a sovereign round whom it could rally in George the Third. The Benedictine Monk in the Introduction to THE MONASTERY probably spoke the sentiments of the great majority of the Jacobite Remnant:

May God bless the Reigning family in Britain. They are not, indeed, of that dynasty to restore which my ancestors struggled and suffered in vain; but the Providence who has conducted his present Majesty to the throne has given him the virtues necessary to his time—firmness and intrepidity—a true love of his country, and an enlightened view of the dangers by which she is surrounded.

So the old Jacobitism gradually passed away; but not till a worthy successor had risen from its ashes, which, should it ever be put upon its trial, would no doubt exhibit equal bravery and fidelity.

THE ART OF FICTION MADE EASY.

It happened the other evening, when we were in company with some ingenious gentlemen, that the conversation turned on the subject of literature. Literature, be it noted, to most gentlemen, however ingenious, means nothing more or less than the few novels which happen to have been latest published and read, or possibly not read, for men may talk with a more open mind when their judgment is not warped by the prejudice of knowledge. Our conversation, then, was entirely connected with the fiction of the hour, and we certainly shall not quarrel with the reader if he is now convinced that our conversation was not worth recording, for indeed it was not, and we should not dream of troubling him with it. In its course, however, one or two remarks were passed which have since remained in our memory, not so much for their intrinsic value as for the trains of thought which they naturally suggest. One gentleman, who was standing with an air of large-hearted proprietorship before the fire, took upon himself the somewhat difficult duty of settling the relation of the general public to fiction, and we are bound to say he acquitted himself of it lightly enough. "In this connection," he said, "there is no such thing as a general public; mankind in its relation to novels is divisible into three classes; those (and they are the largest class) who write novels and do not read them, otherwise known as authors; those who read them and do not write them, of whom it is safe to conjecture that at least half will eventually remove

into the first class; and lastly those who neither read novels nor write them; they are the critics, whose reviews are so helpful to us in choosing a course of holiday reading."

As we know, there are some who would even speak disrespectfully of the equator, therefore it is hardly necessary to dissect this sweeping summary into its primordial inaccuracies, and hang the atoms up for public derision. The omniscience of an evening is soon forgotten, and in the gray light of the following morning its possessor is again the ordinary ignorant mortal whose opinions are founded dutifully upon his daily paper. But these remarks are not without a certain suggestiveness. The number of novels put forth yearly for the consideration of a patient world is enough to make the brain reel and the heart grow sick, if, that is to say, one is conscientious enough to desire to keep level with the conversational times. Conscience, however, is daily becoming less esteemed; it may be compared to an aching tooth which arouses in the sufferer only one wish, to kill the nerve. So, we suppose, it has come about that after a long course of conscience-killing man looks with indifference on the output of novels with which he can never hope to keep pace, even to so slight an extent as to know most of them by name. Perhaps, too, he has another source of consolation. He may have written, be writing, or intend to write one himself. This of course puts the whole matter in a very different light, for it makes all other

novels seem to him small and unimportant, trivial matters in no way connected with his own world. A Greek philosopher gave it as his opinion that "Man is the measure of himself;" we think that this statement reversed, "The measure of himself is man," though doubtless less philosophical, is a good deal more true to life; for, after all, what really interests a man is that which concerns himself, and no less true is the opposite, what concerns a man is that which interests him.

If then this source of consolation be admitted, it remains to be considered how large a number are benefited by it. We will not definitely state our own opinion on the matter, as it is highly inartistic to deal violent blows unexpectedly; more subtly we will put a question to the reader, which he may answer to himself without prejudice. Has he ever had an acquaintance whom he has not at some time suspected of a tendency to fiction, of the intention or desire, that is to say, of some day achieving fame and fortune by means of a novel? We fancy he will be hard put to it to answer in the affirmative, if his experience has been in any way comparable with our own. The bad habit of writing is not now the cherished property of the few; it is part of the natural equipment of the many, whether it actually results in a book or not. It is not improbable that the time-honoured natal endowment of the silver spoon will shortly be set aside as out of date, and that a gold nib will be substituted, or some other emblem indicative of the infant's future brilliancy as a writer.

The next remark, which we will permit ourselves to quote, came from the youngest member of the company. In the pleasing vernacular of the rising generation he said that a

certain novel was "jolly rotten." Pressed to explain, he said that the characters were "a lot of dummies" with about as much life as "my hat," while the grammar and style were "awful," and the plot "as old as the Ark." The book which he anathematised with such discriminating nicety, is one of the sort that is advertised by publishers as, "A strong story, brightly written, holds the interest from the first page to the last." It is, in short, a typical modern novel, no better and no worse than hundreds of others. Doubtless our young friend did not choose his words as carefully as he probably would have chosen them if he had been writing a review of the work in question; but making allowances for the force of modern speech, we are bound to say that his judgment was not at fault, and that the book of which we were speaking is "jolly rotten." We are compelled to go further, since we have said that it is typical, and to apply this hearty criticism to the whole class to which it belongs, that is to say, to the great majority of modern popular novels.

This will possibly shock susceptibilities of one kind and another, but what else are we to say of these lamentable productions? And how could they for the most part be other than lamentable, when we find the whole world turning author? It has come out at last, though we said a little while ago that we would not give our opinion. The trouble is that everybody, fit or unfit, wise or foolish, learned or ignorant, thinks himself or herself capable of writing a novel; and, worse still, is not content with the gratifying thought but is at once eager to put it to the proof. The result is the hundreds of "jolly rotten" novels aforesaid; books uninstructed with information or imagi-

nation, unrelieved by a ghost of humour or a gleam of intelligence.

But concerning the badness of the average novel we have said enough. Indeed it is only the profound sadness with which this subject inspires us, that has moved us to say so much. Since there is no help for it, we bear our affliction, with fortitude we trust, at least with resignation. Nor are we altogether without hope for the future. It has been borne in upon us that there is a small band of devoted workers who have set themselves the immense task of teaching the aspiring novelist how to write. Surely this is a sign that people are waking up to the fact that, to write a novel at all satisfactorily, an author must have certain qualifications, such, for instance, as a rudimentary knowledge of the English language; we do not for our own part insist on anything so abstruse as a plot, or characters that have at least some elements of human nature in their composition.

The most recent effort in this direction that we have seen bears the imposing, yet simple, title *HOW TO WRITE A NOVEL: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO THE ART OF FICTION*; and we learn that it forms part of the *How To* series, a name which is also simple, if not imposing, and certainly most suggestive for a series. The writer, who is veiled under a modest anonymity, offers some excellent advice to those who propose to set about writing novels; people who no doubt, if left alone, would produce one of the ordinary popular novels, "strong stories, brightly written," of which we have heard. It also contains some interesting information and a great deal of quotation. For the world turned author we imagine it will be a most helpful and stimulating guide. The avowed position of the writer seems to be, briefly, that he cannot teach people to tell a good story, but

if they can contribute their own story, good, bad, or indifferent, he can teach them to tell it grammatically and logically; he can "increase the power of the telling and change it from crude and ineffective methods to those which reach the apex of developed art." To this Izaak Walton would have said "all excellent good;" we can at least say that it is much better than nothing. The ensuring of grammar and the avoidance of logical absurdity would be a great point gained, and would tend to make many novels if not readable, at least not entirely unreadable. We wish the author every success.

As we turn over the pages of the book we come across some pieces of advice which seem wonderfully apt for would-be authors of "strong stories." In a chapter on "Pitfalls" there are several, of which we will take one on that most enthralling subject, society.

Perhaps your novel will take the reader into aristocratic circles. Pray do not make the attempt if you are not thoroughly acquainted with the manners and customs of such circles. Ignorance will surely betray you, and in describing a dinner, or an "At Home" you will raise derisive laughter by suggesting the details of a most impossible meal, or spoil your heroine by making her guilty of atrocious etiquette. The remedy is close at hand; *know your subject*.

We cannot too warmly recommend the principle of this advice, but surely there might conceivably be difficulties about the last injunction. Some people are so exclusive. The young author might of course find it worth his while to call on the nearest duchess while she was giving a dinner-party in order to get his local colour right; but it might, we suspect, be also worth his while to cast about for an invitation first, or failing that to let himself out as a waiter. Perhaps the latter course would be the better, as giving more facility for observation.

Under the heading of "Topography and Geography" our author says :

Should you depict a lover's scene in India, take care not to describe it as occurring in "beautiful twilight." It is quite possible to know that darkness follows sunset, and yet to forget it in the moment of writing; but a good writer is never caught "napping" in these matters. If you don't know India, choose Cairo, about which, after half-a-dozen lengthened visits, you can speak with certainty.

This is good and sound, but surely he rates our intelligence somewhat low. We think we could undertake to say whether there was any twilight in Cairo after one visit, and that need be no very long one; after six we could speak with certainty on many other things besides twilight, on the appearance of the moon in that city, for instance. Can one lover make a scene? In a sense he could, of course, and a very unpleasant one, too, if he found a third party interfering with what our cheerful young critic would call "his best girl."

But we will not trespass further on the field of his didactic. It will be more within our own province if we venture to cull one or two flowers from his well-ordered garden of illustration. There is a most entertaining chapter on "How Authors Work," which shows us that the methods of the great novelists are at least as various as their styles, and that the embryo author who endeavoured to combine them would soon come to an early grave; the grave might even be his portion if he tried to imitate some of them. If he proposes, for instance, to live by his pen, it would never do for him to follow the admirable example of Mr. Bret Harte who "has been known to pass days and weeks on a short story or poem before he was ready to deliver it into the hands of the printer." Death in this case might be slow, but it would certainly be sure, as from

the nature of things man can only exist for a certain time without more solid food than a short story or poem.

Most of the authors who are quoted in this book work, or worked, according to the inspiration of the moment, which is perhaps the most satisfactory method, if the author ever has such moments. Anthony Trollope, however, seems to have been thoroughly conscientious. He allowed himself a certain space of time for the completion of a book and entered the amount which he had written every day in a diary marked for that purpose. We know something of this plan, as we once tried it ourselves. The only drawback that we can remember was that the manipulation of the diary (ruling it neatly in red ink, counting the words already written, and so on,) took so much time, that we had to devote every other day to it, and we doubt whether we gained very much. Continued practice, however, might have made us more expert, for we confess that we did not give it a very long trial. As it was, if our memory does not fail us, the novel and the diary expired together on the fourth day.

"Ouida writes in the early morning. She gets up at five o'clock, and before she begins, works herself up into a sort of literary trance." This is extremely interesting, for this literary trance explains a good many things hitherto not revealed to us, as, for example, how it came about that a pretty lady (in the delectable tale of STRATHMORE) was enabled to accomplish the unusual feat of castling her opponent's queen at chess; and how again Chandos, the incomparable Chandos, suffered himself to be crowned (to be sure it was by another pretty lady) with roses drenched in burgundy without a thought for his shirt-collar. The only other instance of a writer working in a literary

trance that we can recall at the moment, is where Lavengro is writing the history of Joseph Sell; but in his case it was induced by necessity, and not of his own free will.

It is very meritorious of the accomplished Ouida to rise so early, but we fear that she will find few imitators. The pernicious rhyme,—

When the morning rises red,
Rise not thou, but keep thy bed;
When the dawn is dull and gray,
Sleep is still the better way—

is every whit as popular with literary men as with any other class of peccant mortals.

We know not if it even bears supposition that the young author could in any circumstances leave his well-earned sleep to sit down to his desk at half-past five in the morning. For our own part many considerations would deter us from such a proceeding. Most important is the question of breakfast, before which no man is a man worth speaking of. Then there are other things; our writing-table is by some inscrutable process put every morning into a semblance of tidiness, whereas in its normal condition (that is to say, as we left it the night before,) it is a sight to make angels weep. Moreover if on the previous evening our ingenious friends have honoured us with their company, there will have been libations, modest indeed but, by reason of glasses, decanters, and other hospitable appurtenances, tending to untidiness. And further, our cheerful young critic, after the manner of his kind, is as liberal with his cigar-ashes as with his comments. No, far be it from us to begin to write in the small hours.

Morning sleep avoideth broil,
Wasteth not in greedy toil.

M. Zola, we learn, “darkens his rooms when he writes;” to hide his

blushes, we wonder? “Upon Ibsen’s writing-table is a small tray containing a number of grotesque figures—a wooden bear, a tiny devil, two or three cats (one of them playing a fiddle) and some rabbits.” The advantages of this are not obvious, though we seem to remember that Charles Dickens had something of a similar fancy; but there must be a purpose in it for Ibsen says: “I could not write without them; but why I use them is my own secret.” Hawthorne appears to have torn his surroundings to pieces while composing. “He is said to have taken a garment from his wife’s sewing-basket and cut it into pieces without being conscious of the act. Thus an entire table and the arms of a rocking-chair were whittled away in this manner.” This method is also to be deprecated for various reasons.

Of Mr. Anthony Hope we learn, through the kindness of the ingenious Mrs. Sarah Tooley, to whom he would appear (figuratively speaking) to have unbosomed himself, that he “is found at his desk every morning, but if the inspiration does not come, he never forces himself to write. Sometimes it will come after waiting several hours, and sometimes it will seem to have come when it hasn’t, which means that next morning he has to tear up what was written the day before and start afresh.” The idea of Mr. Hope sitting daily at his desk with his right hand holding a pen poised over his paper, and his left outstretched to grasp the forelock of the goddess Occasion, so soon as she presents herself, is irresistible. But the possibility of Occasion turning out to be a mere *simulacrum* in a wig has in it the elements of tragedy. We are tempted to ask, what does Mr. Hope do when his copy goes off to the printer the same day? Does he content himself with tearing up a proof?

We ask the question because of his latest *DOLLY DIALOGUE*, the one about the roller and the bump. Did he surround himself with fragments of the *WESTMINSTER GAZETTE*? Several careful perusals of it have failed to reveal its meaning to us; but of course the presence or absence of inspiration is a thing an author must decide for himself, and no doubt Mr. Hope knows what he means by it.

We should dearly like to be able to work on Mr. Robert Barr's principle, for which again we have to thank Mrs. Tooley. Before he "publishes a novel he spends years in thinking the thing out." He spent ten years in thinking out *THE MUTABLE MANY!* But against this plan there are the same objections as against Mr. Bret Harte's.

On the whole we doubt whether the methods of the great masters, as set forth in this book, are likely to assist the young author materially; though they are extremely valuable if only showing (what has been abundantly shown already) that great minds and little things often agree. Perhaps the writer might have done better to entreat of *HOW NOT TO WRITE A NOVEL*. One example is worth ten precepts, and had he taken a dozen average novels and extracted from them a few hundred examples of how the thing should not be done, his labours would, we cannot but think, have been of far more practical value. Consider, for example, the unhappy tendency to be epigrammatic, which we sigh over in so many of our younger authors, and more especially those of the female kind. The form which it generally takes is to make one woman say something spiteful about another in such a way that she can deny the soft impeachment if necessary. It is really very easy to do this, if you leave out enough words. We will

concoct an epigrammatic conversation in which the character of the lady under discussion is irretrievably destroyed, while neither of the speakers is committed to anything definite.

"Ah!" said Lady Fitzclarence, "it is easy for her to be good when—"

"When?" said he.

"When she has no inclination to be wicked, or—"

"Or what?"

"Oh, well, it doesn't matter, but—"

"But?"

"Ah!"

This is epigram, the epigram of the average novel, the epigram which impassioned reviewers (especially when the author happens to wear petticoats) describe as scintillating, or coruscating, with wit. And how much more than the epigram is there in the average novel that might be put into this *Index Expurgatorius*. The grammar, the style, the plot, the scenery, the conversation, the humour! "O the humour of it!" But we do not wish to embark on the work ourselves, so we will leave the suggestion where it is, for the author of *HOW TO WRITE A NOVEL* to use if he so pleases, and our hearty good will with it.

In conclusion we may be expected to give a word of advice to the intending author of a "strong story." Every man, it is often said, has it in him to write one good novel. Let him keep it there; let him keep it hermetically sealed within him. There is our advice in a nutshell. But if this will not content him, we have thought of a scheme of work which, properly applied, should simplify his own course, and also be of considerable benefit to the public. We offer it to him without prejudice.

(1) Do your writing whenever you are unoccupied.

(2) Take care that you never are unoccupied.

FROM A NOTE-BOOK IN PROVENCE.

I.—THE COURSE PROVENÇALE.

BESIDE the bull-fight proper, a Course Provençale, even a Grande Course Provençale, is a poor affair, mild and tame as a match between Cicero House and Sea View College when compared with Aston Villa against Notts Forest. But as a stepping-stone to the real thing, as a gentle introduction to a true Madrid holiday, it serves. The Course offers the ground-work for the bull-fight; a sufficient foundation, at any rate, for the imagination to build the greater fabric upon. I have never witnessed a bull-fight, but having seen a Course Provençale I now know something of what a bull-fight is. Indeed, if, as one versed in the great sport has assured me, there is only one moment in a bull-fight,—the entrance of the bull—I have plumbed the joy to its depths, for I had that moment five times repeated. There are, however, bulls and bulls, and I can never believe that the minute and ingratiating cattle of the Provençale arena are worthy representatives of the noble beasts that too seldom destroy the *toreadors* of Spain. Nevertheless, though the bulls of Provence hardly exceeded the stature of a Kerry cow, we had our thrills now and then; for, as it happens, a very small bull can make a very large bull-fighter run quite as fast as if a herd of buffalo snorted at his heels.

My Course Provençale was held at Nîmes, in the old Roman arena, on the afternoon of an intensely hot Sunday. According to the bills it

was to be a *Grande Course Provençale avec le Concours de Pouly fils, Pouly père, et leur quadrille, qui travailleront cinq superbes taureaux*. The company was to consist of the Poullys as aforesaid,—*Pouly fils, chef,* and *Pouly père, sous-chef*,—and of *L'Aiglon, sauteur à la Perche, Clarion, banderillo, Saumur, saut périlleux,* and *Gras, sauteur attaqueur*. At the time I read this promising bill, I knew of bull-fighting no more than that it is a pastime which every dutiful Englishman must deprecate at home and witness abroad; and being thus ignorant I was unaware that a Course Provençale is merely a muffled version of the genuine spectacle, a bull-fight with the buttons on, so to speak, an Easter review in the place of a battle of Agincourt. My anticipation therefore was as genuine (though tinged a little with apprehension, for I cannot endure bloodshed,) as would be that of a Spanish amateur of the art on the eve of a superlatively remorseless display.

The performance, the bills also stated, was to begin at three o'clock precisely, and at half-past one, *Pouly fils, Pouly père,* and their *quadrille*, accompanied by a band, were to make a triumphant passage through the town. I had forgotten this part of the programme, and was therefore the more surprised, on turning a corner after lunch on Sunday, to come upon two cabs full of bull-fighters, and a wagonette packed to the uttermost with instruments of brass and men blow

ing them. A bull-fighter in a cab is as bizarre a sight as you need look for, especially in Nîmes, for nothing in Nîmes is so shabby as a cab and nothing so splendid as a bull-fighter. There was also the contrast of size, the Nîmes cab being very small and the Nîmes bull-fighter very large,—an enormous fellow, dazzling in scarlet and purple and gold and intensely pink stockings; on this broiling Sunday afternoon a wanton addition to heat that was already almost insupportable.

The cabs were stationary before a *café* (the *Café du Sport*!) and the two Poulys and their companions leaned back in their seats and smoked lazily, gathering in homage with bold roving eyes. Young men, idling about the *café*, pressed forward to shake the heroes by the hand; I saw one offer the burning end of his cigarette for L'Aiglou to take a light from, and, the offer being accepted, tremble beneath the honour. It was a great moment.

And yet there was one unhappy being in the huge crowd. Pouly *père* was unhappy, and I felt sorry for him. Pouly *père* wore the look of one who, after years with the key turned, and the chain up, and the bolts shot well home, and untroubled sleep, had heard the younger generation knocking at the door and had perforce opened to it. There was the bitter fact on all the bills:—*Pouly fils, chef, Pouly père, sous-chef*. We who lead ordinary humdrum English lives, with never a bull from January to December, can have no idea what it must be for a hero of the arena (even the Provençale arena) to find himself growing old, and ceding his triumphs to his son. Pouly *père* had been travailing bulls while his son was in the cradle. That warm Provençale applause, mingled with full-flavoured Provençale wit, had come to be part of his life, and now—

Pouly fils, chef, Pouly père, sous-chef! It was probably at his father's ample knee that Pouly *fils* learned his picturesque profession. Paternal pride no doubt counts for something on the other side; but to be subordinate to one's own son—that must be hard! And Pouly *père* looked by no means past his prime; he was immense, with a neck that he might have appropriated from the most magnificent of his victims. His eye was bright; his admirers were many. But it was Pouly *fils* who rode in the first cab, and whom the young men were jostling each other to shake by the hand.

After a slight difficulty, based on a misunderstanding of heroic status, concerning the payment for the refreshment of one of the lesser heroes,—a hero just on the debatable line between the condition of sometimes paying for oneself and the condition of always being paid for—the procession moved away, to the accompaniment of a too familiar air by Bizet; and the crowd melted into the arena.

I wandered into the arena too; a crumbling relic of the Roman occupation of the Midi, yet, though crumbling, good for hundreds of years still; a beautiful example of the accuracy of the Roman masons' art, with the huge stones, cut to the nicest angles, laid one upon the other without mortar. That was the way to build; the Latin races always understood the art, and understand it still.

By degrees the western half of the arena filled, fathers and mothers and little children in the better seats, and elsewhere soldiers, idlers, and boys. The sun blazed on the white stone of the Roman masons; the sky was intensely blue; the boys whistled the eternal CARMEN. At three o'clock a bugle sounded, the eastern doors were flung open, and, again to the strains of the Toreador's Song, in marched the brave men. I ought to

have known by a hundred signs,—the temper of the spectators, the cheapness of the seats, the meagre promises of the bills, for example—that this Course Provençale was nothing; but I had never given it a thought. I am glad I had not; for when those six glittering figures marched in, with their brilliant cloaks on their shoulders and that careless Southern insolence in their mien, I found myself thrilling to a new emotion. Really it was rather splendid.

Right across the arena they came, while the people clamoured and cheered. Then pausing before the dais, they bowed, and flung their cloaks with a fine *abandon* to fortunate occupants of the front seats, who (with pride also) spread them over the railing,—all except Pouly *filis*; he flung his to the bugler on the dais. There was a brief lull, while they provided themselves with pale pink cloths, and took up their places here and there in the arena. The bugle sounded again. The moment was coming.

The spectators stiffened a little (I was conscious of it), all round the building, as a smaller gate at the far end was thrown open. We waited nearly a minute, and then in trotted (trotted!) a blunt-nosed little bull with wide horns and a wandering inquiring eye. If it had only rushed in, or paused at the threshold with any air of arrogance, its size would have been a matter apart; but to trot in and to be no bigger than a St. Bernard! The pity of it! It was as though one had seen with one's own eyes the mountain bring forth the mouse.

Pouly *père*, however, was above such regrets. One course and one only lies open to that simple mind when a bull enters an arena; he has to perform a particular feat of his own, of which his son shall never

deprive him. No sooner was the bull well in the midst than Pouly *père* prepared for his achievement. He seized a long pole, striped like a barber's, and hurried to meet the bull. Not divining his odd intention, "Do they harry them with poles?" I asked myself. But no; Pouly *père's* purpose was more original, more pacific. Having shouted sufficiently to annoy and attract the bull, he awaited its rush upon him, and then, as it reached him, grounded the pole, leaped lightly over its charging body, and fled to the barrier, a figure of delight. The spectators cheered to the full, and Pouly *père*, smiling with satisfaction, bowed to us all. He had performed his great feat; he had drawn first applause; he was not so old, so useless, after all.

The real business now began; one after the other the members of the *quadrille* waved cloths in the bull's face, and, running backwards as he charged, lured him right to the barrier, which they then vaulted, leaving him enraged and bewildered on the other side. If only the hint could be communicated to these little creatures that if they ran straight they would get the man! But waver they will, following always the divagations of the cloth; and therein lies the man's advantage and safety. The Course was like that all the time; furious but unsustained and impotent charges on the part of the bulls, and continual and sometimes quite unjustifiable leaps over the barrier on the part of the heroes. The irritation to the bulls was very trivial; they were not hurt at all, and little harm was done. The Humane Society might visit the spectacle and be untroubled by the discomfiture of the bull, although the impact of the entertainment on themselves might perhaps provide material for reflection. In the South, however, the effect of spectacles on

the spectator is not a prominent subject for thought. To return to the bulls' injuries; beyond two fugitive pricks as the *bandelliras* entered their shoulders, and one more when the ribbon was momentarily fixed between them, they were not asked to suffer, except in dignity; and they made six fat men perform sufficient feats of activity to adjust the balance.

Pouly *fils* was by far the most capable of the company: his eye was steadier, his nerve stronger, he jumped the barrier as seldom as possible. Indeed, now and then, as he stood with firmly planted feet in the middle of the arena, avoiding the rushes of the bull merely by movements of his body, it was impossible not to admire him. I shall never forget his expression of triumphing content, and the proud controlling gesture with which he raised his left hand, on the completion of each feat, the signal to the spectators to take him at his own valuation.

Pouly *fils* reserved to himself the right of all the most dramatic moments; but the pole-jump,—that he left to his father. There were five bulls altogether, and Pouly *père* jumped over all. But I fear that a touch of ridicule (which possibly he did not perceive,—I hope not—) came into the applause as he descended to earth after his fifth flight. Poor Pouly *père*! Yet a slight compensation came to him. At the end a little body of roughs carried Pouly *fils* from the arena in what was intended to be a triumphant march, but which, owing to defective handling, was merely uncomfortable for Pouly and grotesque to everyone else. Pouly *père*, stepping mincingly behind (compelled to a short step by the air from CARMEN) watched his son's struggles with a saturnine expression which I seemed to under-

stand. As one grows older it is the more easy to find oneself on the side of the fathers.

And here I ought perhaps to say a word for the quadrille. They leaped too, as we were promised in the bills; but not until Pouly *père* had accomplished his particular feat. Once Pouly *père's* honourable bulk was safely transported over the bull, that animal was anyone's game to jump as he would. Gras cleared him at a run, without a pole, as if he were a hurdle; while Saumur turned a somersault in mid air, taking the bull long ways, so to speak. In the real thing, I imagine, there is less acrobatic activity. To jump over the bull that one is about to kill is to put it to too much indignity. But I may be mistaken.

Though five bulls had been harried and the Poullys and their quadrille had disappeared in triumph, the performance was not yet done. The departure of the bull-fighters was the signal for some fifty young bloods to leap into the arena, where they waited until the door of the bull-department was again opened and a perplexed and unwilling creature issued forth. At first I did not recognise its genus, but inspection proved it to be also a bull, made unfamiliar by having its horns carefully encased in cloths and padded at the tips. Between its horns was a rosette, the game being to snatch this away. The scene that ensued was absurd enough. The bull, a harmless, good-natured animal, had no wish in the world to injure anyone, and its rushes were therefore very mild; but the boys were there to qualify, every one of them, for a Pouly *fils*, and therefore it behoved them to take the situation seriously. Thus on the one side we had a bored and flippant bull, with no thought but to get back to its hay, and on the other half a

hundred incipient bull-fighters in deadly earnest, leaping the barrier as numerously and simultaneously as grasshoppers in an Alpine meadow. This lasted for twenty minutes, when, no one having secured the rosette, the decoy cow trotted in, the padded bull followed it through the gates, and our Sunday afternoon's sport was over.

II.—THE FAIR.

FAIRS have always had a quite improper fascination for me. I still remember the disappointment I suffered on a visit to Bedford a quarter of a century ago, on discovering that the statue, of which so much had been said, was a statue of John Bunyan and not, as I in my half knowledge of words had supposed and passionately hoped, a statue (*statute*) fair such as we had every August in our own town; a fair of unearthly light and variety, where fat women displayed incredible shoulders, and (one year) a forlorn seal in a foot-bath was all that met the gaze in fulfilment of an exterior promise concerning the most wonderful sight in the universe, a living mermaid. In spite of such individual disenchantments as the seal, the fair in the aggregate was the most considerable thing in life. The flaring lights, the noise, the swings, the roundabouts, the shooting-galleries, the gingerbread-stalls, the squirts of scented water, the mystery of every booth, the caravans in which these people dwelt, their open-road, open-heath existence, the incessant change and bustle of it all,—these things made up a pleasure that intoxicated me then, and even to this day is to be resisted only by a great effort. At Nîmes, on the Sunday evening following the Course Provençale, I certainly made no effort to resist it.

One of the few living novelists who come to their calling with due seriousness (in his case a seriousness that is almost rapturous), talking the other night about the extraordinary success of a certain fellow-writer (against whose attitude to the art of fiction a similar charge could never be brought), said that after long study of the subject he had come to believe that the popularity of a novel depended entirely on the extent to which it resembled a fair. Unless a novel have drums and lights and peep-shows, he declared, it will never pass into editions. The fair is the symbol; it is the people's favourite amusement in life, and the closer that fiction approximates to it the better will they be pleased. "I am afraid," he added wistfully, "there is not enough peepshow in the book I am just finishing." Probably he was right. The fair is the oldest form of entertainment, and the fair we must have. That I myself want it I have made perhaps too clear; although I want the other thing too. I want that novelist's forthcoming book, for example; but a fair will always fascinate.

France understands fairs better than we do. The best fair I ever saw was at Bordeaux, where I made the acquaintance of my first and (to the present time) last giant. I forget all his name except Jock,—it was eleven years ago—but his picture and his person I shall never forget. They bore a closer resemblance than is common in fairs, but there was, as seems obligatory, just enough disparity to cause one to speculate on the chances that a realist showman would have, should one by a miracle arise. Would ruin necessarily stare him in the face? My giant's showman, for example, (for, poor fellow, Jock was not his own master, but belonged, body and soul, to the owner of the tent,) would it have

been fatal for him had he depicted Jock as he was rather than as an over-nourished grenadier leaning negligently against a lamp-post to light his cigar at the jet? That made him ten feet high at the least; whereas he was something just under eight. Yet, as a curiosity, eight should be enough. In the matter of the mermaid-seal a mendacious artist was of course a necessity; but eight feet of man in a world where five feet odd is the average should be sufficient to tempt realism.

However, there he was, as the legend beneath the picture ran, *The Tallest Soldier in the British Army*, and I paid my ten centimes and entered. Others entered too, and when there were enough of us the giant stoopingly emerged from the back compartment, and slowly unfolded himself to his ridiculous full height. His face was unmistakably English, and as unmistakably the face of a very sick man, a large, dreary, pale, loose face. His red tunic was a world too big for him; he was a giant only in height; a dwarf could have knocked him down. On his head he wore a bearskin, to add to the military illusion; and he got his hand up to the salute laboriously, as though every muscle were stretched and limp. We walked erect under his outstretched arm, dropped coins in the tin box that he proffered with an importunate rattle, and the show was over,—for all except me. I could not let him go without a word, and he asked me to come inside where it was warm, and talk.

I followed him into the tiny compartment at the back of the tent. He sank wearily into a chair, threw away his bearskin, and sat there, a dejected monster, with the stove between his knees. He came from Lincolnshire, he said, and had never been in the British army. He

shivered over the stove as he warmed his vast hands. We talked about Lincolnshire a little, and then of himself; he said that his life was a hell, especially on the road; his employer allowed him to walk out only furtively, late at night and in lonely places, for a giant whose inches are his fortune must not be seen. He was clearly in a late stage of consumption, as so many giants are in this decadent day, and he would not be sorry when the end came. After so many years in a circumscribed caravan and a low-pitched tent, the grave must have appealed to him mainly as a place where limbs could be stretched without let. We parted good friends, and I visited him every day for a week and carried him ship's tobacco and a bottle; but never did a gleam of life flit across the bleak and snowy regions of his face. Perhaps he still lives to give the peasantry of France a false idea of the size of the British soldier; but I fear not. Certainly he was not at Nîmes last month.

I went down the double line of booths four or five times, but no giant held audience there. Fat women, miscalled giantesses, I saw, and a dwarf, but never a giant. I entered every booth; it was impossible to do otherwise. I waited my turn to look through defective lenses at the most atrocious French murders; I saw a moving waxwork group (very popular) representing a British officer disarming a Boer farmer with every circumstance of insolence, and another group representing a Boer hospital in active working condition, with a soldier's leg being amputated by a meat-saw in the foreground; I saw a fat confectioner in a white cap make several thousand of the sweets known as bullseyes in less than five minutes; I saw the temptation of St. Anthony as performed by marionettes, the

temptress being (as in a similar, or the same, theatre at Bordeaux eleven years ago) a sucking-pig; and I saw a young woman who confessed to three legs, the feet of which she displayed very modestly, a young woman with the most perfect self-possession I have ever witnessed. It was no small achievement under a fire of sceptical criticism by a dozen caustic wits. She was rather pretty and quite young, and there she sat, without the faintest tinge of emotion, until they began to show signs of exhaustion. Then, "*Merci, messieurs,*" she said, very sweetly, and dropped the curtain, and we filed out. After all, when one has three legs and can make money by the gift, one can afford to be tolerant.

But the most wonderful thing that I saw was the people. They thronged the place and almost fought to get into a trumpery booth where a scoundrel of a negro was displaying with

infinite contortions his countrymen's method of prayer. Nothing was too trivial for them to see. Fathers and mothers convoyed their families from one absurd show to another with a keenness I have never seen exceeded. Old men and old women struggled just like children; and now I come to think about it, I was one of the crowd too.

The fair is certainly the thing. No other form of entertainment is so comprehensive; no other form makes such a claim on the eternal child within us. Here, however, in England, we are not quite such children as the French,—partly to our gain and partly to our loss—and the fair proper has lost some of its hold. It has not lost enough, however, to imperil the popularity of many a novel that at this moment is being ingeniously manufactured.

E. V. LUCAS.

WHAT IS TRUTH?

As the abrupt mid-day shadows slowly lengthened, the talk drifted into discussion and thence into argument. It turned on the old question of truth, whereof some say the vision has been seen, long ages since, in the beginning of the world and must be sought for, like the Grail, until the end of time. The passengers on board the steamship ORIZABA drew one after another round the streak of sunlight which pierced through the side awning of the vessel, and lay between the disputants like the subject of their argument. In the scorching atmosphere of the Red Sea a haziness of all things in heaven and earth, moral, mental, and physical, seemed to rise from the very vividness of light and heat. The magnificence of the theme made it seem too great for the weary minds that strove to grasp it. Then, as thought after thought was caught at, shaped, and passed from one to the other, the question gained a certain definiteness. "Does the end in any case justify the means?" "May not a fact be represented falsely, and abstract truth be thereby the gainer?" "May a false statement be uttered by a true witness?" And half in languor, half in zeal, the discussion continued, until one woman, who had been silent, found her voice and spoke. She spoke as one speaks who sees conclusions clearly. She was an old woman, and her voice was rough with the accents of the country where her life had been spent. She had been brought up in the Australian Bush, but being born of English parents, she was travelling "home" to see her "people"

before she died. Beyond and deeper than the harshness of her voice rang the conviction which gave it earnestness, as she closed her short appeal for literal truthfulness with the challenge which St. Paul hurled of old,— "Can the truth of God abound through my lie unto His glory?"

The speaker had held the eyes of her audience, but as they drifted back to the ray of sunlight, as to their central and natural resting-place, they became aware that the ray had vanished. It was blotted out by a man standing against the bulwarks in the full glow of the sun. Even the sudden gloom beneath the awning could not hide the age and misery of his features. Yet, despite this double claim on human sympathy, the face was marked by so strange a mingling of emotions, that it filled most of those who saw it with a curious sense of repulsion. Anger strove with self-pity, fear with entreaty; and all these were governed by a hope so fierce, so immediate, and so full of unrest, that it might have been a craving for physical relief, or possibly for a conviction once held and forfeited. The sunken eyes, with all this demand in them, were turned towards the woman who had last spoken. On her face the light of enthusiasm was sinking into the repose which was its abiding charm. These two, alone of those present, had reached the border from whence men look back upon life. The similarity of age marked the force of the contrast; it was marked afresh by the silence with which he left them. They waited as respectfully on his silence

as they had waited on her words ; but they waited in vain. The longing and the hope died from out his eyes, and he seemed almost to fade from their midst. He slunk away like a beast ashamed. The ray of sunlight held its place once more.

The interest which the man had aroused lingered a little while when he himself had left. Questions were asked and it became known, through the ship's officers, that he was a not infrequent traveller. His name was Farrel, a man of learning, travelling, it was believed, to collect or study manuscripts ; but some, who had met him previously, were inclined to doubt the learning, and to hint that manuscripts had no existence save in his disordered brain.

"There is a scholar named Farrel," said a passenger thoughtfully, "or was. I've not heard of his death, but he has published nothing for several years."

After that the conversation changed, but it was not forgotten by the last speaker.

This man, John Presgrave, though born a lover of books, had been destined to rule men as a Bengal Civilian. He had never forgotten his first love, and had beguiled his loneliness and relieved the arduous nature of his duties by following the history of biblical criticism. In this manner he had known Dr. Farrel's name well, as one whose scholarship had been held in great repute about the middle of the century then drawing to a close. Then his influence had begun to wane. He had spent some years in preparing with laborious patience a critical edition of the New Testament, and had the mortification of seeing its value discounted by the discovery of fresh manuscripts, notably the Codex Sinaiticus. He received this discovery with an amount of obstinate suspicion which threw discredit on

his own ability. He had been one of the revisers of the New Testament, but his lack of critical acumen weakened the authority to which his great learning would have entitled him. Many times he found himself in a minority of one. On one occasion in particular, which Presgrave recollected, his disregard of reason and of the best manuscripts appeared to his colleagues little less than astounding. Presgrave had long been convinced that the solution to this problem lay in the personal equation ; for which cause, and for another, he had often wished to meet Farrel. The latter had stood almost alone in pleading for the conditional retention of the doxology as part of the original version of the Lord's Prayer. Presgrave loved the grand and rhythmic sentences, and for their sakes alone could have forgiven much to their defender.

Presgrave watched his chance for speaking to Dr. Farrel, and found the scholar's reserve give way more readily than he had expected. Presgrave alluded to his writings, and though the old man at first turned away, he turned back and asked eagerly, "Have you read them?" Presgrave had, and spoke warmly of the labour bestowed on them. The old man listened wistfully to the praise ; it was the language of his youth, long since unheard. In a few minutes they had plunged into a discussion, and were talking of versions, cursives, and uncials, as men talk to whom letters are as the air they breathe. Thus Presgrave touched on the secret of the man's life. It was unintentional at first. He chanced to ask why Farrel had defended the verse on the three Witnesses (First Epistle of John v. 7) contrary even to the evidence of the Syrian manuscripts. The change in the old man's face warned him, but he did not hesitate, and that night he made

Farrel tell him his history. Possibly the telling of it saved the scholar's brain.

Farrel began by speaking with some vehemence against his fellow-labourers in the work of revision. "These men," and he mentioned two well-known revisers, "have talent and learning enough, but they pay little attention to the dictates of a literary conscience. They are moved by some impulse beyond reason and judgment; and they showed it most on the question of the three Witnesses."

Presgrave had no difficulty in understanding him. In the fifth chapter of the first Epistle of John is a verse which speaks of the threefold witness of "the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost." This verse is omitted in the Revised Version, and with much reason, for it is not to be found in any of the older manuscripts from whence we get our Bible. Yet to save this verse Farrel had adduced plea after plea, tilting desperately against the wise and learned arguments of his opponents. When he realised at length that argument was useless, his only hope lay in the discovery of fresh manuscripts, of which many, as scholars believe, are still awaiting to reward further search, preserved by the dryness of the Egyptian climate.

Inspired by this hope Farrel made his arrangements. He gave up the appointment which he had held for years at Oxford, and made his way to Egypt, concealing his object, meaning to proclaim it only when he returned triumphant. It was characteristic of the intensity, as of the narrowness, of his convictions that he never doubted that the manuscripts, if found, would contain the verse which witnessed to the doctrine of the Trinity. It was the testimony of this verse to a triune God which made him exaggerate its importance out of

all proportion. He held Theism, not without reason, to be more dangerous to Christianity than absolute infidelity; and it was Theism which he believed himself to be fighting.

Of his search through the dens and caves of the earth, he said nothing, though it lasted three years; but of his moment of success he spoke at length. In a monastery in the Nitrian Desert he came at last on the object of his search; a roll of yellow papyrus about ten inches long which opened with the first words of the first Epistle of John. The outermost of the wooden rollers was gone: it had been used by the lay-brother in the kitchen, perhaps as a rolling-pin or pestle; but the papyrus had been preserved, and lay in Farrel's hand. The stress of a lifetime of toil and argument, and of three years of wearying personal search, seemed crowded into thirty seconds as he unrolled the brittle record. His eye devoured the familiar words written in the clear running cursive characters that are found even on the earliest papyrus. He held the roll in his right hand and drew it out with his left, until the end of the writing was reached and the last column was spread before the scholar's eyes. And the fifth, and last, chapter of John's Epistle rolled to the end without the verse which speaks of the "three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost."

Whether that which then happened was accidental or not Farrel himself could never say, though he had often and vigorously searched both conscience and memory. His right hand let the wooden roller fall, and as it fell it broke away from the brittle papyrus, tearing the last column and a half from the rest. The unfinished papyrus that the scholar held then could throw no light on the disputed passage. Farrel made his way back

to the room which had been assigned to his use in the monastery; in one hand he held the sacred roll, in the other, the roller with the last column still attached to it. The portmantau which held his scanty travelling-kit lay open on the ground; he thrust the roll deep down into a corner of it, covering it with his clothes. And then he gazed vacantly at the last fragment.

It needs fifty years of textual research to understand all that Farrel experienced that night. He would have given ten years of his life at any moment for such a manuscript as this,—and now he had found it! The very age and value of it increased the strength of its evidence against the truth. Could it be right, he argued the point again and again to himself, to bring facts to light which gave colour to false doctrine? Might not the truth of God abound through his lie unto God's glory? And unable to find an answer to his questions he crept up and down, backwards and forwards, in front of the little brazier of coals. All was dark save for the coals in the brazier, and in him was no light save the fire of desire; and the fierceness of that longing he mistook for light. Then the thing which shaped itself for him to do appeared first as a holy duty, and next as a sin. "I thought myself the angel of the Lord at least," he said to Presgrave in the bitterness of his sincerity. "I know now that I grudged Z—— his victory."

When the grey dawn began to break, the last embers glowed in the brazier of coals. For one moment they flamed up afresh; they flamed over a roller of wood from which the sap had ebbed seventeen or eighteen centuries ago, and over a smooth yellow fragment made of reeds that had once grown on the banks of the Nile. A few minutes later a ray of yellow light showed an old man raking

despairingly among the ashes; for a flood of conviction had entered into his soul, and the sun had risen.

Then began those weary wanderings the duration of which Farrel could not tell. A feverish restlessness drove him about the world, for at every place where he lingered the inanimate objects became articulate with the knowledge of his secret. He turned from every eye, believing it possessed the power to read the history which it was his torture to conceal. He could not reconcile himself to keeping from mankind the knowledge of the manuscript which he rightly held to be not his own but a human inheritance; yet he shrank from what seemed the more positive falsehood of giving a mutilated text to the world and holding back the history of its discovery.

"I never part from it, though it burns me to touch it. There,—you may see it,—no one else ever has;" and he thrust a dirty roll into the Civilian's hands. Even Presgrave accustomed, as he thought himself, to the changes and chances of human life, could scarcely control his own excitement as he handled that thin, yellow, crackling roll. It was perfect, save that the last two columns had been broken away, and the last verses were missing, as its discoverer had said. He begged to be allowed to keep the manuscript for the night, but the scholar could not bring himself to part with it. When they shook hands Presgrave was bold to fancy that a new warmth, the warmth of returning fellowship with his kind, inspired those cold and palsied fingers. But the effort of confession had been too great for the soul that had dwelt so long in loneliness. In the morning when Presgrave came to look for his friend, he had vanished, none knew whither. He could not face again the man that knew his secret. The

vessel had touched at Port Said at daybreak, and the black figure had faded into the haze of the East.

Some months later Mr. Presgrave gratified an old wish to spend some weeks in Rome, intending, as his natural bent directed, to study the sacred manuscripts in the Vatican. He had sufficient interest to obtain the necessary permission, and, after some preliminary interviews, found himself within the precincts of the famous palace. As he was led through the long corridors and galleries many figures passed him be-frocked and girded. He paid little heed to them until his attention was arrested by one man whom he met somewhat suddenly, coming out of the shade of a dark passage. The man was bareheaded, and a light from above shone on the bald head and clear-cut features the more strongly in contrast to the darkness behind. Presgrave started, and as he did so, he fancied that the man's face likewise changed; but he passed on, and Presgrave, following his guide, wondered if he had really just missed a recognition, or whether the extraordinary deathliness of the features would alone have sufficed to excite his imagination.

When he had finished his studies, he asked if there had been any additions lately made to their manuscripts. He was told that he had seen all that it was possible to show him; but he had scarcely left Rome and returned to London before the civilised world was ringing with the news of the discovery of a papyrus manuscript, a nearly perfect copy of the first Epistle of John. It had been discovered and brought as an offering to the Pope by the famous

English scholar, Dr. Farrel; "the offering," to quote the Pope's declaration, being "a fit atonement for a life of heresy, and the discoverer had been now received into the Roman Communion." The face that Presgrave had seen in the Vatican returned to his mind, answering the questions that it had aroused; but it did not answer them fully. The face that he had seen had been the face of a dying man. Was it possible,—the thought crystallised slowly, and against his will for he was half ashamed of it,—that a man should give his life for his soul's peace, and how would such sacrifice avail at the last? And then, with a sudden wave of admiration, he recognised how terrible must have been the remorse which could wring such a submission from that proud dogmatic spirit. After that he could neither judge nor criticise; he felt that he could only stand aside and watch, as a man stands bare-headed before the passing of a bier.

After a few days, like a wind sweeping westward, came from the Vatican the rumour of Farrel's death. It was followed by a statement, formally published with the sanction of the Heads of the Roman Church, and published, it was added, in accordance with a promise to the dying penitent. Throughout Europe, but especially in England, the story evoked surprise, comment, and criticism. Yet a few there were, here and there, in places unlooked for, taught in suffering and wise to understand; and these, having loved truth and served her dearly, felt that they knew but the shadow of her own preciousness to the man who had wronged her.

THE FREE STATE BOER.

BY AN IMPERIAL YEOMAN, LATELY A PRISONER-OF-WAR.

IT was at an interesting and a critical time that I first got to know the Free State Boer. I was unfortunate enough to be taken prisoner early in June, 1900, when De Wet had just made his dramatic descent upon the line, and shattered at a blow the hopes that had been entertained in many quarters that Lord Roberts's proclamation would have permanent results, and that the men of the Free State had practically relinquished the struggle. A very few days before the attack upon Roodeval and Rhenoster we had been assured that the Free State was to all intents and purposes quiet, that day by day arms in increasing numbers were being brought in and their owners granted passes to return to their farms, and that very little further trouble was to be expected in that part of the country. We know now that none of these hopes and anticipations were to be justified; long months have rolled by, but De Wet, after having been repeatedly surrounded, still remains at liberty, and seems to be able to repair his depleted legions when and in what part of the country he wills. But early in June last no one dreamed that the war was to be so protracted. It was confidently held that after Lord Roberts's triumphal march through the country all opposition would be crushed or melt away into nothingness before him.

That was the opinion entertained on our side; what of the other? Naturally, when I found myself in the hands of the enemy, I took every

opportunity of ascertaining what their ideas were on the subject, and perhaps quite as naturally I found them diametrically opposed to those entertained by myself. A great number of them frankly owned that there could be but one ending to the war; but they would not agree with me that the beginning of the end was in sight. They argued that their power of resistance was very little impaired by Lord Roberts's advance through the centre of the country; as for the British occupying Bloemfontein, what of that? It was not their business to defend the towns; they did their fighting on the *veldt* and in the *kopjes*, and we should find that we had yet plenty of work before us. Indeed they freely criticised Lord Roberts's tactics, and said that it puzzled them to understand what he was about in going right through the centre of the country, leaving them unmolested to watch his movements from the fastnesses on his flanks. Of course one could scarcely expect them to appreciate, or at all events, if they did, to acknowledge that they appreciated, the moral effect of pushing on to Pretoria with all possible speed; but they argued their case with an amount of intelligence and logic which I, for one, never expected to find in them.

The plain truth of the matter is that in setting down the Free State Boers as a lot of simpletons,—which, so far as I have been able to judge, was the opinion formed of them by most English people—we fell into a very grievous error. The Free State

Boer,—I speak of the real Boer, and not of the dweller in towns, who is altogether different—is untutored and simple—as is the rustic in every part of the globe. Of the things that we know he often knows little or nothing; and he cares little or nothing at all about the doings of the outside world. Ignorant he may be; a fool he certainly is not. He has a native shrewdness which is no poor substitute for acquired knowledge; and, as is almost invariably the case with men who have lived their lives in close contact with Nature, who have marked her moods and her changes, who have allowed nothing in the blue sky and the green earth to escape their notice, he seems intuitively to have a knowledge of human nature often denied to those whose means of attaining it, one would think, must have been infinitely greater. Situated as he often is miles from any town and the railway, it is not surprising that his interests are narrow, and that he troubles his head little about anything that does not immediately affect himself; but when any new facts are placed before him, he surprises one by his quick apprehension and ready grasp of facts. Particularly is this the case with the older men, who have retained much of the ancient simplicity and primitive habits of the race. Many of the younger men have forsaken the ways of their fathers, and, turning their backs on the wide *veldt*, have been beguiled by the doubtful allurements of the town. In them one finds the superficial smartness, and the thinly veiled brutal arrogance, which are characteristic in our own country of a certain type of town-dwelling rustics who affects to despise the tillers of the soil from whom he sprung. But they can in no wise be regarded as typical of their class.

I had often heard that one of the

most prominent traits in the character of the Free State Boer was his large-hearted hospitality. Men who had known him years ago have often informed me how, when travelling over the *veldt*, they could find lodging and food for themselves and their horses at almost any farmhouse, and when in the morning they offered payment, it would be almost invariably refused. I can well believe this after my own experience. During nearly the whole of the time I was a prisoner my captors were hard pressed by our troops; food was scarce, and such luxuries as coffee and sugar were very rare indeed, even at the first, and later on were hardly to be obtained at all. Yet whatever they had (I speak of the individual and not of the authorities), they would give you out of their own little store. Not once, but a score of times I have approached a friendly guard and offered to purchase some flour, biscuit, coffee, or sugar; only once or twice has the offer been accepted. In the other cases the burgher has either given freely what he could spare, or else replied that he had none. As for tobacco, it has often happened that when I have asked a man to sell me some, he has promptly pulled out a twist from his pocket, and cutting it in two, handed me half, or given me a handful from his pouch. Any one who has been on the *veldt*, or has seen campaigning in any other country, will be able to approve such generosity at its proper value, especially when it is remembered what a confirmed smoker the Boer is.

Perhaps nothing surprised me more than the feeling most of them entertained towards ourselves. I had expected to find bitter animosity; I found instead a feeling of friendliness which, if not very cordial, was, considering the circumstances, highly

remarkable. Now and again I heard denunciations of British policy, sarcastic references to our habit of increasing the size of the Empire; but such dislike as there was, was directed against the British Government, and did not extend to the individual. On the contrary, a great number of them said that they had many friends among our people; they had lived side by side with them and engaged in business with them for years, and had always been on good terms with them; they were only sorry that things should have come to this pass. On the other hand their feeling towards the European-bred Dutchman was very bitter; he could never be mentioned without eliciting expressions of hatred, contempt and scorn. The reason for this is not hard to find; I shall have something to say about that presently when dealing with another side of the Free State Boer's character.

It was pleasant to find how much respect and reverence was entertained by the Free State Boer for Queen Victoria. Here again the feeling was particularly pronounced among the older men and women; in many farm-houses one might observe pictures of her Majesty and of Oom Paul hung facing one another. The character of our late beloved Sovereign, her reputation for the domestic virtues, her ever-ready sympathy for the suffering and oppressed, and the real religion which was at the root of all her good qualities, appealed forcibly to such a people; and as an old Boer said to me one day, "Some of our people may hate the British, but all of us love and honour your Queen." The same old fellow, — a veritable patriarch he was, full seventy years old, but hale and hearty with long snowy beard and bald head — was much perplexed at the Queen allowing this war to go on. Surely,

he argued, the gracious Lady must be averse from bloodshed, and must desire that peace should crown the closing years of her life; why did she not stop it? I tried to explain to him that, however anxious our Queen might be for peace, her first care would be to uphold the dignity and honour of the Empire, which had been so grievously outraged by the invasion of her territories; also that in such matters she was guided by the advice of her Ministers, who represented the feeling of the people. The latter aspect of the matter was, however, quite lost upon him; was not the Queen supreme over everyone, he asked? I gave it up at last; he was evidently unable to understand the mysteries of a limited monarchy, to see that the head of a State like ours possessed really far less power than the head of a Republic such as his own. He and his people had been accustomed to regard as beyond question the mandate of his pastors and masters, however repugnant to their own convictions, and one could pardon him for thinking that a similar condition of things prevailed elsewhere.

It may well be asked how it was, in the face of the Free State Boers' friendliness towards the English and reverence for the person of her Majesty, that they came to throw in their lot with their kinsmen from across the Vaal. There can be very little question that the majority of them were opposed to the war, until they had been worked upon by the specious arguments and false representations of those to whom they had been accustomed to look for guidance. From the President downwards, all those in authority in the Free State entered into a conspiracy to delude the poor farmers who did not and could not know the real issues involved. It has been openly stated

that Mr. Steyn was directly bought with Transvaal gold, and that many other leaders were also bribed; whether this be the case or not, I am unable from my own knowledge to state, but there is no denying the fact that they must, in most cases, have had some ulterior object in encouraging the burghers to enter upon a struggle to which they knew full well there could be but one end. They knew it, if the burghers did not, and they traded upon that ignorance. But worse than all has been the unworthy part played by many of the pastors, who have shrunk from no falsehoods, however ridiculous to us, though implicitly believed in by their flocks, to attain the end they had in view.

Is it to be wondered at, then, that the burghers, shrewd and keen as they are in the ordinary affairs of life, accustomed to take for granted what was told them by their pastors and masters, yielding them the same sort of obedience as did the English rustic in the last century to the squire and the parson, never doubted for an instant when they were told that, unless they resisted to the utmost, their country would be taken from them by the English? Resistance was preached to them as a sacred duty, and the appeal was not made in vain. It is true that England did not immediately threaten their country; but they were told that they would come next, that if England beat the Transvaalers, she would never be content until all South Africa was hers. Bound by every tie of blood and sentiment to the Transvaal as they were, such preaching could not fail to have its effect upon the Free State Boers; they felt that by abstaining from the struggle not only would they be deserting their kinsmen in their hour of need, but they would also tend to precipitate

the extinction of their own independence.

And when the die had been cast, when the tide of invasion had been swept back from Natal and Cape Colony, when Lord Roberts had entered the capital of the Transvaal, and when the Free Staters, many of whom had been placed in the forefront of the fighting around Ladysmith, saw their own capital in the hands of the British, still lie upon lie was disseminated in order to make them prolong the hopeless struggle. No effort was spared in order to deter them from taking advantage of Lord Roberts's leniency. In many remote districts nothing was accurately known of the proclamation which gave them a chance at the eleventh hour. Many of the burghers were informed of its general import by others who had recently visited some of the larger towns, but they sought their leaders in vain for enlightenment. They were told that the proclamation was but a trick on the part of the English to procure their surrender. If once they nibbled the bait, it was said, their homes would see them no more; the pledge that they would be allowed to return to their farms would not be kept; they would be sent out of the country, to St. Helena, or to some other inaccessible place, where they might languish for years. It is small wonder that such counsels had weight with the Free Staters, accustomed as they had ever been to place implicit reliance on those in authority. The idea of being sent away was what frightened them most, for their love of their own country, of their homes and the soil of their fathers, is very real and striking. It is easy enough to say that they had ample opportunities of finding out the truth, that they could judge what was likely to be their own fate by that of their

fellows who had given up their arms ; but remember the difficulties that lay in the path of the man who wanted to surrender. First, it was no easy task for him to get away from his commando, and if he managed to do so, he ran the risk of being treated as a deserter were he ever to fall into the hands of his late comrades. And apart from this there was the feeling, the natural feeling, that he would be committing a base act in deserting the sinking ship, that although he had been from the first averse from the course his countrymen were taking, now that they had taken it, he must stand by them to the finish. Your Free State Boer is not without a share of sentiment in his composition.

The proclamation was without doubt an absolute failure. As I have already indicated, it was quite impossible for the bulk of the burghers to read it for themselves, and thus they remained ignorant of what had been Lord Roberts's offer. Those who were cognisant and who promptly obtained passes, consisted roughly of two classes,—men who never had the slightest intention of keeping their pledges, and men who meant to abide loyally by their word. That the former were by no means few in number I am prepared to admit, but I do not believe that they were so numerous as people imagine. On the other hand, there is no question that of those who were in the field in June and afterwards many had passes in their possession ; but the question is what proportion of them had come out again on compulsion. The Free Stater who had surrendered, delivered up his arms, and obtained the necessary permission to return to his farm, speedily found himself in a very awkward position. Sooner or later a commando would

come to the neighbourhood of his farm, he would be visited by a field-cornet or some other official, and be ordered to come along with the rest. What was he to do ? To acknowledge that he had a pass might mean ruin ; he would be forced under fear of his life to accompany the commando, and his farm would be looted. On the other hand, if he kept the compromising fact to himself and made some excuse for being at home, he would merely be told to join the commando and his property would be unmolested. That there were many such men with De Wet I speedily discovered. And I do not think I shall be accused of rating my own powers of discrimination too highly when I say that I was soon able to judge between the genuine pass-holder and the spurious. It was no uncommon thing to find a man, who in the presence of others was surly and inclined to give short answers to my attempts to induce him to enter into a conversation, leading me afterwards mysteriously aside and producing the fateful piece of dirty paper. I exhorted many of these gentry on the folly and criminality of their conduct, and got for answer what I have just stated. They could not help it, they urged ; they had been forced, and they expressed a good deal of lingering anxiety to know how our authorities would treat them should they fall into their hands. Of course it may be, as has been often suggested to me by sceptics to whom I have related these things, that all this, and much more of the same sort, was only intended to enlist my sympathies in case the tables should one day be turned, and it might lie in my power to do my present guard a good turn. It may have been so, but the explanation seems to me a little far-fetched.

As time wore on, it became apparent that the minds of the majority, or, at all events, of very many of the Free Staters, were undergoing a radical change. As Abraham Lincoln said, "You can't fool all the people all the time;" and so shrewd a people as this could not remain much longer in ignorance of the manner in which they had been betrayed. As the shoe began to pinch, as rations became shorter and the circle around them on the eastern side of the country grew daily narrower, they began to reflect on the things they had been told by the prisoners and others, and the words of their leaders no longer moved them with the old force. It began to dawn upon them that they had engaged not merely in an unprovoked and wanton struggle, but in a struggle also which could only end disastrously to themselves. It was curious about this time, when Prinsloo was making his last stand in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem (we prisoners, by the way, were some miles south of Slabbets Nek, at a place where we had a capital view of the shelling), to watch the workings of their minds, to follow the complete reversal of the convictions once so tenaciously held. It was hard for them to acknowledge that their faith in their leaders and in their cause had been shattered; but to acknowledge it they were forced, and many did, in spite of themselves. Their expressions of contempt and scorn for their kinsmen of the Transvaal, who had led them to their undoing, were very bitter. They had been used as cats-paws; they had borne the brunt of the fighting all over the country; the Transvaalers had merely made use of them to do the bulk of the dangerous work. There is scarcely a doubt that in the earlier stages of the war it was the policy of many of the Transvaal com-

manders to put the Free Staters in the forefront of every fight and to spare their own men. Notably was this the case around Ladysmith; indeed it was told me as an absolute fact that letters, written by a very eminent personage indeed to the generals, in which this course had been enjoined, had recently fallen into the hands of the Free Staters. The opinion of my captors with regard to the fighting capacity of the men from across the Vaal was by no means flattering to the latter; and many of them had had ample opportunities of judging, having fought all over the country, at Ladysmith, at Kimberley, at Colesberg. Here is a little story which illustrates the general feeling. Said I to a gunner of the Free State Artillery, who arrived at Fouriesburg the day before my imprisonment came to an end, "Have you any news how things are going in the Transvaal?" "No," he replied. "I suppose you know," I said tentatively, "that Lord Roberts has won a great victory some forty miles north of Pretoria, and that eleven hundred Transvaalers have been killed." That was a story going about at the time, and I thought it might get something from him. "That's not true," he promptly rejoined, with a grin. How could he know, I asked, when he had owned that he had no information? Whereupon he again replied: "Oh, I know that can't be right. You might perhaps kill eleven, but you'll never kill eleven hundred Transvaal Boers. They'd never stop for that; if eleven had been killed, no matter how many of them there were, they would be off like greased lightning. The only way such a thing could possibly occur would be by eleven hundred being killed by one shell." That was his opinion and it was shared by most of his fellows whom I sounded upon the subject. . . . It

seems curious enough when we remember what was said before the war, that the Transvaalers would fight, but that the Free Staters had no stomach for the business; but it is also the opinion of most of those who, like myself, have met both in the field.

Towards President Steyn it was also evident that a feeling of something like rancour was cherished. Indeed it was very frequently said that if we could only capture him, the burghers would give in, or, to put it in another way, they were anxious to give in, but could not do so while the author of their misfortunes was at liberty. At the same time there were a sufficient number of stalwarts to render giving him up out of the question had there been any desire to do so. But I think that feeling would hardly have led them to such lengths as this; they would have been glad enough to see Steyn in our hands, but the old feeling of loyalty still retained sufficient hold upon them to prevent such an event occurring through their own deliberate act. Yet Steyn, though loud in his exhortations to the burghers to fight to the death, always took good care not to risk his own precious skin. At this period no one knew for more than a day or two at a time where he was; he would make his appearance at a laager, deliver an impassioned speech and then take himself off, no one knew whither. Possibly he may once or twice have fired a shot,—from a safe spot; but as a rule he kept carefully aloof from places where bullets might be flying. In short, in these days all the wisest and best among the Free Staters were heartily sick of the whole affair, and their sole hope was that it might come to a speedy end. Of course there were some, chiefly raw youths,—for I leave the foreign mercenaries altogether out of my con-

siderations—who had learned nothing and had forgotten nothing, who still hugged to their bosoms delusive notions of foreign intervention, and of driving the English out of the country. A vain braggart set these were, always retailing for the edification of the prisoners some atrociously incredible story with which they had been plied, and never weary of telling us of their individual feats of prowess. If the older men are to be believed, they were by no means so conspicuous on the battle-field. Indeed, a great many of them were not in what we should term the firing-line at all; they moved about from laager to laager, driving waggons, looking after stores and the like, and posing as heroes to all the women they chanced to come across. But, after all, there are individuals of that class in most armies.

It is more than likely that I shall be accused of presenting the Free State Boer in too favourable a light. Certainly I do not regard him unfavourably, and if he made a good impression upon one who formed his acquaintance in such circumstances as I did, the fact speaks well for him. Remember that when I got to know him I was a prisoner in his hands, had to put up with the scantiest of fare, and made one of a crowd who were hurried up and down the country like a herd of cattle. I am not likely therefore to be biassed in his favour. But the treatment I received at the hands of the men,—as distinct from those in authority, who in many cases are not the pure article at all—convinced me that here is a people with whom the task of making friends ought not to be extraordinarily difficult. They have been our friends before; some of them, more perhaps than we know of, have at heart been our friends during the past year of strife; they will be our friends again in the time to come.

I am not blind to their faults. Perhaps the worst of these have their root in an obstinate conservatism, a clinging to the old ways, a fervid abhorrence of anything in the nature of change. The life that their fathers and grandfathers led does very well for them ; they are content to live and die on their farms, content to live in rough comfort and to die with the assurance (not always forthcoming in these latter days) that those they leave behind will walk in their footsteps. Ambition is a thing they know nothing of ; the advantages of wealth, and all that money can give to its possessor, do not seem to appeal one jot to the bulk of them. They are constitutionally idle, and much averse from manual labour, as is indeed the case in any country where it is the custom to employ natives to perform all the more arduous work ; and they are inclined to take things very easily, to let their land practically look after itself, and to be satisfied with what Dame Nature graciously yields them.

If times are hard and comforts scarce, the Boer takes his bad fortune philosophically ; next year may be a good one. His one desire in life seems to be not to be disturbed, to continue on the even tenure of his way without external interference. The busy strife, the eager competition, the unending nervous strain of modern civilisation, he regards with horror ; his very soul rises up in revolt against it. That this attitude of mind is fatal to him cannot be denied ; civilisation and progress are the forces of the world, and he who sets himself up against them is but beating against the solid rock. The Free State Boer must either learn or depart. At present he is out of touch with the times, and is therefore doubtless doomed either to extinction or absorption. But anachronism though he be, he has his good points ; and some of us who were his unwilling guests in camp and on the march, will carry through life a not unkindly memory of his rugged personality.

CORIOLANUS ON THE STAGE.

(KEMBLE, KEAN, MACREADY.)

It will be seen, from its title, that no attempt has been made in this paper to examine the recent revival of *CORIOLANUS* at the Lyceum. The date of its production would not indeed have allowed me the time to do so properly, had I wished it. I have merely reviewed the contemporary estimate of the three celebrated actors who in their days revived the play, of whom two at least won great distinction in their presentment of the principal figure. It may, I have thought, be found interesting to compare these memories with the latest conception of the character of Caius Marcius.

There is no record of *CORIOLANUS* having been acted during Shakespeare's life-time. It was first published in the Folio of 1623, and is believed to have been written somewhere about 1608-10. We may reasonably assume therefore that it was acted, and that Elizabethan playgoers were gratified by the spectacle of a Caius Marcius in trunk hose and a boy-Volumnia in ruff and farthingale. But of this, as I say, there is no record. Since the Restoration at any rate Edmund Kean, in 1820, was the first to present Shakespeare's text of this play; for even John Kemble, the most famous representative of Coriolanus there has been, won his fame in a botched version, the last of several which have graced, or disgraced, the stage. The earliest of these saw the light, as represented by the theatre-candles, in 1682, and was the work of Nahum Tate who is

remembered for his mangling of *KING LEAR*, from which he removed the part of the Fool, possibly, as was suggested, because he wished to have no other fool but himself connected with the tragedy. The next adapter was John Dennis, whose memory lives rather by the reflected immortality he has won from his quarrel with Pope than by his own unaided genius; but both *THE INGRATITUDE OF A COMMONWEALTH*, and *THE INVADER OF HIS COUNTRY*, as these alterations of *CORIOLANUS* were called, were quickly swept into that limbo which has but recently received its full complement by the accession of Cibber's *RICHARD THE THIRD*. James Thomson's *CORIOLANUS*, however, which was produced at Covent Garden in 1749, was not another of these improvements on Shakespeare, but an independent tragedy on the same theme; it has its importance in connection with this subject in that it furnished some of the ingredients for the stage *CORIOLANUS* of the next seventy years. The perpetrators of this arrangement did not hesitate to thrust Thomson into a closer rivalry with his predecessor than he had contemplated. And the version in which Thomas Sheridan, and afterwards John Kemble, appeared was the outcome of the combined talents of the poet of the seasons and the poet of all time. The latter, it must be said, gets very much the best of the bargain, for the contributions taken from Thomson are confined to some passages in the last two acts. Curiously enough the effect

of the alterations is to depreciate the parts of *Coriolanus* and *Volumnia*. Perhaps the play, as it stood, was thought too uncouth and irregular in the mountainous pre-eminence of its leading characters, and the increased importance given to the *Volscian* leaders by the introduction of passages from Thomson tended to make it more symmetrical and, according to the ideas of the eighteenth century, more artistic.

If this be so, the effect of these alterations in the character of the play corresponds to *Kemble's* treatment of the leading part. In the hero of this hybrid drama he found an opportunity for the exercise of his graceful declamatory talent, which, though it could present a regular and classic grandeur, was unequal to the representation of anything rugged or uncouth. This talent was the outcome of his physical qualities and the peculiar cast of his artistic temperament. The former made him slow and deliberate; the latter was precise and somewhat affected, with a leaning towards the heroic. Consequently his style was statuesque to the verge of stiffness, and even beyond it. He was always stately and dignified, or, as his detractors said, affected and supercilious. Greater value attaches to the criticisms of two fellow-artists, both of whom may be presumed to have judged him fairly. *Macready* writes in his *Memoirs*: "His noble form and stately bearing attracted and fixed observation, and his studious correctness retained attention; but in the torrent and tempest of passion he had not the sustained power of *Talma* or *Kean*." *Mrs. Siddons* said: "My brother *John* in his most impetuous bursts is always careful to avoid any discomposure of dress or deportment, but in the whirlwind of passion I lose all thought of such matters."

Such were the means by which

Kemble obtained his effects. It was not so much the *Caius Marcius* of the Republican city in the fifth century before our era that he suggested, as the incarnation of all the qualities of Imperial Rome, at any rate as they were understood in the eighteenth century. Here was an ideal outlet for his genius. A Roman hero, he might argue, would naturally be statuesque and declamatory, and averse to that torrent and tempest of passion of which *Macready* speaks. In expressing a loftiness of soul, a haughty contempt, a kind of arrogant stoicism and public spirit he was unrivalled, and his *Coriolanus* afforded scope for all these qualities. "The Roman characters," says *Sir Walter Scott*, "were indeed peculiarly suited to his noble and classical form, his dignified and stately gesture, his regulated yet commanding eloquence;" and again, in a private letter, he wrote of *Kemble*: "You know what a complete model he is of the Roman." Perhaps the criticism was juster than *Sir Walter* intended. The actor was indeed a complete model of the qualities traditionally ascribed to the ideal Roman ("an abstraction of Roman-nosed grandeur," to quote another and less complimentary critic), rather than the representative of a particular individual. The picture is completed by a touch of ridicule from *Hazlitt* whose democratic sympathies impelled him to make fun of the representative of the haughty patrician, whose "supercilious airs and nonchalance," he says, "remind one of the unaccountable abstracted air, the contracted eyebrows and suspended chin of a man who is just going to sneeze."

How far the conception thus suggested realises or departs from *Shakespeare's* intention is a question which will arise in connection with the performance of *Macready*; but in hardly any other *Shakespearean*

character, except Brutus, could Kemble have found a part so easily to be moulded to his own personality and art. It was because Coriolanus could be made oratorical and majestic without obvious violence to the author's design that Kemble's Coriolanus was so popular. It is probable also that weariness of the stately monotony of Kemble's manner was a prominent factor in the enthusiasm which welcomed to the London stage the natural vigour of Edmund Kean. His talents and his fiery force would quickly have brought him to the front in any case; but his triumph was heightened by the contrast which his style provided to that of the recognised king of the stage. Coriolanus was one of the few characters in which the latter had nothing to fear from his great rival. In fact Kean did not attempt the part until 1820, three years after Kemble's retirement. Even then his rendering was not liked. It was too rapid and vehement in manner to please a generation which, in this character at any rate, still looked for its standard of excellence to the deliberate majesty of Kemble. "Mr. Kean's acting is not of the patrician order," says Hazlitt, summing up the general opinion, and he adds an interesting remark on the subject of the mounting of the play: "One would think there were processions and ova-tions enough in this play as it was acted in John Kemble's time, but besides this there were introduced others of the same sort . . . and there was a sham fight of melo-dramatic effect in the second act in which Mr. Kean had like to have lost his voice."

But the real revolution in the fortunes of CORIOLANUS was brought about by Macready, in the mounting of the play no less than in the acting. In the former respect, as

has been aptly said, Macready reversed the achievement of Augustus, for he found the stage-Rome of marble and left it of brick. Kemble's ideal Roman had stalked about an ideal Rome. His declamations had resounded through the forum of a city made up of buildings of every style and period, which had hardly any feature in common save that none of them existed at the time of the Volscian wars. Macready's aim, on the other hand, was to substitute for the Rome of the popular imagination with its columns and arches, an impressive picture of the rude homely city as it was in the early days of the Republic, which should be in harmony with the tone of the play as he interpreted it. His friend John Forster, writing in *THE EXAMINER* for March, 1838, has left a vivid description of how he succeeded in this object. Of the triumphal entry into the city he says:

Every attempt at a stage "triumph" we happen to have seen before, compared with this, was as the gilt gingerbread of a Lord Mayor's show—the gorgeous tinsel of an ill-imitated grandeur. *This* was the grandeur itself, the rudeness and simplicity, the glory and truth of life. The next scene was that of the assembled senate of Rome, and perhaps in simple and majestic beauty this scene surpassed every other. The senators, in number between one and two hundred, occupy three sides of the stage in triple rows of benches—all in their white robes; with every point of the dress, no less than of the grave and solemn bearing, that distinguished the Roman senator, duly and minutely rendered. . . . We defy anyone, scholar or not, to look at this scene without emotion. It is not simply the image of power, but a reflection of the great heart of Rome.

It may be mentioned as an instance of Macready's minute and painstaking ingenuity, that in order to produce the effect of perspective

in this scene the senators farthest from the spectators were represented by boys.

Here is another of Forster's reproductions of Macready's stage-pictures :

When the curtain withdrew upon the first scene of the fourth act on Monday night, it disclosed a view of the city of Antium, by starlight—a truly grand and imaginative, yet real scene—and in the middle of the stage Macready stood alone, the muffled, disguised, banished Coriolanus. This realised Shakespeare and Plutarch. Behind him were the moles running out into the sea, and at the back of the scene the horizon drawn beyond the sea in one long level line, interrupted only by a tall solitary tower, the pharos, or watch-tower of Antium. The strict truth, and lofty moral effect, of this scene are surpassingly beautiful. . . . The pathetic effect is suddenly and startlingly increased by the intrusion of music on the air, as the door of Aufidius's house, where the General feasts his nobles, opens on the left of the stage.

All this, fine as it may have been in itself, was still more valuable as illustrating the altered conception of the play and its chief character which it was Macready's intention to present. The first step towards revealing what he contended to be Shakespeare's true meaning was to put before the audience as nearly as possible what Shakespeare really wrote. It is true that Kean had already done away with the Thomsonian interpolations; but the restoration of Shakespeare's text by Macready was part of a consistent policy which we recognise also in his banishment of Dryden's alterations from *THE TEMPEST*, and in the return of the Fool to *KING LEAR*.

His conception of Shakespeare's meaning in the present play was that Caius Marcius is a rough passionate soldier, a rugged patriot and hero of the period when the stern republican virtues had not yet begun to be superseded by the luxurious civilisation of the rulers of the world, a proud and

fierce patrician of the early days of the struggle between the orders. "A man of rough manners, but of fiery and passionate sincerity," says Forster in the article already cited; and he triumphantly quotes North's translation of Plutarch's *LIVES*, from which Shakespeare drew, to prove that this interpretation realised the poet's meaning: "So choleric and impatient, that he would yield to no living creature: which made him churlish, uncivil, and altogether unfit for any man's conversation."

Forster's intention of exalting Macready's performance by direct contrast with that of Kemble is plainly shown by a sentence already referred to, "It is the silliest of mistakes to suppose that Coriolanus is an abstraction of Roman-nosed grandeur," which brought down on Macready the retort from James Smith :

What scenes of grandeur does this play disclose,

Where all is Roman, save the Roman's nose!

Each critic hits off very happily the weakness of the player whom he attacks. That of Kemble has already been considered. In Macready's case the drawback was the excessive naturalness, as it was called, which made his rendering appear petty and unheroic. This was as much the outcome of his artistic manner and methods as Kemble's grandeur was of his. Macready was an extremely painstaking actor, and the excessive care and minuteness of attention which he bestowed on the preparation of his parts, owing to his anxiety to appear natural, tended to make the finished article seem laborious and affected. It is this that gives point to the sneer at his Macbeth, that it represented "a respectable Scottish gentleman in considerable difficulties." He lacked, it was said, the art to

conceal art, and so the general conception of a character was apt to be thrust out of sight by the evidences of elaborate study and conscientious preparation which kept rising to the surface.

How minute and conscientious this preparation was we get some idea from the glimpses given us by his Memoirs of the time when he was first studying the part of Coriolanus. He fears that the public recollection of Kemble in the part will be too strong for him, and he goes on, thus :

But with a full consciousness of the difficulty of my task I went to work. To add grace and dignity to my deportment I studied under D'Egville the various attitudes from the antique, and practised the more stately walk which was enforced by the peculiarity of their dress on the *gens togata*. I allowed myself no leisure, intent on mastering the patrician's outward bearing, and under that giving full vent to the unbridled passion of the man.

The last sentence gives the key to his construction of the character. He was to bring out the human nature that there is in it, the particular passionate nature of the man Caius Marcius, and not merely the rough stern nature of the early Roman. Nineteen years later, when he produced the play under his own management, we still find the same careful preparation in such entries in his diary as this, "Brought home my helmet to accustom myself to it." The image of Macready sitting down to breakfast or to his correspondence in a Roman helmet may provoke a smile, but there can be nothing but admiration for the artist who, in face of the Kemble tradition, had the boldness to conceive a new and striking

view of the character, and the power and skill to carry it out. For the unvarying loftiness upon which Kemble so largely relied he substituted, in the words of one critic, "variety, flexibility, and power." Each interpretation may have supplied something of the character which the other missed. In an essay by Lewes, entitled *WAS MACREADY A GREAT ACTOR?*, there is a passage which throws considerable light on his Coriolanus, with regard both to its limitations and to the qualities which he was most successful in expressing.

Every actor is by nature fitted for certain characters and unfitted for others. I believe Macready to be radically unfitted for ideal characters—for the display of broad elemental passions,—for the representation of grandeur moral or physical ; and I believe him peculiarly fitted for the irritable, the tender, and the domestic ; he can depict rage better than passion, anguish better than mental agony, misery better than despair, tenderness better than the abandonment of love. But the things he can do he does surpassingly well ; and for this, also, I must call him a great actor.

Thus impelled and guided by the scope and limitations of his talent Macready enriched the theatre with a Coriolanus, which, while it did not attain to the heroic stature of Kemble's, nevertheless made up for this deficiency by means of a genuine and passionate humanity. It is clear from the text of the play itself that this was a side of the character which Shakespeare had in his mind ; and it is for his success in restoring this side of it to the stage that Macready chiefly deserves to be remembered in connection with the play.

G. CROSSE.

WHEN THE CHOLERA CAME TO SANTA CRUZ.

ONE hot night, when every air was still, four men of Anglo-Saxon race were seated in a room overlooking the quaint old Spanish city of Santa Cruz in Teneriffe. Beneath them the moon-lit roadstead heaved in long pulsations, a sheet of deepest indigo smooth as polished glass and streaked with glittering silver on the oily backs of the swell. To the north the volcanic mountain-range rolled down in a giant wall of vitrified crags relieved by splintered pinnacles to the fringe of creamy foam; and on the other hand white walls, carved balconies, and the red-tiled roofs of churches lay bathed in mellow light. Through the open windows there drifted the eternal song of the surf, and a curious musky odour which hung above the town.

It was comparatively cool in that upper room (the terminus of a submarine cable) and dark, save that a little lantern, by an arrangement of lenses, cast a sharp-edged line of radiance upon a mirror, which Hayward the electrician watched attentively. "For a week since the steamer sailed to fish the broken end," he said, "we have stared at that streak turn about by night and day. My brain seems filled with lines of light, but I can't help feeling it will speak to us presently."

For a time the rest smoked on in silence, listening to the growl of the surf. Three were men of science who had worked hard all day, and to whom, tired of the noisy *cafés* and idle political rumours in the hot streets below, this was a snug retreat. Suddenly the radiance flickered spasmodically; Hayward touched an in-

strument and a sharp metallic clicking broke the stillness of the room. "It's the Galileo talking now," he said, "They will finish the splice to-morrow, and there are many people who will thank God for that very soon. Before many weeks are over a slender strand of copper will be all that connects this island with the rest of the world, for they can't well quarantine that."

"I don't catch on," said the skipper of a leaky American barque, which had anchored there badly damaged.

"I am afraid you will by and by," answered Hayward. "I am speaking very seriously,—the punishment of wicked dirtiness is death. They have had their warnings during the last few years, and, as usual, did nothing. Now, when the trade-breeze veering northward is shut out by the *cordillera*, and it is hotter than anyone remembers before, while water is bad and scanty, the cholera is going to clean out their town. A few are dying already though they try to hush it up. What has brought the flies in legions, blackening every wall?"

"You are right about the flies, any way," said the skipper meditatively. "They know that sign down south."

Hayward went on: "Have you nearly finished the conduit, Tyrrell, or can you close the work and clear? It is surely coming, and this place will be a shambles in a few weeks more."

"It will take at least another fortnight," answered the big contractor. "No; I can't go until I've completed my bargain and have the papers

signed for pay; otherwise, I would do so gladly for the sake of the wife at home. Besides, we took a pride in our section, and I intend to see it through. Harry, I will let you off, if you like; your work is almost done."

Harry Gilroy was his clerk and draughtsman, a man of varied experience if still young in years, who answered languidly: "I have seen Yellow Jack busy in Brazilian harbour work, and you won't find anything very much worse than that. I mean to stay here with you; there's no use bolting before the trouble comes."

Then there followed another interval of silence, and an indefinite something weighed upon the hearts of all in that room, until, as they rose to go, the Electrician said: "It was only right to warn you, and I can't help feeling anxious when I think of what is to come, while I am sincerely thankful I sent Mrs. Hayward home."

During the three succeeding weeks Contractor Tyrrell and his clerk Gilroy worked even harder than before, high up among the chaos of fire-rent crags walling in the deep valley, where they were employed upon one of the several water-schemes which, carried on in the leisurely Spanish fashion, were some time in the dim future to benefit Santa Cruz. Under the burning heat of noon, amid lava dust and *scorie*, and by the glare of the roaring lucigen at night, they drove the slothful Latin *peons* as they had never been driven before, till the British-built section of the water-course lengthened rapidly, while in the sweltering town below each citizen's face grew anxious, and men whispered together at the corners of the streets. Then, one memorable morning, Gilroy dropped his rule, and a score of labourers broke away in fear, for far down beneath him a tiny

yellow flag ran up and hung limply from the staff of the citadel. It was only two square yards of bunting, but it would close that roadstead more effectively than a fleet of ironclads, warning each ship-captain that death was hard at work, and that every port would be barred to him if he cast his anchor there. Later in the day a clash of jangling bells rose up from the Spanish town, and the listeners' lips set tighter, for they knew that before every altar where the smoke of incense went up trembling priests prayed too late for deliverance from the sure and just reward of their rulers' slothfulness. "The man with the cleanest body, and the least upon his mind, will come out best just now," said Tyrrell quietly. "Well, we'll finish our contract if we can control the labourers, and afterwards trust in Providence to evade the cordon."

The weeks that followed will never be forgotten in Santa Cruz, and stories of what happened there will long be told throughout the islands of the Canary archipelago. All day the unclean city lay in sweltering heat, for the trade-wind had veered a few points and the steep mountains shut out every puff of breeze. Candles burned in the shadowy churches and fires in the sun-scorched squares; masses were chanted hour by hour, but red crosses increased on the doorways, and the plague worked its will unchecked. All night blinking torches filed through the silent streets, for a Spanish funeral is generally held in the dark, and there are various reasons, including the free use of quick-lime, why it is better so. Many died from mere terror: the cemeteries overflowed; and lime-charred objects, which had been covered but a few short weeks with soil from Palestine, were flung out

upon the ghastly heap beyond each inner wall.

Every morning and evening three Englishmen bathed in the surf, and one went back a little refreshed to watch over the talking wires which were very busy then, flashing messages that broke up many a family or brought hope to anxious hearts through the depths of the sea. The other two still toiled on at the water-course, bonding stone and smearing cement with their own blistered hands, for most of the *peons*, true to their Latin nature, slunk away in semi-superstitious terror to lie in despairing apathy waiting for the pestilence in their unclean homes. But the Contractor and his assistant, with the slow persistence of a stubborn race, held on unheeding, offering treble wages to any who would help.

At last the final stone was fitted, and that night the three met again in the cable-office above the stricken town. "My part is done," said Tyrrell. "If the Spaniards had finished theirs there would at least have been clean water in Santa Cruz. However, with luck they may complete it before the next cholera. Now, for the sake of those at home, I'll run no purposeless risks, so Gilroy and I intend to get out of this island somehow, in spite of their Government. If we can't do better, we'll row over to Grand Canary in a fishing-skiff."

The Electrician was haggard and anxious, for during eighteen hours each day, in a time when assistance was scarce, it was his hands which held the links binding that island to Cuba, England, and Spain; but he smiled as he answered: "You would only be swamped by the trade-wind sea before you got half way. We had better try Maccario who runs the potato-boat. I paid him well for lifting the shore-end of the cable

once or twice, and he might take a bribe from me. Still, very few have passed the cordon, and most of them dare not try. By the way, Skipper Marvin has not been here for a week, and they have the sickness on board. In days like these it might be only Christian to look him up, and we can arrange about Maccario on the way."

Half an hour later their gig slid into the shadow of the leaky American barque which lay rolling drowsily athwart the lift of the swell. Her black side rose above them streaked with phosphorescent spangles where the oily sea sucked down, a gurgling rush of water poured from her scuppers, and the clang and clash of ceaseless pumps rang through the stillness. Gaining the moonlit deck they saw a group of men stripped to the waist sway forward and straighten their weary backs again as the big wheels went round. The mate came forward to greet them. "The skipper's been expecting you," he said in a shaking voice; "he can't last very long. There's five of them down in the forecabin; the carpenters brought it aboard. She's leaking like a basket with half the butts opened, and would go down underneath us in the trade-breeze roll or I would clear to sea."

Entering the poop-cabin, which was insufferably hot and foul, they found a man, whose face haunted them long afterwards, lying rolled in blankets upon a locker. "I guessed you would come to see the last of me," he said half aloud. "I'm going in an hour or two; you needn't shake your head like that,—touch my hand and see. I know your kind too well to ask if you're not afraid."

"No, we are none of us afraid," answered Tyrrell simply, though he felt the chill of death strike through him as he grasped the icy hand.

The other continued in broken sentences: "I'm going to ask a last favour, for we're the same kin after all. It don't count very much, any way, but I've lived on the sea for forty years, and now it don't seem quite fitting to be shot with a cart-load of yellow Dagoes into that bubbling lime ashore. No, and it's all I ask you,—there's clean blue water outside. The mate will take a fathom of the old stud-link chain, and Tyrrell will read your British service; there's a bit of one on board. We don't use that to home, you know, but there's a tone about it, and it's in our common tongue, so I guess it suits this case better than—what they do ashore." Tyrrell pressed the cold, damp fingers reassuringly, as the thin voice went on: "I've done my best for the owners, dealing on the square, and now when the last charter's cancelled, I'll go out as is fitting for the captain of a ship."

That was the last he said clearly, and the Contractor, who could scarcely breathe down there, went up on deck, where now and then a murmur reached him through the skylights, until somebody tapped on a beam, and re-entering he knew by the silence that the end had come. "Gone," said the mate when they saw him. "He was sometimes a bit of a driver, but a white man all through; and now we had better do as he asked before those Dagoes come."

It was done, and Tyrrell long remembered the dry crackle of the new canvas and the pluck of sewing twine as the sail-maker did his work. Then he sat bare-headed in the stern of the gig, reading hurriedly, while the rest kept watch for the Commandancia launch, until the men ceased rowing, and the oar-blades swung up vertically in the air. "It's brand new," said the mate, who was busy with some marline, "but he was always great

on doing things in style, so we'll let him keep the banner too;" and a sprinkling of stars on an azure field caught Tyrrell's eye as a grey roll of canvas slid across the gunwale and splashed into the sea. Then the boat was rowed shoreward, and presently Hayward held parley with Maccario, who owned a little half-decked craft used for carrying a ton or two of potatoes from the villages down the coast. The latter plainly pointed out that what they proposed would be a risky business, for an edict had been published forbidding those in Santa Cruz landing on any island of the archipelago under heavy penalties. Therefore, said he, they must pay the value of the craft before they sailed, in case of confiscation, and as much again if landed in Grand Canary, where they would probably have to sink the boat and crawl ashore up some lonely ravine, lest the terrified villagers should murder them. Also, he added significantly, the moon was near the mountain-tops, and if they decided to run the risk it would be wise to start at once. "It's a costly business," said Tyrrell; "but we can't stay here indefinitely, and the attempt will have to be made. Let him count this silver, and we are ready to go."

The boatman counted the dollars, and, promising to return in a little time, departed towards the town, probably to bury them, for there is little financial security in the possessions of Spain. The bank endorsed by the Government maintains its right to meet its obligations with ten per cent. of copper coin, and the rest in silver only, while in the Canaries at least a draft is received with scanty confidence, and even the wealthier merchants prefer to convert their unused capital into golden *onzas* coined several hundred years ago, which used to come from Cuba, and are about the

only bullion generally obtainable. The writer has seen iron caskets full of them, and their owner smiled cunningly when a bank or an investment was suggested, knowing well, from experience, that they were safer in the chest. Commerce among the islands is thus carried on by the exchange of goods in kind, or the shipment of sealed bags of silver, and any form of cheque is almost unknown.

Meantime, the Englishmen lay down on the shingle under the gloomy entrance of the Bufadero ravine, where Nelson's picked blue-jackets were driven back into the surf. Near at hand the smooth heave of the Atlantic raising itself on end fell crashing athwart a head of fused cinders, and swirled in creamy smother up a slope of coal-black sand almost to their feet. Behind, the black wall of Las Cañadas rose in a clean-cut ebony ridge against the dark blue sky, and higher still the giant Peak lifted a shrouded cone of snow into the moonlight. There were orange-trees and date-palms near the mouth of the valley, but each leaf and frond hung very still, and their heavy fragrance mingled with the saltiness of the spray. For a space Tyrrell kept silence, gnawing nervously at his pipe or flinging a piece of shingle into the sea, while the boom of the surf spoke to him, as it were audibly, calling him forth to further work, to health and home again. Before him the wide Atlantic stretched away to the north, and behind from the stricken city there rose a roll of drums and a jangle of discordant bells which seemed never still, doubtless to mark the funeral of another officer. At last he said: "I hope Maccario does not intend to play us a trick, he has been half an hour at least, and I feel intensely anxious to get away. Three months of inaction in this awful place

would drive me mad, I think. Still, I found them honest; several ragged *peons*, before they bolted, voluntarily refunded me a few dollars paid in advance. I suppose, Hayward, you won't come along with us?"

The Electrician sighed as he answered. "I have the wires to watch; there is no one else could keep things straight in a time like this, and I am in charge, you know. However, to change the subject, the rank and file of this people are honest enough, frugal and industrious, too, but, unstable and impulsive, they fall easy victims to unscrupulous officers. Well, many of the latter are paying for it now. Nearly all that is good in Cuba is the work of the emigrant Canario, and with a strong hand to rule them there is little they could not do. So some of them dream of republics where every one can have a say, which would mean worse chaos still. What fools we all of us are!"

Presently footsteps were heard on the high road. "Here comes Maccario," said Hayward. "If you will give me fifteen dollars, to keep straight with the Company, I will send your wife a message that you are on the way, and remember you call on Mrs. Hayward if you ever get through." The friends grasped hands for the last time with the froth of the broken rollers hissing at their feet, and a faint, "Good luck!" followed the adventurers through the boom of the surf as, after launching a boat under the shelter of the head, Maccario rowed them towards a cluster of small craft. Both the Englishmen were used to the ways of the sea, so when they reached the little, wherry-rigged *goleta*,¹ Gilroy said: "See every thing clear for hoisting, but we'll row her off with no canvas set to the edge of

¹A small two-masted craft used in the coasting-trade.

the breeze. We should begin to feel it about a mile away. Ah, there goes the moon at last,"—and as the bright disc sank behind the mountains the world grew suddenly dark.

Here it may be explained that for eight months every year the rush of the North-East Trades sweeps above a waste of foam-flecked rollers past the Canary Isles, which have been heaved aloft by volcanic fire out of twelve thousand feet of sea to, as it happens, an equal height in the air. But so lofty are the splintered ranges, Cañada and Cumbre, that under the lee of each island there is scarcely a moving air, and beneath every terminal promontory a straight-drawn line of whiteness divides the frothing combers from the smooth-backed swell.

"Lie still for your lives!" whispered Gilroy, just as they had loosed the moorings; and a dim shadow flitted swiftly along the shore, while the sharp whirl of an electric motor broke through the monotone of the sea. A minute or two later the approaching vessel drove under the stern of an anchored gunboat, and when a hail came down from her poop a clear voice replied, "*Guardia de Comandancia, Reina Mercedes.*" The watchers held their breath as the launch drew near the tier of boats, but she passed on close beside them, and the click of her engines grew fainter as she vanished into the night. "We know the password, at all events," said Gilroy with a gasp of relief. "Now we can slip past the gunboat for the shelter of the American barque. We may also thank our stars she has not steam up." Two balanced sweeps dipped noiselessly, and Gilroy sculled astern, until, as the shadowy bulk of the cruiser loomed up near at hand, he said in Castillian: "Stop pulling, Maccario, and let me answer. I hope most devoutly that sentry has not keen eyes,—still, it is very dark."

Again a drowsy challenge came down from the lofty poop, and Gilroy, who dared not trust the fisherman's patois, and trembled lest he also should fail in the roll of the r's answered hoarsely, "*Guardias civiles,—Reina Mercedes.*" Somebody growled what seemed an approving "*Adelante vigilancia,*" high above his head, and leaving the set of the current to carry them, they drifted on, a moving streak of blackness unseen a few yards away, until a hurried dip of the sweep drove the *goleta* under the counter of the American ship. Here they waited, invisible altogether, until again the launch passed by, and then Tyrrell said, "There's only the Guard-boat's gig; we must get out before she comes." Then the sweeps splashed fast together, and straining every muscle they drove the heavy craft across the lift of the swell, while the sweat ran down into their eyes, and their breath came short in gasps. There was not a zephyr to line the glassy heave, while now, but half a mile away, the Trade-breeze roared down from the northwards, and the Atlantic rollers shook their white crests aloft.

"We will do it yet," panted Tyrrell, slackening his grip on the sweep. "Don't cry out too soon," answered Gilroy; "we haven't seen the *civiles*, and I think I hear oars now." He was right, for presently, out of the denser darkness in the mountain's shadow, there came a pulsating sound, lost one moment in a growl of surf, and rising sharp and clear the next. This was not the quick beat and gurgle of a British stroke, but the intermittent rattle of long Spanish oars which swing in a becket of hide; and the men who heard it rowed harder than before. The phosphorescent water, sparkling green and gold in the eddying wake, flamed about the sweeps: the balanced looms

groaned harshly as they turned on the centre pin; but the *goleta* had not been built to row, and the lighter gig astern came up very fast. "We'll keep on until they shoot us, or run this craft aboard," gasped Tyrrell; but Gilroy had no breath to answer as he wrenched on the sculling oar. He could hear an officer encouraging the men behind, the rattling thud of bending oars, and the swash of water under plunging bows; but the sound of the Trade-wind sea also grew louder, and he knew if they could reach it in time no gig could catch the *goleta* under sail. Desperately he toiled on until a breath of cool air touched his dripping face, when, flinging down the sculling oar, he sprang forward in frantic haste to run the foresail up. "Keep on at the sweep, Maccario; we have found the first of the breeze," he panted out, as the jib fluttered aloft. The dew-drenched canvas rattled, and then slowly hardened out; the tinkle of luminous water grew sharper under the bows each time the *goleta* was lifted on the back of a swell, while the deck sloped a little, and the wake flashed brighter until the play of flickering fire stretched back towards the following boat. "In sweeps, up with the main-sail!" he cried as his breath came again, and three pairs of very willing hands tore the halliards through the blocks. The boom swung out across the stern, the peak shook down a shower of dew upon the men below, and the angle of the deck grew steeper yet. A heavier swell than usual leaped up in vivid blue and green about the lee gunwale; the masts creaked with a sudden pressure, and the shrouds began to hum; while a Spanish voice howled confused threats and orders in the gloom behind.

"Handy with sheet and tiller; here's the edge of the true beeeze!"

cried Tyrrell, and Maccario unhitched a tackle as Gilroy put up his helm. Over went the *goleta* until the brine washed high along her deck, then plunging through a rush of foam drove ahead like a steamer, while a huge comber roared frothing down to lee. "At last!" said Tyrrell hoarsely. "She would drown them in ten minutes if they follow us here," as in peril of his life he sprang up on the narrow deck, and with childish exultation hurled Castilian maledictions at the men behind, until his companion said: "When you have finished that fooling perhaps you'll come down again before she flings you overboard. It would not help matters very much for the *guardias* to pick you up."

The pursuers, however, had evidently had enough of the chase, and seemed even then in difficulties, judging by the shouted orders and the last glimpse the fugitives caught of their gig as she twisted, half-buried in froth and spray, on the crest of a sea. Doubtless they went back again, for they were seen no more, and Gilroy gave up the tiller saying: "Take charge now, Maccario, and remember no canvas comes off her for another hour." For a while the *goleta* foamed ahead, buried to the second deck-plank by the press of sail, while a whirling mass of brine and spray broke solidly across her each time she climbed up from the trough and plunged into the white chaos of a comber's ridge.

"I have sailed for silver cups, but never a race like this," said Gilroy at length. "I think we are safe from any pursuit, so now we'll try to reef her before we fill her up;" and under reduced canvas the *goleta* swept in comparative dryness across the Trade-wind sea while, kneeling in the water, he plied a bucket fast. When the sun swung

up above the rim of the ocean the purple heights of Grand Canary rose streaked with fleecy mist out of a white-flecked sea, and Maccario, recognising the Peak of Galdar and the great ravine of Agaete out of which the vapours rose like the smoke of a burning town, with true Spanish diplomacy put the tiller up, and the *goleta* headed south as though she had come down along the coast. The reason was soon apparent; as they ran into smoother water under Aldea Head a latine-rigged fishing-craft stood out across her bows, and in answer to the questions of her red-capped crew Maccario calmly answered, "*Buscando chicharro,*" which in the Islander's patois means, "Looking for mackerel." This seemed sufficient for the fishermen, who no doubt took them for drift-netters from Las Palmas, and called out hoarse directions as the *goleta* swept on south.

The sun was high when at last he landed them in the sheltered mouth of a gloomy chasm filled with ash and *scoriae* about which the volcanic crags fell down two thousand feet to the sea. Then Tyrrell counted out the rest of the silver, and bade the fisherman good-bye, after which the latter worthy, advising them to avoid the first few villages, stood out alone towards Gomera Isle, and what tale he told its inhabitants the

Englishmen never knew. They dried their brine-soaked garments in the scorching sun, after which for weary hours they dragged themselves over broken lava and cinder wastes sprinkled with euphorbia towards the black peaks above, till towards the afternoon they reached a village nestling among orange groves, palms, and vineyards in a watered gorge. Here their ignorance of Spanish, which was more apparent than real, led the hill-peasants to set them down as some of the foolish Englishmen who clambered across Los Pexos to pick up bits of cinders or fill cases with specimens of mountain vegetation which were not good to eat. Thus, when Gilroy, showing a few silver dollars, said something about a mule and Las Palmas, two sure-footed beasts and a guide were soon forthcoming; and by the time the first rays of the moon touched the mountains they rode into that modernised city where lime-kilns and coal-heaps have replaced the ancient palms.

Ten days later an anxious man with a haggard face smiled in Santa Cruz as the tireless cable delivered him this message out of the depths of the sea: "Got through quite safe,—Mrs. Hayward well—joins us wishing best health to you."

HAROLD BINDLOSS.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

ITS METHODS AND ITS TEMPTATIONS.

It has often been said that the chief characteristic of the House of Commons, and one of the surest sources of its strength, is the instinct with which it reflects in a remarkably high degree the feelings and political wishes of the country. There are those among its greatest admirers who believe that if it once ceased to do this its influence would begin to wane, but that its skill in adapting itself to varying circumstances and changing requirements has ever been, and will continue to be, sufficient to enable it to avoid so momentous a risk.

There is much force in these contentions; but nevertheless it behoves those who wield authority in the House, to consider from time to time whether its methods and habits are really in accordance with the wishes of the constituencies, and whether it is maintaining unimpaired that intense respect and regard which have raised it to the highest position among the representative assemblies of the world, and have enabled it to work out such benefits to the commonwealth as are beyond estimate and defy exaggeration. There are not a few reasons for suspecting that an occasion for doing so exists at present. Some time has elapsed since one of the leaders of the House of Commons commented somewhat caustically on the "dreary drip of dilatory declamation;" but more recently another leader expressed a dread lest "the Mother of Parliaments should become garrulous in her old age." The tendency of debates to

become unduly prolonged has been the subject both of satire and of regret, and there is a growing feeling that the flow of words, which is poured forth day after day, is out of all proportion to the action which those words are presumed to explain and to determine.

The tendency is increased by the presence in the House of a considerable number of individuals, possessing rhetorical powers of no mean order, who avowedly are not greatly concerned with keeping up the credit or the influence of the Assembly of which they are members, and who employ their eloquence not so much with a view to the solution of difficult problems as with a view to hindering the performance of legislative work. The efforts of these gentlemen certainly are not checked, and probably are encouraged by the support of many others who, still cherishing admiration for the Legislature and a desire to maintain its efficiency, are eager, for partisan reasons, to thwart the action of a majority out of which they too hastily say that no good thing can come. The consequence is a continued conflict between those who want to do and those who want to talk, of which there are many signs that the community is beginning to weary.

The weariness would have begun earlier, and possibly even ere now assumed another and less negligible form, had it not been that for many years the country has not been seriously anxious for heroic or drastic

legislation. Most of the great problems were settled before the nineteenth century entered its last quarter. The efforts of a series of able statesmen labouring for over forty years under two Sovereigns, one unable to resist the pressure of popular will, and the other wholly free from any desire to do so, provided only that the true meaning and effect of that pressure were really understood, had brought our constitution and our code to a pitch of perfection with which the electorate were so far content that they evinced, and felt, no serious wish for organic change. It is probably even true that for five and twenty years they have mistrusted and disliked anything beyond attempts to polish and ease the working of a satisfactory machine. Here and there advocates for this and that reform have tried to make their own particular whims burning questions; but they have failed to make them burn. Programmes have been from time to time put forward with more or less earnestness and some apparent zeal; but they have provoked no enthusiasm, and have either sunk quietly into oblivion, or have been changed beyond recognition by the shifting personal factors of the moment. In a word the country has for several decades been content that Parliament should do little, and has therefore acquiesced with a smile of amusement, if not of admiration, when the House of Commons has insisted on talking much. Having no great and unsolved problems of principle to interest it, the country has felt far more keenness about men than about measures. Just as the House of Commons fills rapidly when some delicate or difficult personal question comes before it for discussion, so the country has for many years passed with tolerant confidence from the discussions on the legislative proposals of successive Governments,

to read eagerly debates on matters of mere personal or local importance.

In so far as all this is a sign that the country is prosperous and contented, free from any internal irritation which an act of Parliament can allay, and interested only in the removal of some impediment to progress, it may be regarded as a satisfactory proof of national well-being. But nations, like individuals, may become slothful and luxurious under the influence of prolonged prosperity, and legislative chambers are not exempt from the same danger. The ease with which the House of Lords performs its functions, the small amount of time which it bestows on the business of the country, and the persistence with which on all but very exceptional occasions it adjourns for dinner, are regarded by the vast majority of critics with entire acquiescence. For there is a general feeling of confidence that if there should arise anything which really requires doing the House of Lords would set to work to do it. A few careful observers indeed may be unable to repress a dread lest prolonged inertia may produce atrophy, and atrophy decay; but the country as a whole has hitherto regarded with the same complacent smile the House of Lords doing little and talking less, and the House of Commons doing little and talking incessantly.

There are signs, however, that this complacency is beginning to yield to a fear lest the House of Commons is acquiring a habit of garrulity which may become incurable. At present the country desires to see carried out a careful reform of the army and such strengthening of the navy as may be necessary. What it would like would be that these tasks should be treated not as party-questions, but as the work of a united legislature. For the initiation of proposals the Govern-

ment of the day must in the nature of things be responsible; but what is desired at least, and what the country is justified in expecting, is that these proposals should be wisely criticised, improved by all the combined wisdom and capable statesmanship which can be brought to bear upon them, and carried out with a sole regard to the national welfare. What it does not desire is that upon every detail should be poured an unlimited flood of immature eloquence, in which discussion of principles is drowned in chatter about personalities, and which contributes nothing to a clear perception of the issues before the public, but much to a misunderstanding of matters of supreme consequence, whereon a wise decision is of the utmost value to the nation. There must be moments when public needs require the temporary abandonment of party methods. An Opposition wise enough and magnanimous enough to say, "We will not carp at the proposals for Imperial defence which are put before us, but in no hostile spirit do our best to improve them," would earn the admiration and gratitude of the constituencies to an extent which would be certain greatly to influence their electoral position in the future.

In the first period of the first session of the new Parliament there has certainly not been demonstrated any disposition on the part of the House of Commons to check the prolongation of debate. The new House seems to be even more fond of discussion than its immediate predecessors. Not only are public affairs talked over at great length,—especially when the slightest excuse can be found for bringing in some personal question—but a growing tendency has been displayed to postpone, for ever lengthening periods of the parliamentary day, even the inception of

public business. Until comparatively recent sessions discussions on private business in the House were rare. Only when matters of important principle were involved used the House itself to debate the second reading of a private bill. Having full confidence in its own committees it was content to leave with them the discussion and decision of all but matters of far-reaching consequence and great moment. It adopted this policy all the more readily in that private bills deal mostly with local matters to the determination of which carefully sifted local evidence is essential. The House watched and encouraged the elaboration of the machinery of the committee-rooms till it reached a pitch of high perfection, and rarely interfered either to guide or impede its operation. What control or supervision were necessary it was willing to entrust to the influence of the Chairman of Committees acting on highly skilled and thoroughly trained advice.

Latterly, however, the House of Commons has shown a disposition to abandon this attitude, and not only to debate at length the second readings of railway, gas, water, and other local bills, even when the area of their influence is limited, but also to deal with clauses by the somewhat novel or exceptional method of moving instructions. It is true indeed that such attempts to superinduce the functions of a committee upon the whole House have to some extent failed, because the form in which the instructions were moved has made them out of order. But much reliance cannot be placed upon this; and if the House does not sternly set its face against the discussion of private bills, that discussion is sure to grow more and more diffuse, and to seek to deal more and more with minute and immaterial detail.

As with private business so it is with questions. Time was when the questions asked of Ministers were few in number, confined to matters of great public interest and importance, and put, if not solely from the front Opposition bench, at least only by men of admittedly high position and influence. Now nothing is too trivial to form the subject of a question, nor is there the slightest hesitation or restraint in putting it. In 1820 the House met on April 21st, and between that date and May 26th Hansard records only four questions. In 1840 in the first month of the session thirty questions were asked. In 1860 in the first month, which included twenty-one working days, one hundred and eighty-four questions were asked, or an average of nearly nine a day. In 1880 the first month included twenty working days and two hundred and ninety-three questions were asked, an average of nearly fifteen a day. From February 15th to March 15th of the present session, a period which included seventeen working days, twelve hundred and ninety-seven questions were put on the notice-paper, an average of seventy-six a day. Some of these questions were probably not put or not answered; but on the other hand many supplemental questions, arising out of replies given, were put and were answered. On two occasions, February 28th and March 14th, no less than one hundred and twenty-two questions appeared on the notice-paper; on another there were one hundred and fifteen, and on a third ninety-three. Between March 11th and March 21st, a period which included six working days, one Scotch member, whose absence from the House during the early days of the session was an equal loss to the legislature and his constituency, asked forty-three questions.

Of all this mass of questions but a

small proportion could be satisfied by the statement of one fact, or the supply of one item of information. The great bulk of them have to do as a rule with many matters. They contain many paragraphs and refer to many incidents. They are frequently asked in an argumentative form and cannot well be dealt with save by elaborate replies, in which the avoidance of controversy is very difficult. The preparation of the answers by the Departments concerned involves not only a considerable consumption of the public time by highly-paid officials taken away from important administrative duties, but very heavy expenditure in telegraphing for particulars to all parts of the Empire. In a word the practice of the House of Commons in regard to questions leads to a vast expenditure both of the time and of the money of the State.

The attitude of the newspapers who have devoted attention to this practice is somewhat remarkable. Many of them appear to be aware that there is a dangerous development. THE TIMES itself, on March 1st, expressed the opinion that, "The multiplication of questions to Ministers is becoming so great a nuisance that it will probably bring about its own remedy." Nevertheless not only are the questions and answers recorded in very many instances after they have been asked and answered, but statements are published in regard to their purport before hand. "On Tuesday next the First Lord of the Treasury will be asked whether . . . and why." "Mr. So-and-So proposes to interrogate the Secretary of State for War with regard to . . ." "The Home Secretary will also be invited to state if . . ." "The case of . . . will be brought under the notice of the House by . . . who proposes to ask the President of the

Local Government Board whether . . .” This sort of thing appears continually,—not even *THE TIMES* being exempt from the temptation—and its effect must be to encourage an estimate of the importance of the information sought in the mind of the honourable member seeking it, which needs no encouragement and is already probably somewhat exaggerated.

Now what is it that the House of Commons desires, and what outcome does it expect from the multiplication of questions? Undoubtedly Parliament is entitled to demand and to receive all the information which is necessary to enable it to exercise its constitutional function of checking, controlling, and directing the action of the Executive Government in which for the time being it reposes confidence. And inasmuch as the greater part of this very valuable constitutional duty is performed by the House of Commons, that House is perfectly justified in insisting on being placed in possession of the necessary knowledge. But this object is not attained by the asking of an inordinate number of questions the interest of which to the House, and even to the questioner, is absolutely ephemeral. Of an overwhelming proportion of the questions asked during recent sessions it cannot be said that they have contributed one iota to the right exercise of that influence which the House ought to have on the Executive. They have added little real value to the knowledge of affairs possessed, and rightly desired, by the House or the country. Of most of them the effect has been completely forgotten two days,—it is scarcely an exaggeration to say two hours—after they have been asked. Yet it is impossible to say that the uselessness of any one of them was from the first so clear that it should

have been vetoed by some competent authority, or rejected by the Minister to whom it was addressed; for the theory is sound that there is no detail of administrative action so insignificant as to be utterly incapable of producing results of great Imperial importance. Equally sound, however, is the theory that the good sense of the House of Commons can be trusted to draw the line between matters which are likely to be of moment and matters which are extremely unlikely to have any real consequence. How in practice it has lately exercised this discretion is scarcely an easy question even for its greatest admirers to answer.

The remedy is not easy to find. Questions cannot be forbidden altogether, nor can they be limited to one day or one part of a day; the reason being that at any moment some event of real and not imaginary importance may occur with regard to which the House of Commons is justified in asking for, and ought to be able to obtain, immediate information. A recent instance of such an occurrence, which by some mishap was communicated to one House of Parliament and not to the other, contributed not indirectly to the expenditure of some hours in the discussion of a motion for adjournment. Nor can questions be limited in number, and the machinery of the ballot introduced as in the case of private members' bills. In bills that machinery is applied at the beginning of the session once for all. This could not be the case as regards questions, so long as they can be asked at any afternoon sitting of the House. Nor would the system operate satisfactorily in the case of questions of true moment and urgency.

Somewhat less open to objection is the suggestion that the answers to all questions should, instead of being given in the House, be printed with

the votes. Formerly, and not many years ago, the questions used to be read out in the House as even now are all the answers. At present they are asked by reference to their number on the paper. It has lately been urged with some force that this principle should be extended, and the replies printed side by side with the questions. This would probably be a sufficient and satisfactory method with regard to all but a few questions of really national importance. To these, and to these only, a verbal reply in the hearing of the House is still desirable.

It appears therefore to be worth consideration whether a division of questions into two classes, those to be answered by word of mouth, and those to be answered in print, could be devised which would be satisfactory to the House and conduce to a saving of public time. It might, for instance, be possible to limit the right to a verbal answer to Privy Councillors. The House of Commons recognises in more ways than one the status of Privy Councillor. At moments of supreme consequence, such for instance as the demise of the Crown, the functions of Privy Councillors are of great Constitutional importance, and it is no mere fiction that they have a responsibility in regard to public affairs, which differs from that of an ordinary member of either House of Parliament. There are Privy Councillors on both sides of the House of Commons who do not sit on the front benches. They are men selected for a duty, which is not in theory and ought not to be in fact a sinecure, in consequence of their experience, their judgment, and the high position they occupy in the House and before the country. They might safely be entrusted with the responsibility of questioning Ministers on matters of Imperial interest, and the replies they

receive might with advantage to Parliament and the community be delivered from the floor of the House. Such a system would not operate to the detriment of the ordinary member. If he had good reason to be dissatisfied with any answer given in print to a question, it would not be difficult for him to find a Privy Councillor willing to ask for supplementary information. It would not operate to the disadvantage of the House, which would obtain all the knowledge it acquires now at a far less expenditure of time. It would in no way injure the public, to whom the answers given would be every whit as accessible as they are at present, and in some respects more so; and though it would impose a certain burden on Privy Councillors, that burden would not be heavy, nor one which they ought to decline to bear as a condition of enhanced rank and consideration. By such a system the front Opposition bench would be enabled to put, and hear the answers to, all questions necessary for the discharge of a duty of great constitutional value, the importance of which has scarcely been sufficiently recognised during the last few years, and the increased neglect of which would be a grave public evil. Whatever use is derivable from these answers would be greatly augmented from the fact of their standing out clearly and conspicuously, instead of being overwhelmed in a flood of verbiage. Questions of real public interest, but not required for the purposes of front bench Opposition, could be put by Privy Councillors on either side of the House. The undistinguishable mass of questions put now by ordinary members, not of course because they desire either to waste time or to bring themselves into temporary prominence, but because they have a public-spirited and genuine desire to ascertain facts,

could be answered in print to the full satisfaction of the country, and it is to be hoped of the honourable members themselves. The constituencies would have the satisfaction, if satisfaction there be, of knowing that their watchful member had shown laudable interest in the wards of Kerry workhouses or the lavatories of Highland railway-stations, and had not failed to keep the Legislature informed with regard to the fall of a roof in Tipperary or an accident to a fishing-boat in Skye. And the readers of distant newspapers would be furnished with a printed list of questions and answers on most favourable conditions and at little expense.

An alternative might be found in a division of the questions put down into the two categories by some competent authority acting under instructions of the House; but it would not be easy to fix upon the authority. It is not a duty which it would be reasonable to ask the Speaker himself to undertake, still less is it one which could properly be entrusted to the clerks at the table or to officers of the House however trustworthy and distinguished. The establishment of a standing committee for the purpose, of a nature somewhat similar to that of the committee of selection, is a possible solution, but the duties devolved upon such a committee would be incessant, very irksome, and highly invidious. It would be preferable, therefore, if some automatically acting remedy could be found for that which the leader of the House has admitted to be an abuse, and which therefore cannot be allowed to continue or to grow without grave risk to the prestige and influence of Parliament.

The abuse of questions is not, however, the only one which causes alarm to the friends and admirers of the Mother of Free Parliaments. The

action of certain members of the House of Commons, not belonging to one section only, seems to be difficult to explain save upon the theory that they think it a duty to the public to oppose every possible impediment to the conduct of business which the responsible Government of the day brings forward. The rules of the House are framed upon the wise and proper principle that every opportunity should be given for reasonable discussion, and that minorities should be freely allowed to press honest and conscientious objections, and when necessary press them to a division. But those rules can only work satisfactorily if the discussion is reasonable and the objections are not unduly reiterated. The good sense of the House in past times sufficed, while safeguarding the rights and interests of minorities, to safeguard those of majorities also. It would be difficult to argue that it does so now.

Every stage of Government business is not only debated until the application of the closure becomes absolutely necessary; but division after division is insisted upon when there is no doubt whatever of the result, when no special protest is necessary or even contemplated, and when absolutely the only effect produced is the consumption of very valuable time, valuable not merely to the House itself but also to the country at large. Nor is there the slightest disposition shown to acquiesce in one decision. Over and over again three divisions have been necessary when the sense of the House is practically, though not technically, ascertainable by one. Frequently, upon some amendment not embodying any matter of great principle or high importance, a comparatively small minority have forced

divisions, upon the closure, upon the amendment, and upon the main question. Technically the three issues differ; but it is impossible to maintain that the sense of the House can only be ascertained by dividing it three times, or that those who bowed to a decision once given, instead of insisting on its repetition, could be accused of neglecting any duties of protest or opposition which it behoved them in the interests of the community or their constituencies to discharge.

Advantage is taken of every form of the procedure of the House to reiterate debate, and impede progress. Stages which not many years ago were regarded as formal, and were dealt with as affording an opportunity for discussion under purely exceptional circumstances, are treated now as normal occasions for talk. For instance, the third reading of the Appropriation Bill, a measure which is necessary to wind up the financial arrangements of the period with which it deals, may technically be used as an opportunity for debating any subject. It is useful that it should be so, and that a final chance should be given to the House of dealing with any emergency or any matter of grave moment, inadequately discussed at other times. But on March 28th the House of Commons talked about the third reading of an Appropriation Bill for seven hours and a half. Shortly after half-past twelve the closure was moved and carried by one hundred and sixty-seven to sixty-five. This division did not, however, satisfy the opponents, not of the measure but of the Government. So another division was made necessary in which forty-seven members, with a full sense of their responsibilities and a high appreciation of the credit and influence of the Assembly in which they were sitting, made one

more effort to thwart what was clearly the will of the House, and were beaten by a majority of nearly four to one. The debate itself was distinguished by an exchange of acute personal criticism between the two front benches, and by a repetition of remonstrances and arguments most of which had been heard before. It is difficult indeed to resist the feeling that by such a procedure an amount of regard is given to the privileges and rights of a minority which does not conduce to the reasonable and proper progress of business, and does not enhance the reputation or power of the Assembly in which it takes place.

On Tuesday morning, March the 26th, the House of Commons rose at a quarter to five. The sitting was described by a journal so cautious and free from temptation to exaggerate as *THE PALL MALL GAZETTE*, in a leading article headed "Jabber," as a "waste of the small hours in absolute puerilities," and a "tale of purposeless chatter." Even those who hold, and desire to go on holding that the House of Commons is the embodiment of all that is admirable in our Constitution, and wish to regard it with a respect and admiration amounting almost to reverence, will hesitate to deny that the debate might with absolute advantage have ended five hours before it did. Small talk in the small hours may do very well in some societies, but the House of Commons cannot indulge in it without risk.

On an earlier occasion in the present session the House sat till six in the morning, discussing a disciplinary rule made necessary by the determined action of a limited number of members who successfully resisted the will of the House until it was supported by the application of physical force. The rule was important enough to justify careful debate: it

imposed a penalty of serious effect ; but all that there was to be said for and against it had been said long before it was carried, after the application of the closure, by an overwhelming majority. Of the debate two characteristics are prominent. The condemnation of the extreme policy of protest which caused the intrusion of armed men into the House was by no means as general as it might have been, and as it would have been in the earlier days of the Reformed Parliament ; and to the prolongation of the debate more than one section of the House contributed. The unrestrainable performance indeed of one member led to a considerable consumption of time in discussing and dividing upon a proposal which was hopeless from its inception. The sitting generally afforded an excellent instance of that tendency to garrulity the growth of which is becoming a dangerous factor in public affairs.

An attempt has been made to urge that in encouraging the prolongation of debate the House is merely making a reasonable remonstrance against curtailment of the opportunities and privileges of private members, and against encroachment by the Government upon the hours available for business. Facts, however, weigh heavily against such a contention. At the opening of every session the debate on the address in answer to the speech from the Throne is used to the full by private members for airing their views upon every conceivable topic. They find another opportunity in the introduction of the supplementary estimates which the administration of a vast Empire makes almost inevitable. Wednesdays are at their service for attempts at legislation, and the talk on Wednesdays is as voluminous as it is on the other days of the week. Every day, under the guise of questions, private members

find ample occasion not perhaps for advancing any business which they have at heart, but for making prominent the views which they entertain. On Thursdays, when Thursdays are open, academical debates on matters if not of minor, certainly not of supreme, moment, drag along their weary length until, as frequently happens, they are cut short by a count. Meanwhile the Government are compelled to resort to frequent applications of the closure if they wish to make any progress at all, not only with legislative business which is desirable, but with financial business which is essential. If there be undue curtailment of opportunity, any careful observer of what goes on in the House will, if his partiality be not influenced by bias, be obliged to find that it is the powers of the Government, rather than the privileges of private members, which are limited.

In the present session the progress hitherto made in legislation by the Government has been so infinitesimal as to be scarcely worth notice ; of the measures referred to in the King's speech no single one had at Easter reached a second reading. The comparatively greater success which has attended the efforts of private members is no matter for regret ; there are many subjects in regard to which legislation is more advantageously undertaken by private members than legislation emanating from either front bench. What is to be regretted is that a Government so recently returned to power by a preponderating majority should find itself impeded and hampered in its proposals. With regard to the two classes of bills it might well be said to the House, these you ought to have done and not left the others undone. Assuredly the justification for garrulity cannot be found in any undue absorption

by Ministers of the time of private members.

It must not be forgotten in any examination of the position of the House of Commons that in regard to such a question as the prestige and influence of the Legislature public opinion in this country forms itself slowly, but when once formed acts very rapidly. Belief in the House of Commons is thoroughly ingrained in the minds of nine men out of every ten in Great Britain who take interest in public affairs. Were it not so, adverse criticism might ere now have made itself felt; but as men smile complacently at the vagaries of a trusted and skittish favourite, so the public and the Constituencies have hitherto regarded with tolerance, though not perhaps with approval, symptoms of departure from the methods which have made the House of Commons as admired as it is beloved. A change in this attitude would probably not make itself felt at all until it made itself felt with crushing and irretrievable consequence. Through six centuries of success the House of Commons has slowly and with painful perseverance risen to a very high eminence; were it to reach and pass the summit it would, like any other vehicle, go down hill more rapidly than it rose.

In the April number of *THE NINETEENTH CENTURY* Sir Wemyss Reid places among the most prominent of public features which show that the times are out of joint the "decay in reputation and influence" of the House of Commons. Sir Wemyss Reid would probably not claim to be classed among extravagant admirers of the present Parliament; but his political bias does not prevent him from being a Constitutionalist, and a critic of our chief institutions whose opinions are in the abstract entitled to respect. If he is heard to say

that, "It is impossible for thinking men to close their eyes to the fact that our Parliamentary institutions are being tried . . . and the results of the trial, as far as they are visible, are far from being satisfactory," or that, "the steady and swift decline in the influence of the Representative Chamber is due to more insidious and deadly causes than the turbulent obstructiveness of a few members from Ireland,"—we may value his testimony to the existence of the phenomenon on which he comments, without necessarily accepting his explanation of the causes which have led to it. At any rate, the mere fact that such things are said is enough to give pause to all firm believers in the principle of Representative Government, and induce them to cherish a devout hope that, without distinction of party, men of influence in the House of Commons will think it their duty to carefully consider whether the present progress of that Assembly is in the right direction.

Without distinction of party, I say, for both sides of the House, and indeed all sections are interested in the maintenance of its high and honourable position. Even those who have shown signs of a disposition to flout it as incompetent, and a desire to leave it as alien, have more to obtain from a trusted and powerful than from a weak and discredited Chamber. The front Opposition bench, and such as are open to its influence, cannot, without throwing over those principles of confidence in popular representation which they have ever claimed to cherish, successfully make use of minor manœuvres in order to permanently oppose its will. They cannot say we will strain every effort, and employ every weapon, in order to prevent the perfection of all legislative proposals brought forward by our opponents, without

imperilling that reliance on the voice of the people which they have always put forward as the one sound principle of government. Those again, if any such there be, who secretly rejoice when the House of Commons does nothing but says a good deal, because they consider it best for the interests of the country that nothing should be done, will find that they have paid a very heavy price for inaction if they thereby reduce the House of Commons from the high level it now occupies in the public estimation.

The present House of Commons is eminently capable of preventing its own decay, even of strengthening its own position. A Speaker, whose weight, knowledge, and discretion have never been surpassed, occupies the Chair. On the benches of each side of the House, the front benches as well as those behind them, are men of great parliamentary experience and wide constitutional judgment. The

fact that there are few public problems upon which there is union either on one side of the House or the other, does not militate against the supposition that for one such problem both sides may combine to find a solution. Heaven help this country if Parliament should fall into contempt! There is nothing to take its place were it ever to become senile. On the other hand Imperial considerations make its rise to even wider influence than it has yet attained more desirable than its fall. The problem is vastly difficult in itself, and, like all problems affected by acute personal complications, is more difficult in its surroundings. It devolves upon those who wield any power to take steps for grappling with it, before the country in its discontent makes a solution imperative, or the development of circumstances makes a solution unnecessary.

URBANUS.

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

JUNE, 1901.

PRINCESS PUCK.

CHAPTER V.

THERESA was a conscientious person and really had Bill's welfare at heart. Miss Brownlow said she exercised a good influence over her young cousin. Theresa was rather doubtful on the subject herself, but she felt the responsibility of her aunt's expectations and determined to fulfil them if possible; only she did not quite know how to set about it. Bill proved so very mild; there seemed no occasion for a preventive and negative influence, and a positive one Theresa found difficult to compass. The only definite suggestion she had as yet made for Bill's mental and moral benefit was the invitation to the prayer-meeting. That, both in its religious and social aspects, was good; the religious side, Theresa felt, must benefit her charge, though she did not stop to consider how, religion being to her much what charms were to her forebears, good and protective, though operating in methods neither understood nor questioned. The social side of the prayer-meeting was obviously beneficial, for it was in every way desirable that Bill should mix with her elders, which would help her to grow up. Altogether the prayer-meeting was a good thing, and to it, accordingly, Theresa took her cousin on Friday evening.

They drove in the dog-cart: "We

can walk home," Theresa had said; "it is not far."

So Robert, who did not affect prayer-meetings, drove them and took the cart home again; and as Theresa disliked driving very much, this arrangement suited her better than any other. It suited Bill also, for she sat on the back seat, and was as entirely oblivious of the two in front as if she had been alone in her silent survey of the country. It was still very black and white, she found, though a day of showers and sunshine would alter the whole face of the land now. She was conscious of the coming change; there was a feeling of waiting in the air, as though the unconscious earth stood patient on the threshold of life. There were no leaves as yet among the elms, no blade in the dry, crumbling fields, no hint of green in the close-cut hedge, so black by contrast with the white road. So white the road was, so hard, stretching before them, stretching behind them; Bill looked at it and thought what a long way it could be seen in the pale strong light. Every thing could be seen, the heap of faggots, the pump by the road, the old man working in a cottage-garden,—she could even see what kind of belt he wore; she could see every thing near and far,—truly a March evening was a beautiful thing. She drew in deep breaths of the thin

air; it seemed like wine within her, making the young blood dance and throb in her veins. She felt, though she hardly knew it, that it was a splendid thing to be alive: "I should like to live as long as the world lasts," she thought.

Just then they turned in at a gateway. The short drive beyond sloped down rapidly and the dog-cart entered with a jerk which nearly unseated the back passenger, who, however, was examining the garden too intently to be troubled by that. There was a large raised flower-bed in the centre of the gravel sweep, the drive dividing right and left of it. It was a circular bed planted in a geometrical pattern with Dutch bulbs; as yet the hyacinths and tulips were only green shoots, but the crocuses were in full flower and wound like a coloured ribbon across the intricate design. Bill was wondering how it was that none of the crocuses had gone blind, when the cart stopped before a square, ivy-covered house.

"T," she said, as she got down, "every single one of those crocuses has come up; they must be a good sort."

"I dare say. Mr. Perry is fond of his garden, and he has plenty of money."

Bill's acquaintance with people possessing plenty of money was limited; indeed, she could not recall anyone she knew who was in that affluent state. She looked at the Perry's house critically to see how "plenty of money" looked when it was translated into furniture and fittings. There were lots of white curtains, three or four at every window. "That is expensive," she thought; "it means so much washing." There were thick carpets on the floors, old-fashioned in design, excellent in preservation, and prodigiously ugly; the furniture in the

drawing-room was rosewood, the chairs as like as peas in a pod and all neatly covered in chintz. "I shall tell Polly our things are all right," Bill mentally determined as she sat down in a retired corner. She had been duly presented to the host and hostess, had duly made an inaudible answer to their polite remarks, and had then sunk into her corner still safe under her cousin's wing, as became one of her youth and shyness. No one in Mrs. Perry's drawing-room expected anything different; indeed all would have been surprised if she had shown greater forwardness of demeanour. Her nearest neighbour, a little old lady with a cheerful countenance and a great mosaic brooch, spoke to her; but at first Bill could not catch what she said, for she lowered her voice out of deference to the more important persons present, until it was little more than a sigh in her listener's ear. But after a word or two Bill became used to the sound and made out, as she might have guessed, that the subject of conversation was the weather.

"Dry evening," was the first she heard and then, "a nice walk from Ashelton."

Bill did not catch the connecting words, but she answered what she heard, although she did not know that she had come beyond the boundary of Ashelton that evening, and contented herself with saying that they had not walked.

"Driven?" suggested the old lady. "I expect Mr. Morton drove you and took the pony home again; such a good arrangement, and much safer than for Mrs. Morton to drive those spirited horses herself. I'm sure I wonder she has never had an accident; I quite thought there would be one when I saw her go by on Tuesday afternoon."

"Did you see us then?" Bill asked, and her neighbour explained that she lived at the house at the corner where the roads divided. Then Bill knew that this must be Miss Minchin, the lady who, Theresa said, made ample use of the opportunities for observation offered by the commanding position of her house. At that moment the entrance of some fresh arrivals caused such a buzz of conversation that Miss Minchin ventured to inquire in quite a loud voice whether Bill herself could manage a horse.

"I never tried until I came here," she answered; "I only came on Tuesday, but I have done a little since then. I drove a waggon of straw home yesterday. Tom Griggs told me he thought I should soon be able to handle most things on four legs, but I don't suppose he knows."

"You are learning to drive?" Miss Minchin asked, somewhat mystified. "Mr. Morton is teaching you? But, my dear, do be careful, he has such mettlesome horses; gentlemen seem all alike for that; there's Mr. Harborough, now, he's nearly as bad. You know Mr. Harborough?" Before Bill could answer the old lady went on: "Hush! Mr. Perry is going to speak. You must come with Mrs. Morton to see me to-morrow; I have a cat and a canary, and several things that will interest you." The last words were spoken in a shrill whisper in Bill's ear as the company settled themselves, and Mr. Perry, a trim little man some years retired from the grocery trade, called attention to the fact that the reading was about to begin. When he had made this announcement in a redundancy of words (for he was not averse to speech-making and had few opportunities), the proceedings commenced.

The subject for the evening was faith. Mr. Johnson was giving a

course of Christian virtues during that Lent, and faith happened to be the one under consideration on the evening when Bill was present. She was very much interested, though it was not a matter in which she had erred greatly hitherto; she believed largely, had much imagination, and as yet had thought little and felt less; consequently Mr. Johnson's flowery periods slid harmlessly off her still unconscious mind. She was interested, at first a little in the words, afterwards entirely by the man. Mr. Johnson was a fair man with a tendency towards the sandy, smooth, slightly florid, and with more than a tendency towards plumpness. He had for many years been curate at Ashelton, and, though he was now past middle life, it seemed that he was likely to remain curate at Ashelton, for it appeared that the Church dignitaries had not the same opinion of his worth as had some other people who need not be named. After all, curate at the three Asheltons was on the whole well enough. There was not too much work in the big straggling parish, and there was much sociability of a sort well suited to a man who had a nice taste in tea and pale sherry, and more fancy for being a whale among minnows than a minnow among whales. At Ashelton, though perhaps not exactly a whale, he could pass as a very tolerably sized fish among others of congenial dimensions, at all events when the rector was not there. As for the rector—well, poor man, he was eccentric, he had had trouble—Mr. Johnson said so leniently without any idea as to what the trouble was. For the eccentricity he could vouch: the rector had a cousin who was a bishop, in a genuine, important bishopric, and another, it was hinted, who was a peer. What man, not eccentric, would have remained all these years in a little country parish when he pos-

sessed these advantages? Then there was his passion for music, and also his inability to appreciate Mr. Johnson. Mr. Johnson had at last come to the conclusion that this inability did exist; yet even now he was not sure that it was not partly the expression of a not unnatural jealousy of his own social and parochial triumphs.

On that particular March evening Mr. Johnson knew that he had added one more to the long list of those triumphs. It was a small matter, of course, but, as he told his wife, trifles like that showed how easily he could have influenced a larger audience, had he been in command of one. The trifle in question was Bill Alardy, whose face showed how deeply interested she was in Mr. Johnson's words. She had the most expressive face imaginable, and that evening it was alive with interest. She had never taken her eyes off the speaker; she listened to every word, the tell-tale face expressing the keenest enjoyment and appreciation. So marked was this that after supper, when all were leaving, Mr. Johnson came to Theresa and shook hands with her and Bill, telling the latter impressively that he was very glad to see her at the reading.

To this Bill answered with equal impressiveness, "I am very glad I came."

Mr. Johnson smiled encouragingly. "I shall be happy if at any time I can be of help to you," he said; "I am always pleased to help any one."

Bill thanked him vaguely and went out with Theresa. She did not know what he meant, but it did not matter, as she did not feel conscious of wanting his help. In her opinion he could not improve upon that evening's performance, which had been perfectly delightful; so delightful that when she went to her room she thought about him until it became

too much for her, and turning to the little wooden bed and the chair which stood beside it, she addressed them, inanimate though they were. "My brothers and sisters," she said—and her flexible voice, far more flexible even than her face, rolled out in unctuous tones—"my brothers and sisters, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the only evidence we can present to our spiritual senses, the only evidence they need. It is the be-all and end-all, the beginning and the end of all things." She rolled the words lovingly on her tongue, swelling her face until it became almost Johnsonian in size. "Everything is faith, faith is everything." Here she stretched out a persuasive hand to the quaint little bed. "In it we live and move and have our being; being dead, we die not if in faith, being alive, we live not without it. Whatever is, is not, whatever is not, is, was, and shall be, world without end, amen."

But Theresa did not hear this, and held to her first opinion as to the kind of spiritual good Bill derived from the prayer-meeting. Of the social good she was not so sure, until her young cousin came to her on Saturday morning and suggested that they should go and see Miss Minchin in the afternoon. "Let us go," she said; "she promised to show me her cat and bird and other things."

Theresa acceded to the request, feeling that last night's meeting was not without results since it had introduced Miss Minchin, and implanted a desire to visit in Bill's mind.

Miss Minchin's house was set at the corner where the high road from Wrugglesby divided, the one way to go through Ashelton to the church, the other to the lanes and so to the more distant village of Sales Green. "It is a terribly public place," Miss Gruet, Miss Minchin's particular

friend, always said with commiseration. Her own house was privacy itself, the lower windows looking solely on to laurel bushes tall and elderly, the upper as effectually screened by a great horse-chestnut tree. "It was most secluded," Miss Gruet said, and, solely out of pity no doubt, she often left her seclusion to cheer her friend in the publicity which had fallen to her share. She did so on the afternoon when Theresa and Bill made their call, but did not arrive until Miss Minchin had duly shown her treasures. Bill was interested in them all,—in the cat asleep on the violet bed, only dislodged with the end of an umbrella, and the canary before the window in a green cage with a piece of grey paper neatly tacked round the lower part to keep the seeds in and the draughts out. This piece of paper was often changed, varying in colour with the Church festivals and other important events, always going into mourning on the death of royalty; at least, the cage did, black paper Miss Minchin found difficult to obtain, as she explained to Bill.

"When the poor dear Duke of Clarence died," she said, "I could not get a scrap. I put a piece of black cashmere round the cage, but the little fellow (it was not this canary then but another one) did not like it a bit."

The subject of discussion here gave a short burst of song when he ceased. Miss Minchin encouraged him to continue. "Swee-e-t!" she said; "go on, my pretty, swee-e-t! He likes someone to whistle to him, but of course I can't do that."

"I can," said Bill, and gave a trilling imitation of the caged singer.

"I declare," exclaimed Miss Minchin, "it's quite charming! I'm sure if girls had whistled like that in my young days no one would have thought

it unladylike. They did think so then, my dear, but now, to be sure, things are quite changed; every one can do as they like, and more besides."

It was just then that Miss Gruet came in. "I thought you must be coming here," Miss Minchin said briskly. "I said so to Mrs. Morton just now, when I saw you coming down the road."

"You can see everyone from your window," Miss Gruet said with a touch of severity. "I do believe from your back bedroom you could almost see the field-path that leads to the rectory."

"Yes," Miss Minchin admitted, "I can if I move the toilet-glass. Of course I never do move it, unless it happens that the blind goes wrong, as it does sometimes. It is such a tiresome blind; I remember I had to see to it the day Tom Davies went to put his banns up; he thought no one saw him go sneaking to the rectory, but I did, for I was mending my blind."

Miss Gruet professed herself properly shocked — and interested. "There is no telling what you might not see," she said, "and Mr. Dane a bachelor too!"

Miss Minchin hastened to assure the company that she had never seen anything bad; indeed, only yesterday morning, when the troublesome blind went wrong again, she had seen quite a pleasant sight — Mr. Dane and young Mr. Harborough in earnest conversation. "So nice," she said, "for a young man like that to be such friends with the rector."

The others agreed with her, and talked over this item of intelligence in all its aspects. A little later, Theresa and Miss Gruet being at the time deep in a discussion of the difficulty of preventing mice from eating cheese-mats, Bill led the conversation back to Harborough.

"The Harboroughs of Gurnett," she said; "does this Mr. Harborough belong to them?"

"No, indeed," Miss Minchin answered, almost shocked at the idea. "The Harboroughs of Gurnett are the Harboroughs of Wood Hall, one of the oldest families in the county, just as Wood Hall is one of the finest places. At least, it used to be, but times are sadly changed from what they were. The Harboroughs are poor now and cannot afford to keep the place up; not but what it is fine still,—have you ever seen it?"

"No, but I have heard about it," Bill said eagerly. "There is a room there, the library I think, with a fireplace so big that a quadrille could be danced on the hearth; and the great hall is so wide that a coach and four could turn in it without touching the wall on either side."

"Yes, my dear, yes." The old lady's tone was sad, as of one who remembers departed greatness. "Yes; so they say; they say many things about the place. It is sad to think of the way in which it is being left, sad to think of the Harboroughs, a good old family."

"I thought they were bad," Bill remarked, remembering the common report of the district.

"So they were, bad and extravagant too; they nearly all were, and that is why they are so poor now."

Bill did not express any opinion on good old families which were also bad; she only remarked meditatively, "I think I shall go to Wood Hall."

"You can't," Miss Minchin said; "Mr. Harborough lives there now."

"Yes; but part of the grounds are open, are they not? I could see them, as much as can be seen."

"I would not, if I were you." Miss Minchin's voice was a solemn warning.

"Why not?"

"Because,—it does not seem exactly

right for a young girl to go into those grounds."

"But why?"

Miss Minchin dropped her voice half a tone lower. "Mr. Harborough is a bad old man," she said, "a very wicked old man. It does not become me to speak ill of one in his station, belonging to this county too; still facts are facts, and they are terrible."

"What has he done?"

Bill showed, or Miss Minchin thought she showed, too much interest in the subject, and, either because she would not, or else because she could not, she gave no further information. Whereupon Bill, failing to hear anything about the one Mr. Harborough, returned to the other.

"Is he related to the Wood Hall people?" she asked.

"No, oh dear, no," Miss Minchin answered. "He is an Australian, or a New Zealander, or something American and colonial; I am rather uncertain about those places, but he comes from one of them. Besides, my dear, consider, he is a farmer, nothing but a farmer,—a very good profession; I am not saying anything against it," she added hastily remembering Theresa's husband; "indeed, I should be very sorry to, seeing that all the patriarchs were farmers, so to say. Still, you must admit it is not quite suitable to a member of the county families. I know old families are not respected as they used to be, but no one would think of classing them with farmers even now."

Bill acquiesced and then observed: "It is queer he should have the same name."

"Oh, I don't know," Miss Minchin said, bridling a little. "It is not such an uncommon name; besides the old families spread so. Long ago they were, no doubt, much larger than they now are; there is no telling where all the younger branches go."

"You think he is a younger branch? Then he should be as good as the others."

"Certainly not: for one reason he has not lived in the same place so long; he and his forebears have gone out from among the family; they have not kept up the family traditions. There are many traditions in a family like that, many, and much property too. Why, do you know the side chapel in our parish church is the property of the Harboroughs?"

Bill did not know it, neither did she see the force of it as an argument; nevertheless she was interested. "The whole chapel?" she asked.

"Yes, the little chapel and the little altar and all complete. Of course they never go there, for they are Catholics. I sometimes think perhaps if Mr. Harborough had not been a Catholic—but there! We mustn't be uncharitable. Do you like reading? Yes? Then I should advise you to read the history of the county; you will find all about Wood Hall there and many other things you will like. I don't think Mrs. Morton has a history, but Miss Gruet has a very nice book of Selections; which I have no doubt she will lend to you; I do believe I have it in the house now." She had borrowed it when Harborough first came and had not yet returned it. "We can ask her to allow you to take it home with you; I'm sure she will."

This Miss Gruet expressed herself happy to do, and Bill carried the book away with her when she left with Theresa a few minutes later.

CHAPTER VI.

THE parish church of Ashelton was very old. It was said in Miss Gruet's selected history of the county to be of great antiquarian interest; but antiquaries did not abound in Ashelton,

and neither the inhabitants nor their friends troubled their heads much about the stone-work of the fourteenth century, or any of the other commended points of interest. At one time there had been a couple of letters in a Wrugglesby paper about a little Last Judgment window of obscure meaning; but the letters had long been forgotten, and the rector's new organ partly hid the window now.

Bill paid particular attention to the window on the first Sunday that she went to Ashelton church; but she had just been reading about it and knew where to look for it. For the rest, that which chiefly pleased her were the grinning goblin faces which looked out from the capitals of pillars and the niches of windows,—from every place where the old builders could put them; there was even one carved at the end of Theresa's pew. Everybody had a pew, and almost everybody went to church in Ashelton. The Morton's pew was conveniently situated for keeping an eye on the rest of the congregation. There was only one better placed for that purpose, Miss Minchin's; but she, as she always maintained, had not selected it herself, her dear mother having done so long before her time,—in which case, it is possible to conceive that Miss Minchin inherited her tastes, as well as her pew, from her mother. Bill, from her place of vantage, looked at everybody, and everybody, with even greater interest, looked at her. In fact so much did they look that she, though as a rule somewhat indifferent on the subject of clothes, was rather glad that Polly had furbished up her winter hat before she left Wrugglesby. She gave the hat a little pull forward as she thought of it, and looked across Mrs. Perry's purple bonnet to the Harborough chapel. It was to the left of

the chancel, a step higher than the main body of the church and in a measure cut off from it by a continuance of the slender oak screen which stood before the chancel itself. Bill looked at it thoughtfully, opining that there could never have been enough Harboroughs to fill it, unless they brought their servants with them. There was a small altar with a cross upon it, and above, an old window where fat cherubs smiled in starch-blue smoke. She wondered what its meaning was, as others had wondered before her, and came to the conclusion that it was a pity the starch clouds, if they were clouds, were not red instead of blue: "It could not possibly make the place darker than it now is," she thought, "and it would look very much nicer."

It is to be feared that Bill did not pay very much attention to the sermon. She looked about her over much, but she could still say with truth, when asked by Miss Gruet afterwards, that she had enjoyed the service, for she had a keen ear for music, and the music at Ashelton church was very good. She listened with rapt attention to what Miss Minchin called "the set pieces," and joined enthusiastically in the hymns, singing loud and sweet, for though her flexible voice was perhaps better suited to the mimicry of other sounds than anything else, it still possessed a rich sweetness in its many-noted variations.

When Bella came home from visiting Theresa in the winter she confessed to Polly that she had found Sunday afternoon a little dull; that is to say the first Sunday afternoon; on the second she had gone for a walk and—Bill had not heard any more, so she did not know what prevented the second Sunday afternoon from being as dull as the first. She did not herself find the afternoon dull, as she went up to the garret to look over

some books. Theresa in bringing away her girlish treasures from Miss Brownlow's had accidentally brought a few things which were not hers.

"I have been meaning to take them back several times," she said, "but I keep forgetting. I really hardly know what they are now; there are one or two books belonging to Polly and to you, or your father. I put them in a box in the garret when I had to turn the spare room out; you might get them down some time and put them with your things, if you will."

Bill said she would, and chose Sunday afternoon to do it. She left Robert and Theresa reading and dozing by the fire with the port and oranges on the table beside them. "Don't you want any dessert?" Theresa had said. But Bill did not care about port and oranges; she filled her pocket with nuts and went to the garret to eat them while she looked over the books. These she found in a lidless packing-case neatly covered over with brown paper. The one on the top was *HOLY LIVING AND DYING*. "That's Auntie's: Theresa must have got it from the top shelf in the dining-room; the books there were mostly hers; I suppose she thought they all were and took the lot." The next was a small brown volume, *PLAIN TRUTHS FOR PLAIN PEOPLE*, in which she found Polly's name—"That's just the book for Polly; a plain person she certainly is, and the plain truth is a very good thing for her to start on, considering how she can trim it." The two volumes were laid aside, and the next dive into the box brought out a book she was pleased to see but did not before know that they possessed, an old history of that part of the county. "Whose is this, I wonder—why, it's mine!" She had turned to the first page and seen her own name *Wilhelmina Alardy*.

"That's funny,"—she was cracking her nuts with her teeth as she looked. "At least, I don't know that it is so funny after all; I expect it was stuck up at the top with the other old things, so I never knew about it. Of course I am not that Wilhelmina; that's Grandmother."

Bill looked long at the book, for she had not many relics, or even tales, of her own grandmother, as she counted her father's mother in distinction from her mother's mother whom she shared equally with the cousins. There was not, to be sure, much of this lady to share; not one of the four cousins had even a memory of her, though of their own grandmothers the others each had something to tell. Polly had a good many tales about hers, with an ugly old portrait, too, and a heavy locket she used to wear. Bella and Theresa could remember theirs plainly; they had stayed with her when they were little girls, and still had the coral necklaces she gave them the last Christmas she was alive. But Bill had neither tales nor trinkets; her parents had both died when she was very young, and Miss Brownlow knew no traditions of the Alardys and few facts concerning them, except that Bill's father was an only son, and that for relations the girl must depend on her; so it happened that Bill knew little about her grandmother, except that she herself was named after her. There was a little wooden box-ottoman in the spare bedroom at Langford House, which, she had been told, used to belong to this grandmother. She had looked inside it once and found nothing but papers, which did not prove very interesting; a few letters, not easy to decipher and not, so far as she had tried them, entertaining, half a dozen bills, part of an old account-book, some recipes for cough-mixture and tea-cakes, a

few odd sheets of paper and manuscript music, and some legal-looking documents which were quite beyond her comprehension. The greater part of this miscellaneous collection seemed to have belonged to her mother; a few of the less intelligible were of an older date, and the music and some scraps of poetry were not dated at all. Bill had thought of carrying the poetry away, as the only thing there which interested her; but since she had gone to the box without Miss Brownlow's permission, she decided that she had better not take anything out, and learned the lines by heart instead. Then she shut the box, and gave up any hope of boasting as intimate an acquaintance with her grandmother as the other cousins did with theirs.

That was in the winter. She had not thought any more about it until this Sunday afternoon when she unexpectedly came upon the history of the county with her grandmother's name on the fly-leaf. She was delighted with her discovery, partly because it was her grandmother's, but chiefly because it was the very book she wanted. Settling herself comfortably on an empty tea-chest, she proceeded to study it and the old map of the district which she found folded inside. When at last she was called downstairs for tea she was still full of her treasure, and told Robert and Theresa about it. They listened, amused by the interest she attached to it and the attraction she found in both book and map.

"I believe the map must be a good one," she said at last; "it is so clear, I think I could find my way anywhere by it."

"Where do you want to find your way?" Robert asked smiling.

"Oh, to lots of places, to Gurnett for one. I think I shall walk to Gurnett to-morrow; may I, Theresa?"

"It is rather a long way, but go if you like." Theresa perhaps thought a long walk would be better for her young cousin than spending too much time with the animals in the yard.

The next morning, accordingly, Bill, armed with her map and some sandwiches for refreshment by the way, started on her walk. The distance might be long, but she could not remember any time in her life when she had been really tired. It seemed to her that mere walking was not enough, and once fairly started in the lonely lanes and quiet fields, she broke into a run for pure lightness of heart and ecstasy of living. Soon she was out on a road again, and here she walked more soberly, looking to right and left, noting the veil of green that was spreading over the hedges, enjoying to the full the day and the walk and the solitude.

And so Gurnett was reached, almost too soon, and the sandwiches eaten behind a grassy bank, very much too soon considering it was not yet twelve. After that the map was pulled out and considered thoughtfully. It was some time before she could find on it the exact spot where she now was, but at last she did. "Here I am, here — oh, yes, these must be the cross-roads; there is Wood Hall, over there, and here comes the lane between, the second turning after the cross-roads. The little path ought to cross just where the road joins the lane; I wonder if I shall find it; it seems to go straight from Corbycroft on one side of the lane to Wood Hall on the other, or rather to the little church in Wood Hall grounds. I don't see what it can have been made for, but it must be a real path since it is marked; if anyone says anything to me I shall show him the map."

Having come to this satisfactory conclusion Bill folded up her map and went on. In due time she came to

the junction of the road and lane, but there was no indication that a footpath existed in any direction. In fact, the country itself on the left-hand side had undergone something of a change, for whereas her map showed that there had been a sort of park, the property of the distant hall, Corbycroft, there now seemed to be nothing but pasture-fields. She climbed the steep bank, the lane here being considerably below the level of the fields, and looked round. There was nothing but pasture-land, green, curving, sloping gradually away from her. A clump of elms stood in the centre, beautiful trees, tawny with the catkins which hung from their black branches; but there was no park, only pasture-land sloping down to the farm in the distance. And the farm looked very much as if it were a farm and not a hall; perhaps it was the remains of the old hall patched up and serving as a farmhouse; though, to be sure, her history had spoken of a hall, a small off-manor belonging to the Corbys, a family who seemed to have had their head-quarters and more important property away in the north of the county, in the direction of the coast. The map and history were alike old, and Bill was forced to admit that things might have changed since they were made.

But if the left side of the lane was disappointing, the right more than fulfilled expectations. The ground sloped sharply up on that side; Wood Hall evidently stood on a hill and appeared to be hidden among trees, for the slope as far as Bill could see was covered with forest. It was not a trim park but a thicket, a wild young forest growing up as it could about the stumps of veteran oaks and beeches long since sacrificed to the axe. In some places the young trees almost choked each other with their

crowded growth ; in others they struggled for existence with the old pollards that still held their ground. Brambles and moss and last year's fern covered the paths and choked the water-courses ; here and there a tree, too lightly rooted to withstand the winters' storms, or too old to bear the weight of its years, had fallen and lay as it fell. All was neglected, all growing, in crowded thicket or open glade, as only nature unassisted can grow ; for it was genuine woodland, where the sunshine filtered through a close-woven roof of branches and chased dancing shadows over last year's leaves ; thickets of thorn breaking into leaf, primroses hiding in the moss at their feet ; beeches, tall and straight as pillars of stone, a cathedral twilight in their shade ; pollard oaks still brown in sheltered places ; the glossy darkness of holly, the stately grace of slim young larches lightly tasselled in earliest green ; silver birches, old trees, their white bark cracked and swelled, blackened by many years ; young trees, a lace-work of branches, a tangle of supple stems and bursting buds.

Bill was over the low boundary fence now. There was no evidence of a path, but there ought to have been ; it was marked on her map and she was going to find it, so she began the ascent in the direction in which it should have been. Up she went, the ground soft and irregular, here the dead leaves of many years blown into hollows rustling about her feet, there the rich black earth patched with moss, emerald and gray and golden brown. An old pollard lay as it had fallen ; about its head fungus had gathered, and under its side primroses grew. Higher up, where the leaves were fewer, in sheltered ledges, beneath the twisty coils of beech-roots there were more primroses, plenty of them, and everywhere

anemones, fairy flowers that danced among the dead bracken. The sun, hidden by the hill, looked down through the forest aisles, threading the whole place with arrows of light so that all around there was a lattice of woven light and shadow, while, before, there stretched a path golden as Jacob's way to heaven.

Involuntarily the girl stood still, clasping her hands tight on one another, while her breath came fast. All round stretched this living woodland, thrilling with its growing, stirring life ; the bare trees, brown and purple and deep blue in their shadows, yet touched with the breath of spring, faintest green, or gold, or sparkling where the sun caught their yet unopened buds. The very earth was audible, alive, as it breathed forth its moist sweetness ; and the birds sang their anthem of praise for the world's eternal, ever recurring youth.

She stood, a little brown figure in the lonely wood, her whole soul going out to the great mother Earth, her heart filled with a passionate, inarticulate gladness. "Oh, God!" she said, "how good, how good it all is!"

She said it aloud because she had not outgrown that stage of savagedom which feels, with the Druids of old, that God is in the woods. A chaffinch on a crab-tree above her head looked down and to another hid in the catkinned branches of a hornbeam cried, "Come and see, what d'ye think ! What d'ye think !" And the other replied with exactly the same words, or at least it seemed so to Bill ; she listened a moment, then answered them with a call so like their own that they might well have been puzzled by it if she had not at that moment begun to sing and frightened them both to the safe distance of a higher bough.

"There's laughter for the May-time,"—

She sang and her voice was like a lark's in its complete gladness—

"The morning of the year, the year—"

and the singing was merged into ripples of sound neither song nor laughter and yet a wild sweet blending of both.

"Well, young woman, I hope you are satisfied."

Bill stopped abruptly and faced the speaker, an old man on the higher ground just above her. He may have approached by some path hidden in the thicket on the right, or he may have been close at hand waiting till now to declare himself; she did not know which, neither did she know what was expected of her, so she only answered truthfully, "Yes."

"I am glad to hear it." She looked puzzled, and he added abruptly: "You are trespassing,—do you know it?"

The light began to dawn on Bill's mind; she had forgotten all about the map and the footpath, but now she remembered and answered eagerly: "No, no, I am not really, at least I don't think I can be; there is a footpath somewhere about here; I can't have got far from it."

"There is no foot-path."

"But it is marked on my map," and Bill began to unfold the paper in which she had for greater security wrapped her treasure.

"I can't help your map; there is no foot-path here and there never was. I think I should know considering that the place belongs to me."

"Are you Mr. Harborough?" Bill's face beamed with satisfaction.

"I am; the fact seems to afford you pleasure."

"I am pleased," Bill admitted. Having once got herself into a difficulty she never had any hesitation

about going through with it, in which course she was often helped by a serene unconsciousness of her position and offences, a quality Polly reckoned high in the list of her condemned exhibitions of no "gumption." "I am pleased. I—I had heard about you."

"I am indeed gratified;" he spoke with a sarcastic courtesy somewhat wasted on his hearer. "Judging by your flattering anxiety to make my acquaintance, I must conclude that what you heard was to my credit."

"It was interesting," Bill said doubtfully.

Whereupon the old man laughed. "In that case," he said, "I must conclude it was not to my credit."

Without replying Bill unfolded her map. "This is the foot-path," she said, and began tracing it with her finger.

"I don't want to see your map, child." He was looking curiously at the small brown figure. "Look up," he said, "I would rather see your face. Tell me where you learnt to sing and laugh and whistle to the birds all in a breath."

"I don't know; I suppose I was made like that," she still persistently spread out the map. "My cousin Polly," she explained, without glancing up, "says my father was a singer, a poor one, you know, not anything much, but perhaps I inherited it from him. Sometimes, though, Polly says he was a ventriloquist or even a clown; I don't think she really knows.—See, here is the footpath."

"Whose is this map?" asked Mr. Harborough who had taken it from her and was examining it through a gold-rimmed glass.

"Mine."

"But you did not mark that path; it was done years ago."

"Yes, when the map was made."

"No, certainly not; it was put in

afterwards, that is easy to see. Even if I did not know that, as no such path exists, it could not have been printed then or at any other time."

He dropped his glass and handed the map back to Bill who, after looking at it a little, began to see that he was correct.

"Then there is no path here after all," she said in a tone of woeful disappointment. "I should like to know who marked it on the map!"

"So should I, so should I very much. Where did you get the thing?"

"I found it in an old book of my grandmother's."

"Your grandmother?" he said impatiently. "What was your grandmother, who was she, how did she come by the book and the map, whose were they before?"

Bill could give him no information, and he held out his hand for the map again. She gave it to him and he examined it critically. "There were very few people who could have put that in," he said thoughtfully.

"Then there is a path!" Bill exclaimed.

"No, there is not, and there never was. Come with me, just a few steps. There,—now look down, your path should pass the pond by that stream, do you see? That boggy place, that is where it is marked to go; that place has always been the same. What do you think of men who chose that way by preference,—is it likely they would do it? What should you think of them?"

"I should think they were in a great hurry, and perhaps, that it was night," and Bill looked down into the marshy, overgrown hollow, at a loss to understand.

Her companion's voice aroused her: "What about this grandmother of yours?" he asked abruptly.

"I don't know anything; she has

been dead a long time, but I will find out if I can."

"Will you? Perhaps you think you will also find out about this mysterious path?"

"Yes."

Bill was a painfully persistent person. It may have been that Mr. Harborough thought so, or it may have been that he still wished to keep her to enliven the tedium of the day, for he said coolly: "I will tell you if you like. There is no path, it is true, but the way marked on your map was taken one night by men in a hurry to reach the chapel of ease further on in these grounds.

"They made a path for themselves!" Bill cried. "They were in a hurry and went the nearest way! What were they doing? Why did they want to go to the chapel?"

Mr. Harborough laughed at her eagerness. "My dear young lady," he said, "I will explain if you wish, only we must really walk on. I am sorry to say I can no longer stand an indefinite time even to discuss anything so romantic as you seem to think this tale. Let us go on,—this way. Now for the romance: to begin with, do you know a certain old tradition in connection with carrying a corpse? It may linger still, though I hardly think it, but at the time I am speaking of it was not infrequently believed that the way along which a body had been carried for burial became a path for ever, became what is called a right of way. Mind, this is tradition I am telling you, not fact; it is not fact and it never was. If twenty bodies were carried through my grounds for burial no right of way would be established, but at one time some people firmly believed such a thing to be the case."

"Then the men were carrying a body?" Bill's face was flushed with excitement. "And the person who

marked my map knew about it and believed the tradition?"

"Yes. The question is, who marked your map?"

"Did not many people know about carrying the body that way?"

"Not many, and certainly very few could have marked your map with the accuracy with which I believe it to be marked."

"The burying was private, then?"

Bill was anxious to make the most of her romance. Her companion watched her eagerness with an amused face, and as they came suddenly on to a gravel path, he said with an air of impenetrable mystery: "Very private, I should say, at that time, very private indeed."

CHAPTER VII.

It was an axiom of Polly's that if you can't be clever, you had better be a fool. This, needless to state, was first said in reference to Bill who, Polly considered, fell into the last category and fell there comfortably. "Providence, or something else, helps fools," was Polly's opinion, "while it leaves moderately sensible people to shift for themselves. Things always turn out right for fools. Whatever muddle Bill blundered into, I believe she would blunder out of it again not one bit the worse." The day that Bill went in search of the right of way at Wood Hall was possibly an illustration of this faculty; for on that occasion, though she had the ill-luck to blunder on the owner of the property, she was not ignominiously turned out of the place, threatened with prosecution and other penalties; on the contrary, she was—"Well, treated in a way in which I should not have been treated," Polly said with an indignant sniff. Wherein she certainly spoke the truth, but then, as Bella pointed out,

Bill was not Polly; though what Bill was that she should please the master of Wood Hall, neither could quite say. They did not know him.

After all, there was not much to know, only a lonely old man who had outlived friends and health and amusements. He had come to Wood Hall to die, he said, for it was well fitting that he, the last of the family in a direct line, should die in the neglected home. Certainly he had never used it much as a home; perhaps he had not cared to do so in reduced state, perhaps, more likely, he had little interest in a country life. One autumn, a long time ago, he had spent a month or two at the old hall, which was only some five miles from the house where the high sheriff for the year was living. People said that this proximity had something to do with Mr. Harborough's visit; and certainly there was some scandal about the sheriff's wife which had the effect of closing the doors of the neighbouring gentry upon him for a time, at least of those who still cherished certain provincial notions of morality. But that was all a very old tale, a tale almost forgotten now. Miss Minchin and her compeers might recall it, but to the younger generation Mr. Harborough and his doings were little more than a name, for since that time Wood Hall had seen but very little of him. Indeed, he affected a cynical indifference for the old house, which was possibly genuine enough, though it had not prevented his coming to pass his last lonely days there. Lonely they were, and tedious he often found them; tedious when he was ill, more tedious still when he was well. It was to this tedium, and to the fact that he was moderately well that day, that Bill owed the interest she had for him; that and, perhaps, some little charm her youth had for the old rake.

Whatever may have been the cause, certainly she did interest him, for when he led her through the wood and out on to the path he showed no inclination to let her go. The path was a weed-grown gravel sweep, dividing the wood on the one side from a shrubbery on the other. Here a man with a wheeled chair was waiting the arrival of his master.

"Oh," Bill exclaimed as she saw the path between the trees, "I have come out at the wrong place! I had better go back."

"And lose your way, and trespass still further on my property?"

"I will be very careful."

"I dare say." The old man seated himself in the chair as he spoke. "Don't you think you have trespassed enough for one day?"

Bill did not consider that she had exactly trespassed, but she was not sure that she could make anyone else, say a magistrate, take the same view; neither was she sure what the penalty for trespass might be, so she only said: "I am very sorry; I thought the map was right, though I certainly did not see a path."

"On the strength of the thought you went to look? Yes? Well, supposing I let you off this time—"

"I will never do it again."

"—Let you off, I say, on a condition."

"What condition?" Bill asked cautiously.

"That, as a penance for coming here, you finish the song you began in the wood."

"Is that all? I'll certainly do that. It is not a real song, only a verse of poetry and I don't sing it quite right. The last line should be 'In winter rest is sweet,' only I like it best the other way. Shall I sing it now?" And receiving an answer in the affirmative, she sang without more ado:

"There's laughter for the May-time,
The morning of the year;
There's work for all the day-time,
When summer's noon is here;
The victor's crown of glory
The harvest home shall greet;
But after life's long story
There's the devil's bill to meet!
The devil's bill—"

she sang till all the wood around her seemed full of laughing voices—

"The devil's bill, the devil's bill, the devil's bill to meet!"

Seeing that the condition laid upon her was a light one she felt bound to fulfil it to the uttermost and to do her best, using all the tricks of voice and tone that she knew. In this laudable endeavour her success was such that even the stoical attendant with the chair, who, it might have been presumed, had outlived astonishment in his master's service, looked at her in surprise, while Mr. Harborough himself was delighted.

"Bravo!" he exclaimed. "What a voice it is! They ought to put you on the stage, the variety-stage."

Bill was gratified, but not unduly moved. She had a tolerably clear idea that her vocal tricks had not much real value, and, as she wanted to get home, she did not care to stay for more compliments.

"You see, I have got to get back to Ashelton," so she concluded her explanation.

"Ashelton," Mr. Harborough exclaimed; "you cannot get there till after three o'clock. You surely do not mean to go fasting? You must not do that. You will perhaps give me the pleasure of your company at lunch? Yes? You had better; they will have eaten up everything by the time you get home. Come, you must not say no; that song deserves something more than a wander in the wood. Little Miss Tucker sang for

her supper,—no, for her lunch. I promise that you shall not be late in getting home, the carriage can take you as far as you like on your return journey.”

Bill was not troubled with many even rudimentary ideas of propriety. The sandwiches were little more than a memory, and, besides,—a reason which influenced her most of all—if she accepted the invitation she would see Wood Hall. Consequently she did accept and, walking beside the chair, accompanied Mr. Harborough to the house.

What was it like? Bill sometimes tried to describe it, but she never succeeded, and always ended by saying: “If it were mine, I would never, never give it up; I would fight for every brick of it, every timber, every stone. I would sell everything to keep it; it would break my heart to let it go after it had belonged to my people for so many generations. It is a house that is just weighed down with years; I think it must be almost awful to have all those years behind you.”

It was with a hushed sense of the awe belonging to a great house which has reached its declining days that Bill entered the wide arched doorway. She had said, as they came from the wood, how much she wanted to see the big hall of local fame, so, by Mr. Harborough's orders, they went by the long west front of the house. It was a huge pile, built of bricks which were neither purple nor red, but of that tint which only the centuries can mix, with rows of mullioned windows, set not too straight by the hands of Tudor builders, and pressed yet more aslant by the weight of time upon them. Above was a roof high-gabled, many-peaked, running this way and that; below, stretching to right and left, a terraced walk led to gardens where yew hedges and pleached allies

recalled the days of hooped petticoats and powdered heads, or even of older times when the men of trunk-hose and mighty hand cast bowls on the smooth turfed green. But everywhere was decay; even the spring sunshine and the glad singing birds could not destroy the sense of death and decay,—blistered paint and lichen stone, sagging roof and darkened windows, grass on the terrace, weeds between the stones, unclipped hedges, the rose-walks a tangle of thorns; and the great, sad, grand old house looking down on it all.

To this place Bill came, out of the spring sunshine and the living air into the great hall. It was not quite so great as tradition said, but still of size enough to tempt some mad Harborough of bygone days to try to turn his coach in its width. Vast it was, with its dark walls hung with tapestry rotten past repair, its dark polished floor, and its fireplace where a man might well share the hearth with the logs and not then be over-near the blaze. Above the mantel-piece were the arms of the house, the house that had seen its best days; the dragons' heads, deep cut in polished wood, grinned down malignantly on the little intruder whom the Harborough of to-day had brought from his woods. She paused a moment, awed by the sense of past greatness, by the weight of the years that lay behind, by the thought of the stately women who had passed that way before her. Then she went on, and as she went her light step gained a stateliness, her figure a dignity which well became the place and made old Harborough ask himself if the child had not some good blood in her after all.

He found himself pondering over the same question again later on, for Bill, like most born mimics, often unconsciously imitated those she was with, frequently, without being aware

of it, catching her manner from theirs, sometimes shaping even her speech and accent according to those of the person to whom she spoke. Thus, as Mr. Harborough treated her with an almost exaggerated courtesy, she returned him the same, and, since she was keenly conscious of the dignity belonging to the old house, she shaped her behaviour in accordance with it. As for her host, he was half surprised, half amused, the amusement growing, however, as he led her to talk. Nobody had found her conversation amusing before; Carrie and Alice, though they sometimes laughed, more often professed a contempt for her and all her sayings, even while they half feared her many mocking voices. Certainly no one had laughed at her thoughts and replies; she could not herself always see a reason for her host's laughter, but it was plain that he did. He was old, she thought, and therefore easily pleased, lonely and therefore not very critical; but his appreciation encouraged her, the wine (the first she had ever tasted) excited her, and she talked as she had never talked before, he leading her on till she had bewitched herself.

"I tried to amuse him a little while, poor old man," she told Polly meekly afterwards. "I really owed him something for the good food he gave me. Still, I think I did it more because I liked it than for anything else."

To which Polly, having but small opinion of Bill's powers of amusing, only made reply, "I dare say."

Mr. Harborough, however, who had lived in seclusion so long now that a small thing entertained him, vowed, far on in the afternoon, that Bill was the best of good company. In acknowledgment of which compliment Bill swept him a curtsy, with three fingers on her lips in the fashion of the china ladies on Miss Minchin's mantel-piece.

Then she said she must go home, and in so saying, it is to be feared that the imp in her got the upper hand, prompting her to the character she loved, for the tone and manner of her words suggested Mr. Johnson.

Carrie and Alice did not like Bill's mimicry, but Mr. Harborough was otherwise, and he recognised the original almost before Bill was aware of it herself.

"I must come and hear that parson of yours," he laughed.

"Why don't you?" Bill suddenly became serious. "There is the Harborough chapel in Ashelton church; what is the good of having a chapel all to yourself if you never use it?"

"I do not belong to the Church of England."

Bill remembered Miss Minchin's words. "Oh," she began apologetically, but then a magnificent idea occurred to her or to some spirit of mischief that possessed her. She cast a quick glance at Harborough, her eyes ablaze with light.

"What is it now?" he asked.

"Nothing;—at least, you would not do it—I don't believe you could."

"Try me," he answered; "lay your commands upon me and they are obeyed."

"It is not a command; but it would be,—I should like to see what would happen."

"In what case?"

"If you had a service in your chapel. I don't know if you could, but I should almost think so; it is your own; you could have a Roman Catholic service there as well as we could have a Protestant one in our part, couldn't you? I should like to see what would happen if you did!"

"I should probably be prosecuted," Harborough said; "that is what would most likely happen."

Bill sighed. "I never thought of that," she said.

"Did you not?" he answered. "Neither should I if I wanted the service, or rather, wanted to see what would happen."

"You would risk it?"

"What will you give me if I do?"

Harborough had little respect for either religion, less still for his neighbours' feelings. As for Bill, neither thought occurred to her; the thing appealed to her as many an act, incomprehensible to a man for its folly or its wanton mischief, appeals to the superabundant energy of boyhood. It was simply a desire to see what would happen, a sporting appreciation of an explosion with no realisation of consequences painful to other people.

"What would you give me?" he asked.

"What do you want?"

He hesitated a moment, and then said: "Come and see me again, and we will talk it over."

She agreed readily: "Yes, if Theresa will let me."

"Theresa must let you."

Bill thought it was probable that she would and said so, but Mr. Harborough, possibly judging from a wider experience, was not so sure and did not seem content with the arrangement.

"Why ask?" he said.

"Because I must; she won't mind."

"But supposing she does?"

"She won't; I shall be able to come."

"You think so? Then let us make this bargain: if I do as you suggest, you will come once more to talk over the terms."

"Very well; I will come once, she is sure to let me; but when I come, supposing I don't like your terms, supposing they don't seem fair to me, what am I to do? Must I fulfil them?"

He told her that she need not,

laughing at her caution, as a servant announced that the carriage was waiting.

So Bill took her leave and drove away in state, though she did not think it necessary to complete her journey in the Harborough carriage; in fact she dismissed it at the entrance of one of the lanes and went the rest of the way home on foot.

"Did you have a nice walk?" Theresa asked her young cousin when she met her at the door.

"Oh, yes, glorious! I have had such a good time. I went into Wood Hall, not the grounds only, but the house too. You never saw such a place; it is,—I can't describe it."

"Into Wood Hall!" Theresa exclaimed in astonishment.

"Yes, and I saw Mr. Harborough; he was ever so kind, not the least like what you would expect—"

And then out came the story of Bill's adventures, a brief and rather incoherent story with some things left out and some told twice, and, naturally, no mention of the surprise in store for the people of Ashelton. That was the only thing she intentionally suppressed, but unintentionally she suppressed many details and most of the conversation, though enough was told to puzzle and disturb Theresa.

"Bill, I don't know what to say. I am sure you ought not to have gone. I wish I had never let you go that walk."

Theresa, completely astonished by Bill's tale, now for the first time realised the responsibility of her charge. The charge herself had no idea of the nature of her offence. "Ought not to have gone?" she said. "Why not?"

"Because—because you ought not. I wonder you did not know; you should have known by instinct."

Theresa's sense of the enormity of

Bill's conduct was increasing, but with it there was also increasing a recognition of the difficulty of making it clear to the offender; certainly if she depended on Bill's instinct she was not likely to be successful, for, as Polly had rightly said, Bill possessed little of that in connection with matters of social behaviour.

"Well, for a moment I did wonder if I ought, because, of course, I had on my old dress and the place is so splendid."

"That is not the reason at all. You ought not to have gone,—I mean, he should not have asked you. He would not have done so if he had been a nice man; he could not have done so properly."

"Oh, yes he did—"

"I mean, he could not have asked you with propriety. You know he cannot think you—did not ask you as an equal; besides, you must have heard about him, the sort of man he is."

"About his being bad? Miss Minchin did say that, and certainly he did say himself that he had the devil's bill to meet."

Bill did not think it wise to explain, in answer to Theresa's exclamation, that she herself had supplied the expression. She let that pass and Theresa began: "If you thought him all that—"

"But I am not sure he is bad exactly; and if he were, I don't see what harm it would do. Besides, is he bad? Of course I shouldn't say he was good in our sense of the word, but then there are so many senses. He gave me the idea of being like a person who had lost his taste for all except one kind of thing. You can't blame a person for not liking strawberry jam when they can only properly taste peppers; I should think, in a way, he could only taste peppers; and I should not be surprised if he had tried them very hot."

"Don't talk nonsense, Bill," Theresa said severely; and Bill, acting on the suggestion, did not talk at all, except when she explained to her cousin that she had promised to go to Wood Hall once again. This Theresa naturally forbade, absolutely refusing to permit it on any condition whatever. Bill did not press the point, nor go into too many details, for, as she said to herself, "Perhaps he won't do it, and then I sha'n't have to go after all." If he did, it would be then time enough to settle with Theresa, and arrange some satisfactory compromise between breaking her own word on the one hand and her cousin's command on the other.

But would he do it? Bill wondered about it once or twice during the week. Would he be able to get a priest to read the service for him? She had a very vague idea as to how he would set about it. He had said something about knowing a man, and had smiled when he said it, not a very nice smile, but it looked rather as if he thought the man would do as he was asked. So Bill wondered, and the week passed quietly.

Sunday came, a still, peaceful spring day. April was fairly in now, every bush and tree was waking to the fact even in the grey weather. Sunday was grey, quiet and calm, but a Sunday long remembered in Ashelton. The congregation assembled in church at the usual time, wearing the usual clothes, for it was not yet Easter. There was nothing much to look at, but from force of habit the congregation looked at each other. Bill, from her corner seat, looked across the old pews to the Harborough chapel. Was he coming? The clock began to strike eleven. No, he was not coming after all, he—was he?—she watched. The small side door of the chapel was opened

from without and into the fretted twilight an old man stepped—he had come!

A great smile of satisfaction spread over Bill's face; a pleasant sensation of excitement and expectancy took possession of her. To tell the truth, something like a thrill of excitement ran through the whole congregation, though they expected nothing, at least nothing definite. Miss Minchin said afterwards that she wondered what was going to happen when she saw him come in, but then the saying came after the event. At the time she certainly looked earnestly enough to have seen anything there was to see, though that did not amount to a great deal. Mr. Harborough, attended by his manservant, entered; the verger, who hastened forward for the purpose, disposed of the servant in a side seat and shut the master in the great front pew. The congregation stared intently; Mr. Harborough stared in return with the vacant stare of a superior being,—they had always said he was very haughty; his eye met Bill's for a moment, and a faint smile of recognition passed over his face, but the general public did not notice it.

The clock had ceased striking, and the first notes of the organ filled the church with a soft vibrating sound. Forth from the new vestry on the right came the choir and clergy; forth from the old vestry on the left, built originally for the sole use of the Harborough chapel, came a priest with shaven face set in a mask of stolid endurance. Bill, with the wanton cruelty of youth, saw the enduring face, but, not recognising its pain, felt no compunction, no pity for the man forced by some threat he feared to a task hateful to him. She felt nothing at all except a thrilling excitement. For a moment the event was all she

had expected. All around her she could feel the mute horror and astonishment of the congregation; she could see it uncontrolled on their faces, so comical, she thought, in their blank, speechless amazement at this unparalleled conduct of the lord of the manor. At the end of the aisle was the verger, motionless, dumb; in their pews, the churchwardens, alike dumb, incapable of action, watching, fascinated, the rival clergy who, owing to the situation of the altar in the Harborough chapel, were hidden from each other's sight by the wooden screen. No one in the chancel knew of those in the chapel; no one in the chapel showed any sign of knowledge of those in the chancel; all knelt in silence. But as the last choir-boy on the right rose from his knees, he leaned a little forward and saw the priest beyond the screen. His eyes grew round with astonishment; he almost fell forward on his head in his eagerness to be quite sure; then the situation struck him as it struck Bill, and doubled him up in spasms of suppressed laughter.

"When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness,"—Mr. Johnson began, at the same time becoming aware of an unusual rustle and movement among the hitherto spell-bound people.

The priest should, no doubt, have begun to read at the same time, but he did not. Mr. Harborough apologised to Bill afterwards for the way in which he failed in his part, for he hesitated and waited a moment. In that moment the verger, a shrewd old brickmaker, hastened up the aisle, and, without waiting for orders from the churchwardens, delivered some whispered information to Mr. Dane.

There was a breathless pause; then low but distinct came the voice of the priest,—"*Introibo ad altare Dei*—"

Miss Minchin started violently and looked about her in an awed fashion. She had seen all that had passed, but she hardly thought, as she said afterwards, that he would really venture to hold a service in the parish church. Mr. Dane passed quietly between the slender pillars of the side screen and approached the priest. A second whispered conversation, a glance, possibly an appealing glance, at Mr. Harborough, and Mr. Dane went on to him. Mr. Johnson, in the absence of the rector, went on with the service, but when Mr. Dane returned to his place he silenced his curate with a glance, and the priest, either more courteous or more sure of a hearing, did not attempt to begin his reading anew.

Mr. Dane turned to the congregation. "My brethren," he said, "our neighbour, Mr. Harborough, has expressed a wish to hear the mass read in his chapel of St. Mary Magdalene.

As the hour he has chosen for the reading coincides with that of our morning-service, and as both cannot be conducted simultaneously in a seemly manner, I ask you to wait with me while the reverend Father reads the mass, which may God bless both to him and his hearers."

No one left the church; to a man they stood by their rector, though there were those among them who had strong feelings and would have much liked to enter a protest. The priest turned back to his mass-book; his hands shook a little, for the rector's words had distressed him curiously; but Mr. Dane composed himself to listen with quiet dignity.

And deep hidden in the shadow of a high old pew was one whose grief and self-abasement knew no bounds. The event had not been what she had anticipated; things looked so very different now.

(To be continued.)

SOME CHILDREN OF THE STATE.

OPINIONS differ widely as to the condition of children in our Poor Law schools. Some of these opinions are based on fact, others on fancy. Even experts are at variance as to the value of the training given in such institutions; while the average man, with a point of view coloured by an early study of Dickens, sees in them nothing good.

Nobody can doubt that Poor Law schools have improved since the days of *Oliver Twist*, thanks to a livelier interest in social questions and a humaner administration of the Poor Law. It is true that they differ widely in different parts of the country; yet, even in the most benighted rural district, where bucolic brains do not aim at a very high standard of training for pauper children, and where education for the poorer classes is still regarded in the light of a dangerous experiment, there is much to be said in their favour. A feeling that children, at any rate, are paupers through no fault of their own is generally prevalent, and their lot has brightened accordingly. In London and our other large towns the managers of Poor Law schools go a step beyond this and are responsible for genuine and often generous efforts to make the schools as efficient as possible, and to give the children a training which shall have some taste of home-life about it, and from which the taint of pauperism shall be as far as possible removed. But even here the schools are, as it were, in the melting-pot, undergoing various processes of change with a view to their betterment, and what the result will be is not yet

clear. A jealous eye is kept on the schools by the authorities on the one hand and by philanthropists on the other; and, from time to time, the public is given the benefit of their observations. Officials of various grades report on the work of the schools and the condition of the inmates as seen through their eyes. Such testimony, however, honest as it may be, is liable to prejudice or shortness of view, and it is not an ill thing that, for once in a while, the children should be allowed to speak for themselves; not directly, of course, for that might be subversive of discipline, but in such a way that side-lights may be thrown upon the administration of our Poor Law schools. What are they taught? How are they being trained, and what do they desire?

Recently the boys and girls in the upper standards of some of the most representative Poor Law schools of London and the neighbourhood were asked to write short essays on "What they would like to be in life, and why." Over eight hundred papers were sent in, and were evidently the candid and untutored expressions of the children's own desires. A careful tabulation of these essays shows the following results. Of four hundred and eight boys, one hundred and fifty-one decided in favour of various handicrafts; one hundred and one wanted to be soldiers, thirty-five farmers, thirty-four sailors, twenty-one engineers, seventeen musicians, ten clerks, five gardeners, three engine-drivers, three firemen, three explorers, three page-boys, two doctors, two

artists, two grocers, two professional cricketers, two waiters, two heroes, while one candidate was found for each of the following careers, a postman, a naval band-boy, a teacher, a secretary to a football-club, a special-correspondent, a gymnastic-instructor, a hunter, a guard, a cook, and a swimmer. Of four hundred and twenty-six girls, two hundred and ninety elected to be domestic servants of one kind or another; forty wanted to be dressmakers, thirty-three nurses, thirty teachers, six missionaries, five laundresses, three nursery-governesses, two milliners, two lady's companions, two post-office clerks, two travellers, two poetesses, one a governess, one a machinist, one a drill-mistress, one a naturalist, one a botanist, one a duchess, one a lady adopting orphans, one to be rich, and one to be useful.

The choice of a calling has been determined in many instances by what the children are taught in the schools. This is particularly so as regards handicrafts among the boys and domestic service among the girls. Musicians, too, (this with the majority means band-boys) come mainly from those schools where the band is a prominent feature. The war in South Africa will in a measure account for the large percentage of aspiring soldiers; many expressions indicate that its progress had been watched in these schools with the keenest eyes, and that the children were well posted as to what was going on. Apart from this, however, there are indications that in many schools soldiering, as a future, is kept prominently before the boys, but there are also a good number of instances where personal reasons are given for such a choice; boys are the sons of soldiers or have relatives in the army, and many specify the particular regiments to which they hope to belong.

Both boys and girls have plenty of

ambition, and there is an evident determination to make the most of whatever calling in life falls to their share. The wisdom of thrift is also appreciated, and often the main reason for the choice of a future calling is that it will insure ample provision for old age, or a sufficient surplus to support a family or assist parents and friends. The need for honesty and truthfulness is much insisted on, and in most of the schools the children are apparently warned against the evils of drink. The girls also speak much of the need for diligent and conscientious service; they must clean out the corners and sweep well under the mats. The boys are much impressed by the need of obedience to authority. Health is greatly desired, and more than one boy asserts that the calling he has chosen will tend to develop his limbs. For instance, a boy who desires to be a postman emphasises the fact that the work will strengthen the muscles of his legs. In one school the boys are much given to choosing what they are pleased to call "clean" trades, and, in another, choice is largely determined by the fact that a calling is not dangerous. Many of the boys are very patriotic. They desire to have a hand in building up the Empire and express great readiness to die for King and Country. There is also among them much anxiety for honours and promotion; they want to do some great deed which shall bring them name and fame.

The girls are less mercenary than the boys; that is to say, they give greater evidence of an altruistic spirit and lay less stress on a desire for good wages. They have much to say concerning the value of religion and the power of influence. Aspiring nursemaids speak of the good or bad influences which they may bring to bear upon the children committed to their

care, and some of the girls, from the Roman Catholic schools, intimate their intention of seeing that the children are brought up according to the Roman Catholic religion. As a matter-of-fact among the girls, whether the six missionaries, or the nurses who look to point their patients to God, or the dressmakers who see in that calling a greater opportunity for daily devotion and religious meditation, the religious element is strongly marked. Among other things these girls are anxious not to forget their manners; many of them reveal an intense love for children, and most of them look forward to the time when they will have homes of their own. As might be expected, the girls show a wider range of ideas than the boys, and their essays are less bald and conventional. A feeling is also borne in upon one, by a study of these essays, that the girls are trained under a less rigid rule, under a system freer, healthier, and more elastic. Comparing school with school, it is notable that the children in the smallest schools show the greatest range of choice. For example, in one large school three careers sufficed for the whole of the girls, while in some of the small schools there are almost as many careers chosen as there are essayists.

It may be well, however, to see what the children have to say for themselves. With such a mass of material it is difficult to classify, but it is possible in some measure to select. I will take the boys first, leaving the reader to draw his own deductions from the careers chosen and the reasons given for the choice.

One boy, then, would like to be a tailor because it is "a gentlemanly trade." "I could make other people," he writes, "look smart as well as myself." Another having already learned the rudiments of the trade is

of opinion that,—“There is no one given more appreciation in the world than a good tailor. He is brought into contact with the best Society in the land. My master has been a tailor in the army and he was promoted to master-tailor in 1863. He was twenty-three years tailor and four years cutter-out. He is very kind to me and has given me advice. His chief advice is learn all you can while you are young.”

A shoemaker's craft is selected on the grounds that, "It does not take much money to start in the business, and there is not much brain-work about it." Carpentering is chosen by one lad because he thinks it would be nice "to get a good situation in London mending doors for gentlemen;" by another because he "will be able to get work all the year round, and can make some little wooden ornaments which sometimes come in handy for putting on the mantel-piece." Bakers, we learn, "are now thought more of than they used to be," and are "at the present time just as healthy as any other people in England."

Those who aspire to wear a red coat do so, of course, on an infinite variety of grounds. One boy puts in the forefront of his reasons that, "You do not want to learn when you are young, for they teach you in the army." A second thinks that the military profession "may make a man of me. I will obey any command that is given me, be it right or wrong, by the men who are promoted over me. Then if I do my best in everything; keep myself clean, be ready, smart and active, I may, in time, be promoted, too."

Yet another says: "A soldier lives not like working men in close shops but in airy tents, and therefore it must be a healthy profession." This lad's desire for glory is coupled with

an appreciation of the risks which wait upon it: "The worst part of a soldier's life is when he has to go to war, and never knows whether he is going to be killed or not." The following extract suggests a train of thought which it is not very easy to follow: "A soldier, writing to his friends, says, 'I have been firing on the Boers all the day of April 26 and every time I fired I have not been wasting government ammunition, but the Boer ammunition which I found on a dead Boer.' So I can well see that the British soldiers do not care to waste British ammunition on Boers."

A boy who wants to be a gardener is impressed with the need of adequate knowledge in his work. "A gardener," he writes, "must be careful. He has to know all the names of the plants, and if he does not remember them he will get into a muddle."

A boy, in a Roman Catholic school, who wants to be a farmer, says: "Of the money I earn I will put some in the bank, and with the rest I will buy clothing and pay the rent. I will be able to go to Mass on Sunday and get my horse out in the afternoon and go and see some of my friends." Another with the same aspirations, but of a less religious bent, writes: "You have a horse and cart and you can ride out on Sunday and have a good day of it." A third would like to try his luck as a farmer in Canada. "I would like to go to Canada. Farmers who go there generally take dogs with them in case of rats. Men who work underground generally don't live long after forty, while men who work out in the fresh air nearly always live long lives. If you go to the Derby races you will see fine horses that come from Ireland. The farmers in Ireland are generally big strong fellows, while in England they are not quite so big."

Here is a curious extract from the essay of a boy who wants to be a waiter. "I would like to be a waiter in a restaurant. A waiter has to be a very smart man. A waiter's job is a very fine one. He has got to get the dinner ready for men who are waiting for it. A waiter has not got many hours a day to work. They have very good pay and get plenty of tips. A waiter stops work about four o'clock in the afternoon. A waiter has a long time to eat dinner, lunch, and tea. A waiter has a tail coat and a front."

Many of the boys express a desire to be able to help their parents. One with a taste for shoemaking, says: "When my parents are old I may work for them. I may be able to make boots and shoes for them, so that they will not have to buy them but keep their money for food and clothing."

As an instance of the boys who want "clean" trades, we may take the following. "I would like to be a carpenter," says the writer, "because it is very nice to work with a clean apron on and respectable clothes, and also clean flesh."

Of patriotic feeling there are many examples. Here are two. "England needs many soldiers, for but for such people England would not be in its present position at the head of the world." A boy who wants to be a bandsman writes: "Three hundred of our school went to the Royal Military Tournament to see the soldiers drill. We saw the POWERFUL men with their 4.7 guns and a team of the R.H.A. This made me wish I was one of them and I hope to be so some day." Many of the boys are proud of their teachers or of their schools. This is the way in which a boy who wants to be a musician speaks of the school-bandmaster. "Our bandmaster started when quite

a little boy and taught himself. He was not the son of a bandmaster like most great musicians are, but he is now one of the greatest musicians of the present day."

Take again three instances of the way in which these boys weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the callings they select. One, wishing to be a baker, says: "I am not big enough to be a soldier or a sailor, and the work of a baker is clean, healthy, and not dangerous. Of course one runs the risk of catching cold, coming out of the warm bakehouses into the cold air, but with a little care there is not much to fear." The next, desiring to be a tailor, writes: "With a needle, a few yards of cloth, and some thread I could soon start work as a tailor. I have often made a few little odds and ends, and the trade of a tailor would suit me well when I grow up to be a man. It is an indoor life, a very cool job, very clean, and not much danger, and there is not much standing. Tailors require a lot of education. The great evil among tailors is drunkenness, but I have signed the pledge already. I would get ever so many more customers than drunkards." The third boy gives his preference for a military life. "I would rather be a soldier than an ordinary workman, because you are taught in the army to obey orders. No matter what the General's order may be it has to be carried out; willing or not willing it has to be done. To obey orders is one of the best things you can do. There is another reason why I should like to be a soldier, that is, you can get into the army easily, and very often it takes a good deal of trouble to get a good trade. When any people see a soldier they ought to be proud of him, for they must remember that the soldiers and sailors defend their country."

Of the way in which the boys appreciate the need for making provision against sickness and old age, the following are striking examples; the second is especially notable. The first, who would be a soldier, gives as his reason, "I shall get a pension and be able to end my days in an honourable way." The second, a boy who wants to be an engineer, concludes his essay in this way: "The work may be dangerous and dirty, but it is honest, necessary, and responsible. Engineers have good pay, and although they may have long hours that will soon be put right, for workmen are now trying to get an eight hours day. Supposing a pipe burst and I were badly injured, I could claim money from my employers and spend the rest of my life without working." The third boy, who also desires to be an engineer, writes: "I should like to be an engineer, as I might earn a good living by it and there is not much fear of going into the workhouse if I work hard and work with a will. But if I spend all my money in the publichouse, instead of saving it for later on when I may be out of work or cannot work through old age, then I will have to go into the workhouse or die of starvation. But there would be none of that if I had saved my money for old age, or when I am out of work. If I have a house of my own and the gas-pipe breaks, or the gas leaks out of some joint or plug, I know exactly what to do. If I have the proper tools I can do it myself, instead of having my house blown up and perhaps be killed myself."

There is no lack of ambition among these workhouse lads. Many of them have great ideas of what they will be able to rise to with honesty, industry, and perseverance. "I would learn languages," writes one boy who wants to be a clerk, "in case I might be an

ambassador or statesman of my own country. I have a longing to read other books which are not in my own language. It is very nice to be a clerk and rise to be a great man in your own country, and after your death to be honoured yourself, and your family ever afterwards to be proud of having a son who knew how to support them and his dearly-loved country." Another boy's ambition is of a less soaring kind. "It is an indoor life," he writes of a tailor's, "cool and a sitting down trade, and I may become a tailor of Royalty."

Of the girls' essays, I will now give some extracts from a few of the most striking. A girl, who wants to be a laundrymaid, writes: "I have been reading about Martha Crossley in our reading-books, and I hope to prosper like her. She began life as a servant and as she was so frugal and careful with her money by degrees she became a rich woman. I do not mean to say I want to be rich, but I want to be prosperous."

"God first made gardens and gardening seems one of the purest of human pleasures," writes the girl who wishes to be a botanist. Another from the same school, chooses the career of a naturalist on these grounds: "I want to find out all about animals. We ought to make their life in this world happy, for so far as we know they have no life in the world to come." An embryo teacher writes thus of her future pupils: "I would not only cultivate their minds to do things that are grand and clever, but help them to form their characters, which is not an easy thing to do, and help them to correct their faults, especially lying and deceit."

An extract from the essay of a girl of fifteen who wants to be a nurse shows something of the formative influences at work in the lives of these

children. Relating her visit to a hospital she says: "I liked the ward where the children were the best. The sisters spoke so lovingly to the little sufferers and they looked up and smiled as if they were grateful for the kindness shown them. There is a beautiful picture, 'The Roll Call,' in our schoolroom, and I never pass it by without thinking of our brave wounded soldiers in South Africa, and wishing I was old enough to go and help nurse them like Florence Nightingale in the Crimean War."

It is a girl in a Roman Catholic school who, desiring to be a dress-maker, writes: "It is a very quiet and respectable trade but not very healthy. As a dressmaker I would only need two dresses as I could mend them and they would last me so long. And besides we should be able to think of the good God more often and have not distractions. I should very much like my master and mistress to be Catholics as I would be able to go to Mass on Sundays and holidays of Obligation and fulfil my Easter duties more easily. I would be able to help my mother a great deal, and we would be so charitable as to mend any poor creature's clothes that are torn."

Another Roman Catholic girl, who wants to be a nursemaid, sees in that calling an opportunity for wielding a considerable religious influence. Her essay runs as follows. "When I grow up I shall have to earn my own living, so I think I should like to be a nursemaid, and I have my reasons for saying this. For instance, I could get the child to be baptised, and then I could bring the child up and teach it to love and serve God, and if the child happened to get very ill I could take it to a hospital and see that it was among Catholic people; and if it was to die I am nearly sure the child would go to Heaven and God would

reward me for bringing up the child, and perhaps after a few years God would send me another little child and I could also teach it the same, and if it was a little boy I could send it to a Catholic school and get it to learn how to serve Holy Mass, and if it lived to be older I could try and get it to be made a priest, and if I was to go and hear Mass said by him I am sure I would be delighted to think that I had the pleasure of bringing up that priest when he was a little boy, and I am sure he would be grateful to me. And another reason why I should like to be a nursemaid is because I like children, for they are so innocent and I don't think there is anything nicer than to deal with an innocent child; and I could correct her faults and help her to grow up good and honourable and it would also be a great credit to her family."

To be a duchess may seem a strange choice to come from a girl in a Poor Law school, but that it is not a wholly selfish ambition will be seen from the following short paper, the writer of which is only eleven years old. "When I am grown up I hope to become a Duchess and in due time a useful woman, and I should help to rule the country and govern the people. I should be able to be kind to little children and help them in different ways. If a child was ill I should be able to send her to the hospital and pay all the money until she was better. If some children were hungry I would give

them some money to buy food, and I should take them to a good school and have them well educated, and when they got older I should be able to get them a nice situation."

Finally, here is the essay of a little lass of twelve who aspires to be a poet and a novelist. "Although I am still young my greatest wish is to be a poetess or a novelist, but I do not know if I shall ever change my mind and want to be something else. One must be a good grammarian and learn to keep the manuscript all in the same tense, learn where to put the stops, and learn how to express one's thoughts clearly. Being a novelist or a poet is a chance living, because every book will not bring money and you may gain or you may lose by it. I should like to be a poetess because it is a very favourite pastime of mine to make up bits of poetry." Then follows an example of the young essayist's versification.

These are but a few of many curious and striking illustrations of the vast difference between the system of training now carried on in these schools and that which was in vogue half a century ago. With such ingenuous evidence before us it is not difficult to believe that the children in these Poor Law schools are, at all events, not deficient in ideas, and that they are being carefully and kindly trained to lead good and useful lives.

W. H. HUNT.

ANCIENT PISTOL.

“Got pless you, Ancient Pistol!” We are most of us, I think, inclined to echo Fluellen’s blessing, while refraining from its base addition. We have a sneaking affection for Ancient Pistol, and have no wish to revile one who has amused us so royally.

A great many people must have listened to the Ancient’s swelling words lately, as Mr. Mollison rolled them out in *HENRY THE FIFTH* and Mr. Asche in *THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR*. One need not stay to compare the two performances; both were admirable, and it was assuredly no fault of either player, if the spectator, who was perhaps a little rusty in his Shakespeare, left the theatre with the feeling that, while he had been vastly diverted by the Ancient, the character yet remained to him somewhat of a mystery. Was there ever such a man as this Pistol, this Prince of Swaggerers? Is he possible as a contemporary of Prince Hal and Poin? And where did he acquire that strange jargon of his, his “red-lattice phrases,” his “bold beating oaths”?

Before attempting to answer these questions let us gather up into a story all the incidents of his career. Shakespeare had a liking for this “base Assyrian knight,” as Falstaff somewhere calls him, answering Pistol according to his folly. He would never otherwise have brought him into no less than three of the dramas; into the second part of *HENRY THE FOURTH*, into *THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR*, and into *HENRY THE FIFTH*.

Pistol is a soldier of fortune, one

of the train of Sir John Falstaff. His rank is doubtful; he is commonly addressed as Ancient, that is, Ensign; but he is sometimes Lieutenant Pistol, sometimes Captain. Commentators attribute this variety to negligence on the poet’s part. More probably Shakespeare would have us infer from it that any rank bestowed upon him was, in fact, honorary. His right to any one of the three titles was, to say the least, questionable. Falstaff, in his anger, puts him on a level with Corporal Nym: “You and your coach-fellow Nym,” he says. And Mistress Dorothy tells him plainly he has no right to the badge upon his shoulder. “An captains were of my mind,” she says, “they would truncheon you out, for taking their names upon you before you had earned them. You a captain, you slave, for what? . . . He a captain! hang him, rogue!” Gower too, that stern soldier, speaks his mind as fully, if more soberly. “Why, ’tis a gull, a fool, a rogue, that now and then goes to the wars, to grace himself at his return into London under the form of a soldier,”—with much more to the same purpose, until our poor Ancient’s reputation grows as threadbare as his doublet.

It appears that Pistol had at least the virtue of fidelity to his master. True, he is not found among the marauders on Gad’s Hill. Perhaps Falstaff doubted his discretion, for Pistol had not the gift of silence. But it is he who rides helter-skelter into Gloucestershire to inform his master of Prince Hal’s accession, which was to be a source of honour to

the Knight, as they fondly hoped. Such services as this Falstaff repaid by his protection in certain transactions in which his henchman was involved. When Master Abraham Slender accused Pistol of robbery, the latter met the charge with a flat denial.

Word of denial in thy labras here!
Word of denial: froth and scum, thou
liest!

And Sir John countenanced Pistol with entire equanimity; whereupon Slender withdrew the charge, wisely determining that he would "ne'er be drunk again, but in honest, civil, godly company." Again, there was the affair of Mistress Bridget's fan. The handle of it was missing, and Falstaff swore upon his honour that Pistol had it not. Nay, he had imperilled his soul, he declares, by "swearing to gentlemen my friends you were good soldiers and tall fellows." Master and man parted company for a time, but when Falstaff was committed to prison by his former boon companion, Pistol shared his captivity, and not, it seems, without good reason. "The man is dead," says the Beadle, "that you and Pistol beat amongst you." They are both at large when next we hear of them. Perhaps the new King relented towards the Knight and, at his intercession, included Pistol in the amnesty.

Nor was it in any censorious spirit but from the need for retrenchment that Falstaff discarded, for a time at any rate, his followers. The severance was quickened by the refusal of Nym and Pistol to bear his letters to Mistress Ford and Mistress Page. In this refusal they stand upon their honour. Perhaps, however, rations had grown scanty in the Knight's service, for Pistol's subsequent attempt to borrow money from his patron fails to extract a single penny. Nor need

we sympathise with his failure, even though he had shared with Falstaff over Mistress Bridget's fan. For he and Nym had vowed to revenge their dismissal upon the Knight, and looked to make money out of him by betraying his schemes to Ford and Page. There were, in short, faults on both sides.

Shortly after the death of Henry the Fourth Pistol seems to have thought it was time he settled down, and with that intent married Mistress Quickly, hostess of the Boar's Head Tavern in Eastcheap. The marriage was like to have caused a fight between the Ancient and Corporal Nym. The dame, it seems, was plighted to the latter, but Pistol's high-flown talk, we must suppose, prevailed over the sententious brevity of the Corporal. It was only at Bardolph's instance that the two consented to be reconciled.

Meanwhile Sir John Falstaff lay sick within the tavern. The King, as the hostess said, had killed his heart, and he shortly died. His roguish followers forgot old scores, and mourned him sincerely, each according to his kind. One cannot at any rate doubt the genuineness of Bardolph's grief: "Would I were with him, wheresome'er he is, either in heaven or in hell!" A better man than Sir John might be proud to win such an epitaph even from no better man than poor Bardolph. The times, however, were stirring, the invasion of France was imminent. Pistol, finding himself, it may be, a little tired of domesticity, determined, like a true soldier of fortune, to have his share of the spoil. The three worthies bade adieu to "the quondam Quickly," and set off for France as sworn brothers. It cannot be said that at the siege of Harfleur they covered themselves with glory. Bardolph's career, moreover, was prematurely cut

short, for, being convicted of stealing a pyx, he was hanged without ceremony, Pistol's appeal notwithstanding. For sharing in this sacrilege, or for some similar offence, Nym was also executed. Meanwhile, Harfleur had fallen, and Pistol, prompted by some sudden whim of valour, had done yeoman service in helping keep the bridge over the little river Ternois at Blangi. If any think that he was consistently a coward, let them remark Fluellen's words: "He is a man of no estimation in the 'orld; but I did see him do gallant service." How the same man who bore himself so bravely at the bridge could allow himself to be cudgelled later on by the fiery Welshman is a matter hard, if not impossible, to explain. But let us remember that on one occasion, at least, Pistol played the man. There is no getting over the Welshman's tribute.

But alas for our valiant Ancient! His valour speedily cooled. Incensed with Fluellen for refusing to use his influence with the Duke of Exeter on Bardolph's behalf, he insulted the emblem sported by Fluellen on St. David's day. He brought the choleric captain bread and salt, and bade him eat his leek, thus mocking at "an ancient tradition, begun upon an honourable respect, and worn as a memorable trophy of predeceased valour." For at Poitiers, if Fluellen may be believed,—and antiquarians are divided on the origin of the custom—"the Welshmen did good service in a garden where leeks did grow, wearing leeks in their Monmouth caps: which to this hour is an honourable badge of the service." The moment when this insult was offered was unsuited for contention, but Fluellen bided his time, and, when he found it, bade Pistol eat the leek that he had derided. Pistol's courage appears to have wholly evaporated; he ate

the leek, with a rain of blows for sauce, without offering the least show of resistance. This is our last glimpse of him. The news has reached him, he tells us in soliloquy, that his wife, "his Nell," is dead; and, for himself,

Old do I wax: and from my weary
limbs
Honour is cudgelled.

He can ensconce himself no longer under the shelter of his honour; and so, for England, there to live by very dubious courses. Yet at his exit one feels inclined to say, as Prince Henry said of his master, "I could have better spared a better man." So powerful is the magic of Shakespeare, who makes us regret parting even with his rascals.

"I know no character in Shakespeare's plays," said Coleridge, "(unless indeed Pistol be an exception) which can be called the mere portrait of an individual." Accepting this theory of Pistol's origin, how far are this individual and his bombastic talk in keeping with the era of Agincourt?

We may answer at once that such a man is as probable in that age as in any other. The braggart swashbuckler is a canker incident to the profession of arms in every age. But his language is a jargon which no one in the days of the fourth and fifth Henrys could conceivably have used. Shakespeare knew this perfectly well, but was no slave to historical accuracy. The style of talk that doubtless amused the audience in the Globe Theatre on the Bankside as much as it amuses us to-day would have been unintelligible to the real Prince Hal and his companions. For Pistol talks a playhouse jargon, in a time when no playhouse existed. The mystery-plays of the fifteenth century were not the storehouse upon which he drew. His Pistolesse (as it has been termed) is

liberally sprinkled with quotations and misquotations from Shakespeare's immediate predecessors in the playwright's art. And, if we adopt Coleridge's view, there is no objection to supposing that the poet may have known Pistol in the flesh, and may have talked at the Mermaid or elsewhere with this out-at-elbows adventurer, this hanger-on at the theatres, who loved to season his conversation with tags from his favourite authors. But, be this as it may, it is quite certain that Shakespeare in the mouth of Pistol deliberately intended to ridicule the absurdly bombastic style of previous dramatists.

Let us remember that, beyond a natural desire to improve the public taste by this ridicule, he had some excuse for lampooning the earlier school. They had said many hard things about him on his first coming among them. Greene accused him of plagiarism; it was in the matter of the three parts of HENRY THE SIXTH, the original draft of which, according to some, was produced by Greene and Peele. There was talk of "an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers," of a "Tyger's heart wrapt in a player's hide." When we think of these attacks, Shakespeare's revenge seems moderate enough. Even Marlowe, to whom only of his predecessors in tragedy it is said that Shakespeare was indebted, and with whom he may have collaborated in the revision of HENRY THE SIXTH, was not free from the faults of bombast and bad taste. Indeed he is among the first to fall, by the mouth of Pistol, under the poet's censure. It is Marlowe and Peele who are parodied by Pistol on his first appearance. The passage so well illustrates Shakespeare's method that it is worth quoting in full, and also as a specimen of many others. The scene is the Boar's Head, and Pistol has not been received according to his liking.

Page. Pray thee, go down

Pist. I'll see her damned first; to Pluto's damned lake, by this hand, to the infernal deep, with Erebus and tortures vile also. Hold hook and line, say I. Down, down dogs! down, fators! Have we not Hiren here?

Host. Good Captain Peesel, be quiet; 'tis very late, i' faith: I beseech you now, aggravate your choler.

Pist. These be good humours, indeed!

Shall pack-horses,
And hollow pamper'd jades of Asia,
Which cannot go but thirty mile a-day,
Compare with Cæsars, and with Cannibals,

And Trojan Greeks? Nay, rather
damn them with

King Cerberus; and let the welkin
roar.

Shall we fall foul for toys?

Host. By my troth, captain, these are very bitter words.

In Pistol's first speech he parodies Peele's BATTLE OF ALCAZAR, in his second a well-known passage from Marlowe's TAMBURLAINE, where Tamburlaine harnesses to his chariot the kings whom he has conquered, "the pampered jades of Asia," who, he complains, "can draw but twenty miles a day." These, then, were topical allusions to Shakespeare's auditors. It is hardly necessary to say that Pistol's *Cannibals* are *Hannibals* in the original.

Later, as if to atone for seeming unkindness to a dead friend, Shakespeare introduces in THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR a stanza from Marlowe's pretty song THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE; and in AS YOU LIKE IT he quotes a beautiful line from HERO AND LEANDER:

Dead shepherd, now I find thy saw of
might:

Who ever loved, that loved not at first
sight?

Thus launched on his career of misquotation, Pistol maintains it to the end. Some of his most telling utterances can be traced to an earlier

source. "Base is the slave that pays," says Pistol. "My motto," wrote Heywood in one of his INTERLUDES, "shall be, base is the man that pays." His every remark is tinged with the mockery of bombast. A stilted style is wearisome, but a parody of it may be delightful; it is not so much what the Ancient says that moves our laughter, as the way in which he expresses it. Shakespeare, who designed him in the first instance as a lash for the fustian of others, surely came to love the character for its very affectations. "'Convey' the wise it call. 'Steal!' foh! a fico for the phrase!"—"Why, then, the world's mine oyster, which I with sword will open."—"Give me thy fist, thy fore-foot give to me: Thy spirits are most tall."—There is no resisting such a phrase-maker as this. And how laughable is that misconception of Nym's Latin!

Nym. Will you shog off? I would have you *solus*.

Pist. Solus, egregious dog? O viper vile!
The *solus* in thy most mervailous face;
The *solus* in thy teeth, and in thy throat,
And in thy hateful lungs, yea, in thy maw, perdy,
And, which is worse, within thy nasty mouth!
I do retort the *solus* in thy bowels.

This is near the language of exorcism. So, at least, Nym takes it. "I am not Barbason," he says: "you cannot conjure me."

But, in truth, Pistol's bark was worse than his bite, as is the way with most of his kind. He was loyal, in the main, to his associates; once in his life he was a real soldier; he showed some feeling at Falstaff's death. For these glimpses of virtue, and above all for his inimitable style, let us overlook what is less admirable in him, and let us end, as we began, with a blessing on the head of Ancient Pistol.

H. C. MINCHIN.

OUT-PATIENTS.

(A SKETCH IN A HOSPITAL.)

It is two o'clock on the out-patients' afternoon, and the hall of the hospital in which they assemble is already fairly well filled with women and children; men are not treated here. Some thirty thousand of them enter these doors in the course of the year, passing in turn into the consulting-room, where high ability and wide experience are at their service, thence through another door to the dispensary where the prescriptions are made up, and down a passage into the street again. The number of patients is large and the time allotted to them is relatively very short indeed; but this is not a consideration which has much weight with the majority of the visitors who are chatting sociably in the waiting-room. As the clock strikes, the nurse on duty ushers the first comer into the consulting-room. She advances with a cheerful smile towards the doctor, dragging the little patient behind her.

"Well, what's the matter?"

"Well really, doctor," says the patient's mother, "I don't rightly know what's the matter with 'im but 'e's downright bodily ill,—bodily ill."

"Well, but what do you notice wrong with him yourself?"

"I 'ardly know, doctor. My young man, 'e says to me,—'e just got a bit o' work yesterday, 'e did, 'e's a labourer at the docks—an' as I was sayin', 'e just come 'ome from 'is work larst night an' 'e says, 'W'y, Missus, what's the matter with the kid?' An' I says to 'im, 'W'y, yer do frighten me—'"

"Yes, yes," says the doctor, "but what I want to know is, what do you notice wrong about the child?"

"But that's what I'm just tellin' yer, doctor," the woman answers, a little injured by the interruption. "When my young man says to me 'W'y what's the matter with the kid,' I tell yer I was that scared I began to feel queer all over. I do suffer from the 'eart, doctor, an' 'ave done for years, an' when my young man—"

"Look here, Missis," the doctor interposes; "if you can't tell me what's the matter with the child you must go outside and wait."

The woman ignores this suggestion. "Yer see, doctor," she pursues, "I can't 'elp feelin' anxious about 'im. 'Tain't as if I 'ad a lot; I never 'ad but three, an' buried two of 'em with the fever, which they was taken to Homerton an' me livin' down at Deptford, it was a terrible long way to get to see 'em; an' so when my young—"

"Look here, my good woman," says the doctor decisively, "you go and sit on that chair over there, and when you've made up your mind what's the matter with the child, you can come back. Next one, please, nurse."

The next one comes in carrying a baby in her arms and leading a little girl of five or six.

"And what's the matter with you, Polly?" says the doctor.

"Oh it ain't 'er, it's the baby, doctor. She's got a corf."

"A cough?"

"Yes; a narsty, 'ackin' corf."

The doctor wishes to examine the patient's chest and the woman lays the baby flat on its face, undoes several knots, and removes a series of small garments, but is finally checked by a knot which only becomes tighter for her efforts to untie it. She tackles it vigorously with tooth and nail, while the baby howls dismally. Growing desperate, she breaks the string and discovers to her dismay that this is not the last line of defence. Underneath the little jacket is a piece of flannel sewn firmly round the body. With this she wrestles silently and at last the nurse offers a pair of scissors.

"How long has she had the cough?"

"It ain't a she; it's a boy."

"Well, how long has he had the cough?"

"Oh, 'e's 'ad it a long time."

"What do you call a long time? A week?"

"Oh, more'n a week, doctor."

"A year?"

"Oh no, 'e ain't 'ad it a year."

"About a month?"

"Well," in a burst of candour, "I really dunno, doctor; you see it ain't my child, it's my sister's child. That's 'ow I was so long undressin' of 'im."

"But why is your sister not here?"

"She's that nervous," the deputy explains apologetically, "an' so I says as 'ow I'll take 'im myself. She's a-sittin' outside, she is."

The case is quickly treated and the conversation with the first lady resumed.

"Well, Missis, have you settled why you brought the child?"

She has; during the interval she has recalled the symptoms and is able to describe them with a wealth of picturesque detail.

"I think myself 'e's got a touch of the croup," she says confidently. "'E's so wheezy on 'is little chest, an'

'e gets that convulsed of nights as you dunno whether 'e's dead or alive; an' 'is little spine do rattle so, that we don' get no sleep. Sometimes 'e burns like a little coal, you carn't 'ardly abear 'im in bed wi' you, 'e's that 'ot; an' sometimes 'e perspires like a bloomin' pond, an'—"

"My good woman," says the doctor irritably, with his ear to the child's chest, "how do you suppose I can hear anything while you keep on talking?"

"Beg pardon, I'm sure, doctor," says the mother much aggrieved by this unjust reproach; "but I thought as 'ow you'd arsked me wot was the matter with 'im."

She disappears, injured but not unforgetting, prescription in hand through the second door into the dispensary.

The next patient was evidently seriously ill.

"You must leave the child here," the doctor says. "She has inflammation of the lungs."

"Leave 'er 'ere,—in the 'orspital? Oh my gracious!" says the mother, much agitated by the suggestion. "Oh, I don't see as I can do that, doctor. I lef' 'er 'ere once before an' they turned 'er out more dead'n alive. An' then there was 'er boots,—she come in with a good pair o' boots on 'er feet, an' I never saw 'em no more."

"And you think we stole them?" says the doctor.

"I don't go so fur as to say *stole*," says the mother darkly; "all I says is she 'ad a good pair of boots on 'er feet when she went in, an' I never seen 'em since. It ain't fur *me* to say 'oo's wearin' them boots now, but I don't 'ardly like to leave 'er 'ere agen."

"You must do as you like," says the doctor shortly; "but if you take her out, you will kill her;" and influenced either by this warning or by the fact that the boots the child is

now wearing are hardly good enough to seduce either doctors or nurses from the path of honesty, she acquiesces reluctantly.

Her successor is a Polish Jewess who had come in two days previously, speaking no English but armed with a piece of paper on which some friend had written an account of the illness. "Had Measuls, now got no Measuls, have a Corf, tissicky Corf," ran the document, but it did not shed enough light on the case, and the doctor had sent her away with a piece of paper on which he had written, "Some one who speaks English must come with the patient to-morrow." She has now returned, with a companion.

"Ask her what's the matter," says the doctor.

The interpreter turns to the patient and repeats, "Doctor says, what's the matter?" The Jewess shakes her head. "Doctor. says, what's the matter?" repeats the interpreter very loudly. The Jewess patiently shakes her head again. The interpreter puts her lips to her friend's ear and screams at the top of her voice, "Doctor says, what's the matter?"

"Why don't you say it in Polish?" asks the doctor.

"Oh, I dunno no Polish," says the interpreter much surprised.

"But what have you come for then?"

"I dunno, sir," says the interpreter; "but you said on her paper as 'ow you wanted someun 'oo could speak English. But she don't understand no English, she don't," she adds with a pitying glance at her companion; "she's a furriner, pore thing."

The mother of the next patient is also a Jewess who professes to be able to talk English. In reply to the opening question, "What is the matter?" she replies readily, "I not know; he is seek."

"Does he cough?"

"Whaat?"

"Does he cough,—*husten*, you know. Don't you talk German?"

"No, he not *husten*," she answers, "he is seek."

"Does he take his food?"

"Whaat?"

"Does he eat?—*essen*," says the doctor rapidly champing an imaginary meal. The woman looks at him, faintly interested in his pantomime and repeats despondently that the child is "seek."

"You don't understand German? Yes, all right, I know he is seek. Oh, you've got a friend outside? Let's have her in, then."

The friend appears and a long and animated conversation in Yiddish follows accompanied by expressive gesticulations; then the newcomer turns to the doctor and smilingly gives him the gist of the dialogue.

"Zis chile, he is seek."

"So I have heard already," says the doctor coldly; "if you can't tell me anything more than that—"

"He is seek all over," the linguist continues impressively. "He not eat, he not sleep, he all fire." She stops short dramatically.

"Yes?" says the doctor encouragingly. But there is no response; the history of the case is at an end.

The next child is a sadly emaciated infant of five months. "'E don't put on no flesh, doctor; 'e's awastin' away to a shadder, that's what 'e's doin', pore little angel. 'Is chest do sound 'oller, don't it, doctor? That's 'cos 'e ain't 'ad 'is tea."

"What are you giving him in the way of food?"

"Oh, 'e 'as a bit of what's goin', same as we do; 'e's wonderful 'earty at 'is food."

"But what sort of food?" asks the doctor contemplating the tiny wrinkled haggard face of the hearty eater. "Cheese?"

"No, 'e don't 'ave much cheese; 'e don't like it."

"Tea?"

"Yes, 'e 'as a tidy drop of tea."

"Beer?"

"No, 'e don't often 'ave no beer; 'is father gives 'im a drop now an' agen."

"He doesn't have any milk, I suppose?" asks the doctor sarcastically.

"He do 'ave some milk, doctor, but 'e don't care for it without there's tea in it. I dunno what 'e'd do if we was to stop 'is tea."

She is followed by an anxious little girl with a baby in her arms and a mite of three hanging on to her scanty skirts. "Please, doctor, I dunno what ter do with the baby; 'e keeps on a-'ollerin'."

"Why didn't your mother bring him?" asks the doctor.

"We ain't got no muvver, sir."

"Who looks after you all, then?"

"There ain't no one but me, sir; I looks after 'em;" and the baby's clean well-cared for condition testifies eloquently to her success.

"Well, Polly, you say that baby's always crying; what are you giving him?"

"I did giv' 'im cow's milk but it only made 'im 'oller more, sir, so I'm tryin' Nestle's milk wich a lady downstairs give me, and a hegg of a mornin' sometimes; but 'e don't seem satisfied, and 'ollers so of a night father don't get no sleep."

"Look here, Polly, you go home and ask your father if you may leave him in the hospital; that would be the best thing for him."

The child hesitates. "Very well," she says reluctantly after a doubtful pause. "But I may come an' see 'im in the orspital, mayn't I, sir? cos 'e's my bruvver, and 'e's a nice baby."

"Of course you can; and by the way, how old are you?"

The baby's careworn guardian was nine last birthday.

The next interview is extremely brief and somewhat stormy. A woman hurries in determined to leave her child in the hospital, but unfortunately for her convenience it is not ill enough to justify its admission. She tries persuasion and coaxing in vain and finally sweeps out of the room with a shrill *crescendo* of taunt and denunciation. "Call yerselves a 'orspital!" is her parting volley as she slams the door behind her. "I calls yer a set of bloomin' murderers!"

The out-patient department is open only at stated hours, but the casualty-room, where the house-surgeon sees minor ailments, is never closed. The accident-bell rings frequently enough, but there is never a great stream of patients waiting to pour in, and consequently a more leisurely air prevails. Here are two children aged eight and three; the elder child explains that her little sister, Sally, has swallowed a farthing; at least the coin has disappeared mysteriously while in Sally's possession and they are naturally anxious to recover it; the consequence to Sally's digestive arrangements is evidently of only secondary importance. An emetic is administered and the little patient sits demurely on the edge of the sofa with her hands folded on her lap, awaiting events, observing doctor and nurses solemnly with her large grey eyes. After a due interval another dose is given, but still no result follows. Various devices are tried but without success; in defiance of all contrivances for making a child sick, the little maiden sits unconcernedly on the sofa, her hands still calmly folded, gently swinging her toes. But the elder child's patience is at last exhausted. With a series of violent thumps on her sister's spine, she shouts: "Sick it up, Sally, carn't yer? Sick it up

at once, silly ; we won't get no tea if yer don't."

The method is unprofessional but efficacious ; and the next moment a wild-eyed three-year-old has "sicked up" the missing coin.

The little girls go home to tea and are succeeded by an individual in baggy trousers several sizes too large for him, a coat that reaches down to his ankles, and an enormous pair of boots in which he shuffles along with considerable difficulty. The quiet deferential tone in which he speaks would do credit to a butler in Berkeley Square, but his accent is unmistakably of the East. His age he states is ten.

"Where do you live?" asks the nurse with the register.

"Loimce, Miss," he answers politely.

"Loimce?" repeats the nurse, a new arrival at the hospital. "How do you spell it?"

A shade of embarrassment crosses his face at this disconcerting question but he is not unequal to it. "Oi just spells it Loimce, Miss, when oi writes it."

"L-O-I-M-C-E?" suggests the nurse.

"Yes, Miss, that's roight ; you've got 'im on the boko."

"Got what?" asks the nurse puzzled.

The boy looks round somewhat wearily, as if asking what is the use of talking to such uninformed people as this.

"He means Limehouse, Nurse," says the doctor.

"Thanks, guvner," says the boy, infinitely relieved at finding someone at hand who is evidently not without glimmerings of intelligence. "And what's the matter with you, sonny?" the doctor continues. "Why, who did this?" It is a nasty knife-wound in the arm.

"A bloke, guvner."

"What were you doing to the bloke?" asks the doctor as he washes the wound.

"Nothink, guvner."

"But you must have been doing something."

"No, guvner, oi ain't touched 'im," he declares earnestly.

But the doctor notes the singular discrepancy between the size of the boy and the size of his boots. "Are those your father's boots?" he enquires with apparent irrelevance.

"No, guvner ; 'e ain't got none."

"Where did you get them, Johnny?"

"From a bloke."

"The bloke that knifed you?"

Johnny hesitates a moment and then nods assent.

"Drunk?" asks the doctor busy with his bandages.

"Corse not, guvner," answers the patient. "'E wouldn't 'ave got me if 'e'd been drunk, only a bit on, 'e was. Yer see 'e 'ad the kickers under 'is arm, and oi thought 'e was all roight, so oi pinched [stole] 'em and 'e knoifed me."

"You must come up to-morrow and get it dressed," says the doctor, and the boy shuffles away. The doctor glancing out of the window after him, observes that he slips off the boots, making his way discreetly and warily barefoot down the street, lest by any chance the "bloke" should be lying in ambush.

There is an interval of silence ; then a sudden peal at the accident-bell is heard, and the next moment an agitated parent is seen running down the passage with a child tucked under her arm, its bare legs streaming behind it in the wind of its mother's rapidity.

"What's the matter, Missis? Has she swallowed some poison?"

"No, sir, it ain't that," she pants ; "but I'm that scared, I don't know 'ardly which way to turn."

"Well, but what's happened? Has she hurt herself?"

"No, sir; and 'er father 'e's that upset 'e couldn't do nothink, else I ain't used to running like that, and 'e'd 'ave brought 'er up, but he says as 'ow 'e daren't touch 'er, and I've run all the way, an' me 'eart—"

"Come now, Missis, just tell me quietly what's the matter with the child."

The patient, a pretty little thing of four, looks enquiringly at her alarmed parent; there seems to be little the matter with her.

"It's all very well yer a-sittin' there and a-tellin' of me to be quiet," cries her mother; "if yer 'ad any children of yer own, yer wouldn't like

ter see 'em die afore yer eyes, oh dear, oh dear, and there ain't only two more and the baby."

The doctor in despair examines the little girl, but fails to discover anything wrong. "Now look here," says he firmly; "I can't find anything the matter with your child, so you'll have to go away unless you tell me why you brought her up to the hospital."

"Well, doctor, we was all a-havin' our tea a minute ago as it might be, and 'er father was eatin' a nice bit of tripe as was over from dinner, when Susy, that's 'er, says as 'ow she loved God and was goin' to 'eaving when she doied. *What?*" in tones of horror, "Ain't yer goin' to give 'er no medicine?"

THE HUNT FOR THE WORD.

THE business of a publisher divides itself into three functions. The first is that he should select books to publish; the second that he should publish them; and the third that he should call attention to the fact of their publication. Of these, the third is rapidly outstripping the others in importance, and is therefore naturally the one on which most care, thought, and artistic endeavour come to be expended. It is universally conceded (except by a few old-fashioned persons who of course do not count) that the best book is the one of which most copies are sold; and therefore the book which everybody wishes, let us not say, to buy, but to be able to talk about, is the one which everybody is supposed to have read, to be reading, or to be about to read. When once the idea of a large sale has taken root, matters are simple; it is only necessary to advertise the figures, and the rest of the sheep will follow where so many have led. The publisher who neglected to employ so simple and efficacious a method would be neglecting his duty to his client and to himself. It is, however, when the idea has not yet taken root, that the art of publishing achieves its real triumphs, in convincing the public that a certain work has sold, is selling, or will sell in large quantities. Some time ago this effect was produced by a rapid succession of editions. Books entered upon their sixth or seventh impression with marvellous celerity, and the fact was vociferously proclaimed. Gradually, however, it became noised abroad that

not many copies need necessarily go to an edition; the proclamation began to lose something of its significance, and a newer device took its place. Were Mr. X. to assert that he has implicit belief in the high literary merit of the novel he will publish on such a day, the world might possibly remain sceptical. But if this hypothetical gentleman communicates through the public press the intelligence that he has led off with an order to his printer for a very large number of copies, a certain stir of interest is perceptible. It costs indubitably a considerable sum to print, say, ten thousand copies of a novel; and the publisher who has not only given that order, but has paid for reiterated proclamation of the fact in several newspapers, does plainly back his opinion, and is therefore rewarded by a certain degree of attention. Moreover, if he really knows his business, he will be careful to bring this conclusive argument before the notice of some influential critic, or at least of some critic who has the reputation among the booksellers of being able to influence public opinion,—as expressed in shillings, the only expression of public opinion for which the bookseller has any respect. There is always some such a critic about, ready to stand sponsor at the shortest notice to any aspiring author, provided only that he can count on being first in the field.

In these remarks will be found, we believe, some explanation of the unusual comment aroused by the publication of Mr. Charles Marriott's novel, *THE COLUMN*. We cordially

agree with the reviewer who hailed it as something "outside the common ruck of fiction;" but we are equally convinced that it was not of a kind to become rapidly prominent without an extraordinary degree of advertisement. It is true that a little while before the momentous day of issue the publisher was good enough to "confidently predict that this novel will rank as one of the most remarkable productions in fiction of recent years;" but this gallant expression of opinion (which, after all, as it stood, was not much more convincing than Lucretia's reason for her belief in Proteus) might still, we suspect, have left an oft-duped public cold, had no more solid assurance of confidence been forthcoming. At all events, by a variety of means, attention was called to the book as to something of wholly exceptional merit. Almost simultaneously with the date of publication a flourish of trumpets was sounded in nearly all the leading journals which, both in its volume and its unanimity, recalled something of the rapture which greeted the once immortal AYLWIN. The story, we were told, combined "all the best faculties of the writers known to everyone." All the author's characters "have stepped from life into his pages to be turned about and displayed by a mind which lets nothing escape." "To the ordinary novels of the day it is as light is to darkness;" a comparison which another critic, with a finer turn of fancy, bettered by vowing it to be as far ahead of the ruck as "Snowdon's summit is from the level of Primrose Hill." "THE COLUMN is an extraordinarily fine achievement, and until its author publishes again we hardly expect to see its equal." And so on, and so on, till the chorus culminated in this enigmatic (but to the elect no doubt convincing) pronouncement:

"The *format* is the Bodley's best." Obviously a writer who is welcomed in such terms on his first appearance cannot be treated as a beginner; we look to him not for promise, but for performance.

Let us begin, then, with an examination of the book. Structurally, its edifice is of the simplest. Miss Daphne Hastings, a young lady of unusual type, makes the centre of a highly unusual community brought together by chance (as we are asked to believe) in a Cornish village. Her surviving parent, Edward Hastings, had married a Greek woman, and returned from Greece bringing with him his daughter, and a single Doric column which he has erected on the sea-cliff in view of his windows, planting laurels round it. He is known to a limited circle as the author of *SUBSOIL*, a volume of essays which, we are given to understand, preach a Hellenic paganism. Daphne, after taking part in a rehearsal of Schubert's B minor Symphony performed by the village Choral Society with the doctor conducting, feels a crisis of her fate impending. She wanders to the column, viola in hand, and as she strikes the strings of her instrument she is answered by a man's voice from below the cliff, crying for help. This is Mr. Basil Waring, brother of the Vicar of the unusual parish, and a person of the most aggravating culture. He turns out to be a devout admirer of *SUBSOIL* and to have broken his leg. He is nursed under the roof of Hastings, and marries Daphne. In a little while the pair discover that they are not in complete emotional sympathy. Mr. Hastings dies, leaving Daphne lonely; but a baby is born to whom she transfers her entire devotion. Basil, a little in the cold, goes to London, and relapses into an amour; but this has no bearing on the story as Daphne knows nothing

of it. Before he returns, she, a strong swimmer, goes to bathe where she has always bathed, and is drowned.

It is, of course, only fair to say that Mr. Marriott would not accept this as an accurate outline of his plot. It omits the part played by the column and generally by inanimate nature. But we are speaking at present of what we can claim to understand, and upon that we have certain criticisms to offer. First, then, beyond the romantic manner of his apposite arrival, we can conceive no earthly reason why Daphne should fall in love with Basil Waring. Mr. Marriott sees him as a person fundamentally contemptible, but superficially attractive; the reader, however, is not made at any point in the book to feel the attractive quality. That is a grave defect in art. *ROMOLA* is not among the great novels, but George Eliot leaves us in no doubt of Tito's fascination. Secondly, the scene between the couple newly returned from the honeymoon, where Basil (who has acquired the habit of popular instruction in the East End), proposes to make the column a place of educational pilgrimage for tourists, is perfectly incredible. He does not merely hazard the suggestion; he insists, in the teeth of the girl's natural repugnance. This is not psychology; it is caricature. And it leads up to a second, and even worse, scene by a complication which we omitted from our sketch of the plot. Michael Trigg, vergger of the church, is a born mystic; a picturesque, if rather pedantic, dissertation upon Cornish character prepares us for his readiness to attempt a spell. Devout himself, he believes that Hastings has died and been damned for a heathen, and that Daphne is kept from conversion by the malign influence of the column. Following, therefore, the principle of magic, that

to act on a part is acting on the whole, he chips a fragment from the column and, bringing it to church, lays it under the cloth to be consecrated with the Eucharist. Daphne, recovering from childbirth, goes to the column and Basil accompanies her. She sees the damage, and instantly assumes that he has taken advantage of her illness to introduce his tourists to the consecrated spot. When he explains, with natural irritation, that her assumption is groundless, she accuses him of intent to "drag her into a vulgar quarrel." Her behaviour at this point may be extremely feminine, but it is not that of the traditional Greek goddess.

As for the other element, which is, we presume, symbolic, it defies criticism. That the column had something to do with Daphne's drowning we are bound to believe, since there is no other and easier explanation. There is a long chapter which describes how Daphne, in that excitable state which accompanies the early stages of pregnancy, sees a vision where the column takes its place in a great temple, and she herself is led by a procession to the altar. Then the sky opens, thunder crashes, and she is aware of her re-consecration to some mysterious bridegroom whom she had unwittingly forsaken in marrying a mere mortal. It is all very fine, but to the plain man more than a little bewildering.

There remain two grounds on which the book may claim notice, its presentment of character and its virtuosity of style. On the first of those we base our regard for Mr. Marriott's talent. Daphne is, as we have urged, not always well shown, but on the whole she is an impressive figure. Her father, Mr. Hastings, is very slightly but skilfully indicated, and so is the vicar, Herbert Waring. The characters treated in the manner of Meredithian

farce (for of course Mr. Marriott derives bodily from that source) move us less, the doctor, for instance, and Mr. and Mrs. Bargister. Gertrude Laffey, the designing female who completes her conquest of Basil, is better; but the stimulus of what Mr. Marriott is pleased to call her "muliebrity" is somewhat nauseously insisted on, and the preciosity of her appalling letter, in reply to Basil's equally intolerable narration of his mishap, passes all endurance. There remain two really good figures, the boy Johnnie and the sculptor Cathcart. Their part in the story is only to assist in the presentment of Daphne, but there is enough of them both to make one think that Mr. Marriott may some day do good work, when he learns to be less clever and perceives that excellence lies in simplicity not in contortion.

Coleridge defined good prose as "proper words in their proper places," and he further held that works of imagination should be written in very plain language; "the more purely imaginary they are, the more necessary it is to be plain." Very different is the case with those who nowadays are commended for style. "How forcible," observed the tormented Job, "are right words!" It is for the wrong words that our young geniuses toil as some men have been known to toil for virtue. The word which they desire to find is the word which no one else would have employed; the image by which they prefer to illustrate their meaning is the one which no one else would have been clever enough to think of. And Mr. Marriott can bandy conceits with the best of them. Such a phrase as "the mouthpiece of history chuckles vain salacity" should make him free at once and for ever of the Guild of Gibberish. Yet when he pleases he can be neat and pointed while still

remaining intelligible. Here is a description of the impression made by the village doctor in his capacity of musical conductor.

Mrs. Bargister, who reverently misquoted him, wondered why he did not compose an oratorio or something. Chaperoning her daughter to the weekly rehearsals, she hung upon the music with pathetic fidelity, and had, under the mordant civility of Caspar Gillies, already learned to swallow "How pretty." The action was almost physical, and with any silence, accidental or designed, there was to be seen upon her face the look of the dog who is nearly surprised into the forbidden bark.

This again is good, though in a very different key, concerning Daphne's mood as she issued from the music to her wandering on the cliff on the evening when she heard Basil cry for help.

The calyx of her heart had unclosed a little, hinting roseate possibilities to be brooded over in midnight solitudes. [The suggestion of midnight, though, in this context is bad.] It was as if, fingering a familiar cabinet, she had pressed the spring of a secret drawer hitherto unsuspected; and for the time the world held for her nothing to be compared with its dim-seen fragrant contents.

But the mind needs other things of a writer than comparisons, even if they be witty or beautiful, and the desperate determination to be continuously ingenious is distracting. We will give a case in point, from some more comment of the same kind upon Basil, observing, by the way, that Mr. Marriott is not content to let his characters display themselves in word or act; he must be for ever expounding, and for ever ingenious in the exposition.

He [Basil] habitually steeped himself in the atmosphere of the moment, and at intervals examined his soul as one would a meerschaum—to see how it was colouring. Before the arrival of the post

he had been heaving the lead into his consciousness and picking out samples of the deposit of the last few weeks. The result was satisfactory to his self-esteem, and the congenial task of raking among the contents of his mental dredger revealed many pretty things.

The lead, it may be submitted, is not a dredger. Basil, indeed, has a most disturbing effect on Mr. Marriott. When, bored alike with the country and his wife, he leaves her for some alleged business in London, his journey, by the sufficiently prosaic medium of the Great Western railway, stirs our author into the strangest example of what Ruskin has taught us to call the pathetic fallacy.

The names of stations shouted by porters became cries of welcome; and by Reading he already heard the diapason of the Strand. The fever of the town was on him; he voiced the epic of London arousing his companions—upon whom had fallen the vague fear of the metropolis—as one leading pilgrims to some land of promise. *Even the engine seemed infected with his rapture, bounding forward with answering cries.*

Mr. Marriott's style has been praised by one of his admirers for being careful; but careful of what, we would ask? Will anyone unravel the tangle of ideas in the following phrase? "To her excited imagination the whispering laurels were inimical and the column upreared the stern monitor of an ideal slipping from her grasp." That, we desire to state brutally, is not English, however one may take it. How does a column uprear a monitor,—or a minotaur? We incline to the belief that Mr. Marriott intends the verb in a neuter sense, as later he writes: "At the far end upreared a white presence, veiled, inscrutable." To this phrase the same objection applies; it is not English. To make it English we must write: "At the far end a white presence, etc., reared up,"—and that

is nonsense. To such extremities are men driven by the hunt for the unexpected word.

The effects of this chase upon Mr. Marriott are widely varied. Sometimes a well-meant effort after distinction of phrasing lands him in the merely incomprehensible.

If the man [Edward Hastings] could be held local of any place, he was of Greece; here he impinged, and the intensity of contact suggested to the competent observer a key to his character; though there was but little in his habits to corroborate the theorist and nothing to encourage the bore.

Why intensity of contact should suggest a key, even to the most competent observer, we are at a loss to know, and the latter part of the sentence is dark as Erebus. *Impinged* is a word specially consecrated to strange uses with this author, who writes, for example, of "a heavy windless evening, with a sky so burnished that the edges of things impinged with an insistence that was almost audible." No doubt this means something; but for our own part we can but re-echo good Dr. Gillies's comment on a certain passage in *SUBSOIL*, and confess that we "fail to see what he means"; and moreover we feel far from certain of Mr. Marriott's ability to enlighten us. We should like him to try Dryden's test, and see how he would put it into Latin. He is a scholar, or at least weighted with trappings of scholarship which are not worn lightly. Such a passage as this, for example, can only be described as sheer pedantry.

Nowhere is the insurgence of Spring more absolute than in London. Out on the countryside the Epithalamion of sun and earth is more modulate, for even in midwinter there is a pretty conjugal civility, a kind of breakfast-table dalliance between them. But when the almond breaks in London squares it is Olympian wooing or nothing.

The observation is pleasant enough, but surely a thing of this sort can be said without two neologisms such as *insurgence* and *modulate*. A little further we read how "the infatuate pair seek to smother the Devil with the roses of amenity;" and when, in the same paragraph, Mr. Marriott wishes to allude to this metaphor, he writes that "they continued their Heliogabalus-pastime," a compound before which the bravest Teuton might grow pale. One last illustration of this vice cannot be spared, for Mr. Marriott's own profit.

The individuality of our English Counties is unquestionable; and he who is susceptible to such influences has little need of map-makers. That is, if he can rid his mind of the tyranny of history and the importunity of the alleged development. For the disturbing power of the latter, one has only to point to the metropolis! *Here time has exploded the plausible fallacy of the Geometrician, and London holds Middlesex in its belly.*

What the second sentence means we cannot conjecture, but the words italicised are Mr. Marriott's elegant way of saying that in spite of Euclid the greater is contained by the less. It would be difficult to burlesque a manner such as this. How far in sheer infelicity a man may be carried by the habitual abuse of words, is best seen in a passage, which it is, we trust, not irreverent to quote. Daphne and her friend Miss Williams are together on the cliffs: "They might have sat for Mary and a more tolerant Martha, captive to the trivial round, but respecting her sister's pregnant indolence." Of all adjectives!—but Mr. Marriott is in a way excusable. No self-respecting writer nowadays would speak of a pregnant woman,—pregnant silences, pregnant words, pregnant landscape, anything with which the word has never before

been coupled, if you please—but to employ the word in its natural meaning is a solecism too gross to contemplate.

Mr. Marriott, it need hardly be said, is not alone in his vagaries. How should he be, when such things are hailed as excellences? Some time ago an author submitted a manuscript to a well-known publisher. The manuscript was declined with a courteous letter in which the publisher deplored the absence of distinction in the author's style. "Have you not read the stories by Mr. Bernard Capes?" he asked. "Can you not try to write like Mr. Capes?" Now Mr. Capes is a shining example of those extravagances which it is the special purpose of this article to deprecate. Open his book, *THE LAKE OF WINE*, and you come upon a lurid procession of sentences like this:

A squirrel ran from branch to root of a beech tree like a stain of rust; a cloud of fieldfares went down the sky and wheeled, disintegrated, as if they were so much blown powder; the ruddocks twinkled in the hedges like dead leaves flicked by the wind.

The true object of a descriptive passage is, we believe, to suggest to the mind of the reader the physical settings of a scene or event. Mr. Capes has other views. It is as if he stood on the front of a platform and said: "Gentlemen, here is a tree; pray observe, not the tree, but the words and similes in which I shall describe it. They are specially invented for the occasion." A squirrel goes down a tree-trunk in a flash of russet colour; Mr. Capes will liken it to the slow trace of rust. A flock of fieldfares turn on the wing; Mr. Capes will never say they scatter,—they are disintegrated. Robin is too vulgar a word for his

fancy; the bird shall be a ruddock, and the sudden showing of his red breast shall be likened to what in all nature it least resembles, the motion of a dead leaf. His hero rides across the downs and an outcrop of white chalk is seen as Nature showing her teeth at him. Thus he achieves distinction and a style.

Mr. Marriott limits his research for the unexpected to the written word; his personages speak intelligibly; but Mr. Capes, not content with his own elegance, makes his characters also "parley euphuism." "That I should come to be the eyesalve of such a parcel of oafs!" exclaims the hero when he finds himself stared at. "Your ambition is a tortoise," is the sentence that he springs upon a servant, not unnaturally frightened of so superfine a speaker. "Mr. Tuke," we are told a little later, "laboriously strained at a camel of wit;" and the phrase seems to us admirably descriptive of Mr. Capes's own methods. "Gentlemen, gentlemen," we seem to hear him crying, "for Heaven's sake let us not forget ourselves so far as to be simple!" If his hero wake of a morning, we find him "lying lazily snoozed among the pillows." If there is a landscape-effect on hand, here is the procedure: "The grass was a foot long and so weighted with dew that a kilderkin of sweet water might have been gathered from it." Truly it is a sonorous word that fills the central place in this sentence and becomes at once the intellectual focus, sending our minds post-haste to memories, not of dew-drenched lawns, but of the ineffectual struggle to master weights and measures. And the worst of it is that Mr. Capes had really a pretty instinct for the feeling of the scene and took the right method to convey it. A common word would have expressed his mean-

ing simply and avoided the inevitable jar of the entirely unexpected and incongruous. But *kilderkin* undoes him, and the essential effect is sacrificed to the hunt for the word. His sentence would gain and not lose by translation into Latin, to revert to our test; but we should like to see the faces of Professors Jebb and Tyrrell if they were set down to render a phrase like this: "She sang to herself in that odd wild voice of hers, the stinging disharmonies of which seemed to flicker up in the flame of her hair." There you have the modern method in its full beauty. *Disharmonies* is not English, nor Greek either for that matter; it is a new and spurious mintage. Neither harmonies nor disharmonies can either sting or flicker, and hair, though it has been likened with natural fitness and beauty to a flame blown backward, cannot possibly (unless under a barber's revolving brush) resemble an ascending flame. A single licence sparingly taken produces its appropriate effect: such a phrase as "stinging discords" might grace a period; but this riot of incongruities results only in gibberish.

And the pity of it is that the men who run after these new inventions are men of real talent. Mr. Capes has not the power of characterisation which we have noted in Mr. Marriott; but he has what Mr. Marriott entirely lacks (so far as we have opportunity for judging), the power of inventing incident. *THE LAKE OF WINE*, if it were translated into English, would be a really good story. Indeed, toward the latter part of the book, when his hands are full with the narrative, the author does not indulge to the same extent in this habit of acrobatic contortion. But in a later book, *OUR LADY OF DARKNESS*, we find a dilution of the narrative gift and no tempering of the extrava-

gance in diction. Take again Mr. Neil Munro, a writer whose first volume, *THE LOST PIBROCH*, filled us with hopes that his subsequent work has not yet entirely dashed. Take the opening of a chapter of his story, *DOOM CASTLE*, from the May number of *Blackwood's Magazine*.

Long after, when Count Victor Jean de Montaignon was come into great good fortune, and sat snug by charcoal-fires in the chateau that bears his name, and stands an edifice even the Du Barry had the taste to envy, upon the *gusset* of the roads which *break apart* a league to the south of the forest of St. Germain-en-Laye, he would recount, with *oddly inconsistent humours of mirth and tense dramatics*, the manner of his escape from the cell in the fosse of the Great MacCailen. And always his acutest memory was of the *whipping* rigour of the evening air, his temporary sense of *svounding* helplessness, upon the verge of the *fantastic* wood. "Figure you! Charles," would he say, "the *thin-blooded wand* of forty years ago in a brocaded waistcoat and a pair of dancing-shoes seeking his way through a labyrinth of *demoniac trees*."

What would Lockhart have said, we should like to know, to such a passage? Would he not have cried *havoc* and let slip the scorpions? But as things go, we have merely to remark that the forcing of the note is a little more obvious than usual. *Tense dramatics* is of course not English, but who cares nowadays to limit himself to a beggarly dictionary?

The man to blame for all this is not Mr. Meredith, the chief of sinners by example. It is Stevenson with his preaching of a doctrine that concentrated effort not on the thing to be said but on the manner of saying it. Stevenson himself had always an infinite deal to say. His invention was endlessly prolific in stories, his critical intelligence was infinitely subtle in the ethical casuistry for which life offered endless material to

his insatiable curiosity. However one may rate him as an artist, his influence upon the younger generation has unquestionably been far reaching. But, happily or unhappily, he wrote and thought like a Scot. The Scotch divines, who were his spiritual as well as his physical forefathers, transmitted to him a taste for polysyllables, and he was born a worshipper of exotic words. Anything appealed to him more than the natural way of easy speech, and he preached the deliberate cultivation of an assumed manner. He "played the sedulous ape" himself to Lamb, Hazlitt, and many another besides, and the method, like all the methods of genius, answered for himself. Other men follow it with disastrous result. They play the sedulous ape to Stevenson, and they push his tricks to the point at which imitation becomes caricature. ST. IVES is a bad example of Stevenson's manner, as he knew and said himself; it is unfinished work, dictated by a man not used to dictating, and composed under the pressure of a deadly illness. But in Stevenson's part of the book it would be hard to find parallels to such a sentence as this which we take from Mr. Quiller Couch's few concluding chapters that complete the tale.

Prompt upon the inference came inspiration. I must win to the centre of the crowd, and a crowd is invariably indulgent to a drunkard. *I hung out the glaring signboard of crapulous glee*. Lurching, hiccoughing, jostling, apologising to all and sundry with spacious incoherence, I plunged my way through the sightseers.

Take this again: "Wind in hidden gullies and the talk of lapsing waters on the hillside filled all the spaces of the night." Or this, where the hero is describing his escape in a balloon: "We were made one with

the clean silences receiving us." The point to be especially noted is that these finical phrases are placed in the mouth of a French soldier who, though born above the ranks, had seen all his service in them. It would be easy, but ungracious, to add other examples. Mr. Couch undertook a most thankless task to serve the wife and family of a dead friend, and, we may be sure, worked with more anxiety than he would have done on his own account. But the passages cited are examples of Stevenson's manner as Mr. Couch conceives it. The pages of WEIR OF HERMISTON offer a contrast rather than a parallel to such writing.

We have done with our illustrations. The moral we would wish to convey may be briefly stated. Words are the medium for displaying thought, not the thing to be displayed. It is the thought, the observation, or the invention that matters, not the words. Their main business is to be adequate; if we allow to them a beauty, it should be secondary, not primary. There has been no greater master of words than Horace, and his dictum is emphatic,

Verbaque provisam rem non invita
sequentur,

which Lewis Carroll has freely rendered in his happy parody of a familiar piece of advice, "Take care of the sense, and the sounds will take care of themselves." The something "*insigne, recens, indictum ore alio*, (notable and new and such as no other poet had sung before)," which he proposed to produce in honour of Bacchus, was not a new word, nor any nice derangement of epitaphs. He was not going to speak of *molten voices* or *blue music*. He was going to make something new

out of the old words, conforming, as was his custom, to the demands of common sense. And Horace wrote in verse, where licences are more permissible. Prose is, or ought to be, the tongue of ordinary speech a little arranged and conventionalised. Our last thought would be to under-value polish, but polish consists in removing roughness and incongruities, not in adding them. The hunt for the word results in a bedevilment of the common English with a mass of ill-assorted oddities; and we believe it to be for the practised writer a purely unnecessary exercise. At all events, Thackeray's manuscripts showed scarcely an erasure, and few men have written better than Thackeray. Scott perhaps is hardly a model; his prose, to borrow his own phrase, is apt at times to be a little loose about the joints. But his faults are superficial and accidental; his excellences are essential, the "countless unaffected colloquial charms and on-carryingness of his diction," which Coleridge spoke of; and these are incompatible with a stilted and tortuous utterance. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the right word is not the unexpected word, but that which will unobtrusively commend itself as natural and appropriate. We would plead with the younger generation of writers to be natural even in print; not to disguise from the world that urbanity and unpretending grace which we are sure distinguishes their private conversation; in a word, to write more or less as they talk. But if they have, with much application, learned to talk as they write, we can only implore them for their own sake and that of others, to unlearn what must inevitably be a most paralysing and intolerable accomplishment.

HIS FIRST ENGAGEMENT.

I.

BOBBY was an anachronism. He lived in an age not his own, and his own age knew him not; but the arrangement suited him exactly. He loved his surroundings, and was loth to change them for what might have seemed more congenial. He was a boy of twelve, who, according to all established custom and many well-grounded reasons, should have been in England, at school, playing with boys of his own age, and learning Euclid and Latin; but his father was loth to part with one who, for all his youth, was so sterling a companion, and who was also so obviously happy. Bobby's mother had died four years ago, and perhaps this was also a reason that father and son still clung to each other beyond the time usually allotted to Anglo-Indians.

The life that appealed so strongly to Bobby was not one that his elders altogether appreciated. There, however, he had the advantage over them, for the delights of the club and the ball-room, and the luxuries of a comfortable mess were unknown to him. It was no hardship, therefore, to him to be doomed to a winter at the foot of two parallel ranges of bare hills in a dreary frontier-post; indeed it was infinitely preferable to the summer that he had just spent with strangers in Cashmere. It was enough to be with the great man his father, to ride his sure-footed sturdy little Tangan pony up hill and down dale in his father's company, wherever his duties or the chance of sport might take him.

His father, Major James, was political officer of this part of the North-West Frontier, which was being held for a certain period by a Brigade of Occupation. A Brigade of Occupation, if necessary, is a necessary evil: it is an evil to the people of the country who hate invasion except in so far as they can profit pecuniarily by it; it is an evil to those who occupy, for it means the loss of the amenities of the life of cantonments with none of the counterbalancing advantages of war-service. The men therefore hate it because of heavier duties and curtailed comforts; and the officers hate it, because the polo-ground, if it exists, is bound to be uneven and stony, and because there is no excitement, and no society, and fewer comfortable chairs.

Thus it came about that, except in a measure for his father, who was inured to the life, and was a highly important individual (more important in many ways than the General himself), Bobby was the only supremely happy person in the post of Kala, though it contained some twenty British officers, and about two hundred soldiers and followers.

Bobby, too, was a great man in his way, and had a faithful following of his own. There was Badshah, the skew-bald Tangan pony aforesaid, and there was a bull-bitch called Dodo, who slept on his bed every night, and followed him everywhere, except when the sun was too hot; and besides these, there were Mal Singh and Abdullah, and a few lesser beings, not necessary to mention, for they merely waited upon his bodily

needs. Abdullah was important, for he was a learned man, a *moonshee*, and an English scholar, who taught Bobby to read and write, and to do sums; but the latter had a far greater respect for Mal Singh. Mal Singh was a pensioner from a great Sikh regiment and now spent his declining years in the service of the Major Sahib, whose father had in days long ago been his first commanding officer. His duties now were those of orderly to the third generation that he had known of this family of Sahibs *bahadur*; and he became to Bobby much what the pedagogue was to the youth of ancient Greece.

A good native soldier can become the best old retainer in the world, and Mal Singh's attendance upon Bobby was a wonderful combination of lavish respect and wise control. His influence was very salutary. He never let the boy do anything that was not what a young Sahib should do, though in restraining him he never ceased to be his servant. He rode with him when his father could not. He carried his gun in his first essays at shooting, and told him when, where, how, and at what to shoot. He carried his orders to the lesser servants, and squatted patiently by the hour in the verandah, while the little Sahib did his sums with Abdullah or slept his noon-day sleep.

So Bobby was a young satrap, with the Englishman's imperial instincts well developed in him. If you had thrown him straight away into an English home, he would in twenty-four hours have been dubbed by all the inmates an incorrigibly spoiled and unmanageable urchin; and this would have been true, but only because he would have been unadapted to his surroundings.

But he had one trouble; it was the dread of leaving his father. He knew that it would come; that all boys

went home to school, and left their fathers, their ponies, their dogs, and their servants, and the bright sun and the jungles behind them, and exchanged these for rain and fog and much book-learning and many maiden aunts. He put the thought from him philosophically, and never mentioned it, because his father did not.

Thus the blow fell heavier when it did fall. One fine morning in December his father told him that on the day after the morrow he would take him down to Bombay and there put him on a steamer bound for England; that there his home would be with relatives, but that it was also destined that he should go to a school where there would be fifty other boys besides himself.

Bobby struggled bravely with his tears, though he could not quite keep them down; but he was a Sahib, though a little one, and so, controlling himself, he prepared to face the worst. Thinking, wisely enough, that the best way to face the worst was to make it a little better if possible, he suggested to his father that the morrow being his last day, it ought to be spent in the pleasantest manner conceivable. Accordingly, after much consideration, it was decided that his father should invite the officers in the post to a shooting-party, for it was the season for the *ubara*.¹

A political officer should know his country almost as well as a fox-hunting squire at home; and besides, from his dealings with the natives, he is the natural recipient of all the most trustworthy reports as to where game is to be found. Therefore some dozen or so of officers who could be spared from their military duties accepted Major James's invitation gladly. Whether the sport were good or bad, to get away from this accursed brown mud fort from morning till evening on any

¹ *Ubara*, the lesser buzzard.

pretext was a god-send in itself. But when it became known that the motive of the expedition was to wish Bobby farewell, then all who could accepted with alacrity; for Bobby, besides being a healthy, sturdy, sporting little fellow, had also the charm of being unique; and wherever men herd together they love to concentrate affection upon a single object different in kind from themselves, whether it be the pet goat of a regiment, or the parrot of a ship's crew, or even an inanimate object such as the ship itself, or, with a regiment, the colours of the regiment. In this case it was a boy that did duty as regimental pet to two whole regiments, who was as much at home in every officer's mud-hut as in his own father's quarters, and whom they were all accustomed to see daily tripping fearlessly over the horses' heel-ropes in the cavalry lines, or helping casual half-naked sepoy to clean their rifles. They turned out, therefore, in force to do Bobby honour, when they heard with regret that this was to be his last day among them.

II.

The sun rose late on a bright December morning. By half-past nine the air was warm enough to make the slow ride over broken ground to the spot where they were going to begin shooting tolerable, if not exactly pleasant. Mounted on ponies and clad in the embroidered yellow-sheep-skin coats called *poshteens*, that are one of the chief exports of Afghanistan, the party of fourteen filed out of the fort, followed by their grooms, and by their orderlies carrying their guns. Outside they picked up a motley crowd of ragged coolies, whom Major James's political influence had apparently conjured up out of the barren soil, and who would

be useful later on for driving the game. They were accompanied by twenty men as escort, though this was in mere obedience to standing-orders, no sign of disaffection among the neighbouring tribes having shown itself for many months.

For the first few miles the ground was covered with big stones, with no vegetation to speak of, and intersected at every few hundred yards by broad deep *nullahs* the sides of which were generally precipitous, with only occasional gaps, down one of which, on the loose pebbles, your pony with some remonstrance would consent to slip, and up another of which on the opposite side he would climb with much effort and many back-slidings. No pony so clever at this game as Badshah, the Nepaulese Tangan. Thus progress was slow and it was not till eleven o'clock that they reached the part over which they were going to shoot. Here the nature of the ground altered. The riders dismounted, leaving their ponies to be led after them on the outskirts of the jungle; for they had reached a spot where the ber-thorn bush grew thick and tenacious; and a ber-thorn covert is what the *ubara* loves. Here they began the serious work of the day.

Major James, posting his party in a line at suitable intervals from each other behind thorn-bushes, sent on the coolies to drive towards them what *ubara* there might be lurking in the jungle ahead. It was natural that hospitality should give place in his heart that day to fatherly affection, and pardonable that he should post his son Bobby in the likeliest spot of all. The party was in Bobby's honour, and all were glad to see his father put him near a short space of clear ground, beyond which was a thick belt of ber-thorns, in which, if anywhere, an *ubara* should be hiding.

Then all was quiet. The coolies'

chatter was heard for the time being no more. They had gone ahead, sticks in hand, under the direction of Bobby's orderly, Mal Singh, to drive the game towards the Sahibs.

Soon a confused murmur of grunts and snorts and the throwing of stones into the bushes and the beating of them with sticks reached the sportsmen's ears. It grew louder and clearer. Mal Singh's voice was heard upbraiding a delinquent coolie, and the delinquent coolie was heard rattling off his thousand excuses; but no game made its appearance. Shooting in the East is often disappointing; partly for the simple reason that in many places it is not very good, but still more because the natives who tell you birds are plentiful, tell you so to please you for the moment, rather than because it is the fact. Only the day before Major James had been told that *ubara* were as plentiful in this jungle as vultures round a dead camel; and this was the result.

Just as the drive was at its end, and as the certainty of a blank was impressing itself upon them all, with a whirr like a partridge, a grouse, and a pheasant rolled in one, up out of the thick thorns in front of Bobby got a game old cock-*ubara*, and flew strong on the wing across him. Up went Bobby's gun to his shoulder and covered the bird well. Bang went the contents of a No. 3 cartridge into his head, and with a swerve and a swoop down he fell among the berthorns as dead as Julius Cæsar. "I sha'n't mind going to school so much now, Father," said Bobby, as the Major came up and patted him on the back.

The drive was over. A coolie picked the bird up, and was carrying it off to its destination in the game-bag. But Mal Singh, seizing him by what clothing there was to seize, wrested the bird from him, and pushed

the fellow away. This was no ordinary bird, shot by an ordinary Sahib, to be put in a game-bag unnoticed and eaten casually at sundown. It was the bird that his master, Bobby Sahib, son of the great Major Sahib, the political officer, and grandson of his own commanding officer Sahib of old days, had, alone of all the other Sahibs, shot with his own gun on this, the last day that he should call him master. Placing it carefully in his left hand, and measuring his distance from Bobby with his eye, he sprang to attention, and, as though on parade at a general's inspection, marched with all the swagger of the proudest soldier-race in the world to within six paces of Bobby. Then his heels met with a click, his right hand flew to his forehead and down to his side in a lightning salute, and bending down he placed the bird carefully at Bobby's feet, muttering, with a lump in his throat and tears in his eyes, "*Shábásh, shábásh!*"¹

III.

This was the only bird shot that day. The men that had brought the news that *ubara* were plentiful were arrant liars, and after four more drives and no more luck, they were all glad enough to stop this pretence of shooting and eat a hearty lunch under the clump of trees that Major James pointed out ahead of them.

Still the party had not been altogether a failure, for if there was only one bird to be shot, it was obvious to all that Bobby was the right man to shoot it. Moreover the regrets of frustrated sport can soon be obliterated in food and drink, especially when breakfast was long ago, and much ground has been covered in the meantime; and when A. is a friend of B., and both A. and B. know C. inti-

¹ *Shábásh*, well done, bravo!

mately, and when A., B. and C. are all at work on the same meat-pie, and helping themselves from the same bottle. So luncheon went merrily on, and the birds that were not were soon forgotten. Later on they pledged Bobby in many toasts, to which he responded with few words and much ginger-beer. They wished him luck on his voyage, luck on the football-field, luck on the cricket-field, luck in the form-room, and luck in the future, when he should return a full-blown officer of Her Majesty's service, like his father and his grandfather before him.

Mal Singh, squatting underneath a shady tree close by watched the Sahibs making merry, and was glad that his young master was the cynosure of their eyes. And because the noon-tide was warm, and he had trudged many miles on foot, and was an old man, weariness came upon him, so that, bowing his head into the angle of his elbow, he slept. Dodo, the bull-bitch, who had remained with Badshah the pony during the shooting, had now come nearer and joined Mal Singh, while her master was in the charmed luncheon-circle to which she was not admitted. Like Mal Singh, she had sat eyeing the proceedings with interest, and may be pride, and like him at length she succumbed to weariness and slept.

Then the others lit cheroots, and lay back in inelegant comfortable positions to take what ease a hard ground could afford, till it should be time to be stirring. This did not amuse Bobby who did not smoke, and whose digestion was not like a grown man's that cried for repose after a meal. Wherefore he slipped away quietly to take a stroll, passing close to where Mal Singh and Dodo slept. Mal Singh slept on, but Dodo, waking at the approach of her master's footsteps, followed quietly at his heels.

Fifty yards further on Bobby came to a *nullah*, the exploration of which seemed the obvious method of employing his time. Down he dropped into it, displacing many stones from the cracked crumbling soil in his descent; and down dropped Dodo after him, displacing even more with her clumsy tread.

The most prominent object in the *nullah* was a large boulder, with a further drop of the ground on the far side. Round it and down into the hollow Bobby scrambled, with Dodo behind, now pricking her ears, and sniffing the ground as best she could with her upturned nose.

IV.

In this hollow was crouching another boy of about the same age and height as Bobby, but of very different appearance. He was a thin-faced, sharp-featured, Jewish-nosed, sallow-complexioned boy, clad in dirty loose robes with a long knife hanging from a belt round his waist, another belt full of cartridges slung from his shoulder, and a small battered Remington rifle in his right hand. He stood up at Bobby's approach.

It was a strange meeting; the sturdy, chubby-faced English boy, carrying nothing in his hand, but with clenched fists and a stolid determined attitude, and the wiry, yellow little Afridi startled but all alert, and armed to the teeth. The two, recoiling slightly, stood facing each other. The British boy clenched his fists still tighter, and the Afridi, gripping his rifle, touched the handle of his knife with his left hand, while brown eyes met blue in a level, well-poised stare.

Matters remained thus at a deadlock, till Dodo relieved the situation by smelling the Afridi boy's ankles. The latter though brought up to

fear nothing, yet feared the bulldog. Such a monstrous ungainly body, such an uncompromisingly vicious countenance, to one who had never seen the like in a dog before, seemed unnatural and demoniacal. But more terrifying than all fears was the fear of being afraid; and the Afridi boy found that he trembled, and the harder he tried not to, the more he trembled. And was he not the son of Shera Khan, the chief of Dara, a leader of men and a mighty warrior? And had not his father, laid low with fever, put him in command of his own *lashkar*¹ of one hundred men, and sent him hither? And how should such a one tremble, when a foul infidel's dog sniffed at his heels? For though possessed of unearthly ugliness, yet the monster was surely nothing more.

Nevertheless he was paralysed with fear, and dared not move; but yet the more he felt his fear the more he felt his shame, till at last, overcome by both, he burst into a flood of tears, while Dodo sniffed on calmly.

This outburst astonished Bobby far more than the actual meeting had done. He had seen armed Afridis before (though the Afridi boy had not seen British bull-dogs), and the blood-thirsty appearance of the young ruffian with his rifle and knife did not trouble him at all. Besides Dodo was with him, and Dodo, who was a born fighter, and whose tale of victories included many beasts from the common pariah-dog to the fretful porcupine, was a grand champion to have by one on chance meetings in lonely *nullahs*.

Thus Bobby on his part was not afraid, but only concerned when he saw the other boy weep. He was, as has been explained, not used to other boys, living, as he had always

done, with grown men. He wept sometimes himself, and on these occasions regarded himself remorsefully as an exception to the rest of Englishmen, though he knew that the practice was common enough among natives. Still when he saw another boy howl with his fist crammed into his eye in true boyish fashion, then he felt that it was not because he was a native but because he was a boy that he wept, and his heart went out to him accordingly.

To relieve the bitterness of the other's grief he dived into his pocket, where he found a half empty box of chocolates which he applied without delay. They had become partially melted with the sun, and the melted ones had not borne the jolt of Badshah's paces over-well; but they were still undoubtedly chocolates, and as such should serve their purpose. The Afridi boy did not know what to do with them, but Bobby whose Pushtoo was fluent, soon explained. Of course the former's fellow-tribesmen would have been shocked to see their chief's son partaking of food from the hand of a Christian. But the boy was distraught and unnerved, and knew not what he did; while the dangerous propinquity of Dodo's proboscis to his heels was an additional motive for compliance.

He took and ate, and was comforted. His eyes followed the box as Bobby withdrew it, and the latter, divining his look, was constrained to offer it again. The offer was again accepted, this time with more alacrity, and the two without more ado sat down together to make a serious business of what remained. Dodo sat down between them and partook also, but the Afridi edged away involuntarily from the dog's familiarities, so that Bobby's hospitable instincts forced him to put the dis-

¹ *Lashkar*, lit. a camp, and so a body of soldiers.

turbing element out of his guest's reach, and he pulled her by her collar over to his other side. Resenting this treatment Mistress Dodo moved away up the *nullah* for a ramble on her own account.

Thus comfortably settled in the hollow, and with the ice well broken by the chocolates, they began to talk. Bobby could speak Pushtoo easily, and thus there was no barrier between them on the score of language.

The Afridi boy was asked his name and told it; it was Mohamed Khan. In his turn he asked Bobby what had brought him thither; the latter explained that he had come with his father, the political officer, and with many others, and that to shoot *ubara* had been their object. Then, since his heart was still full of his morning's achievement, he straightway gave his listener a glowing account of the bird he had shot that morning. When he had dilated on the long weary waiting, while the coolies beat the bushes with no success, and told how at last, when there seemed no hope, a bird had indeed got up, and flown with much noise and speed near to where he stood with his gun, and how he had lifted his gun to his shoulder and taken aim, he paused to look into Mohamed Khan's face, but was disappointed to find that it lacked altogether the expression of enthusiasm which he felt himself, and which he had hoped to see there. The face was solemn and thoughtful, and after a time Mohamed Khan muttered, almost to himself: "Then the report was true."

"What report was true?" asked Bobby crossly. "Why talk you of reports, when I tell you of *ubara*?"

But Mohamed Khan with the same grave manner, and without looking at Bobby or apparently noticing his impatience, proceeded: "The report came to my father last night that

many Sahibs were coming to-day to shoot in this jungle, and they have come. Therefore the report was true."

"What is the matter with you?" demanded Bobby. "Why do you go on talking about these reports and not listen to my story?"

But Mohamed Khan would not listen and went on talking to himself. "The little Sahib is beautiful, though his dog is ugly, and he has shown me much kindness; and truly the sweetmeats of the Sahib-*logue*¹ are very sweet."

"What rot you talk!" blurted out Bobby in English; then again in Pushtoo he asked angrily: "What is the matter?"

But for answer Mohamed Khan put his fists in his eyes again and wept noisily.

The chocolates were exhausted, and so was Bobby's patience. That the only boy he had met for ages should turn out such a cry-baby was intolerable. He seized him by the shoulders as they sat together, and shaking him well, asked a third time what the matter was.

Mohamed Khan with much sobbing and gulping down of tears answered: "The Sahib is so fair and so brave, and his heart is so kind. Lo! his eyes are blue like the sky, and his face red like the sun at sunset. His like I have never seen. And I came into this *nullah* armed with my rifle and my dagger. And the Sahib came unarmed, yet he feared me not, but came near to me, and looked into my face. And he showed me great kindness, giving me in my trouble sweetmeats that were like unto the food of the Blessed in Paradise. Therefore what wonder is it that I love the Sahib? And what wonder is it that I now weep? For have I not come here with a hundred men of my

¹ *Sahib-logue*, the people of the Sahibs, the white folk.

father's *lashkar* to slay the Sahib and his father and his friends?"

Bobby's grip upon the Afridi's shoulders tightened; his eyes flamed; he muttered between his teeth, "You came to kill my father!" Then flinging his arms round him, they rolled over upon the ground.

Mohamed Khan's fighting instinct was aroused in a moment. They turned over and over one another, each struggling for the upper hand. Now Mohamed Khan was uppermost, now Bobby. The former's rifle had been kicked away at the beginning of the struggle, and lay out of reach. It seemed ages to them both, but it was barely two minutes that they lay struggling. Then Bobby's British weight and British back-bone told. Mohamed Khan lay exhausted beneath him, with his head bent back upon the ground, while Bobby pinned his body down with his knee, and holding his right arm down with his own left hand, placed his right hand in a throttling grip on the Afridi's throat. But this last act released the latter's left arm for the first time since the struggle had begun. One more moment's hard pressure on his throat would have rendered both that arm and the rest of his body powerless, but the Afridi boy had just time to place his free hand on the handle of his knife and begin to draw it from its scabbard.

But at this moment, just above them, there was a scrambling over the loose stones, a snort and a yelp, and Dodo's teeth, clutching at the loose folds of the sleeve of Mohamed Khan's tunic, as it moved about suspiciously while the arm that it hid was seizing the knife, met at length in the skinny bit of his wrist just clear of the bones, and stayed there; and thus the drawing of that knife was interrupted.

Bobby had heard Dodo's yelp and

knew that she had come to his assistance, but did not know what she had done; while the other, half-throttled, had no voice to cry out when bitten; so the English boy's hand gripped tighter and tighter at the Afridi's throat, till the latter's sallow face grew purple, his head hung limply backward, and his tongue lolled from his mouth.

He was vanquished. Bobby let go his hold, and looking round saw Dodo looking up at him wide-eyed, with Mohamed Khan's wrist between her teeth, and his hand and arm hanging limply from her mouth.

Then he saw the knife that hung from his enemy's side, and drawing it from the scabbard, examined it and played with it. He never thought of using it to put an end to his foe as he lay senseless and helpless beneath him; but Mohamed Khan waking anon from his swoon, and looking upward, saw Bobby leaning over him knife in hand. Thinking his end was near he cried: "Spare me, Sahib, spare me!"

"But you would not have spared my father, had you caught him thus," cried Bobby, suddenly fired to vengeance by the other's cringing entreaties.

"Do you then love your father so much that you needs must kill me? So be it. I too, Sahib, love my father." This he said haughtily but resignedly, accepting after a brief struggle the decree of Fate. "I too love my father," he repeated, "and for him I die. He sent me forth at the head of his men, because he was sick with fever and could not come. He bade me come and attack you unawares, while you were busy with your shooting or your feasting; for those who had advised you to come hither to shoot had also told us of your coming. Therefore I, at the head of a hundred men came hither.

These I left in yonder *nullah*, and myself came forward to spy upon your people as you sat at meat. Here, in this *nullah* I met you, and you and your dog have vanquished me. Slay me, then, now, and I will die, knowing that I have done all that my father would have had me do."

This filial devotion appealed to Bobby; it was just what he felt so strongly himself. Understanding his foe now and respecting him, he treated him with all the courtesy of nations, and as an honoured prisoner of war. First of all he bade Dodo loose her hold. This, with an upward look of reproach and misgiving, she at length did, revealing some ugly marks on Mohamed Khan's wrist. Bobby's handkerchief was wrapped carefully round as a bandage, and since the pain was not now great, the two sat up together side by side, as they had sat before, and reviewed the situation calmly. War had been declared and a decisive action fought; but now there was a suspension of hostilities, and a chance for overtures of peace.

There were two main difficulties that it was needful to smooth away. First of all, it was clear to Mohamed Khan, that if he took his men back, leaving the Sahibs unharmed, and if Bobby told his father what had been their intentions, then would they have accomplished nothing, but only incurred the wrath of the Sirkar¹ on account of their treacherous plotting. On the other hand, Bobby realised that if he were to let Mohamed Khan depart uninjured, and not tell his father of the plot that had been laid against him, he would be leaving his father open to an attack at any moment from a treacherous foe, whom he might still go on believing to be a loyal ally.

¹ *Sirkar*, the supreme authority, the Government.

At last Mohamed Khan spoke thus. "Lo! I am the only son of my father; he speaks to me all that is in his heart, for he says that I soon will be a man. I know what thoughts he has towards your people; and often has he spoken to me of your father and your father's greatness. I know that in his heart he thinks highly of you, and that he was very loth to lay this plot against you, and would have thought not at all of any such deed, had he not been urged thereto by holy men. It may be that when I return and tell him that I have accomplished nothing, that he will be angry; it may indeed be that he will beat me; but in his heart he will forgive me and rejoice. And, oh Sahib, every day I grow stronger, and my father weaker, for he is old and sickness takes hold of him often, whereas each day I grow taller and shoot straighter with my rifle, so that the men of my father's tribe daily honour me more and obey me more readily. I know, indeed, that though I am now a child, yet very quickly shall I be the leader of all those that wait for me now in yonder *nullah*. Since now the Sahib has spared me, I will return, taking them with me. To them I will say that the Sahibs have returned to the fort and that nothing is to be seen of any of them, save only the fragments from their feast. To my father I will tell all. And, oh Great One, though I love my father, yet do I now swear to you, that should he not hearken to my petition and consent to leave you unharmed so long as he shall live, then assuredly will I slay him with my hands. And I, on my part promise, that never again will I lift my hand against the Sirkar. But, oh Sahib, I too love my father. Spare him then, and tell to your father naught of all this matter; else will my father surely be ruined by your father's wrath, and by the

might of the Sirkar's armies. Say then, oh Sahib, what is in your heart."

"It is well," answered Bobby; "I consent. You shall return to your father; neither you nor he shall ever again seek to hurt my father, and of this matter I will tell him nothing."

Then Mohamed Khan unloosed his Afghan knife from his belt, and handing it to Bobby in its scabbard, gave it to him as a keepsake and as a pledge of the treaty that day ratified. And Bobby, casting about him, found somewhere deep in a trouser-pocket a six-bladed, ivory-handled treasure of a knife, and this he gave to Mohamed Khan.

Then with a low *salaam* Mohamed Khan was gone, and Bobby, with Dodo at his heels, and hiding his new knife inside his waistcoat, retraced his steps across the *nullah*, and went back to his father and the shooting-party.

And since the afternoon was waning, and there was little hope of more sport, the party rode back slowly to the fort. And Bobby let the reins lie loose on Badshah's neck and sat silent and deep in thought, so that all supposed him to be weary with the toils of the day. And Dodo trailed behind him silently, and Mal Singh's face was very long, as he strode

behind carrying his master's gun for the last time. And his father rode alongside gloomily, thinking of to-morrow's parting.

But a weight was off Bobby's mind. Hitherto the future had been a dreary blank and had frightened him. But that morning, when he had shot the *ubara*, he had felt some of that feeling of exultation that fears no to-morrow. And now, as he thought upon what had since happened, he realised in a vague way that he had saved his father and his friends from a grave danger, and surely to have done this formed a fit ending to his Indian life. So it was with a stout heart that, as his father wished him good-night, as he lay dog-tired in bed with Dodo at his feet, he murmured heavy-eyed and half asleep: "Father, I am glad I am going to school."

Then his father wondered that his son should be so brave, so callous, or so philosophical. And none at Simla or at the India Office ever knew that at Brighton, in the lowest form of Dr. Jones's preparatory school, there struggled daily over the oblique cases of *musa* one who had held a grave frontier-question in the hollow of his hand, and grappled it with masterly acumen, firmness, tact, and success.

POWELL MILLINGTON.

ENGLISH SURNAMES.

IF in many ways not easily overlooked the past is wont to reassert itself in the present, there are directions in which the two are so closely mixed that we do not notice the former, though it may be well worth recognition. Thus, amidst the multiplied and complicated pursuits of modern life, we are daily in unconscious touch with the fewer and simpler matters that exercised the brains and fingers of our forefathers in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; for in a shape no less familiar than that of the surnames in constant use to-day, the English occupations of those bygone ages are largely represented. But who observes the ancient fact affirmed in the current designation? Who in naming the author of VANITY FAIR thinks of his descent from some plain north-country thatcher of stack and cottage? Who recognises in the Jenners, now of life-saving repute, the offspring of those whose business it once was to destroy life, the *ginours*, or engineers, who served the catapults in medieval war? Yet there is surely some interest in realising the origins of the names we hear everywhere about us. In the following pages I have quoted a few of the names derived from the occupations pursued in the later Middle-Ages. As the period supplying the specimens was one of frequent conflicts, I have chosen first some reminders of medieval battle; after which a small selection of surnames expressing peaceful industries and recreations will be briefly considered.

The registers that have been preserved at Somerset House since 1837

furnish what seems at first sight to be a very complete series of surnames connected with war. Supplying in the first place that invariable cause of hostilities, Quarrell, they lead on to Allies, Challenge, Charge, Battle, Greatbattle, Rout, Victory, and Conquest. They proceed, as it would appear, to enumerate in detail the ghastly results of conflict, in the names Gash, Gore, Slaughter, Carnage, and Corps; and seem to furnish particulars of war-material in Powder, Bullet, Shott, Shell, Cannon, Sword, and Lance. They mention too the Gunner, and further specify his deadly charges in Cannister and Grape, recalling the ingenious (rather than ingenuous) argument founded upon them by the tippling Lieutenant Luff, that tea and wine are equally destructive. Few, however, of these surnames have anything directly to do with warfare, and only one,—Gunner—commemorates a military calling. This name, too, is apparently the sole mark made on our registers by the primitive firearms of the fourteenth century, which seem indeed generally to have barked more than they bit, and to have been especially harmless towards the enemy. The name Cannon is not military but ecclesiastical. It is known to point to one of the bound religious orders, the title of which, had its members kept their vows, would not appear among hereditary surnames. Battle itself owns but indirect relationship to war. It was merely the distinguishing description applied to migrants from the Sussex village that has borne that name since "might made right eight hundred years ago."

Of the other surnames quoted, some,—those, for instance, designating weapons—have been recognised as nicknames; and the rest are probably corruptions.

Many nevertheless are the true representatives of medieval crafts and callings connected with warfare. Of Jenner and Gunner, already mentioned, the latter necessarily dates from more recent days, while the former may have become hereditary much earlier. Some genuine war-surnames have been to all appearance removed from the military list by corruptive influences, just as false ones by the same means seem to have been placed upon it. There is, for example, Alabaster, which has probably caused much speculation as to how the decorative substance, formerly often seen under glass in drawing-rooms, can have foisted its name upon family nomenclature. In this disguise, however, which affords an example of what may be called constructive corruption,—the joint work of imagination and illiteracy—lurks no other than the medieval cross-bow-man or arbalester, who, sometimes mounted and sometimes afoot, equipped with his rather cumbrous arbalest, and his quiver of fifty short thick arrows, or quarrels, was so important a factor in the battles of the thirteenth century. The *balistraria*, those narrow apertures through which these warriors discharged their darts, are familiar features in old military architecture. There are Arblasters among us whose less corrupted designation describes their ancestors more intelligibly than that just mentioned; and also Bolsters and Blasts who are held to be of like descent, and whose names therefore need not suggest bed-furniture and wintry winds. But the famed archers of England are otherwise and more familiarly referred to cognominally, as are the crafts of bow

and arrow-making. Most of us have met with Archers and Bowmans whose fathers wielded perhaps the long-bow of the fourteenth century, perhaps the earlier and less convenient weapons. Bowyers, as well as Bowers and Boyers, are within the circle of many people's acquaintance; and these alike represent the medieval bow-maker, the craftsman in yew, elm, ash, or wych-hazel; while the Arrowsmiths, and according to one authority¹ the Arsmiths also, point to the workers who shaped the steel arrow-heads, and the Stringers to the manipulators of hemp, flax, catgut, and sinew in the making of strings both for the bows, and for some of the heavier engines of war. The Fletchers, whose name has sometimes been set down as derived from the French *flèche* (an arrow), and has been held therefore to refer to arrow-makers generally, are apparently more rightly regarded as descended from those formerly engaged on the specific task of fledging or feathering arrows, which they usually did with slips cut from the wings of a goose. The Fletchers, by the way, are said to have attracted to their more agreeable surname some of the Fleshers, a north-country race who, with the Butchers of Norman descent, and the imported Labouchères, were ancestrally concerned with slaughter other than that for which the Fletchers helped to prepare the instruments. Tipper and Setter are explained as having been the respective denominations of the forgers of the arrow-point, and of the workman who fastened the point to the shaft. Both words survive as surnames; and they put a finish to the cognominal account of arrow-making, as those they describe did to the arrows.

¹OUR ENGLISH SURNAMES; by C. W. Bardsley. The writer is much indebted to this interesting book.

The ages mainly concerned in the settling of family names having been among those in which hand-to-hand fighting was a more prominent feature of battle than it can be in these days of Lyddite, Maxims, and Lee-Metfords, they called forth much attention to defensive armour, then of real service. It is apparently in surnames affording general descriptions that the many workers who supplied the consequent demand must chiefly be sought. The Armorers, Armourers (armers) and Armorys,¹ also with some reservation the Smiths, may be recognised as descendants of the men who, at different dates and according to many fashions prevalent within the centuries in question, wrought the suits of ring or plate-armour, the varying shapes of helmet, vizor, and skull-cap, of shield, greaves, poleyns, and vambraces. But surnames touch more explicitly on the equipment for personal encounter, and for the offensive as well as the defensive part of it, when they take us from the workshop to the field of battle. Not only do they show us in Jackman the wearer of the coat of mail, but they similarly point out the bearer of pike, spear, &c. There is, it would seem, but one weapon of importance in close fighting the separate manufacture of which is referred to cognominally, but that is the most important of all, the sword. Sworder is a not uncommon family name describing the forgers of the blade. Less frequent is Sheather; but this too may be met with, and is a relic of the men who in old days shaped the scabbard for the destructive instrument that still symbolises "war and waste" in general. It seems to suggest here that we put by our military surnames, and produce a few relating to civil callings.

¹ The final "y" is an old appendage, fanciful or familiar, to many surnames.

On a general consideration of what has already been said, it will be seen that the names significant of old pursuits by no means furnish main descriptions only, but are also largely specific. If, therefore, we can for a moment imagine our surnames as having remained merely personal up to the present time, and as beginning under existing conditions to settle into hereditary permanence, we shall realise what an enormous accession to the numbers of those created by occupations, multitudinous as they are already, must have come about owing to the minute subdivisions of labour which distinguish the industrial methods of these days. Every one of the countless local and familiar terms expressing different minutiae of manufacturing toil as it now proceeds, terms constantly used by the toilers to describe themselves orally and in writing, among comrades and employers as well as in the register and the census-schedule, would have been liable to pass into permanent surnames. To take a simple example:—instead of the group of half a dozen names now existing relative to the medieval miller and mill, we should, under the conditions supposed, have probably acquired by means of the numerous steam flour-mill companies employing many men variously busied and described, a lengthy list designating several grades of officials from the Managers downwards, to the Grinders, Loftmen, Storemen, Spoutmen, Loaders, &c. In the case of the great industries the operation of the multiplying process would of course have been much more strongly marked.

The ancient flax-manufacture has supplied many of the particularising surnames which have been imagined as arising in increased numbers out of the prevalent specialism of modern industrial procedure. There are not only the cognomen Flaxman,—now

of artistic rather than manufacturing association—to commemorate the medieval flax-workers in general, and Lyner descriptive of the medieval dealers in manufactured linen; Scotcher is also to be found, with its modified Scutcher, and its familiarised Scutchery, each telling of the process, now performed for the most part by machinery, of separating the woody from the fibrous part of the line-plant. There are, too, among us Hacklers and Hecklers representing forefathers who with the hatchel, or hackle, combed out the filaments of the flax so as to reduce them to their finest fibres, a process fitly lending its name to a serious mental and moral operation sometimes undergone by human subjects. And again there are the Blackers whose progenitors also had to do with a subordinate, but not unimportant, proceeding in the preparation of linen for the market. These workers were not, as their description suggests, concerned in sullyng the useful material, but rather in rendering it more fair. They were in short the *bleachers* of the woven linen. Our family name-system certainly possesses singular powers. It can affirm without mendacity that Two and Two do not make four; by the simple agency of marriage it can convert a Round into a Square,—a process not easily distinguishable from squaring the circle; and here it is able to maintain under strict cross-questioning the paradoxical position that black and white are identical. The surname Whiter survives, and describes exactly the same occupation as Blacker; but the riddle is solved in the explanation that “the Anglo-Saxon *blac*, unaccented, means black, while *blác* signifies pale or white, and the derivative verb *blácian* to bleach or make pale.”¹

¹ Lower's PATRONYMICA BRITANNICA: art. *Blaker, Blacker.*

The surnames created by the manufacture of wool, the original great staple of the country, are found also to describe many details of the industry. While general denominations, from Woolman and Stapler to Draper, Clothier, and Taylor, appear in the registers, these are supplemented by numerous names denoting particulars of the manufacture. Among them are Comber and Carder telling of a preparatory treatment of the raw material answering to that of heckling in the case of flax; Spinner and Spinster which speak for themselves; and Webb, Webber, and Webster of frequent occurrence, representing the medieval weavers. Here too the Walkers come in, whose ancestors were pedestrians in a sense little less monotonous, though much more honourable, than that in which the term applies to convicts on the treadmill. They patiently accomplished by treading the thickening or felting of the manufactured cloth, the operation that turns to full account the singular curly, elastic, and scaly properties of wool-fibre by pressing the woven material till its threads become firmly bound together in numberless subtle knots. Fullers there are in abundance, as well as Walkers, who represent similar work effected by the same means; for the fulling-mill, now in its turn superseded by more delicate machinery, was not used till the middle of the fifteenth century, by which time, although it cannot be said that the door was even then closed against their increase, surnames had for the most part taken hereditary form.

In similar detail are the operations of many another industry of old days kept in mind in the columns of the registers. The smiter on the anvil whose familiar generic description Smith,—already spoken of as in part applying to the armourer—has fur-

nished the commonest English surname, has also originated at least twenty others, expressing by prefixes the several branches of his occupation; as Nasmyth representing the nail-maker, Shoosmith the horse-shoemaker, Sixsmith the sickle-maker, &c.; while corresponding distinctions abound in the surnames describing those humblest of rural labourers the "minders" of live-stock, for not only are these countrymen represented among us by the Herds and Hurds, but also in such names as Calvert, Colthart, Coward, Hoggart, Sheppard, Stothert and many others, in which the last syllable must be read as *herd* (keeper) in spite of variations of spelling, the first representing the kind of animal tended.

With some exceptions, and one notable one furnished by the pursuit of hunting, pastimes have not, like the graver occupations of life, divided themselves into sections likely to confer separate titles on their votaries and furnishers. There are, however, surnames enough in existence to supply a record of the general features of sport in the Middle Ages. The names Butt and Archer recall the fact that medieval games consisted largely in preparation for war by practice in marksmanship. The former describes those who set up targets in the fields and closes provided for archery practice; and the latter either may point to the marksman distinguished in civil competitions, or may as already shown be a description of military service. In Hunter, Buckmaster, Venner, and many other names, the aristocratic diversion of the chase is commemorated both through its devotees and their servants. Todhunter should send a thrill of horror through the frame of the modern sportsman, as it celebrates the destroyer of the tod, or fox, which was treated as vermin when family surnames were coming into use, the

deer being then the huntsman's game. The Falconers abound everywhere to recall the hawk-tamers and trainers who were greatly in demand by the upper classes after Norman usage had given its great impulse to English falconry. As will be remembered, their name, very variously spelt, has for the most part shrunk into a dissyllable, and usually retains the French "u."

If it be true that the prototype of cricket was practised in the fourteenth century, and if devotion to the pastime had then been so ardent and so productive of professionals as now, cognominal traces of the game might certainly be expected. A quest for such traces might seem to be rewarded by the promising surnames Batman, Bowler, and Fielder, each of which may be found in register and directory; but even if club-ball furnished such terms, the three names are shown to bear meanings quite unconnected with that sport. The first describes a boatman, the second a turner of rough wooden vessels, and the third a dweller in the meadows. Should anyone be disappointed at failing to trace a long descent for our prime English game, he may take comfort from considering what surnames signify less wholesome forms of sport that are happily now extinct. Bearman, Berward, and Bullard, for example, recall the brutal amusements of the bull-ring and bear-pit, as Cocker points to the cock-fighter, whose occupation, however, survived till a time within the nineteenth century that men yet living may remember. Wiseman, on the contrary, refers to a harmless entertainer, being commemorative of the conjuror at fairs and wakes, a personage still familiar enough, as is also the Player, who "strutted and fretted his hour" upon the medieval stage on similar occasions, with only village-green or market-place for scenic accessories.

Our nation has often been set down as unmusical ; but surnames go far to show the wide acceptance of minstrelsy as a recreation in the England of the later Middle Ages. If indeed the numerous quasi-musical terms found among family names could safely be put in evidence, the testimony against the charge would be overwhelming. Unfortunately the Harmonys and Melodys, the Anthems, Chants, Ballads, and Glees, the Flats and Sharps, Trebles and Basses, the Organs, Harps, Lutes, Horns, Fiddles, Drums, and Fifes of the registers cannot without great hesitation be called into the witness-box. A large number of these names must doubtless be classed, like many others already quoted, as mere corruptions ; though some, originally applied as nicknames, may have a reference to musical acquirements. But there remain sufficient trustworthy witnesses to the popular appreciation of musical entertainment. There is Gleeman, for instance, pointing to the itinerant vocalists of the Middle Ages who were always sure of a welcome in hall and bower, with respect to which name it is to be remembered that *glee* originally meant music or minstrelsy in general, not a particular form of it. The Sangers and Sangsters are also representative of the same class. Then there are the Crowthers and Crowders who in the old days drew forth melodies, more or less sweet, from the *crowd* or *crowth*, a primitive violin, and the Fiddlers and Vidlers, whose ancestors performed on instruments of much

the same fashion. It is interesting to learn from musical history that these popular musicians went far to anticipate by intuition the musical truth and freedom of much later days, while the monks, who were the accredited teachers of the art, long lagged behind, hampered by scales of ecclesiastical tradition which were arbitrary and misleading. To add one more surname of true musical origin where many must be left unnoticed, we may set down Harper, representing specially favoured performers,—often probably, like the crowders, hailing from Wales,—in the popular concerts of five hundred years ago.

Of the family names quoted in this paper many seem out of place in their proper connection, on account of incongruous associations lately acquired by them. Sanger, for example, has probably even now suggested to some readers the circus and the clown, and, if they be Londoners, Sangster has likely enough reminded them of umbrellas ; but the name Harper can create no such confusion, though, in the hands of the well-known musicians who have borne it in our own day,

The harp a king had loved to hear

has been exchanged for another instrument. It would be strange if the mutations of life were so constant as to admit of no such congruities as are thus occasionally shown between the pursuits men follow now, and the ancestral capabilities expressed in the surnames they inherit.

EDWARD WHITAKER.

IN LAVENGRO'S COUNTRY.

I HAD heard at Lowestoft that the old house at Oulton in which George Borrow had lived,—that old white-fronted house amid the rugged firs—had been pulled down; but I was comforted to hear, at the same time, that the summer-house in which he wrote LAVENGRO and THE BIBLE IN SPAIN was still standing in the grounds of the modern villa now occupying the site of his old home. So, on a bright December morning, when a boisterous sea-breeze was buffeting the heathery cliffs of easternmost England, and the rush of the wind up the Lowestoft scores¹ was of almost Arctic keenness, I set out for Oulton, bent on exploring some of the lanes and by-roads so often traversed by the Walking Lord of Gipsy Lore. Leaving the town by the Beccles road, I soon found my path bordered by freshly-ploughed fields, where white-breasted, grey-winged gulls were as plentiful as rooks amid the furrows; while from every hedgerow flocks of chirping sparrows rose with a loud whirring of wings. Though the wind was so keen, the winter until that morning had been one of unusual mildness; and the russet leaves still hanging on the roadside oaks, the blooming of red dead nettle, pimpernel, and speedwell in the unploughed corners, betokened the approach of a green Christmas. Even insect-life was still to be seen; flies were creeping listlessly about a sun-warmed, ivy-covered wall, and in a high-hedged lane, beside

a copse of leafless elms and birches, a little swarm of gnats was dancing in the aerial path of a winter sun-beam. An Oulton broadsman, who overtook me a little way out of the town, commented on the open weather which was helping us on to Christmas; but he added that in these parts they had their winter during the first three months of the new year.

Near Oulton Broad station, where the broadsman left me, I turned to the right down a narrow winding road, which, after I had passed a row of cottages which have sprung up since Borrow's time, skirts the tract of waste upland where his Romany friends so often had their camping-ground. I call it waste land, and it was waste land twenty years ago; but the term scarcely applies to it now, for it has become an unsightly building-estate, dotted with groups and terraces of little red houses which Borrow, if he could see them, would, I am convinced, compare unfavourably with the brightly-painted travelling vans and kraal-shaped blanket-tents of Mr. Petulengro and his tribe. A little further on I discovered that the fine old tithe-barn had disappeared, the barn through the gaping holes of whose ruined roof the red light of the Broadland sunsets used to glow, till the rafters looked like the charred relics of a conflagration; but the splendid black poplars which were planted many years before Borrow was born, still stretched their huge rugged arms over the neighbouring road. The lane leading to the little church,—a lane so hedged with holly bushes and overarched by closely

¹ Scores (Anglo-Saxon, *scoren*, a cleft) are steep narrow lanes, leading down from the top of the cliffs to the seashore.

interwoven branches that even in winter, when only the hollies are not leafless, it is as gloomy as a crypt—that, too, was unchanged; but when I approached the clump of firs whose mournful music on stormy nights reminded Borrow of the days when he went gipsying, a change, for which, in spite of what I had heard, I was not prepared, revealed itself.

In 1840, when, after several years' journeying in Russia, France, Austria, and Spain, George Borrow, at the age of thirty-seven, married and settled down at Oulton, Oulton Cottage was an isolated house, less accessible by land than by water, on the reedy verge of Oulton Broad. At that time the Norfolk Broads were, so to say, undiscovered, except by the draw-netters, eel-catchers, reed-cutters, and gunners who dwelt among them and relied on their abundant wild life for a livelihood. The only boats which sailed the quiet waters were the trading wherries which carried cargoes of coal, corn, and timber between the coast and the inland towns, and the little brown-sailed punts of the flight-shooters and fishermen. Hardly anyone, unless he were an angler or a gunner, thought of visiting these lowland meres for recreation; even at the time of Borrow's death, which occurred more than forty years after he first came to live here, very few yachts or wherries had been built for the special purpose of cruising on these inland waters. Much less had enterprising land-owners and speculative builders realised that the heathy and corn-clad uplands overlooking the Broads and river valleys were excellent sites for villas: the men who had their homes on these uplands were, for the most part, farm-hands or those whose livelihood was gained among the meres and marshes. In the reed-beds, of which there was then a wide belt

almost wholly surrounding Oulton Broad, the rare and beautiful little bearded titmouse nested; its musical call-note, like the clashing of fairy cymbals, being heard there all the year through. Not infrequently the booming of a bittern brought the Oulton and Carlton Colville gunners to those dense jungles; on the adjoining marshlands, where the sails of innumerable wooden windmills whirled whenever the dykes were filled with flood-water, large flocks of wild-fowl settled during the winter months. The wailing of the white-breasted lapwing and the piping of the redshank were familiar sounds to everyone who laboured on those fenny lowlands, where the heron stood sentinel by the dykesides, and the reeling of the shy grasshopper warblers went on all summer amid the lush marsh grass.

To-day the railroad runs within a hundred yards of the site of Oulton Cottage, and on the uplands which overlook the hollow in which the cottage stood are several glaringly new houses whose erection banished for ever that native wildness which was the chief charm of the northern end of Oulton Broad. Down by the waterside, where a scanty fringe of rushes represents the old reedy haunts of the bearded titmice, are other red brick villas. Smooth lawns and symmetrically designed gardens have taken the place of sedgy margins where the coot and water-hen nested and the water-ragwort displayed its brilliant blossoms. From the uplands, which were once open rabbit-haunted warrens, smoothly rolled gravelled walks lead down to the road which connects this new resort of successful citizens with the Oulton road. The Broad itself has altered little, except that the clearing away of some of its old reed-beds has added slightly to its navigable area; but the scene it

presents on a summer day is very different from that which Borrow saw from the windows of his waterside home. True, the brown-sailed wherries are as numerous as ever, and on any day of the year, save when the waters are ice-bound, one or more of these characteristic craft may be seen sailing up or down the Broad. Occasionally, too, a glimpse may be caught of a fisherman's gun-punt; but where only brown sails were visible forty years ago the white canvas of innumerable smart yachts, pleasure-wherries, and racing cutters gleams in the sunlight. For Oulton has become one of the chief yachting centres of the Broads, and all sorts and conditions of holiday-makers now seek rest and recreation on the inland waters which were once unexplored except by the local wherryman, fisherman, and wild-fowlers.

The house which occupies the site of Oulton Cottage stands at the head of a small inlet still known as Borrow's Ham, and although several other houses have arisen near it, its immediate surroundings have not altered to the degree one might at the first glance imagine. The rugged firs which overshadowed the cottage still spread their dusky plumes over the old lawn; just beyond them is a small reed-fringed pool in which a few active little coots find sanctuary. There, too, the chuckling of sedge-warblers may be heard when the end of April comes and the plucky little brown birds return from the banks of the African rivers to their English haunts; not infrequently the loiterer by the pool's side hears the bleating of a snipe. Tits, buntings, and finches are quite as plentiful around the Broad as ever they were; even the crested grebe is sometimes, though rarely, seen breasting the wind-ruffled waters. But the human dwellers by the Broad are a people who knew not

Borrow; therefore it is the more to their credit that when his old home was demolished they preserved the quaint little summer-house which was his writing-room and study for so many years.

It stands on the verge of the lawn in the shadow of the pines. Ivy has enfolded it in its close embrace and crept up to the peak of its conical roof. It is an octagonal structure, somewhat larger than the average summer-house, and its windows command a charming view of the Broad. It is quite a century old, and after Borrow's death it was for a long time neglected and allowed to fall into decay. But now it is in good hands; its interior has been restored, and if only it contained Borrow's philological library, and his father's sword still hung on its wall, it would look much the same as when he used it. Even at this season of the year, when the amber reeds have grey feathery plumes and chill mists often rise from the Broad, it would be a warm and pleasant retreat. When Jasper Petulengro and his gipsy friends came to call on Borrow, and were ushered into this little summer-house, they must have felt as much at home here as in their own tents, and the voice of the wind among the pines would remind them of their sheltered camping-grounds.

In spite of the changes which have taken place around the summer-house it is not difficult to realise that Oulton Cottage was an ideal home for a child of the open air, and Borrow, who, when disappointed and disillusioned by his privations in London, took to the gipsy's life and set up his tent in the Mumper's Dingle, ought to have been here the happiest of men. The abundant wild life of the Broad and the marshes should have provided him with a wide field of observation; the isolation of his retreat should

have added, and undoubtedly did add to the charm the place had for him.

But in spite of his being often compared with Thoreau it has always seemed to me that, though he was a lover of nature and solitude, he was not a naturalist. A child of the open air he undoubtedly was; but then there was that umbrella, "manifold and bulging, gigantic and green," which to Dr. Hake was the most damning evidence against Borrow's being a genuine worshipper of Nature. The works of man, his history and legends, the prowess of a pugilist, a good horse, and the record of an East Anglian worthy would always arouse his enthusiasm; but of wild birds, beasts, and flowers he had little knowledge. In LAVENGRO he speaks of the choughs continually circling about the spire of Norwich cathedral, when, no doubt, he is referring to the jackdaws: he calls the planet Jupiter a star; and he writes a book descriptive of wide journeyings in Spain without telling us anything worth knowing of the wild life of that country. Humanity always interested him more than birds and flowers; during his travels in Wild Wales he was always on the look-out for roadside inns, and desirous of hobnobbing with their rustic frequenters. The gipsies' horse-dealing transactions, and the philological puzzles of their ancient language, occupied his mind and pen for hours together; but he leaves it to a Romany *chal* to describe the charm of the gipsies' open-air and roving life, contenting himself with setting down the rover's words without comment. True, he would seem to imply that the sun, moon, and stars, and the wind on the heath were as much to him as to Jasper Petulengro; but when he stood on a Welsh mountain-top, where, one would think, the wide outlook would have inspired him, he only sees a fitting

opportunity for pompous declamation. Who, too, but Borrow, when he dwelt in the dingle and enjoyed, under such romantic circumstances, the companionship of that charming nomadic Amazon, Isopel Berners, would have failed to appreciate the novelty and romance of his position, and would have persecuted the poor girl with his chatter about the Armenian language? As Mr. Birrell says, one "longs to shake him" for it. In WILD WALES he mentions that one day he and his family (that is, his wife and step-daughter) took a stroll up the side of Berwyn "for the purpose of botanising;" but what botanist, after reading his works from beginning to end, can help doubting whether Borrow knew a mountain cranesbill from a bog pimperl?!

Not content with the evidence of his own works, I turned to the LIFE OF GEORGE BORROW, in which Professor Knapp prints a considerable number of Borrow's letters, chiefly written while he was at Oulton; but I searched in vain for any indication that he was an observer of the prolific wild life of the Broads. True, he sometimes went a-fishing; but he tells us nothing about the sport he had in landing the Oulton pike. In LAVENGRO he remarks that as a young man he "had an attachment to the angle, ay, and to the gun likewise;" but his idea of sport scarcely commends itself, for he says that when he went out shooting he "seldom returned at night without a string of bullfinches, blackbirds, and linnets hanging in triumph [!] round [his] neck." And in the next paragraph, in regretting the shortness of the English winter, he says he "speaks as a fowler"!

Concerning his home life, occupations, and pastimes at Oulton he was always strangely reticent, a fact the more surprising in view of the

freedom with which he related the encounters, adventures, and occupations of his earlier years. But in one of his prefaces, where he describes how he commenced writing *THE BIBLE IN SPAIN*, he gives us a glimpse of how he passed his days.

At first I proceeded slowly—sickness was in the land, and the face of nature was overcast—heavy rain-clouds swam in the heavens,—the blast howled amid the pines which nearly surround my lonely dwelling, and the waters of the lake which lies before it, so quiet in general and tranquil, were fearfully agitated. . . . A dreary summer and autumn passed by, and were succeeded by as gloomy a winter. [To a true lover of Nature no summer, autumn, or winter should have been dreary or gloomy.] I still proceeded with *THE BIBLE IN SPAIN*. The winter passed, and spring came with cold dry winds and occasional sunshine, whereupon I arose, shouted, and mounting my horse, even Sidi Habismilk, I scoured all the surrounding district, and thought but little of *THE BIBLE IN SPAIN*. So I rode about the country, over the heaths, and through the green lanes of my native land, occasionally visiting friends at a distance, and sometimes, for variety's sake [1], I stayed at home and amused myself by catching huge pike, which lie perdue in certain deep ponds skirted by lofty reeds, upon my land Then came a summer with much heat and sunshine, and then I would lie for hours in the sun and recall the sunny days I had spent in Andalusia, and my thoughts were continually reverting to Spain, and at last I remembered that *THE BIBLE IN SPAIN* was still unfinished, whereupon I arose, and said: This loitering profiteth nothing,—and I hastened to my summer-house by the side of the lake, and there I thought and wrote, and every day I repaired to the same place, and thought and wrote until I had finished *THE BIBLE IN SPAIN*.

But if Borrow was no naturalist, he had a keen appreciation of rural scenery. Innumerable passages in his books prove this. His descriptions lack that insight into details which constitutes the charm of Thoreau and Richard Jefferies; but no writer more

quickly and clearly conveys to the reader a vivid impression of the scene he wishes to depict. And that the impression made upon him by a lovely landscape remained with him, even though years had passed since he saw it, is obvious from the vividness with which he could call up in his Oulton summer-house the scenes he had visited in his boyhood.

Few people now living in Oulton, I found, remembered Borrow, though barely twenty years had passed since he dwelt among them. During the latter years of his life he seldom welcomed visitors or sought the companionship of his neighbours. In 1869, after his wife's death in London, he returned here, as he said, to die; and, although his death did not occur until twelve years later, he was from that time dead to the world in which he had been a unique and striking figure. At times, wrapped in the voluminous cloak which had been his constant companion in Spain, and wearing a broad-brimmed hat which almost concealed his face, he would wander along the lonesome lanes and by-roads around his isolated home; but he seldom spoke to the people he met in his rambles and who eyed him curiously as he passed. Occasionally he was visited by one or two of his old friends; but that his desire for solitude was generally recognised and regarded is evident from a letter written to him by Edward FitzGerald, who at that time often stayed in Lowestoft. FitzGerald was one of the few men whom Borrow, in his latter days, was not averse to meeting, and it was in response to an invitation to Oulton Cottage that he wrote to Borrow:

My nephew Kerrich told me of a very kind invitation you sent to me, through him, some while ago. I think the more of it because I imagine, from what I have heard, that you have slunk away from

human company as much as I have!
 Are you not glad now to be
 alone, and find company a heavier
 burden than the grasshopper? If one
 ever had this solitary habit, it is not
 likely to alter for the better as one grows
 older—as one grows *old*.

I was loth to leave the old summer-
 house among the pines, for in it I
 could almost feel the presence of
 Lavengro and his Romany friends.
 It was easy to conjure up a vision of
 the tall, white-haired wanderer who
 so often mused within its wooden
 walls, and see his dreamy eyes
 brighten as the strange greeting,
 "*Kosko divvus*, brother," announces
 the approach of one of the swarthy
chals from the neighbouring heath.
 And along the narrow footpath which
 leads to the old church with the

square, brick-topped tower I seemed
 to walk side by side with the Walk-
 ing Lord of Gipsy Lore. As the
 dusk descended upon the marshlands,
 and the night-mists gathered over the
 dykes and river, I still thought of
 him of whom it was said, "His
 enthusiasm for nature was peculiar;
 he could draw more poetry from a
 wide-spreading marsh with its strag-
 gling rushes than from the most
 beautiful scenery, and would stand
 and look at it with rapture." For
 there, on those breezy uplands over-
 looking the marshes, he often stood
 and dreamed of the days when he
 dwelt in the Mumper's Dingle and
 his chosen friends were the Children
 of the Open Air.

WILLIAM A. DUTT.

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION :

ITS HISTORY, CHARACTER, AND POSSIBILITIES.

AUSTRALIAN Federation is really a re-action from Australian Separation. England from the first had found it difficult to realise the geographical and circumstantial differences that parted the young colonies. No two colonies could well have been more dissimilar in origin than New South Wales and South Australia, for example, and it was inevitable that each should desire to mould its own destinies. But if England was prone to underestimate the actual distance, Australia was inclined to ignore the relative nearness of her component colonies. The noble lord who, when asked where South Australia was, replied "somewhere near Botany Bay," was no doubt from the positive standpoint inaccurate, for a distance of five or six hundred miles can hardly be held to constitute nearness; relatively speaking, however, he was perfectly right. So far as political, social, and commercial life are concerned, South Australia, despite those five or six hundred miles, is assuredly somewhere near New South Wales; and there is, in proportion, about as much intercourse to-day between Sydney and Melbourne, or between Sydney and Adelaide, as there is between Manchester and Liverpool.

The idea of Australian Federation is English in its origin, and it is Lord Grey and not Sir Henry Parkes to whom most legitimately belongs the title of the Father of Federation. It is not, of course, to be supposed that this conscientious, but unpopular, states-

man, the peculiar aversion of Wakefield and other progressive spirits, was possessed of such political prescience as to have foreseen the actual lines of Federal development. But so early as 1847 we find him writing: "Some method will be devised for enabling the legislatures of the several Australian colonies to co-operate with each other in the enactment of such laws as may be necessary for regulating the interests common to those possessions collectively,—such, for example, as the imposition of duties of import and export, the conveyance of letters, &c;" and he speaks of the "Creation of a central legislative authority for the whole of the Australian Colonies." Australia, however, indignantly rejected his suggestions. "*Non tali auxilio*," she cried, and she cried rightly. Any scheme for Australian union, to be acceptable to Australians, must emanate from Australia herself. Nothing speaks more highly for the tact of the authorities at home,—who, for all the hard things that have been said of them in Australia, have on the whole deserved conspicuously well both of England and of the Colonies—than the fact that the Government at once gave way, leaving the Colonies to re-discover for themselves, in the fulness of time, the absolute necessity of a central Legislative Assembly, if Australia were ever to be more than a term of geographical convenience. "Australia for the Australians" is at least an intelligible cry; but "Australia

for the New South Welshmen," "the Victorians," or "the South Australians" is a cry of provincialism only possible in the infancy of national history.

Although a detailed scheme for a central Australian Assembly was submitted to the English Parliament and fully discussed there, the Act providing for the separation of Victoria was eventually passed without any of the Federal clauses. It was, however, anticipated in England that the Colonies would of themselves gradually combine for legislative purposes much sooner than was actually the case. The Governor of New South Wales had for many years the official title of Governor-General of Australia. But the implied hegemony of the mother-colony was distasteful to the younger members of the Australian family, and after 1861 this shadow of a pious aspiration towards Federal Union was entirely removed.

Meanwhile there were not wanting Australian statesmen who, while distrusting the advances of Lord Grey and his colleagues, were by no means insensible to the advantages of a Federation, if they might have the devising of it. The Reverend Dr. Lang, a Presbyterian minister, produced in 1852 a complete scheme of Federal Union, together with what some considered, and still consider, its logical consequence, complete separation from England; and W. C. Wentworth, a prominent figure in early Australian politics, soon became a partial convert to his views, drafting a bill, and submitting it in 1857 to Mr. Labouchere, the Secretary of State for the Colonies. That gentleman, however, judged, not unreasonably, that the scheme was premature. Select committees were held through the influence of Messrs. Gavan Duffy and Deas Thomson in the same year in Victoria, in New South Wales, and

also in South Australia. But inter-colonial distrust was already a political fact; and the tendency to decentralisation was increased by the separation of Queensland two years later. The zealots for Federation, notably Mr. Duffy, did not allow themselves to be discouraged, and endeavoured for many years to pave the way to Federal Union by the adoption of a uniform tariff; but beyond a series of inter-colonial conferences to settle special questions where from time to time common agreement was necessary, little progress was made.

In 1867, at the most important of these conferences, Mr. (not yet Sir) Henry Parkes eloquently announced his faith in Federation. "I believe," he said, "that this occasion will inevitably lead to a more permanent Federal understanding. I do not mean to say that when you leave this room to-night you will see a new constellation of six stars in the heavens. I do not startle your imagination by asking you to look for the footprints of six young giants in the morning dew, when the night rolls away; but this I feel certain of, that the Mother-country will regard this congress of the Colonies just in the same light as a father and mother may view the conduct of their children when they first observe those children beginning to look out for homes and connections for themselves." But for a long time, partly through the action of the Home Government, partly through the internal difficulties of united action, the prophecy seemed but the utterance of a visionary enthusiast. In 1881 Parkes himself declared his conviction that the time was not yet come for the construction of a Federal Constitution, but advocated the immediate creation of a non-fiscal Federal Council. This Council actually came into being in 1885, but its limited powers, and the abstention of New South Wales,

made it a halting creature from the first, and at its death at Melbourne in 1899 it was little missed.

That ultimate human question, "Of us two, am I to kill you, or you me?" is as applicable to nations as to individuals. It is the instinct of self-preservation that has promoted most political agreements. While the Australian Colonies seemed enabled by their aloofness to lead an easy life without concerning themselves with European nations, Federation remained a dream in the minds of statesmen. But when rumours of war came to the golden continent, when French and German activity in the Pacific warned Australian colonists that nations which will not help themselves are likely to fall a prey to nations which will, then Federation became embodied; it was no longer an abstract theory, but a definite scheme for practical politics.

In 1889 Major-General Edwards was sent out by England to inspect the Australian forces. In addition to his detailed report on the troops of each colony, he submitted a memorandum of advice strongly recommending "the federation of the forces of all the Australian colonies." The shrewd Sir Henry, with that sensitive finger ever on the public pulse, and that silver tongue miraculously responsive to the finger's message, judged that the time was come for an appeal to the people in favour of Federal Union. To secure the Colonies from foreign aggression was of the first importance; for that purpose General Edwards had considered the federation of the Colonial forces highly desirable, and in order to effect this some kind of Federal Union was indispensable. Sir Henry Parkes accordingly advocated a convention of the leading men from all the colonies to devise a Constitution and bring into existence a Federal Parliament. As a step

towards this a conference took place at Melbourne in 1890 between the Federal Councils and representatives of New South Wales and New Zealand.¹ This body recommended a National Convention and, the consent of the several parliaments having been obtained, the Sydney Convention of 1891 commenced sitting under the presidency of Sir Henry. The result of their labours must not be under-valued. Though the draft bill drawn up by them never passed into law, it formed the basis of the bill which eventually secured acceptance; it afforded a definite scheme for discussion, educated public opinion, and showed the world that Australia already possessed statesmen capable of framing a sound and liberal constitution. And yet it is not surprising that the bill of 1891 was shelved by the Colonial Parliaments. In the first place, from the days of the Long Parliament at least, no Parliament has liked to sanction aught derogatory to its own authority. Now it was quite clear that if the Federal Parliament was to become an accomplished fact, the power and prestige of the State Parliaments would be materially diminished, and their numbers probably reduced. It is contrary to human nature for a man to be anxious to abolish his own salary. In the second place public opinion was not decidedly in favour of the bill: the Labour Party especially disliked it; in the weaker decentralised Parliaments they would, they thought, have more chance of carrying social legislation than in a strong Central Assembly of the collective wisdom of the Classes. This attitude was not unreasonable; certainly the Labour

¹ It was at a banquet in honour of the assembling of this Conference that Sir Henry Parkes made use of the famous phrase, "The crimson thread of kinship runs through us all."

Party have won by waiting; they have both exercised more influence on the State Parliaments than they would have hoped to exercise in the Federal Houses, and they have secured a considerably more democratic constitution under the present act.

Sir Henry Parkes's government was ousted from power in October, 1891, without succeeding in carrying an approval of the bill through the New South Wales Parliament. And the succeeding government, that of Sir George Dibbs, was even more apathetic, if not antipathetic. While New South Wales only played with the bill, it availed little for the other Colonies to take it seriously. It now struck Sir Henry that it would be the best course to follow the example of the original American States and ask not Parliament, but the electors themselves to choose representatives for the purpose of drawing up an amended bill; but the suggestion fell flat, and Federation seemed, in one of its most prominent opponent's words, "as dead as Julius Cæsar."¹

The politicians of New South Wales had done their best to stifle the bill; but the people now began to agitate in favour of the movement. The Australian Natives' Association and the Federal Leagues exercised wide educative influence. At a conference at Corowa in 1893 Dr. Quick of Bendigo suggested the passing of Enabling Acts in the different Colonies providing for the popular election of representatives to amend the bill, and for submitting it when amended to a Referendum.

In 1894 Mr. G. H. Reid succeeded Sir George Dibbs as Premier, professed his adhesion to the Federal

principle, and, calling a conference of Australian premiers, carried resolutions substantially embodying Dr. Quick's suggestion of Enabling Acts and a Referendum. The new government now busied itself with fiscal matters, and succeeded in introducing a nearer approximation to Free Trade in New South Wales than any other Colony has attempted. The Enabling Act was passed with surprisingly little opposition in December, 1895. South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania followed suit. In Queensland the two Houses quarrelled over it; but Western Australia gave a conditional adherence. The election took place early in March, 1897, and resulted in the return of fifty men thoroughly representative of the political intelligence of Australia, all, or nearly all, strong Federalists on lines similar to those of the previous bill. When on March 22nd, the delegates assembled at Adelaide, Mr. Barton, who had been returned at the top of the poll for New South Wales with nearly one hundred thousand votes, was chosen leader of the Convention, and it was decided to draft a fresh bill.

On April 22nd the result of the work of the various committees appeared in the first draft of a Constitution. On September 2nd (the sitting having been postponed till then to enable the Premiers to attend the Queen's Diamond Jubilee) the Convention met at Sydney, and proceeded to improve the draft bill in the light of the criticism passed upon it by the State Legislatures in the form of nearly three hundred suggested amendments. The final session of the Convention took place in Melbourne in the beginning of 1898, and the Constitution Bill was now referred to the people. The Referendum of 1898 was the cause of considerable excitement in New South

¹ Sir John Robertson was the author of the phrase; which was cleverly turned for his own purposes by Mr. Barton, who pointed out that the murderers of Cæsar were not in all respects commendable, and that if Cæsar died, Cæsarism lived on.

Wales, where opposition was strong. The vote showed a majority in favour of the bill; but as the number voting for it did not reach the eighty thousand minimum stipulated by an amended Enabling Act, the effect was that New South Wales rejected the bill. All the other voting colonies accepted it by satisfactory majorities.

Mr. Reid, the New South Wales Premier, who had voted for the bill, but had spoken against it,—a paradoxical position which naturally afforded much scope for the political caricaturist—now seized his opportunity. He suggested a conference of premiers to consider amendments that should make the bill more acceptable to New South Wales.¹ The other Premiers were naturally not particularly well disposed to such a conference; moreover a general election was imminent in New South Wales, which might result in Mr. Barton's taking Mr. Reid's place as Premier. When, however, Mr. Reid had come victorious from the polls (though with a reduced majority), and had carried resolutions through the House making clear in what respects he wished the bill amended, the Premiers of the six Colonies met at Melbourne, and conceded Mr. Reid, on behalf of New South Wales, much, though not all, that he asked. On June 20th, 1899, the second Referendum took place in New South

Wales, and the bill was declared carried. The other Colonies, on the result being known, passed the amended bill by majorities aggregating over two hundred thousand.

It only remained now to secure the Imperial assent, and a delegation, with Mr. Barton at its head, was despatched to London for the purpose of watching the bill through Parliament.

Arriving at Westminster in March, 1900, the delegates, as will be remembered, found the objections of the Imperial Government to centre mainly round the judicial clauses, which restricted the right of appeal to the Privy Council. After considerable friction (the delegates maintaining that they had no power to alter the bill in any way) a compromise was arrived at, the bill was brought by Mr. Chamberlain before an interested and cordial House, passed amid cheers, and on July 9th, 1900, duly received the Royal Assent¹

It would be to lay claim to a characteristic essentially undesirable and un-English to ascribe any great originality to the Australian Federal Constitution; for original institutions seldom long survive their origin, while it has been a persistent quality of the English mind never to make a new law when the same result can be obtained by re-interpreting an old one, and to distrust even a reasonable innovation unless it wear an ancient mask.

He, then, who would look for a brand-new Constitution, leaping full grown from the head of Mr. Barton and his colleagues, will be disappointed. The roots of the Australian

¹ The writer was present at a great meeting in Sydney at which Mr. Reid brought forward this proposal. An amusing instance occurred of the Premier's unrivalled gift of effective popular repartee. "Mr. Reid," said a raucous voice from the gallery, "in the event of the other Premiers refusing to meet you, what would you do?" Mr. Reid, without an instant's hesitation turned to the enquirer, and said, in his monotonous high-pitched tones, audible in every corner: "Sir, in that most lamentable—and, may I add, most unlikely?—contingency, I should consult you." The meeting was convulsed and the enquirer subsided.

¹ The Federation was made complete by the accession, at the eleventh hour, of Western Australia, the only outstanding Colony, where a referendum, taken on July 31st, 1900, resulted in an unexpectedly large majority in favour of Union.

Constitution are to be found not in Australia nor in the critical nineteenth century, not even altogether in England and the creative thirteenth century,¹ but in the earliest records of the Aryan race, when Homeric monarchs consulted their legislative councils, while Thersites aired his lungs in the assemblies. All these three elements, king, council, assembly, have their counterparts in the Australian Constitution; nor, assuredly, is Thersites wanting.

The strictly Federal element is of later growth. Nor is this a matter of surprise, Federation involving a somewhat complex political conception of dual citizenship. The citizen of a State joining a Federation does not cease, on becoming a citizen of the Federation, from being a citizen of the State. The States of a Federation agree for certain purposes to unite permanently into a nation, and to have a national executive and legislature for those purposes; but they still retain their individuality, and each keeps its own executive and legislature for the functions which have not been handed over to the Federation.

The nations of ancient Greece, in all but size presenting an instructive parallel to the Australian Colonies,—they, too, being communities of men of common race, religion, and speech, politically independent, and free to develop each on its own lines—formed no distinct Federal Union till after the crown of the world had irrevocably fallen from the brows of Hellas. In 280 B.C., however, we have in the Achæan League a true example of Federation, which, though somewhat crude in form, bestowed

good government on a large part of Greece for nearly a century and a half. The formal extension of the Roman franchise to the provinces accustomed men to the idea of a dual citizenship, though distance prevented it from being more than an idea. On the fall of the Empire the germs of Federal development were trampled beneath the steps of triumphant Feudalism. No more was heard of them for a thousand years, though we may see a federal analogy in the dual relationship of a feudal vassal to his lord and to his king. The medieval unions of cities, such as the Lombardic, the Rhenish, and the Hanseatic Leagues, were rather temporary commercial alliances than real Federations. The same was at first the case with the Swiss League of the Thirteen Places, although it afterwards developed into a true Federal Union. We come to the verge of modern history with the Confederation¹ in 1579 of the Dutch provinces, on the eve of their glorious struggle for liberty against the tyranny of Spain.

Two hundred years later the American Constitution applied the Federal idea to the English governmental system, as then existing, or as understood by the lawyers to exist. The German Federation of 1870 applied the Federal idea to a Monarchy. The Federation of Canada in 1867 was the first instance of a Federation under the British Crown, and was the model on which Sir Henry Parkes based his earliest schemes of Australian Union.

The Federal Constitution of Australia owes much to previous Federal experiments, especially to those of the

¹ The House of Commons, more than any other part of the Constitution, may be said to have had a founder in De Montfort, in what Freeman calls "the wonderful thirteenth century, the great creative and destructive age throughout the world."

¹ By a Confederation as distinct from a Federation is meant a weaker bond of union, wherein the citizens of the States have no part in the Federal Government, but the Federal Body exerts its authority merely through the governments of the several States.

United States and of Canada ; but it claims to have carried democratic principles to greater lengths than has ever been attempted in any previous constitutional document. The main difficulty that beset the framers was the divergent history and characteristics of the different Colonies ; some were larger than others, some were richer, some were more populous ; some had borrowed much, others less ; some had highly Protective systems, others approximated to Free Trade. Had these differences not existed, possibly the best step would have been a complete unification, such as took place when the seven English States of the Heptarchy came under one ruler. But although a scheme of Australian Unification was seriously proposed, it was never seriously supported ; for it was realised that no Australian Colony would be willing to lose its individuality.

A Federation, then, implying the continued individuality of all component States, it was essential that the individuality of the larger States should not be allowed to swamp that of the smaller. On a basis of population New South Wales, for example, would be entitled to nearly eight times as many members in the legislature as little Tasmania, or vast, but sparsely peopled, Western Australia. But it was hopeless to expect either of the latter Colonies to consent to Federation on such terms. Accordingly the framers of the Constitution had recourse to the device adopted by the American Republic, and while maintaining the principle of proportional representation in the House of Representatives, gave each State the same number of members in the Senate.

The fiscal difficulty was met with a less satisfactory solution, which was responsible for much of the hostility displayed to the bill. By a clause

suggested by Sir Edward Braddon, and in general unceremoniously referred to as the Braddon Blot, it was decided that the Federal expenses should be met by customs and excise duties in the following way. Previously each Colony had had its separate tariff. To obviate the pecuniary difficulties in which particular Colonies might have found themselves, if, while intercolonial duties were abolished, other customs and excise were devoted solely to the Federal expenses, it was provided that only one fourth of the said customs and excise should be devoted to Federal purposes, the remaining three fourths being restored to the separate Colonies in proportion to their actual contributions.¹ By this device intercolonial Free Trade was indeed assured ; but the fact that four times as much customs revenue was to be raised as was required for Federal purposes,—that is to say, an annual sum of eight or nine million pounds—made extra-colonial Protection not less certain. Mr. Reid, indeed, at the first Federal election, led his party as the champion of Free Trade ; but Free Trade with a tariff of eight million pounds for less than four million people, was less a practical policy than a piece of adroit political practice. The Braddon clause is certainly not an ideally satisfactory arrangement ; but though many objected, none was able to suggest a more feasible scheme. New South Wales was perforce, therefore, content, with the other Colonies, to adopt it, with Mr. Reid's proviso that at the end of ten years the whole matter should come up for re-consideration. Meanwhile the financial clauses of the

¹ This provision was to last for five years after the imposition of a uniform tariff, afterwards in such proportions as should seem fair to the Federal Parliament. West Australia was allowed five years in which to abolish its intercolonial duties.

bill secure one main object of Federation, the sweeping away of all inter-colonial barriers. The first duty of the Parliament, which the Heir Apparent to the Crown of Great Britain has just opened with so much pomp and circumstance at Melbourne, will be to impose a uniform tariff in the name, not of scattered and jealous Colonies but, of a United Australia.

The question of the division of functions between the Federal and the State Parliaments is settled in the Australian Constitution by the opposite device to that which was adopted in the Canadian Federation. By the latter the Federal Parliament has in its province all functions not assigned to the State Legislatures. Under the Australian Constitution the State Parliaments are left all functions that are not definitely assigned to the Federal Legislature:¹ to the Federal Parliament are entrusted taxation, trade, defence, borrowing, postal services; the States retain control of education, public works, the railways, and the provincial administration of justice.²

In the event of the clashing of Federal and State Legislatures, a guardian, or interpreter of the Constitution, is supplied by the new created Australian High Court; which will determine whether in any case either Legislature has acted *ultra vires*, and from which to the Privy Council, as has been seen, appeal will only be allowed at the desire of the High Court itself.

The question of the amendment of the Constitution is of even more importance. For the amending authority

is in the juridical sense the Sovereign (although in Professor Dicey's phrase, a monarch "that slumbers and sleeps"), superior even to the Constitution itself. The framers of the Australian Constitution endeavoured to make the Constitution sufficiently rigid for security, but sufficiently flexible for progress. They followed current English political thought in believing that the American method under which, as is well known, only fifteen amendments have been passed in nearly eight times that number of years, erred on the side of rigidity. They therefore laid down that an amendment to the Constitution should become law if carried by an absolute majority of both Federal Houses, and confirmed by popular Referendum.¹

Of the two Houses of the Federal Parliament, each has the right of initiating legislation, with the exception of money-bills which originate in the House of Representatives alone. The members of the two Houses² are paid equally, the stipend being fixed at the rate of £400 a year; tenure of office lasting for three years in the House of Representatives, for six years in the Senate.³ Both Houses are elective, on the principle obtaining in each Colony for the election of the Legislative Assembly,⁴ until the Federal Parliament shall itself fix a franchise.⁵ Provision is made for

¹ The Referendum to show a majority in favour of the proposed amendment, both in the whole Commonwealth and in the greater number of the States.

² In the Senate six for each Colony; in the House of Representatives twice the total number of the Senate, in proportion to population.

³ Half the Senators are to retire in every third year.

⁴ Thus in South Australia women will vote in the Federal Elections, the total vote being divided by two.

⁵ Which must not, however, be more restrictive than that of any Colony. Mr. Barton has already declared himself in favour of adult suffrage.

¹ But the Federal Legislature may at any time add to its functions, adopting the ordinary procedure laid down for the amendment of the Constitution.

² But the Commonwealth can take over the railways at the consent of the Colonies.

the settlement of possible deadlocks by the device of a joint sitting of the two Houses, an absolute majority to be final.

Such are the main provisions of the Constitution Act of the Australian Commonwealth, so far as a long and complicated document can be conveniently summarised. It must be for posterity,—the “unnumbered millions” to whom Sir George Grey was so fond of alluding—to decide how far it really is the “monument of political wisdom” which Mr. Chamberlain declared it to be when he introduced it to the British Parliament.

It is not claimed that Federation is an ideal method of government. Undoubtedly it has the defects of its qualities. Thus the admirable flexibility of the English model has to be abandoned. The liberty of the people is bound by a written document, and the Federal Parliament can never be animated by quite the sense of responsibility possessed by the all-powerful English Commons. Moreover the simplicity of English procedure is rendered impossible. Even before Federation, if we judge by British canons, Australia was vastly over-governed. New South Wales, for example, besides its Legislative Council, had, and has, a paid Legislative Assembly of one hundred and twenty-five members for a population of less than one and a half millions.¹ Under Federation none of these Chambers is abolished, although it is hoped in time that the number of members may be reduced. Thus in addition to the twelve Chambers already existing, with their Governors, two others are created, together with a Governor-General. May we not legitimately

fear the dangers of over-legislation, which have been the result of the Federal system in America, where, Mr. Godkin tells us, fifteen thousand, seven hundred and thirty acts and resolutions were passed in one year? There are, he says, “in the United States no less than four hundred and forty-seven National Legislators and six thousand, five hundred and seventy-eight State Legislators,” exclusive of country and city officials; a ratio to population which, if adopted in England, would bring the numbers of the British Parliament up to at least four thousand.

The cumbersomeness of the financial clauses has been already mentioned. The provision of equal State representation in the Senate has also caused considerable criticism in the larger Colonies, and so far as it involves disproportionate representation,—a man's vote in Tasmania being eight times the value of one in New South Wales—is a defect, albeit a defect inherent in an equitable Federation under existing conditions.

Australian Federalists do not deny such defects; but they look to more than compensating advantages. In the first place they hope, from the destruction of intercolonial barriers, a great extension of intercolonial trade. Instead of one free local market, the Australian agriculturalist, or manufacturer, will now, at one stroke, have six. In the second place, Federation is expected to induce a closer consciousness of national unity. “For the first time,” to use Mr. Barton's words, “in the world's history, there will be a Nation for a Continent, and a Continent for a Nation.” The native Australian¹ has assuredly always been patriotic; in spite of intercolonial

¹ The six Colonies with a population of three and three-quarter millions, have no less than six hundred and sixty legislators in the State Parliaments, four hundred and twenty-eight in the Legislative Assemblies, two hundred and thirty-two in the Councils.

¹ In Colonial parlance a *native Australian* does not now signify one of the aboriginal inhabitants, but a white man born in the Colonies.

bickerings and jealousies, he has always possessed a dim consciousness that he was an Australian first and a Colonial afterwards. Had he not possessed this consciousness, all the politicians in Melbourne and Sydney could never have induced him to take the bold and irrevocable leap in the dark that Federation involves. But patriotism will now strike deeper roots, and spread wider branches; while its fruits will be shown in nobler ideals of social and of individual life. Nor need the national spirit necessarily clash with loyalty to the Empire. There are those who think it will; there are those who believe that the Imperial influence (largely a Government House influence) is, and will increasingly prove, a retrogressive force in the social and political life of Australia. But if the Imperial authorities send out the right stamp of men for Governors, if England does her best to secure free trade in labour and ability throughout the Empire, if she will open her courts to our lawyers, her schools to our schoolmasters, her churches to our clergymen, and in return send out her own to us, I can see no reason why Federation should not prove the stepping-stone, not to Separation, but to that great Federation of the English peoples which has been the lode-star of so many imperial-minded statesmen of our time.

Finally the Australians hope,—for without this no political or social progress can be assured—that Federation will bring the best men into public life, so that, in the Platonic phrase, the Kings will be Philosophers, and the Philosophers Kings. The whole political life of Australia should be set upon a higher plane. The abstinence of the ablest men from politics is admittedly a grave danger to American progress. And of the men of

character and culture and ability that are attracted into American politics, it would appear, from Mr. Bryce's masterly exposition, that the Federal Houses, and especially the Senate, attract too large a proportion. For although they attract the better men, they have really the less vital functions. "The grave political functions of the country," says Mr. Godkin, "are discharged in the State Legislatures, and by inferior men," while "most of the inhabitants pass their lives without ever coming into contact with the Federal authorities."

In the Australian Constitution Federalists maintain that while on the one hand the functions of government have been so equitably distributed between State and National Legislatures, that Australians will tolerate inferior men in neither; on the other hand such additional power and prestige will attach to office in the National Parliament, that many of the ablest and most successful men in the State will no longer be found unwilling to sacrifice some portion of business or of leisure to do their duty to their country. If such hopes are not altogether borne out by the *personnel* of the candidates for the first Federal Parliament, there is at least a leaven among them who in ability and character would do honour to any deliberative assembly in the world. Given such men in increasing numbers, given a sane, law-abiding, but progressive public opinion for their support, and Australians may indeed hope a glorious fulfilment of the proud national aspiration, *Advance Australia!*

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PRINCESS PUCK.

CHAPTER VIII.

THERE can be no doubt that few things are so well concealed as the perfectly obvious, no course of conduct so little observed as that which is open to all observation. If Bill had wished to conceal her doings on Sunday afternoon she would probably have been found out; since she was perfectly indifferent as to who knew what she did, no one discovered it. If she had been anxious for concealment she would have gone to the rectory by way of the field-path, and would inevitably have been seen by Miss Minchin and catechised by her in due season. But, since she was far too absorbed in other matters to care what any one thought, she went by the public way and no one knew it; no one, till Mr. Dane's old house-keeper admitted her and took her to the study where Mr. Dane, but lately returned from a children's service at Ashelton End, sat before his beloved piano.

The rector of Ashelton knew every one in his parish and, to a certain extent, all about every one; consequently he knew of Mrs. Morton's aunt and sister and cousins in Wrugleshy. To be sure, he knew about them before Theresa was Mrs. Morton, for Miss Brownlow was an institution of such long standing that he, being also an institution of long standing,

could hardly fail to know of her. Still, this knowledge did not give him much information about Bill, of whom he only knew that she was a niece of Miss Brownlow and a cousin of Mrs. Morton. At one time he had tried to find out more about her, though not from any personal interest, for he did not know her even by sight then. It was on account of her name that he had made the enquiries, having good reason to remember the name of Alardy. However, he could discover nothing to couple her with the other Alardy, nor indeed had he been very hopeful of discovering anything. It was the familiarity of the name that had tempted him; and it was this familiarity which caused him an almost painful start when she was announced on that Sunday afternoon. He did not know her, nor her business, nor could he guess what it might be.

Bill did not leave him long in doubt; her very face betrayed her; there was about her whole manner a contrition and self-abasement almost suggestive of a dog in disgrace. "I have come to tell you I did it," she said, standing in the centre of the room; and the old rector at once perceived that he was to hear a confession, the enormity of which seemed terrible to the offender.

"Sit down," he said kindly. "There is something you want to tell me,

something which seems very bad? Let us hear what is the matter, and we will see what can be done."

"Nothing can be done or undone." She spoke with absolute conviction. "I want to tell you in case you should blame anyone else, and because I owe it to you,—that is the reason. The thing can't be altered now." And then she plunged straight into her confession. "It is about this morning's service. It was all my fault; I got Mr. Harborough to have it."

Mr. Dane had known the owner of Wood Hall more years than he had known Ashelton. He was considerably surprised by Bill's confession, considerably more surprised than he had been by the affair of the morning.

"You induced Mr. Harborough to have the mass read?" he asked. "You? But why,—how?"

"I thought of it," she answered, "and,—and he did it. This is how it happened. I was in the wood, and he found me and took me to the house to amuse him a little while, and I amused him as well as I could. It was rather like the daughter of Herodias dancing before Herod, though I did not dance; he did not ask me, but I sang and talked and pleased him. It is true he did not ask me at the end what I would like, but when I thought of this he half promised to do it; and now,—he has done it."

"Then it was your idea? He did it to please you, or rather because you asked him?"

"Yes; it was my fault; he would not have done it if it had not been for me. I suppose," she added doubtfully, "he hardly knew what it would be."

Mr. Dane had other opinions, but he only said: "Perhaps we had better not consider his action in the matter. I have known him long enough to be tempted to judge him

as one man is sometimes tempted to judge another; but we will not do it. Let us talk about you; you persuaded him, or at least suggested the idea?"

"Yes; I suggested,—I did not persuade, I only suggested; but I had pleased him first so that he was ready to do as I wished; it was almost as good as persuading."

Her eyes were honest, but the rector was perplexed. He could not quite understand the case; the nature of the offence and the manner of the committal were clear enough; but the nature of the offender puzzled him. "Tell me," he said, "what made you suggest such a thing; why did you do it?"

"I thought it would be —" Bill hesitated for a word,— "not exactly fun, though still funny,—it was, too, at first;" and in spite of her genuine penitence a smile stole over her face at the recollection. "I believe I wanted to see what would happen more than anything else," she concluded after a pause.

"Were you satisfied with what did happen?"

"No; oh, no, no! If I had thought of that I would never have suggested it; I never thought about hurting you or the poor priest. When I saw how you took it, and how he hated what he had got to do, I felt as if I should like to get up and tell Mr. Harborough to stop. But it would have been no use, I am sure,—I had done it and I could not undo it."

"No," he answered her very gravely, "no, you could not."

There was a moment's silence, and Bill for the first time in her life faced the irrevocable. At last the old man spoke again. "And it never occurred to you," he said, "that it would be painful to other people? Tell me, did another and a higher consideration never occur to you either?"

"That it was irreverent? I did not think of it at the time; now, of course, I know it was; but I really did not mean to be, and I think God must know. That is the best of it; you need never pretend or explain to Him. He knows, but other people,—I am very, very sorry."

Mr. Dane pressed that point no further; perhaps the offender was beginning to explain herself to him a little, and so he judged it unwise. He led her to talk of the events which preceded her suggestion; she told him all readily, the walk to Gurnett, the ramble in the wood, even her own rapture when alone there.

"And to think," she concluded, "that I should have felt like that,—as if the whole world were holy—and then, a little later think of such a thing!"

"I know," he said, "I know. The human mind is a very strange thing, and evil thoughts, in spite of what some people say to the contrary, are perhaps the very strangest things which ever come there."

"Yes,"—and she drew a deep breath. "I was so glad to be alive that morning," she went on; "I was glad about everything; I was fairly crazy with,—with life I think. I can't explain, and I am afraid you don't understand."

Did he not? It was a great many years ago, but he too knew what it meant—life and the joy of living, the wanton madness of youth. He understood so well that he said little more about the act she deplored but could not undo. Instead, he tried to prepare for the future, and he prepared by asking some few questions about the past, about life at Ashelton, life at Wrugglesby with Miss Brownlow, poor dear Miss Brownlow. And again she told him readily, but her answers only deepened the wrinkles in his forehead. She thought they were

for her wrong-doings, but she confessed them all bravely, including her enjoyment of the prayer-meeting.

"I liked it," she admitted, "because Mr. Johnson was so fine when he talked about faith, the evidence of the spirit, and the things which are not as they are, and all the rest of it. I suppose it is wrong? I have not imitated him very much yet; I will try not. That is the chief reason why I liked the prayer-meeting and why I went to the second one. There was another reason,—I liked driving there. It was such a splendid evening, one of those that make you feel as if you would like to live for ever."

He ruffled his hair thoughtfully and looked at her with a still troubled brow.

"You don't understand?" she said, mistaking him. "I don't mean eternal life that we—that Mr. Johnson talks about; but never to leave the world. It is so beautiful, so dear! I can't"—and there was almost a sob in her voice—"I can't bear to think I shall have to die and lose sight of it all; that the thrushes will sing and I shall not hear them, the leaves come and go, the suns rise and set, and I never see them. It is sad to think how much I have lost already, though inside myself I always feel as if I had not really lost it, as if I had been there all the time from the beginning and seen all the changes. You know what I mean; you can learn lots about the past but nothing about the future; nothing helps you about that, and by-and-bye there will be, must be, more earth-history—it does not seem possible that I shall not know; I do not feel as if I could die!"

She looked up, appealing almost passionately for mercy on this first time that her soul had been betrayed into words. Perhaps the old rector was a lenient judge; his eyes were

almost wistful as he said half to himself: "And you are never ill, and never tired."

"I never have been."

"And you have not nearly enough to do—" he was speaking solely to himself now—"God help you!"

It is possible Mr. Dane thought this was a case for man's help also; at all events he did not dismiss it with some brief fatherly advice and a blessing. He talked to Bill as he had not talked before to anyone in Ashelton; he, who, as it were, kept all on the outskirts of his life, spoke of those things which were the innermost shrine of his faith, the things which, like the priests of old, he believed should be kept for the initiated. And Bill was not initiated. Possibly she did not quite understand him; but it did not matter, she would do so some day. Possibly he did not quite understand her; how should he with all the gap of years between them? Nevertheless he treated the girlish fancies delicately, almost as holy things.

In the end he set her a penance, for, though a believer in spiritual repentance, he also held that work was very good for the soul; so for her wrong-doing he set her a task, at least he said it was for that.

"What shall I do?" she asked eagerly.

"You know that long bed at the bottom of Mrs. Morton's garden? Dig it up. First pull up all the weeds and burn them, then dig it up, dig deep, put in manure and plant potatoes. I do not think Mrs. Morton will object; I fancy she would let you do what you like in her garden."

"Yes, oh yes, she won't mind. I will begin to-morrow morning; is there nothing else? I shall like doing that."

"Do that first," he said, and she

promised, not questioning his right to set her a task nor the fitness of the one he set. In fact, so satisfied did she seem with his wisdom that, just as she was leaving, she told him of the promise to go to Wood Hall again and of the difficulties attending it.

"I promised," she said, "thinking Theresa would let me go, and now she won't; but I must still go."

"You should not have promised;" and he looked very grave.

"But I have; I thought Theresa would not mind."

"She is quite right; nevertheless one must keep a promise."

It is to be feared that here spoke the man dowered with family tradition, and not the clergyman and spiritual adviser. The sentiment, however, was one which Bill understood. "Yes," she said, "I must go."

"But not alone," he answered; "she must go with you."

This Bill did not understand; she was also very certain that Theresa would not agree, and proceeded to explain the difficulty.

"She would take you, surely she would drive with you?" Mr. Dane persisted.

But Bill shook her head. "She would say the promise was wrong and could not be kept, and she would think she was encouraging wrong by going; that is her way of looking at it."

Mr. Dane felt he was brought face to face with a difficulty, but he only repeated firmly, "You must not go alone." Perhaps he could think of nothing else to say.

Fortunately just then Bill thought of a possible way out of the trouble. "Do you think it would do if Polly were to drive with me?" she asked. "Polly is my eldest cousin. I should have to leave her outside the house,

but I would not be many minutes gone."

Mr. Dane did not know Polly, but he thought she would do. He strongly recommended also that she should, if possible, accompany Bill into the house. Bill was not at all sure that Polly would do this, and she was very sure indeed that she did not want her to do it; however, she could not explain all this to Mr. Dane in the time now at her disposal, so she prepared to say good-bye.

"There is one thing I should like to ask you before you go," said Mr. Dane, looking at her thoughtfully as she stood by his chair. "It is about yourself."

"I will tell you if I can," she answered, "but I think I have already told you all there is to tell." Indeed, she had told him a great deal, far more than she was aware of, but it was not quite what he meant.

"Your mother was Miss Brownlow's sister?" he asked.

"Yes, the youngest, Kate; but I do not remember her at all; she died when I was very little."

Mr. Dane looked at her thoughtfully. "I should doubt if you were like your mother," he said; "you are not at all like your cousins, or Miss Brownlow either."

"No, I am not like them; sometimes Polly says I am like my father; but she did not know him, and she only says it when she is angry. I don't think I can be like him really, except that I am dark. He was dark, but then he was very clever and fascinating; Auntie says he bewitched my mother, so that she would marry him in spite of what they all said. I believe they did not think him good enough for her. I don't quite know what he was; he used to come sometimes to sing at the town where she lived, but he was not a grand professional singer. Some

people said he was half a gipsy; he loved wandering about."

"Do you remember him?"

"Not clearly; he did not live long after my mother; still I remember him better than I do her. I can just remember going about with him, or at least I think I can; it is difficult to tell which is memory and which fancy, it is all so long ago. I came to Auntie when I was very small."

"And remained there ever since?"

"Yes, remained there ever since," and she held out her hand to him.

He took it. "Good-bye," he said, "good-bye, little maiden. Do they call you Katie, too?"

"No; Bill,—Wilhelmina."

"Wilhelmina!"

Perhaps the other Alardy had been called Wilhelmina; the old man's face almost looked as if it were so, or as if some ghost had sprung to life at the name. But Bill did not see his face; for a moment he stood in the shadow of the door, then turned and went stooping into the dimness of the passage; and she went onward down the road, thinking only how she could compass to-morrow's visit.

Polly was shrewd enough after her fashion, and if she saw Mr. Harborough would, Bill felt certain, find out more than was desirable concerning her cousin's share in the reading of the mass. Therefore Polly must not set foot inside Wood Hall. Bill had some respect for her shrewdness, though she was depending on being able to outwit it when she said she would get her chaperonage for the intended call. "But I'll get her," Bill assured herself as she walked home that Sunday afternoon; and the chances were that she would, for she was a tenacious little person, and also, while much lacking in perception on some points, she had an instinctive comprehension of character which

gave her a truer conception of the turns and twists of Polly's nature than either of the other cousins possessed.

On Monday morning Bill set to work to carry out her plan. Her newly acquired mastery over the reins was the first thing pressed into her service. She would drive the old pony over to Wrugglesby, pack some clothes she wanted, and bring Polly (Bella would be giving music-lessons) home to Haylands with her for the night. At first Theresa demurred, but Robert only laughed at her fears; and finally Bill was allowed to go, with Henry, the boot-boy, in attendance in case of accidents. Bill accepted Henry's escort to Wrugglesby, but said he would have to walk back as she intended to take Polly for a drive by herself. Theresa demurred again, but Robert was on Bill's side; and finally, as might have been foreseen, Henry walked back alone, while Bill and Polly went for their drive.

Not, however, before Bill had encountered another obstacle, which presented itself in the attractive form of Bella. Bella wanted to make one of the party; she pointed out that there was room for her in the pony-carriage, and that Theresa was sure not to mind an extra guest for one night. Of course, in the ordinary way it would have been impossible for her to get out in the afternoon, but to-day it happened that nearly the whole school was going to a birthday party and there were only two music-lessons to give. These two lessons were Bill's salvation: she and Polly would take their drive while Bella gave them; as soon as she had done she was to walk to Sales Cross Roads, where they would meet her with the pony-chaise at a quarter to four.

The plan met with Polly's entire approval; she did not at all wish to

waste the early part of the afternoon waiting for Bella, and she was not troubled with many unselfish scruples. When Bella inconveniently said, "I think I could be at Sales Cross before that," Polly answered decidedly, "But we cannot." Whereupon the good-natured Bella gave way, and, with matters at last satisfactorily arranged, the other two drove away.

Polly leaned back with great satisfaction; Bill had borrowed a cushion from Theresa for her and she appreciated it. "Really, Bill," she said benignly, "I should never have thought you would learn to drive so well; you are quite getting on."

"Do you think I have grown up any more?" Bill asked.

Polly looked at her thoughtfully. "I don't think you have developed much," she said, after consideration. Before she reached the end of her journey that day she changed her opinion and came to the conclusion that Bill had developed surprisingly, in one direction at least.

"We are going to Gurnett," Bill announced, and Polly, to whom one place was as good as another, acquiesced.

"We can easily get from there to Sales Cross to meet Bella," Bill went on to explain when they were nearing the village. "I want to see someone at Gurnett, or rather, just this side of it; we don't go through the village."

"Whom are you going to see? I will hold the reins while you go in; I don't care about going with messages to strange farms; there are always geese and cows about."

Bill entirely agreed with this suggestion. "Yes," she said, "you must wait outside while I go in; I won't be long, not more than ten minutes I expect. It is not to a farm we are going, though; it is to Wood Hall."

"Wood Hall! Whatever does Theresa want from there?"

"Theresa does not want anything; I am going on my own business. She does not know I am going, and she would be very angry if she did."

"Well, Bill!"

"But I have got to go all the same," Bill continued ignoring the exclamation.

"What about me? Pray, why should I allow it if Theresa does not? I insist on hearing all about it at once."

Curiosity as well as indignation prompted this speech, which Bill proceeded to gratify to a certain extent. "I will tell you as much as there is time for," she said, and there was not time for a great deal. Polly's explosions of righteous wrath, not so judicial and certainly not so genuine as Theresa's, helped to shorten the narrative.

"Well, Bill, I could not have believed it of you! No, I could not, even if anyone had told me! I know a good deal about you, it is true, but I should never have expected—well—" Words failed and Polly took refuge in a superlatively expressive sniff; she had brought the language of sniffs to a rare perfection.

But Bill was not at all impressed, and when Polly asked with stern dignity, "Do you think I, any more than Theresa, will allow you to go to Wood Hall?" she answered, "You can't help yourself."

"Can't help myself, indeed!"

"No, we are just there." That was undeniably true; they were in the drive and must soon reach the house. "If you did not mean to come," Bill went on composedly, "why did you not say so before we turned in?"

"I did not notice."

Bill was politely doubtful. "Look here, Polly," she said, "what is the

good of pretending? It is not what things are that matters to you, it is how they look. I am sure that this is quite right, you are not; but that does not count, as you only want it to look right—"

"Bill! You are a wicked girl. How dare you say such things?"

"I dare say them, and you dare think them," Bill retorted, vaguely aware that she must have outraged the sense of decency again. At that moment a sharp turn in the drive showed them the house just in front, the chaise swayed to one side, for the ground dipped suddenly down before it rose again for the last little ascent.

"I shall come in with you," Polly said heroically as she gripped the sides of the chaise with a firm, though nervous, grasp. "I shall not leave you—Bill, do be careful how you drive!—not leave you in spite of your conduct to me."

"Yes, you will. You will wait outside, and think how it can be made to look best."

"I shall do nothing of the kind!"

"Then I shall frighten the pony and make him run away. He won't run far, but by the time you get back here I shall have gone inside. Good-bye for the present; I sha'n't be long."

Bill jumped out as she spoke, and the indignant, though discreet, Polly took the reins and patiently waited in the pony-carriage. Bill certainly had developed, and developed, among other things, a painful plainness of speech. This hurt Polly more than anything else, for she believed in observing all the decencies of life, in saying and seeming all that was suitable to the occasion, even to a certain extent persuading herself to feel it too. She always acted, for herself if there was no other audience; she could not help it, and the fact that there was not the least chance of

anyone being deceived did not deter her from taking a part. More often than not people were a little deceived; they believed in her more or less, as she believed in herself. Bill did not, which was her misfortune; but she said so baldly, and that was her fault, a fault Polly found it hard to forgive just then. "Yet," Polly thought when she sat in the chaise waiting and meditating on Bill's development, "she is proving to be rather as I expected; she has twenty times the go of the other two, if only one could make her sensible." From which it may be seen that Polly had a keen eye to the main chance, and even in matters of personal affront sought first a possible advantage; afterwards, if expedient, she resented the annoyance. During the ten minutes that she waited for Bill she had serious thoughts of making common cause with that offender.

Bill was as good as her word. Mindful of a limit to Polly's patience, she came to the point as soon as possible, and asked what Mr. Harborough demanded in return for fulfilling her wish. But he, not aware of any urgent reason for haste, set the question aside and asked instead if she had been satisfied with Sunday's comedy.

She did not think it a comedy; indeed, to tell the truth, she was not quite sure what a comedy was; certainly she had not been satisfied, but, as she hastened to explain, that was not his fault. "It was my own," she said.

"Your own, daughter of Eve? Dissatisfied as soon as gratified? It's the way with 'em all. Still I own this affair did not turn out as well as it might."

"You did not expect it to be like that? Neither did I, if I had thought—"

"You would have chosen a day

when the curate was in sole command? It certainly would have been better from a sporting point of view."

For a moment the vision of what might have occurred in those circumstances flitted through Bill's mind, but she banished it and said gravely: "It would have been funnier, I dare say, but no better; worse, I think, for I should not then have found out that it was wrong."

Mr. Harborough laughed, seeming to find a good deal of amusement in the idea of Bill's tardy conscientious scruples; but on account, he said, of her disappointment he asked nothing further of her, saying that they would now cry quits to the bargain. Bill was relieved, having been afraid he would lay some fresh difficulty upon her; as it was, she felt she had escaped easily, and prepared to make her adieux with a light heart, explaining at the same time that, as Polly was waiting outside, she must go at once. The idea of Polly waiting outside also seemed to amuse Mr. Harborough.

"Dear me, how they have been talking to you!" he said. "Bringing home the enormity of your conduct to you with a vengeance! They won't leave me my unsophisticated little maiden long; good women are great teachers of the ways of this wicked world."

Bill scarcely understood him; still, she fancied he was insinuating something against her cousin whose words really had had no weight at all in determining her action. "It was not exactly Theresa's doing," she said.

"Not Theresa?" He laughed. "Yet you have brought a dragon, a chaperone to watch over you. You need scarcely have taken the trouble; I should have done you no harm."

"They would not let me come alone."

"I wonder they let you come at all."

"Theresa would not; Polly could not help herself." Bill did not explain Mr. Dane's share in the matter, and Harborough did not ask it. "When are you coming again?" was all he said.

"Never."

"Never? Are you going to leave me all alone in my desolate old age?"

"They won't let me come."

The old man's tone had been but half serious, yet as he spoke the extreme silence of the house suddenly impressed Bill, the loneliness of the great room where they two made an oasis of humanity in a desert of shadowy memories. The polished floor stretched around her, only quivering into life when she moved and sending distorted reflections of herself along the boards; the mirrors on the wall never waking till she turned for them to cast back her brown face and ruddy hair. Away at the far end of the room there were chairs and cabinets, but they were too distant to reflect her on their polished wood, too far off to have any connection with this life. They belonged to the folks who looked down from the walls. It was a wondrous house, and a terribly lonely one to an old man who did not care for memories, whose taste, vitiated by the hot peppers of his manhood, could not appreciate the *pot-pourri* of the centuries that were gone.

"Could you not get someone else to come," Bill said at last, "someone belonging to you? You haven't got anyone?"—he had shaken his head and she felt the case was a bad one till a happy idea occurred to her. "Why not pay a girl?" she said. "You could, you know; you could get one that way."

"For what would you undertake the post?"

The question was asked with all gravity, but she was not quite sure

that he was in earnest. It would be a good thing if he were, for this was work she could do, and, since she had to earn her living, it seemed much better that she should do it in this way which fitted her small abilities. She glanced quickly at him, uncertain what to answer. "Twenty-five pounds a year," she said at last, at a venture, naming a sum which seemed to her exorbitant considering his straitened circumstances.

He smiled a little and shook his head. "Can't be done," he said, and she prepared to reduce her terms cautiously, but he explained the obstacles.

"It is the aunts and cousins who are in the way, my dear; if you were alone in the world we would not quarrel as to terms."

"Oh, but I could easily explain to them."

Bill was confident, but Mr. Harborough reminded her of her confidence with regard to Theresa's permission to repeat her visit. She was forced to admit his superior knowledge there, and to allow of its possibility again, although it seemed foolish to carry social objections into a purely commercial transaction.

"Believe me," he said, "there are no terms on which they would allow you to enter my service, except the cover of my name." She did not understand. "If the salary were a marriage settlement," he explained, "they would permit you to take it, and, under the name of Mrs. Harborough, they would raise no objection to your accepting the post of companion."

In spite of her disappointment at finding the offer not a genuine one after all, Bill burst out laughing; laughing principally at her own stupidity in taking him seriously. Then she said: "I must go; Polly will be tired of waiting."

"Laugh and go," he said. "Do

you laugh at Wood Hall? I could—by Heaven, it is almost worth doing!" he exclaimed with a sudden access of energy. "There are some who would not laugh then, my little brown elf."

He laughed himself at the idea, laughed softly with a bitter spite in his eyes. Afterwards it occurred to Bill vaguely that perhaps he really had been in earnest, and that she was to have played a part in some scheme of vengeance. But she never seriously thought so, and at the time it did not appear to her as anything but a jest. As such she laughed again so that her merriment rang in the great room; and she was still smiling when a minute later she came out to Polly waiting in the chaise.

CHAPTER IX.

THE four roads which met at Sales Cross traversed the district in every direction. "You can't go anywhere without going by Sales Cross," said Bella, basing her opinion on the number of people who had passed while she was waiting for Bill and Polly on that April afternoon. None of these travellers were mentioned by name except Mr. Jack Dawson, who could hardly be said to have passed since he was still there when the pony-chaise came in sight. He looked, too, as if he had meant to stay some time, seeing that he had dismounted from his horse and was standing, with the bridle over his arm, so deeply absorbed in conversation that he did not notice the approaching carriage. Bella explained later that he got down to help her free herself from the long bramble she had twisted round her ankles while gathering primroses a few minutes earlier. From the conversation which ensued between the two elder cousins Bill gathered that Jack Dawson had had

something to do with Bella's second Sunday afternoon at Ashelton being less dull than the first.

But she did not listen very attentively; Polly's eloquence had not much interest for her, especially since, during the drive from Gurnett, she had settled her own differences with her cousin, telling exactly what she pleased of the doings at Wood Hall. There had been a battle royal during that drive conducted with a good many words, and, it is to be feared, some little heat on both sides. But it had its advantages, being the first time that Bill and Polly had crossed swords as equals, and each understood the other the better for doing so; also it gave Polly a further indication that Bill was growing up,—“Though not in the way we should wish” as she said to Bella with melancholy dignity. “No, Bella,” she went on as her listener showed no signs of distress at the news, “Bill is not a lady, and nothing will ever make her one.”

To which Bill agreed, adding: “I don't believe I have got all the instincts and so on, and I'm sure I don't feel things the way I ought. I suppose I have got a little bad blood somewhere.”

“Somewhere!” Polly's sniff was impressive. “With your father—well! we need say no more.”

“Considering what you have already said,” replied Bill, “I think you need not.”

Bella wondered what had been said, but she did not hear, for soon afterwards they reached Haylands, where Theresa declared herself delighted to receive the two visitors instead of one. Later on, she heard of Bill's other doings, and with them she was not so well pleased. She was distressed as well as angry when she was told about the visit to Wood Hall.

Polly had been much opposed to

telling her anything about it. "Leave it alone," she counselled; "it can't be altered now. There will only be a great fuss, and how shall I look for letting you go?"

But Bill disagreed. It would not be honest, she said.

"None of it was honest," retorted Polly; and certainly the part she took upon herself was open to question, although, no doubt, it was the one best fitting the situation. "I thought it better to let her go to-day,"—so she concluded a most able explanation of affairs to Theresa. "You see, to-day I was with her; another day she might have been alone. She was certain to go, sooner or later, with or without me,—she is so dreadfully obstinate—and so I was determined that she should go under the most favourable circumstances."

Theresa agreed, and blamed Bill severely; but Bella remarked: "You stayed outside for her good, I suppose, Polly?"

"I stayed outside," Polly replied with dignity, "because she would not let me come in without a scene."

The truth of this statement was obvious and effective. Indeed Polly's manner while at Haylands was altogether effective; more especially when, on their first arrival, they found Mrs. Dawson talking to Theresa on business connected with the Church Missionary Society. Mrs. Dawson had the cause of missions very much at heart; she attended many meetings and paid many visits in connection with it, with what exact result to the cause no one knew, but doubtless it was beneficial. The principal results of the call on Theresa were entirely unconnected with missions, being the postponement of Bill's confession for half an hour and the social opportunity afforded Polly.

Polly made such good use of the occasion that Mrs. Dawson, a rather

imposing personage, unbent to quite a rare extent. She even hoped that Miss Hains would be able to come to her tea-party next day with her cousin, Miss Alardy. Polly regretted she could not do so, since she was unfortunately obliged to return to Wrugglesby in the morning.

"And I really did regret it too," she informed the others when they were discussing Mrs. Dawson late that evening; "I wish I had been staying on here."

"We could not both have gone," said Bill, for whom the invitation had already been accepted; "there's only the one skirt, you know."

"It is my skirt."

"But you have lent it to Bill," Bella said; "besides, she is the youngest, and has never been to anything yet."

Polly did not consider this a very valid argument, though, as she said, it really did not matter since she could not stay any longer at Ashelton.

It was at bed-time that this discussion took place. Bella was to sleep with Bill, and Polly had come into their room to brush her hair and edify them with her view on several subjects. The fact that she did so in Bill's presence showed plainly that she recognised her as something like an equal.

"I will tell you all about the tea-party," Bill said, feeling rather greedy in that the festivity had fallen to her share.

"Yes, but you will not be able to do it as I should," Polly answered regretfully. "I made an impression on Mrs. Dawson this afternoon; I should go on making one if I were to see her again, a good impression."

Bill laughed irreverently.

"Don't be rude, Bill." Polly's manner was momentarily that of an elder and teacher, but almost immediately she dropped it and returned

to the terms of familiar intercourse. She at least possessed the merit of adapting herself quickly to altered circumstances and relationships.

"My dear girls," she said, sitting down in the one easy-chair the room boasted, "one has to make good impressions; one never knows when they may be useful."

"You have no use for Mrs. Dawson," Bella said quickly.

"No, she does it to keep her hand in, for pure pleasure and practice, and because she can't help it. She would try to make a good impression on us if there were no one else."

This was Bill's opinion, but Polly only said, "You are a silly child," and began to put her hair into curl-papers, at the same time giving the cousins her views on many things, notably on matrimony. On this subject she had very decided opinions which she did not at all mind expressing with a degree of frankness which shocked Bella.

"You are horrid, Polly!" she exclaimed at last.

"I have the courage of my opinions," Polly retorted; "I say what others think."

"They do not think such things."

Bill, who had hitherto paid small attention to the conversation, debated this point in her mind as she sat perched on the bed in her favourite position. "I don't believe people think much at all," was her conclusion.

Polly told her that she knew nothing about it, but, nothing daunted, she went on to explain herself. "They don't think; they do things because the things come along, do them by instinct, or impulse, or something; they don't half know what will happen. I am nearly sure they don't think about the before and after. Nobody can see the real beginnings and ends, and some people

don't seem able to see even a little bit to right and left,—I wonder why."

Neither of the elder cousins was prepared to go into the question, Bella possibly because she herself belonged to the class who cannot look before and after, Polly, certainly because she wished to discuss more practical matters. By way of putting an end to Bill's speculations she introduced the topic, suggested by her previous remarks, of their own future.

"Say that you, Bella," she said, "marry money,—"

"I sha'n't do any such thing!"

"Oh, well—" and then followed another exposition of Polly's views which Bill lost little by not heeding. She had picked up the fairy-book which she had taken to bed with her a few nights ago, and had become too absorbed in its pages to hear what Polly said until the mention of her own name arrested her attention.

"And what is to become of Bill?" said Polly, who had by this time settled the future for the rest of them.

"There is the school, she could help—"

"The school!" said Polly disdainfully. "What good would Bill be, what can she do?"

"Nothing," the culprit answered, before Bella could speak in her defence. "It is quite true, I should be of no use. I don't know what I could do unless, perhaps, be a general servant; they are scarce now, and I can work like a steam-engine. I never get tired and I can get up ever so early—you should just see how I can scrub and iron, and I can cook a little too."

"You ridiculous child!" laughed Bella. "Do you suppose we should ever let you do that?"

"She might do worse," was Polly's opinion.

"She could not do that," Bella replied emphatically; "neither Theresa nor I would allow it. And Polly, you might as well say good-night now; we want to go to sleep."

Polly took her candle, casting a grotesque shadow of herself and her curl-papers on the low ceiling. "Good-night," she said with severity. "I am glad you can sleep; I don't find it so easy when I look forward to what must happen."

"Don't look," Bill called after her, "except at your candle; look at that, and mind you don't spill the grease."

None the less Bill lay awake a long time, thinking not only of the future but also of the past which might almost have been hers that day were it not for the aunts and cousins. Also she thought of Bella and her future, and from that she mentally went to Jack Dawson, who appeared a very pleasant sort of person, and to Mrs. Dawson, who did not, though in Bill's opinion she was an entertaining one. At least she had thought so when she sat meekly silent during the lady's call that afternoon.

On the next day she had another opportunity of studying Mrs. Dawson, for that was the day of the state tea-party which Polly had so deeply regretted missing. Polly and Bella had gone back to Wrugglesby, and Bill was left in undisputed possession of the skirt. It was not new, neither was it in the latest fashion, but Bill thought it very beautiful as she contemplated herself in her little mirror on Tuesday evening. Of course one needed the best clothes the family could muster for such an occasion as the present; the tea-party at Grays, Mrs. Dawson's house, was really quite an important social function besides being the first which Bill had ever attended. She was somewhat impressed and tremendously interested

by everything, the solemn mahogany grandeur of the bed-room where she and Theresa took off their wrappings, the spotless whiteness of the linen covers of the stair-carpet, the giant hat-stand by which Robert waited for them in the hall.

The drawing-room was large; the main part of the furniture dated from the Sixties, the wonderful blue of the upholstery being unmistakably of that era. But the sundry tides of fashion that have swept through the land since then had left a few deposits even in this conservative house: some peacock-feathers and a silk-covered palm-leaf, a present possibly in the decorative days; a small black table, a relic of æstheticism; a rococo photograph-screen of later date,—a few such things could be seen here and there. "They were given to her," thought Bill gazing earnestly at the immovable black-silk dignity of Mrs. Dawson; "they were given by *her*." This was Bill's decision when her eye lighted on a girl standing near the hostess. The girl was tall and muscular, turned four and twenty, athletically built and dressed in the fashion of the day, the fashion which obtains in Ealing and similar exclusive suburbs. Her face, it is true, did not express much, but then other people's faces do not as a rule express much, and she naturally did not wish to do anything but what everyone else did. She was doubtless an expert at lawn-tennis and hockey, and an authority on the technique of bicycles. Probably she thought her aunt at Ashelton much behind the times, though, as she informed her friends, she liked staying with her: "It was such a deliciously unsophisticated place still."

Bill looked at her with interest and at first with some admiration, for to her inexperienced eyes Miss Gladys Dawson was a new and fine specimen of humanity. Miss Gladys Dawson looked

at Bill only with a careless curiosity because she found her a little odd, and wondered why she had never seen her at Ashelton before. She also (and here came in the insult) looked at the skirt. A light blazed up in Bill's eyes, a light that was almost like a red flame, and there rose in her heart a great wrath and a feminine desire to pay back the offence, to criticise in some way the offender and bring ridicule on her. Bill had never felt the sentiment before, being in the main indifferent to opinions of all sorts. Miss Dawson's glance on herself would have passed unnoticed; she cared nothing for criticism and had a very poor opinion of herself,—but the skirt was another matter, Polly's cherished skirt which she had made with so much labour out of two old silk dresses of Miss Brownlow's! Bill felt that the look, half amused, half supercilious, wholly, indescribably feminine in its critical survey, was an insult to the absent Polly and cried aloud for vengeance. "I wish I could do something," she thought vindictively. "I wonder what she would mind most."

It was now six o'clock, and there was a general move to the dining-room for tea. Mrs. Dawson had always dined at two and taken tea at six, and she always would do so as long as she was able to dine and take tea at all. She made no difference for visitors, except in the quantity of food prepared, and in that respect she certainly planned lavishly. The table that night was loaded with the dainties which have gone out of fashion with six o'clock teas. Bill noticed everything carefully, trying to remember all she could for the sake of her absent cousins. There was a wonderful tablecloth, she observed, of fine unbleached linen whereon drab dogs hunted drab stags over a grayish ground much interspersed with drab trees whose leafy branches

met in the centre of the table and were hidden under the pot of a pink azalea. Arranged everywhere, almost crowding each other off, were cakes both hot and cold, so many of them that Bill could not taste them all. There were also several preserves, notably one of pineapple, very sticky, very difficult of manipulation, inspiring one (if that one were Bill) with a desire to take the pot and a spoon to the store-room and eat in comfort unobserved. "It wants practice," Bill decided as she watched the ease with which Mr. Johnson, who might reasonably be expected to have had practice, managed the pineapple. "I expect he has been here heaps of times before," she thought, and no doubt she was right for he seemed much at his ease. Mr. Perry, on the other hand, was never quite able to forget the grocer's shop when he sat down with Mrs. Dawson; he talked nervously and rapidly all through the meal, forgetting his tea in his anxiety to be polite, and remembering that he wanted a third cup when everyone had finished and the tea-pot was dry. Bill felt sorry for Mrs. Dawson when she saw her pouring tepid water through the tea-pot so as to supply the late comer, sorer still for Mr. Perry when he received his large shallow cup and made manful efforts to drink its contents while the guests waited for him.

Bill sat next to Mrs. Johnson, a placid matron not much given to general conversation; and as she returned becoming answers to the few remarks made to her, she was voted by her neighbour to be "a nicely brought-up girl." Gladys Dawson, of course, was different; being older, and "from London," she was expected to talk, and she did do so; in fact she took the lion's share of the entertainment upon herself. Mrs. Dawson was not averse to this, but, as Bill noticed,

neither was Gladys. "She likes it," thought the silent watcher; and there came into Bill's mind, by reason of the insult offered to Polly's skirt, a desire which is a natural instinct in most of her more developed sisters,—the desire to outshine the other woman.

"It would not be easy," Bill thought, feeling that she did not know much about the subjects of greatest interest to the ladies present; but then, as she soon found, Miss Dawson did not either, and so wisely confined herself to entertaining the men. Bill did not feel very hopeful of her own powers in that direction, and before she could make any definite plans her thoughts were interrupted by Mr. Dane's entrance into the drawing-room to which everyone had now returned. Mr. Dane never joined these parties till after tea, on the excuse of parish-work. After the little disturbance created by his entrance had subsided, and he had shaken hands with everybody, Bill found that he had taken the chair next to her. She knew that he wanted to hear if she had been to Wood Hall, and she was quite ready to tell him. It was easy enough to do this unnoticed in the buzz of general conversation; and accordingly she told him how she and Polly had driven to Wood Hall, how Polly had waited outside, and how Mr. Harborough had laid no fresh conditions upon her. This was all very well, but it was not so well when she went on to talk of Mr. Harborough's loneliness, and so, incidentally, of her suggestion of a paid companion, and his offer of the post to herself. "Of course he did not mean it really," she concluded; "it was only in fun, but for a moment I thought he meant it."

"What made you think he did not mean it?"

"What he said afterwards;" and

she related all that followed. "He meant he would have to marry me before they would let me come," she said, laughing a little.

But Mr. Dane did not laugh. "Yes, marry him," he said, "marry him for Wood Hall, for his name and position,—would you do that?"

"I did not have the chance; he did not ask me really; it was all fun."

"Have you told your cousins of the fun?"

The old man was looking earnestly at her, waiting for her answer, and she hesitated before she gave it. She plainly heard Mrs. Perry saying, "I never had a sitting of eggs from the Possets turn out badly," before she said, "No, I have not told them." And she wondered why she had not, and why she never would, for she knew then that she never would.

"If he had meant it, would you have taken him and Wood Hall and the name, and the little you know, and the infinitely more which you do not know?"

"No," she answered frankly. "I would like Wood Hall immensely; I would do a good deal for a place like that—I don't believe I would be too particular what; but I could not marry him. I could not marry anyone; I could not possibly be cooped up with one person. I believe I would like more than anything else to be a gipsy and wander from place to place, mending chairs and stealing fowls."

Mr. Dane did not reprove the lax morality of this speech; all he said was: "Then I suppose you are never going to see Mr. Harborough again?"

"No," answered Bill, and as she did so Mr. Johnson, who had caught the name, tried to draw his rector into a discussion of Sunday's enormities. But Mr. Dane would not be drawn; he was polite, but firm and

most uncommunicative. The only opinion he would give was that he believed Mr. Harborough's proceedings were not actionable, since he himself had given consent for the mass to be finished.

"But I am sure we could prosecute," Mr. Johnson persisted. "I was speaking to Stevens,—Stevens of Wrugglesby you know—about it; he says it is quite possible to prosecute for brawling and creating a disturbance in church during divine service, if for nothing else."

"No doubt he is right, but I do not think the churchwardens will wish to prosecute. The case would offer several nice points to a lawyer, for, though the mass was begun without our permission, and so was technically a disturbance, the offence was partly condoned by the permission to continue which was afterwards given. Moreover, though our church is of course a church of England as by law established, the Harborough chapel is held on a very old tenure which it would be necessary to understand clearly before any move could be made in the matter. I don't mean to say we could not prosecute: I dare say we could; but I hardly think it is necessary. What do you think?"

Mr. Johnson almost thought it was, on account of the precedent: "Solely on account of the precedent; it might occur again."

"I do not think it will," Mr. Dane answered, just in time to prevent Bill declaring the same thing warmly. Then someone began to sing and they all listened, placidly or otherwise according to their natures. When the song was over, Bill, finding Mr. Johnson's attention diverted elsewhere, turned to her neighbour for information on a subject which had puzzled her since her first visit to Wood Hall.

"You know all about this part of the country," she said. "Perhaps you can tell me if it is true that a good many years ago a body was carried by night from Corbycroft to the little church in Wood Hall park."

"Yes, certainly it is true; but what makes you ask? Who has told you of it?"

"Mr. Harborough, but he did not say much; is it a secret?"

"No, oh no; some of the old folks at Gurnett still tell the tale, though there are not many now who can tell much except from hearsay. It was not much talked about at the time, and is pretty well forgotten now."

He spoke as if the subject had long lost its interest for him, but to Bill it was all fresh; she felt that her romance was becoming exciting again. "Who was it?" she asked. "Who were they going to bury?"

"Roger Corby, the old Squire he was called, though he was not squire of Gurnett. He died at Corbycroft, and he died very much in debt. His servants and—and some other people believed that his body would, according to a barbarous old practice, be arrested for debt, so they removed it by night to the church in Wood Hall park."

"And was it arrested?"

"No, and I do not believe there was any likelihood that it would have been. Long ago bodies were sometimes arrested, legally or illegally,—I do not know which—but so late as that—it was in 1833—it was more than improbable."

"But they must have believed it," Bill objected; "they must have thought it would happen."

"Yes, but the servants were ignorant, and the girl, the Squire's granddaughter, was a child of thirteen, headstrong, daring, imaginative, who heard the servants' chatter and believed it. The thing was practically

her doing. She was fond of her grandfather, and there was no one to take charge at his death; her father was abroad and she and the old butler managed everything. She always did as she liked, and grew up as she pleased, with no one to thwart her."

Bill wondered if Mr. Dane had known the granddaughter, or if this too was only part of the local tale; she would have liked to ask him but thought that perhaps she ought not, as the last words scarcely seemed addressed to her. She contented herself with inquiring, "Did you live here then?"

"No," he roused himself with an effort. "No; I was not born in this part of the country and at that time I was a lad at school; a little lad I must have been, for I am younger than Harborough."

"And he? Did he know at the time? How old was he then?"

"Yes, he knew; he must have known, for he was at home when the thing happened."

There were more questions Bill wanted to ask, but she was not able to do so for at that moment Miss Dawson's well-trained soprano informed the company that she was "a monkey on a stick."

By the time she had reached the end of her song Mr. Perry had claimed the rector's attention, and Bill was left to meditate on the half-told story until Mrs. Dawson asked her with awful politeness for a little music. Theresa had warned her that this would occur, telling her to bring her music in anticipation. Bill had obediently brought it, making up her mind to play one of her pieces if required, but now when the time came she did no such thing. She cast a quick glance at Miss Dawson, who was now talking to Gilchrist Harborough, and thinking of the

covert sneer at Polly's skirt, went to the piano in no very Christian frame of mind. "I can sing as well as you," was the defiance she mentally hurled at the young lady as she sat down to the piano and began to play from memory, or, more correctly speaking, by ear from some half forgotten melody. It was curious music, at first compelling attention by its strangeness, afterwards holding it by a charm of its own,—a love-song of long ago, low, yet with an almost harsh refrain in it, vibrating with a passion at first suppressed, but afterwards breaking forth into a tumult of emotion likely to tingle strangely in the nerves of those who listened.

"Red is the rose thou hast bound in
thy hair,
Redder thy lips, love.
Soft is thy breath, aye, the sweetest
of air,
Incense to me, love;
E'en though it choketh the voice of
my prayer,
(I pray not now, love.)
Stars are thine eyes,—ill stars some
swear,
Beacons to me, love.
Oh, heart of my heart, I want nought
but thy beauty,
Of here and hereafter, I ask only thee!
Sinner or saint, thou art God of my
worship,
In time and eternity Heaven to me!"

Silently Mr. Dane rose and went out of the room, closing the door noiselessly after him. At the time Bill's astonished audience hardly noticed it; afterwards it was said by some of the more severe that he went out to mark his disapproval of the tone and tenor of the song, which was certainly most unbecoming in a young girl. This may have been the case; it obviously was not because his Christian forbearance and courtesy were tried beyond endurance, as sometimes happened, by false notes, for to

a musician the rendering of this song left little to be desired. Whatever the reason, Mr. Dane left the drawing-room, and passing through the hall went out by the open garden-door, out into the sweet spring night where the song could not reach him. His lips moved once as he went :

“If God in His anger hath shut thee
from Heaven,
Then closed on us both let its golden
gates be.”

And the strange thing was that these words did not occur in the first part of the song which he had heard, but in the second part which he did not hear, and of which Bill was now singing the last verses.

“If God in His anger hath shut thee
from Heaven,
Then closed on us both let its golden
gates be !
For thou, oh, beloved, art the God
of my worship,
In time and eternity Heaven to me !”

And between the box-edged borders, where drooping daffodils glimmered in the moonlight, an old man stood and murmured in the ghostly, tearless upheaval of some dead passion :

“Thou, oh beloved, art the God of my
worship,
In time and eternity Heaven to me !”

CHAPTER X.

DOUBTLESS the ladies of Ashelton were right in saying that the song sung by Bill Alardy at Mrs. Dawson's tea-party was most unsuitable and highly improper. It was not only the words, though, as was pointed out, they were reprehensible, but also the terrible earnestness with which they were sung. Ashelton was justly shocked, and Theresa, although agreeably surprised by the unexpected

richness of her cousin's voice, was overcome with shame. Even Gladys Dawson, who was naturally beyond old-fashioned prejudices, looked at Bill with something more intelligent than her previous stare. Gilchrist Harborough, sitting by Miss Dawson, remembered the words spoken by Morton that Friday night ; the “little girl” certainly could “sing a capital song” of a sort.

But he did not remark on it to Miss Dawson ; indeed he seemed to have forgotten all about her, and looked across to the singer, who had twisted round on the piano-stool and now sat uneasily regarding the company with a comical mixture of fear and defiance in her eyes. She was painfully conscious of their feelings, though not entirely able to understand them. She was both surprised and angry at the unexpected storm she had raised. Her eyes met Harborough's ; he at any rate was not shocked ; he understood, he was even a little amused. Bill's face began to clear, and the tantalising chameleon eyes changed. Miss Dawson addressed a remark to the young man, and receiving no reply, glanced in the direction where his interest obviously lay. Bill saw the glance and experienced a twofold gratification ; one person in the room sided with her, and another (she who had sneered at Polly's skirt !) was annoyed thereby. Her face cleared entirely, and her eyes absolutely shone. The mischief was done.

Somehow or other, Bill did not quite know how, she found herself soon afterwards talking to Harborough, about the song and about all manner of other things. It was quite easy to talk to him, though he seemed a grave sort of young man given to taking things seriously, so seriously that it was rather strange he should approve of the song. He asked her

where she had learned to sing it, and she told him she did not quite know. "I found the verses written out," she said, "and I think I must have heard them sung when I was young. Perhaps my father sang them; I don't know."

"You sang as if you meant it," he observed.

"So they should be sung."

"But you have not felt that; you don't know what you were talking about."

"Oh, no," she agreed readily, "it is all pretending; but that does not matter; one can pretend anything. Almost it feels sometimes," she went on thoughtfully, "as if one had felt it in another first life; don't you think so? Or perhaps it is that those who went before—the mothers and fathers and grandfathers—felt it and passed the memory on."

Harborough shrugged his shoulders. "That is an old problem," he said, "which does not trouble me much. I never think about my ancestry as you seem to; I find enough to do without seeking for the grip of the dead hand."

"Some people do not have to seek for it," Bill answered. She was thinking of the Harboroughs of Gurnett. "Have you ever been to Wood Hall?" she asked abruptly.

"No; I have ridden past it once or twice, but I have not had occasion to go in that direction often,—why?"

"You know there are Harboroughs there,—people of your name?"

"Yes, possibly distant connections; I have heard my father say that his people came originally from this part of the country. But I am not proud of the fact, if it is one; they appear to have been a pretty bad lot."

"Yes," Bill admitted, "and they are poor, desperately poor for the position; at least, so it is said, and certainly the place looks like it. Still

they have been there for hundreds of years."

"What the better are they for that? Nothing, I should say, seeing that each generation seems to have been worse than the previous one, till we come to the present, last and worst, bankrupt alike in means, morals and constitution, played out, worn out, done for,—and a good thing too."

"It is the grip of the dead hand," Bill said with conviction, and when he looked at her, doubtful as to her meaning, she explained: "They have an awful lot against them; the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children have not much choice left them."

"Much income, you mean."

"No, I don't, though they have not very much of that either. I believe the estate is mortgaged, but so are their natures and characters; they could hardly go straight if they would. Think what it must be to have all that weight of tradition and fathers' sins pulling against you."

Harborough was not convinced. "Most of us have as many ancestors as have the great people of Gurnett," he said, "yet some of us seem capable of independent action."

"We don't know about them; that makes a difference. We have not got them, in a way, stored up as the Harboroughs have. If you had been into Wood Hall you would know what I mean."

"Then you think the next Harborough is bound to go and do likewise?"

"I don't know him," Bill said; "but I think he has a bigger chance of doing likewise than you have."

"Yes; because if I believed I was doomed to be the same kind of blackguard as my ancestors I should blow my brains out."

Bill looked at him gravely. "You

wouldn't really," she said; "because you would not be as you are now if you were one of them. I wonder how nearly you are related?"

"What does it matter?"

"Nothing,—unless you could claim Wood Hall."

"I am generations away from that," he laughed; "and I don't want to be any nearer."

"You are not a Catholic? No? I wonder if the owner of Wood Hall must be?"

"Certainly not; a man's conscience is his own."

Bill nodded. "And his family?" she said.

"Have nothing to do with it; a man has a right to his own opinion."

Harborough spoke warmly: he almost looked as if he defied Bill to defend the position; but she only said: "A woman is better off then; she has a right to two opinions,—her own and that of the person she is with."

"That is scarcely the point," Harborough said; but he did not get her back to the point for she would have no more serious discussion; either her ability or her interest was exhausted. Harborough, whose bent of mind was habitually grave, tried in vain to bring the conversation back, and was half amused, half vexed by her evasions. He was certainly wholly vexed when Miss Dawson, from the ottoman, introduced the labour-problem as a subject likely to interest him.

Bill perceived the vexation and was amused. If she had been truly feminine she would probably have been gratified; but her nature was lacking in some of these girlish characteristics, and though she was pleased by the annoyance of Gladys, her enjoyment partook more of the pleasure of vengeance than of a womanly appreciation of pre-eminence. She was glad to have avenged the

insult offered to Polly's skirt, but she had no other feeling about it. She certainly never thought of Gilchrist; by the next morning, when she set about her penance in the garden, she had forgotten all about him.

She enjoyed the penance immensely. It was hard work in the open air and there was something to show for the labour; moreover, it appealed strongly to her, for it was a clearing up and setting straight with the prospect eventually of a productive yield. She had already made plans for the improvement of other parts of the garden when the long bed should be finished. There was plenty of room for improvement, for the garden seemed to be nobody's business; Robert was not interested in it, and Theresa,—more because she had never been used to doing so than for any other reason—never thought of working in it.

"She does not like digging and she hates worms," Bill said. "You would not expect T. to grub out here; besides, she has work in the house."

This was said to Gilchrist, who apparently had not entirely forgotten her existence, whatever she may have done with regard to his. At all events, when he saw her from the footpath which crossed the field beyond the garden, he came to enquire how she was and what she was doing. She told him her intentions with regard to the plot of ground on which she was engaged, but she did not cease work to do so.

He watched her half amused. "I wonder Morton did not set one of the men to dig this for you," he said.

"Why should he? I can do it well enough."

"Yes," he admitted, "but it is hard work for you."

"Work," she replied oracularly, "is an excellent thing. You yourself believe in the dignity of labour."

"Who told you that?" he asked reddening slightly.

She had stooped down and was wrestling with a giant worm as yet but half above the soil. "Don't you believe it?" she inquired. "Out you come—" this was addressed to the worm—"you're not going to stop here, come along now!" It came, and she threw it over the iron fence to find a new home in the field. "This is the dignity of labour," she said as she returned to her work.

There was very little dignity about the small, hatless figure on the deeply dug plot. Bill had a great faculty for putting trade-marks of her occupation on herself and clothes; labour she might represent, but dignity never.

Harborough laughed a little; it was impossible to know when the girl was in fun and when in earnest. "Mrs. Morton will have a lot of potatoes if your crop is a good one," he observed.

"Yes, but they'll keep,—besides, she can bring them to Wrugglesby for us if she likes. There is an awful lot of waste in this garden; one could grow heaps of things—it does seem a pity. While I am here I am going to try what can be done with it."

"In the way of growing potatoes?"

"All manner of things. I don't know much about it, but I'll find out; there is a book about gardening here, and Mr. Dane has got another, a big one, I saw it in his bookshelf. I expect you know a good lot."

She stopped work for a moment as the idea occurred to her, then went on again with it and her questions at the same time till Harborough soon found himself giving information on the subject of fruit and vegetable culture; flowers did not seem to enter into the girl's consideration at all.

"Some grow themselves," she said

of them, "and there are heaps of wild ones to be got. I would see about flowers afterwards; the other things must come first."

"But," Harborough objected, "in such a garden as this it would be possible to grow many more eatables than Mrs. Morton could use; surely it would be better to devote the surplus time and room to flowers. Unless," he added slyly, "you think the other vegetables could be brought to Wrugglesby like the potatoes."

"Well, yes," Bill admitted, "some could, and the rest could be sold."

"To whom? Believe me there is no profit attached to market-gardening on a small scale; your profits would not pay your freight to London."

"I should not send them to London." Bill was at the end of the row now, and Harborough had moved farther along the fence to keep even with her. "I should take some in the light cart to Wrugglesby and sell to people who had no gardens, and some I should take to Darvel. It is rather a long distance off, but it is quite a big town with barracks and lots of houses without gardens. People with things to sell come to our house in Wrugglesby like that; at first we did not buy much, but now we have a good deal from them—that is how it would be with me. I should sell rabbits too, I think, and fowls and eggs; Theresa does not half make them pay."

"I fancy she would raise objections to your making them pay in that way."

Bill was forced to admit that such a thing was probable. "Still," she said, "if it was really right I might do it all the same if I lived here; I could easily get round Robert. But I don't live here, so I am afraid there is an end of the matter."

Harborough watched her curiously for a moment. "You don't appear

to suffer from any class-prejudices," he observed.

"What are they? Do you mean I don't mind what I do? If that is it, I don't; why should I? Do you?"

"No."

The question was superfluous, he thought, for did not his manner of living demonstrate his theory to Bill as to everyone else?

"You work your own farm," she said, so she evidently knew, "and I should work my own cabbage-garden. We should not make big profits, but we should make enough to live on with what we grew for ourselves, and we should enjoy ourselves at the same time."

"You would like it?"

"Yes, very much. I do not mean I should do it if I were rich. I should find some other work then; there is sure to be some belonging to being rich; but if I were not rich, only rich enough to have a farm or a cabbage-garden, I should work them like that."

"I wonder if you know what real work is?"

The remark was more speculation than question, and seemed to emanate from a different and much older being. Bill was not piqued, for indeed she regarded him in the light of a different and older being.

"I have not done much," she said, "but I mean to get this garden a little straight before I go back to Wrugglesby."

"If you don't get tired of it first."

"I sha'n't do that; you can come every morning if you like, to see if I am at work or not."

This was something of a challenge. Harborough at first had not intended accepting it, yet, since on the next day circumstances caused him to come home at midday by the field-path, he thought he might as well see if the girl was really at work. The day was moist

and close, and a warm fine rain, which fell at intervals, might have offered some excuse for remaining indoors. But she had not availed herself of the excuse; very likely, he thought, because she expected he would come, thinking which he wished he had not done so, and even for a moment meditated going away without betraying his presence. But it was too late for that; she had seen him and glanced up from her work to ask, "Are you going to market this afternoon?"

"Yes."

"I suppose you can't see Robert off in good time? Theresa will be waiting for him."

"I will do what I can."

"Thank you." She resumed her work, and he went on his way determined to keep his promise.

And either he did keep it, or else some other circumstance brought about the desired results, for Robert came home early that night; and Bill, who was sitting with Theresa, was satisfied, trying to persuade herself that Harborough was right in saying that the one escapade was an accident not likely to be repeated.

She did not see Harborough for the next few days, and so could not thank him for his good offices. She did not altogether expect to see him; indeed, to tell the truth, she had forgotten about him in the engrossing interest of her work. But after nearly a week he passed that way again and found her still very busy, though now at a spot some little way from the railing. She did not cease work to come to him, and as he did not jump the rail to come to her, they carried on their conversation in tones suitable to the distance that separated them,—an arrangement which struck Harborough as more practical than pleasant, though he would not take the initiative in improving upon it.

The conversation itself was practical, strictly horticultural, and mostly concerned with the growing of lettuces, which, though it showed a laudable attention to business on Bill's part, was uninteresting. She was attending very much to business and not very much to Harborough; she even once went unceremoniously away to fetch some water-cans, singing as she went.

Harborough turned to go; the water-cans, it is true, were not far away, but she had gone for them without a word of apology. He was an extremely practical young man, believing in utility, in the importance of work above all things; but he did not quite appreciate seeing manners (and himself) sacrificed to some one else's notion of work.

"There's work for all the day-time," Bill sang, repeating to herself fragments of the song she had sung to the other Harborough, and quite unconscious of having offended this one. "The rose of this can has rather big holes in it, I believe it will wash the seeds out of the ground—the victor's crown of glory,—of glory, glory"—now, then, I've filled my shoes with water. 'But after life's long story there's the devil's bill to meet.'"

"What are you singing?" Harborough stopped to ask.

"Nothing," and Bill stood on one foot while she emptied the water out of her shoe.

"Yes, but what was it?"

Bill recited the verse to him and began to water her seed-patch.

"Why don't you come nearer?" Harborough asked. "All the men in the yard will hear what you are saying."

"There are none there now, they are all eating their lunch in the barn; besides what does it matter if they do? It will do no harm."

"Oh, no; it might even do some good; it is almost a pity they should not be edified by your—hymn, is it?"

Bill looked up arrested by his tone. "It isn't a hymn," she said, "but it is true all the same, every bit of it, the laughter and the work and the bill, only I don't think you always have to wait till the end of life's long story for that. After all, it is only fair; you must expect to pay a good price for a good thing,—and it is good!"

"Which? The broken cucumber-frame or your own work? You are admiring both."

"Everything,—just being alive."

"Do you consider one is in the devil's debt for life? It is a new idea."

"No, not exactly that. The debt you owe is the wrong you do. You have not half lived if you have done no wrong; you miss an awful lot if you never do any wrong,—don't you think so?"

She looked up as she spoke. Wrong so prefigured appeared wonderfully alluring, for there was an indescribable provocation in her face and figure, a fascination, nay, a temptation personified, which roused the youth in him, stirring the pulses usually so cool. Theory and reason are all very well, admirable in fact for ordinary use, but young blood will course in spite of them; the world's spring will not always take *no* for an answer.

Harborough went home that day vibrating with an emotion which was strange to him. Afterwards, when he was cool again, he was ashamed of it, for it did not seem exactly a good thing, and he vowed he would not go near the garden again. Yet, how could he help himself? In a rash moment he had offered to mend the broken cucumber-frame for the girl, and she, serenely unconscious of his emotions, had accepted the offer.

There had not been time then: Theresa wanted her in the house in five minutes; but he would come some other time. She had suggested to-morrow, or any day he liked. It did not matter when it was done, but it had to be done; he had left himself no choice.

That same evening he met Theresa in the lane, and, acting on impulse, he told her of his offer to mend the frame. On the whole, he thought it better, even if she put a false construction on his actions, than jumping the fence some morning when Bill was alone in the garden. But Theresa did not put any construction whatever on his actions; she looked upon her young cousin as more of a child than she really was, and much more of one than Harborough thought her. "She told me you offered to do it," Theresa said; "it is very kind of you, I'm sure. She has taken a great fancy to gardening, and I am glad of it, though I cannot give her much help myself, for I know so little about it, and am so busy besides."

Harborough assured her he was pleased to give any assistance he could, and Theresa thanked him again for sparing his valuable time, and invited him to do so to-morrow afternoon, and to have tea afterwards.

This he did, he and Bill spending an hour in the garden before tea. That afternoon Bill did not arouse any sentiments, unholy or otherwise, in his breast, neither did she sing or whistle; she devoted herself to business, and Harborough, having of late worked with farm labourers, found it a refreshing change to work with a person who understood what was wanted and did as she was told.

"She has more common-sense than most of the men I know," was the opinion he formed that day, both when they were at work before tea, and when they were at the table later on. Her intercourse with Robert Morton impressed him very much; she had gauged the man's character to a nicety, and Harborough could not but see that she understood him better, blamed him less, and could do infinitely more with him than could his stately young wife. He was not sure that he liked her the better for that. "An odd girl," was his opinion, when at last he had convinced himself that she was not really conscious of the part she was playing; "she simply reflects her surroundings, but—" His ideal of womanhood was not a changing elf, a will-o'-the-wisp, a creature who could in mind enter into all things, reflect all things, good, bad, and indifferent, without judging or condemning. Woman should be above man; she should not understand evil except when he taught her; she should be merciful, of course, with the mercy of love, the pity of superiority, but not tolerant with the liberality of good fellowship; she should have nothing in common with a man like Robert Morton; she should be something fairer, better—unconsciously he looked at Theresa.

Yet Bill fascinated him. She was not fair, above, apart; she was of the earth earthy, a brownie by the hearth, not a goddess for a shrine. And yet the last thing in his waking thoughts that night was the dark glowing face watching him from the gate, the first thing that haunted his dreams was the small figure gliding into the green twilight of the nut-bushes.

(To be continued.)

AN UNKNOWN CHAPTER OF NAVAL HISTORY.

BRILLIANT episodes are many in the annals of the British navy, but of brilliant enterprises planned by devoted and gallant men and paralysed by untoward fate, the records are very few. That which I am about to describe is a lustrous but unknown example of courage and daring belonging to a critical time in our history.

The great blockade of the French Atlantic ports, conducted by Admiral Cornwallis in the years 1803-5, was, undoubtedly, one of the most important and difficult operations ever entrusted to a seaman, and the interest of its dramatic incidents is varied and profound. It would be difficult to exaggerate the measure of the disaster that would have flowed from a miscarriage of our plans, or to set too high a value upon the splendid services of those officers and men who, by their bravery, courage, and resource prepared the way for Trafalgar. They displayed some of the finest qualities which have ever been shown by British seamen,—endurance and constancy almost without a parallel, enterprise and gallantry of the highest type, and a most firm and clear grasp of a strategic situation and of tactical conditions singularly intricate and sometimes obscure. The preparations of Bonaparte were imperfect, it is true, and were conducted by stealth, and, in part, by desperate enterprise in the dark; but they were on a colossal scale, and their weakness was unknown to our commanders, while the menace of invasion seemed very real to people at home.

In every French port vast armaments were preparing, and in the

country round each the camps were full of men. A huge flotilla of transports had been collected, and in the great naval arsenals the fleets of France were nearly ready. If they should put to sea and unite, England might well be undone. "Let us be masters of the Straits for six hours," said Napoleon with vain assurance, "and we shall be masters of the world." Ganteaume was at Brest with twenty sail of the line; there were six more at Rochefort, four at Ferrol, and ten at Toulon, besides frigates and other vessels innumerable; and these numbers were increasing, while one hundred and fifty thousand men were prepared to embark at the French ports, and three hundred thousand were assembled in the Texel with war-ships and transports enough. Six hours would not, indeed, have sufficed for the work of Napoleon, but, if Villeneuve could have united his forces with those at Ferrol, Rochefort, and Brest, things would have gone badly with our admirals ranged along the coasts, and the invasion of our shores might then have been easy.

There were some in the fleet who presaged misfortune to our arms. Thus Captain John Whitby, who had been with Nelson in the Mediterranean, in command of the *BELLEISLE*, wrote to Cornwallis, in June, 1804, disclosing his apprehensions as to the situation at Toulon and the possible evading of Nelson by the French.

From all this, I draw one general conclusion,—that it is very possible for them to escape him. Upon the last occasion they might have got to the West Indies, or elsewhere, without the possibility of

discovery, had they so chosen. And from all this, I draw these particular ones likewise, concurring with other circumstances: they have ten sail of the line at Toulon, one at Cadiz, four, I think, at Ferrol, six at Rochefort, and twenty, you say, at Brest, making in all one-and-forty ships of the line. If they pass Lord Nelson they can relieve Cadiz (which is only blockaded by two frigates), Ferrol, Rochefort; and if, on their way to Brest, you meet them some morning, when they are attempting a grand junction, I shall not be surprised.

In these grave and critical circumstances, which, let me say, never disturbed the calm confidence and strong purpose of our commanders,—a purpose which was not so much to seal the French in their ports as to tempt them out and destroy them—it was urged, by certain bold spirits in the fleet blockading Brest, that an immense national advantage would be gained, and a great strain be relieved, if, by a *coup-de-main*, the French fleet in the port could be destroyed. It was an enterprise, unknown to naval historians, that fired the imagination of many, that was discussed and planned in secret, and for which the preparations were brought to completion, but which failed for reasons I shall explain, these reasons throwing a curious side-light upon the methods of Admiralty administration. In certain naval biographies there is evidence of a partial knowledge of the fact that such an enterprise was contemplated, but the circumstances have never been made public, and in the latest naval history no reference whatever to this bold undertaking is made.

The use of fireships was not new in the British navy; they had been employed, and had been intended to be employed, on a number of occasions, and Captain Charles Brisbane appears to have contemplated an attack with fireships in the previous blockade. The classic instance of

their use is, of course, the attack made by Cochrane in the *Basque Roads* in 1809, though there his direct purpose miscarried. It would appear that the plan of burning the French fleet at Brest in 1804 was meditated by certain young officers engaged in the daring work of the inshore squadron. Among these was Lieutenant Thomas Ussher of the *COLPOYS* schooner, afterwards the well-known admiral who, in 1814, conveyed Napoleon to Elba in the *UNDAUNTED*, and whose name should stand very high for gallantry in the annals of the British navy. It is said that while in the *PELICAN*, in 1797-98, he was engaged in upwards of twenty boat-engagements, and he took part in several in 1804. It was apparently early in the year, probably about the month of March, that he boldly entered the harbour of Brest on a dark frosty night in a four-oared gig, and rowed along the French line, obtaining exact information as to the enemy's strength and the positions in which the vessels lay. When he came abreast of the flagship he was discovered, and three boats were despatched in pursuit, but by hard pulling, the gig was able to clear the Goulet, or entrance of the harbour. There, however, the boats of eleven gun-brigs lying in Camaret Bay joined in the chase, and Ussher was very closely pressed but managed to effect his escape.

But it was in the mind of Captain Peter Puget of the *FOUDROYANT* that the project took shape and ripened, and indeed he appears to have suggested it to Ussher. The name of Captain Puget is very little known, but from the papers which have passed through my hands, I recognise him to have been a man of singular enterprise and resource, and of unflinching courage. He had been a comrade of Vancouver in the great

cruise, and Puget Sound is named after him, and he was in command of the *GOLIATH* in the Baltic in 1807. The *FOUDROYANT* in 1804 was the flagship of Sir Thomas Graves, but that officer was not a party to the plan, though later on he was made acquainted with it. It was discussed by Captain Puget with Captain Patrick Campbell of the *DORIS*, a very intrepid officer, who in the *DART* at Dunkirk in 1800 had been engaged in a very gallant action in which fireships had been employed; and Lieutenant Graves, of the *FOUDROYANT*, and Lieutenant Milne, of the *MARY* cutter, were almost from the beginning associated with Lieutenant Ussher in their desire to take part in the desperate enterprise. The scheme was laid before Cornwallis by Captain Puget, who proposed that ten fire-brigs, formed in two divisions, under the direction of himself and Captain Campbell, should go into Brest harbour on a favourable night, while three sloops remained for service in Camaret Bay. The brigs were to be fitted, inside and out, in such a way as to insure an immediate communication of fire to the masts, yards, and hulls of the French vessels, and the officers and men in them were to escape, if they could, in six-oared boats. Captain Puget's proposals took account of every circumstance of wind, tide, and light, and he suggested that the fire-ships should keep close under the north shore as they went in, in order to be nearer to the enemy's batteries, so that any red-hot shot might pass right through them, instead of lodging within. One division was to haul for the southern part of the French fleet, and the other for the northern part; they were to run athwart hawse of the ships, and, grappling them, were to be set on fire, while for a diversion the sloops were to

make a raid on the gun-vessels in Camaret Bay. Captain Puget admitted that there was an appearance of desperation about the enterprise, but he thought that by boldness and suddenness of attack, consternation and confusion would be caused and danger would be reduced. He felt sure those attacked would consult their own safety, and, as for the chance of losing men on our side, he could only say that "all could not expect to survive."

I certainly believe that such a plan may, and will be successful, from the operation of fear on the human mind; it is well known the consternation which even a common fire produces on shore, when assistance is near to get the flames under. In a ship, fire is considered the greatest calamity that can happen; and such effect has it on the mind that I have known in three cases men jump overboard on the first alarm, thus rushing from an uncertain to a certain death, to avoid even the possibility of being burned. How much more would that fear be increased when a ship is grappled by an enemy for the avowed purpose of destruction, and whose plans are all arranged. If one man in such a situation jumped overboard, the rest would instantly follow, and this would certainly happen, not only from the fear of fire, but from the apprehension of an immediate explosion.

The project thus broached to Cornwallis by one of his captains received his approval, and he submitted it to Lord Melville, then First Lord of the Admiralty. Cornwallis was leaving the fleet off Brest for a short time, and when he was ashore in July and August, 1804, he seems to have discussed it several times with the First Lord. Lord Melville recognised the national advantages that would result from the success of such an enterprise, and he had confidence that a bold and daring attempt was likely to succeed. In this he was guided by the advice of Cornwallis, but the two took

counsel with Captain Charles Brisbane, afterwards the distinguished admiral, to whom Captain Puget's plan was confidentially revealed, and it was hoped to use both these enterprising officers in the attempt.

It is very deserving of note that Lord Melville did not disclose his purpose to his naval colleagues on the Board of Admiralty until much later, and that on his personal authority he gave orders to Admiral Young at Plymouth for the preparation of the fireships, the details resting with Sir Andrew Hamond, Controller of the Navy, and General Congreve, the inventor of the famous rocket that bears his name. The preparation of the vessels was to be made with the utmost secrecy. Their fittings were to be sent out in another vessel, and no one was to know their destination. Captain Brisbane somewhat modified Captain Puget's plan, and by the orders of Lord Melville, evidently directed by Cornwallis, took command of the operation, which it was hoped would be ready for execution on August 29th, 1804. Subsequently many delays occurred, and at length Captain Brisbane came to the conclusion that Wednesday, September 19th, or within a day or two later, would be a very suitable time for the contemplated stroke.

His instructions are extremely interesting. It might happen, he said, that some of the ships under command of himself, of Captain Puget, or of Captain Campbell would be disabled in going in, but, however dangerous might be their situation, they were not to be destroyed by their officers until it was seen that the enemy's ships were on fire. If the French showed any disposition to attack disabled ships with boats, pigs of ballast were to be ready to throw into them with the purpose of sinking them.

No prisoners to be taken, nor are we to suffer ourselves to be taken alive. In the event of a gale setting in from the westward during our operations in Brest, which possibly may prevent our retreat through the Goulet, there will be a ship lying in Douarnenez Bay to give us a chance of escaping across the neck of land. Desperate service requires desperate acts, and I trust, being driven to this resource, we should be able to make a good retreat across.

A frigate anchored between Camaret and Bertheaume was to send up a rocket so soon as the French ships were observed to be on fire, in order that the boats might see the direction for escape; but Captain Brisbane was to carry in his pocket a false fire or blue light, which would be set off if the intrepid Englishmen were coming on board the ship in Douarnenez Bay.

I hope every man's mind is completely made up to execute this service in a gallant manner, or fall in the attempt. You will remember it is not the wish of Admiral Cornwallis, nor the wish of our country, that any but volunteers should be sent on this service. You will, therefore, have time to decline going on it without any reflection on your character as a brave man; for officers and men are very apt, on the first proposal of enterprise, to volunteer their services for their country, fearing they are marked men by their captains if they do not come forward. I beg to assure them that, on this service, I shall be more obliged to them to keep back if they do not feel themselves ready and equal to execute this service at the expense of their lives.

We thus see a great enterprise, intended to change the whole subsequent course of the war, and to seize from Napoleon any chance of acquiring his desired command of the Narrow Seas, confided to the hands of men who would shrink from no sacrifices to attain their end. They were ready, carrying their lives in their hands, to undertake an operation surrounded by the utmost danger, and

to accomplish a task which would have been glorious in the annals of the British navy, even if the horror of its effect might have appalled humanity. The three captains were men whose names must ever be respected for the intrepid courage and the splendid enterprise they displayed in preparing for the grand attack, and the lieutenants who were to command the boats have a great title to our respect as officers of fearless courage, prepared to encounter colossal peril. We shall presently learn that there were other officers also, not selected for the work, who were just as eager, and perhaps just as fitted, for the great enterprise.

But the stars in their courses were fighting against the brave men who had weathered all the winter storms of the blockade, and were filled with the inspiring purpose they had conceived. There were extraordinary delays in getting the boats prepared, and Lord Melville was very much displeased at the failure to make them ready by the appointed date. He wrote to Admiral Young on September 14th that, as he could not cure what was past by repining at it, he would be silent, but that he was satisfied there were unnecessary delays in more quarters than one, and that he had some doubt, in the circumstances, if Admiral Cornwallis would think it expedient to make the attempt. It is useless at this date to attempt to fix the responsibility for this unhappy failure upon any one individual, though there is the best reason to believe that, if the boats had been ready at the time indicated, the attempt to destroy the fleet of Ganteaume would have been made.

There was, however, a far more serious cause operating to spoil the enterprise, and it is here that we are brought into contact with a curious and significant aspect of

Admiralty administration. No Order in Council had then made the First Lord "responsible for all the business of the Admiralty," but, none the less, by ancient precedent and plain necessity, or in this case perhaps by evident expediency, did Lord Melville act in regard to the intentions of Cornwallis solely on his own authority. If he had been a stronger man he might have carried the thing right through. Yet, it may reasonably be asked, what is the value of expert professional advisers if you neglect their inspirations? The chief adviser whom Lord Melville then had at the Admiralty to inspire him was Admiral (afterwards Lord) Gambier. Now Gambier was not a man fitted by Nature to wield the club of Hercules. On the contrary, there was a certain strain of feebleness in him which found expression on sundry occasions. It may speak well for his humanity, but not for his grasp of the essentials of warfare, that he shrank from its extremities. In the famous affair of the Basque Roads in 1808, he saw, before the Admiralty instructed him, that fireships might be used advantageously there, but he wrote to Lord Mulgrave that it was "a horrible mode of warfare, and the attempt very hazardous if not desperate." There were those in the fleet who sneered at Gambier. Rear-Admiral Harvey, for example, disgusted at the management of the affair of 1808, went about speaking disparagingly of him, and said to Lord Cochrane in relation to him, "I am no canting Methodist, no hypocrite, nor a psalm-singer." When he was in the *DEFENCE* she was known as a "praying-ship," and a sarcastic friend, seeing her dismantled, is said to have hailed him: "Be of good heart, Jimmy; the Lord chasteneth whom He loveth."

It deserves to be noted that Gam-

bier's frame of mind was not confined to the British navy. Thus in the previous blockade of Brest, when Fulton proposed to blow up two British frigates by means of his NAUTILUS, Villaret-Joyeuse, the admiral, and Caffarelli, the prefect, refused on the grounds of humanity. It was a disgraceful way of making war, they said, and those who engaged in it deserved to be hanged.

I do not allude to these things in order to depreciate or censure Gambier, but only to show what manner of man it was that was at Lord Melville's right hand in 1804. It was not until the first days of September that the project was broached to the members of the Admiralty Board when the business had already been in hand for about two months. Thus did Lord Melville on September 5th report the result to Cornwallis.

Having now put the means into your hands of making this enterprising attempt, I should not act fairly or candidly with you, if I did not explain to you that I had recently communicated to my naval colleagues the preparations I was secretly making, and the objects of them; and from them I certainly have received no encouragement to persevere. They concur in thinking that the enemy must be supine beyond example, and totally negligent of the common vigilance which every commander of a fleet in the circumstances of the Brest fleet, ought to use, to give the most remote chance of success in this attempt. Without being skilled, as they are, in naval operations, every man of common understanding must be aware that the attempt is not less dangerous than it is enterprising, and nothing would be more remote from my mind than to give an order originating from my own knowledge or speculation for carrying such a service into execution.

But the proposal did not come to Lord Melville in this way. It had been made by experienced officers on the spot who were confident of success, and he would not put a negative upon it if these enterprising and meritorious

men saw no reason for changing their opinion.

Meanwhile, Captain Brisbane and his associates were gratified at the prospect of meeting their friends in the gunboats off Ushant and were quite ready, as he expressed it to Cornwallis, to "make a dash," eagerly expectant of the honourable service before them. The boats had left for the rendezvous under conditions of the utmost secrecy, and many of the appliances were carried by the HAPPY RETURN (name of sarcastic omen) which had orders to convey them to the TROMP at Falmouth for the store-keeper at Gibraltar. But there were secret orders which her commander was to open at sea, and which would direct him instead to join Cornwallis off Brest. Lieutenant Milne had received special instructions in regard to the various appliances, which included dark-lanterns, fire-barrels, port-fires, and parts of grapnels, which last Captain Brisbane would put together. These were kept separate in order that the men who had made them might not divine the use to which they were to be put.

We may well imagine that Lord Melville's letter carried dismay to the minds of the brave officers who were thus eager for the enterprise. Bitter must have been their disappointment. Cornwallis wrote to his lordship on September 11th that those who had the operation in hand had not fallen off in their zealous expectations of success. Only a few days before he had shown Captain Brisbane's instructions to a young officer who had performed a boarding-service to his satisfaction in the previous summer, and who was intended to go into Brest Harbour in one of the freshships. Captain Brisbane had put everything in the worst light, but this lieutenant was very much pleased at the opportunity that was offered to him, and

Cornwallis himself proposed to visit the advanced ships and see, before the attempt was made, that all was well. "It is a daring service," he said, "but I have always been of opinion that much might be done by surprise, and I have formerly thought that our ships, superior to all the world at sea, were not always so secure at anchor." At about the same time, however, Cornwallis communicated the depressing letter from the First Lord to Captain Brisbane, with the remark that the opinions of those in office ought undoubtedly to have very great weight, and that he would not, on any account, have the attempt made, if the brave officers entertained any doubt as to the favourable prospect of success. Lord Melville, he said, after the opinion of his colleagues, was "rather tender upon the subject;" and thus did the gallant and loyal Cornwallis, the soul of bravery and honour, commend the enterprise to his subordinates.

The least doubt or alteration in your opinions would determine me not to allow you to proceed, and it would not, in the smallest degree, reflect upon your characters, for which, as the bravest of men, I shall ever have the highest respect; and happy should I be if, at any time, it should be in my power to prove it to all of you.

We are left to bridge the gap between this letter and the next by a little imagination, but it is easy to see that, after the long delays that had occurred and the practical censure of the project which had been expressed by the Admiralty Board, the intrepid officers were dispirited, and lost the strength of their endeavour. Could they, in circumstances like these, have been expected to persevere? There is a rather sad order of Cornwallis's to the officers of the gun-vessels, dated September 29th, directing them to proceed to the

Downs and to follow the orders of Lord Keith. Such, then, was the melancholy failure of a deed of high emprise, inspired by lofty patriotism, and born of the true spirit of the naval paladin.

Another contributory cause had operated disastrously for the undertaking. The plan had been shaped by those who had served during the blockade, and who trusted to themselves to carry the enterprise through; but there were others also who claimed an honourable share. Certain lieutenants, required for the needs of the fleet, had been sent out with the fireships, and Lord Melville, anxious that no circumstances should lead to a suspicion of the business, had not explained to them that they might be transferred. This was part of the secrecy that caused the combustible materials to be sent in a separate vessel, but the new lieutenants objected. They had received command; why should they give place to volunteers? Lord Melville was keenly disappointed at what occurred, and he remarked to Cornwallis that, if it had been explained to the officers that they could not be employed because others had previously volunteered, they could not have been hurt, but would have taken it for granted that he "would not allow them to be ultimately sufferers." But, beyond and above that, he ranked the execution of the important and brilliant service, and he did not think that any over-delicacy was a sufficient reason for laying the execution of it aside. At the same time, he said that his naval colleagues, though not sanguine of success, had placed "no especial disapprobation" upon the enterprise,—an interpretation of their opinion scarcely in harmony with the expressions used in his earlier communication to Cornwallis. The gallant admiral had the welfare

of his comrades at heart and he replied that, though important service ought to outweigh every other consideration, there could be "nothing more disgusting to the navy" than to move officers in command to make way for volunteers, and all those who went out to him had declared themselves ready to go upon that or any other service. They would not reason the matter, and if they gave up when going upon immediate service, "they are open to the reflections of their brethren, who are not apt to spare much on such occasions." Captain Brisbane had been perfectly ready up to the last, and had taken infinite pains to persuade the officers in command to make way for those who had volunteered long before. The service had been delayed considerably beyond the time: Captain Puget had observed that the enemy's ships had changed their position; and Cornwallis added significantly, "the unfavourable opinion of the sea-officers on the Board did also a little damp the ardour of some."

The circumstances of this splendid but abortive enterprise became known to me in the course of my researches into the evidences of the Blockade of Brest; a number of the documents I have cited are in the possession of Colonel Cornwallis West, and will be published in a forthcoming volume in the series issued by the Navy Records Society. There are many other papers relating to the event, and among them a letter from Captain Puget, thanking Lieutenant Ussher for all he had done in the matter. Puget also wrote with great modesty to Lord Melville, and commended to his attention the services of Lieutenants Graves, Ussher, Milne, and Mends, who had volunteered under

his auspices, and were ready to the last, though he said "their expectations were a little damped from the circumstance of my being deprived of the principal command." They had shown unwearied diligence in every stage of the undertaking, and deserved every recommendation. Captain Puget believed, indeed, that if it had been the good fortune of the officers to conduct that enterprise, these lieutenants would have merited "countenance and protection," and as it was he thought it only common justice to mention their spirit and alacrity.

This is an opinion in which we must all agree. It may be doubted, indeed, whether, in the history of the British navy, there is any record of splendid enterprise more characterised by true bravery than this project of burning the French fleet in Brest. It was marred by "outrageous Fortune;" but to Captains Brisbane, Puget and Campbell, and to the young officers who were to command the boats, and not less to gallant Admiral Cornwallis who supported them, we must give a high meed of praise, and the great merit of their patriotism, skill, and valour is not depreciated by the fact that, through a curious concatenation of circumstances, which throws some instructive light upon naval administration, it was made impossible for them to carry out the work upon which their hopes were fixed. Their work is not lost even now, if it enables us to understand better what was the valour, spirit, and patriotism of our sea-officers in the Great War, and to realise more fully what it was that gave us success.

JOHN LEYLAND.

THE SERVING-MAN IN LITERATURE.

ALL the good people who keep house insist that servants are not what they used to be. By this they mean that they are worse than they used to be, for improvement in unmarked lapse of time passes unnoticed. Servants are less willing to remain servants; all wish to command and none to serve. Thus it comes that in these days household servants desire no fixity of tenure; they are ever on the wing in the hope of bettering themselves. The interests of masters and servants no longer coincide, for the fortunes of the house are nothing to a man or maid who first saw it last Easter, and will be away in search of novelty next Christmas. Faithful service cannot agree with the longing to call no man master which is fostered by the Board Schools. Elementary teachers, whose abilities have raised them to the position which they occupy, are too ready to preach about the blessings of freedom and independence, and Englishmen would be the better for less of both blessings. Among servants ignorance of the world and fear of the unknown, which used to keep people to one place and one service, have given place to love of change. A good servant knows his value and tries to exact it to the uttermost farthing; a bad servant finds he is endured at least for a season; good and bad alike are always shifting their quarters. Masters find their lot made harder by the weak unwillingness to give a bad servant a bad name; in modern days Elisha would have dismissed Gehazi with a good character. And so servants have lost the honourable

place which they held in the world's regard. Folk dismiss them as readily as they change a butcher or a baker, and there are no ties of affection on either side. It is the price we pay for the spread of education and discontent. The spirit of prophecy may tempt some to maintain that when all the nation is educated, good service will again be cheerfully rendered. It is at least as likely that we shall then all be servants, like captive Andromache, or Eumæus the goodly swineherd, hewing wood and drawing water for foreign masters.

Serving-men should feel proud when they reflect what an honourable position is theirs in literature. They play many parts in history, and are indispensable in novels and plays; in satire Davus is ever a lash for the flagellation of his master; their simple annals have given inspiration to many poets. It may be that Sosia and Geta, liars from the beginning and fathers of lies, have been exhibited more often than Eumæus or Caleb Balderstone, because evil is more amusing than good, and vice more various than virtue. We cannot hear without yawning a long account of how well Emmanuel Jennings polished Stubbs's shoes. In the later Greek comedy, and the Roman plays thence derived, the thievish slave evokes the cheap-won laughter; in our own comedy the impudent valet lies to the same end. Roman and English play-goers were alike in many ways, especially in their perception that the sight of physical pain, endured by inferiors, is very laughable. The stage-direc-

tion, *kicking him*, is frequent in the Elizabethan plays. And so the slaves of Roman comedy are always being beaten on the stage, their teeth knocked in or their eyes knocked out. They know how to bring down the house by jocose hits at one another, recollections of how Geta was hung up by the hands and flogged, anticipations of the day when Davus will be crucified. Pit and gallery roar yet when the clown beats the policeman, or an angry master hammers impudent William with some improvised weapon that smashes in his furious hand. Plautus and Shakespeare, who are more alike than people imagine, win the laughter of the groundlings by similar methods; the servants whom they bring on the stage seem to be brothers-in-blood. The wild humorous talk of Lancelot Gobbo is curiously like many passages in Plautus; there are speeches of slaves in Plautus which, rendered into Elizabethan diction, would almost seem extracts from any one of Shakespeare's earlier comedies. We find the same misapprehension of words, the same simple puns, the same extravagant nonsense. As Lancelot is Jessica's accomplice when she deludes her father, so there are dozens of servants in Plautus's plays who support the heat and burden of the plot by fooling their masters in the interest of a vicious son.

Dramatic writers do not wander from reality when they make serving-men play so important a part, for after all no one can do anything without the servants knowing it, whether he wishes to change his boots or his name, to save a persecuted maiden or run away with another man's wife. Though we now scorn as an ignoble device the opening conversation between the hero and valet, from which the audience learns as much as it needs must know,

servants still perform, in less obvious ways, the duty of the Greek messenger, without his prolixity. They are, to be sure, less frequent on the stage than in our Restoration plays, because the rôle of the pimp has been allotted to others. In comedies where the humour is broad their position is unassailable. What were HENRY THE FOURTH without Bardolph and Nym? When crowded houses are following the inanities of what it pleases some people to call musical comedy, the pert servant has the richest part and the loudest cheers. Why should they not hunt in couples on the stage as in life, where Audrey is not too poor a thing for Touchstone to marry, and even Nym is troth-plight? The old order changeth not, and the high courtesy of hero and heroine is emphasised by presenting the humble loves of butler and chambermaid, who buss one another without shame, and trip up each other's heels without decency. Their admirers are delighted by an unblushing lie, enchanted by a clever prevarication. One might think that lies and prevarication are unknown in suburban kitchens.

In fiction servants are rarely the protagonists, although Mr. George Moore in ESTHER WATERS reversed the ordinary rule, and made the master and mistress merely accessory. The device by which a servant is made the mouth-piece of his master's adventures is of course no exception to the rule. There is something like it in THE MASTER OF BALLINTRAÉ, and Stevenson allows the teller a soul of his own; but the two brothers remain chief hero and chief villain, and the petty interests of the secretary serve, as is usual, to relieve the tension of mind with which we observe the villain flout the hero. Yet the serving-man has very often a full revenge, and he and his are more

attractive than their betters. One is apt, in this work-day world, to resent the presentation of the faultlessly good and the thoroughly bad, and advance half-way to meet the humours of everyday folk. Despite the charming Di Vernon and the roguish Catharine Seton, Scott's best characters are not found among his heroes and heroines. There is nothing in Henry Morton, for instance, beyond irreproachable conduct and something of youth's daring courage. After his ordeal in Tillietudlem Castle is over we recognise him no better than Mistress Alison did when he returned from foreign parts. "All thoughts, all passions, all delights" we ought to trace back to the sacred flame, but Edith Bellenden is less to us than the bare-footed slut who dusted the Antiquary's study. Morton's servant, if he can be called such, a ploughman turned valet, and Miss Bellenden's maid, their courtship is a very different matter, and Cuddie and his jo are preferred far above the impeccable youth, the blameless rival, and the peerless Dulcinea. Scott is so lavish, too, with his serving-folk. Cuddie and Jenny, Mistress Alison, the miser's housekeeper, John Gudyill, Niel Blane, are all to be counted for righteousness; testifying Mause, precious woman, might also be claimed as a servant. Such servants outweigh brave soldiers, eloquent preachers, mad enthusiasts, fond lovers. No novelist, except Thackeray, has paid so much attention to those that stand and wait, and Thackeray chose to keep his eye upon their faults and weaknesses. Scott has a friendly nod for all sorts and conditions. Towards the old servant whose fidelity is that of a dog, who wakes a smile, not free from contempt, not unmixed with tears, Scott felt as he felt towards Maida and Camp. Now most men cherish much more dearly a faithful

dog than a faithful servant; Caleb Balderstone cannot be tied up when he is not wanted. In Richie Moniplies he depicts a less altruistic nature with the same kindly feeling; other people might find harder names for Richie than Moniplies. Cuddie is the faithful servant who is a trifle dull; old Caxon the same when worn out and past his work. To all of them Scott, as Mr. Jorrocks used to advise,

Is to their virtues more than kind,
And to their faults a little blind.

He had an underhand regard, plain to be discerned, for that masterpiece of canting rogues, Andrew Fairservice. We take Andrew to be the prince of lip-servers; he hath a smack, he doth something grow to; he is part of the revenge that we miserable sinners take upon the folk who are so much better than we are. He lies, he tries to swindle, he is as unctuous as Mr. Chadband himself; yet for all his offences no reader ever regarded him with dislike, much less with the loathing which we keep for the Chadbands and Pecksniffs. Andrew is as anxious as Major Pendennis's Morgan to defraud those who have more money and less experience; but he wins sympathy because he is a most inefficient rogue; the only points he scores are permitted him by charity. He is like the horse that goes lame until he feels the whip, which soft-hearted masters occasionally spare. His sense of humour is large enough to embrace himself, and the world is never hard on a rascal with this endowment. Hence, though he is detected and unsuccessful, his humour covers his retreat, and brings him handsomely off. "To the commands of Mr. Jarvie, therefore, Andrew was compelled to submit, only muttering between his teeth, 'Ower mony mais-

ters—ower mony maisters, as the paddock said to the harrow, when every tooth gae her a tig.'” Perhaps Dickens took the ground-plan of some of Sam Weller’s humour from Andrew Fair-service. Of course this unrighteous servant lived to a good old age, happy and unrespected, an indispensable nuisance. The last words of *ROB ROY* are “Old Andrew Fair-service used to say that there were many things ower bad for blessing, and ower gude for banning, like Rob Roy.” It is Scott’s way to make a speaker unconsciously render verdict upon himself.

No writer of fiction has made so much use of servants as Thackeray, or inquired more closely into their conditions of life and methods of thought. At the same time, he follows the ancient tradition, and is for ever mocking at them and dwelling on the amusing inconsistency of behaviour and language, which is due to lack of education and imitation of their superiors’ words and manners. Dickens was still fonder of making twisted figures of speech issue from the mouths of valets and footmen: Mr. John Smauker is a good example of the common manner. We find it harder to laugh at such things than our ancestors did; our fathers devoured the *YELLOWPLUSH PAPERS*, but the children’s teeth are set on edge. The trick of bad spelling is stale; the touch of tragedy in the *Affaire Deuceace* is the salt which keeps the thing fresh. Thackeray, however, uses servants for a more subtle purpose in his great novels; they do much more than display the snobbishness which grows in vulgar people from association with their betters. The servants form the chorus of his novels, a far different chorus from that which intersperses comments on men and things in a Greek tragedy. The Attic chorus may be held to represent public

opinion in all its weakness, truckling and facing both ways; Thackeray’s servants are used as a mirror to reflect truly the foibles and vices of society. One might parody a well-known aphorism and say that he shows his chief characters as three different persons, Becky or Amelia or Jos, as they appeared to themselves, as they appeared to their companions, and as they appeared to the servants. By his method the servants’ hall is the court of Rhadamanthus. There the heroes and villains are stripped, and all the hidden marks burnt upon their souls are exposed to view. Jane the housemaid gives her opinion upon Becky, and it is to be accepted as the verdict of a stern judge who knows all the facts of the case. Thackeray may have gone to his grave in doubt (at least he said he never knew) how far Becky had committed herself with Lord Steyne; but he leaves the reader in no doubt as to the servants’ opinion upon her conduct, for they accept her punishment as just. A most definite hint is conveyed obliquely (a favourite practice with Thackeray) when he turns aside to say a word about the career of Becky’s lady’s-maid, who afterwards kept a milliner’s shop in Paris: “It was no doubt compassion for her misfortunes which induced the Marquis of Steyne to be so very kind to Madame de Saint-Amaranthe.” In the great trilogy that deals with English society in the early years of the nineteenth century, Thackeray seems to feel that he has not formally introduced a character to his readers unless he has brought forward his body-servant to give evidence against the said defendant. Ever behind the emperor stands the slave with his “Remember thou art mortal.”

It is surprising that Thackeray could find so little good in servants; to him they are knaves or fools, cunning knaves or contemptible fools.

Mrs. Bonner is faithful to her mistress, and closes her long service by becoming besotted on the empty-headed footman, Frederick Lightfoot. Monsieur Alcide Mirobolant adds the crime of being a Frenchman to the error of being a servant, and receives such treatment as is fitting from a loyal contributor to PUNCH. They are all unjust stewards or foolish virgins; they give away their master's secrets as readily as David Copperfield's cook gave away the beef and coals. Not only is there no Caleb Balderstone, at which one cannot grumble, but no one of them has so much virtue as Richie Moniplies. In Thackeray's opinion Sam Weller would have told his master's purposes to Job Trotter, and then the precious pair would have looked how they might make a little for themselves. The tone of *THE NEWCOMES* is kindlier than that of the other two books; the author speaks of Ridley, the butler, with a contempt that is not bitter, but it is not given to all butlers to beget great painters. Miss Honeyman's Hannah is the conventional old maid's maid, and is not held up to public scorn. The conclusion must be that Thackeray despised servants because they were servants, as he despised the Irish because they were Irish. Thackeray knew that all men are snobs, more or less; for which reason he stands high among men, and was born to write *THE BOOK OF SNOBS*. His state of mind was inconsistent. He heartily despised the rich vulgar and the poor vulgar, because of their vulgarity, only remembering now and again that the latter could not help it. He can never close his eyes to human imperfection, or forget that men are masters of their fates, until he has closed the tale of their frailties. And yet by virtue of his self-restraint he is the greatest master of the pathetic among our novelists, whensoever he permits the gentle rain of compassion to fall. This

bitter compeller of contempt is the kindest writer about young children, who are too natural to be vulgar; he is not merciful to all that are desolate and afflicted, although wide awake to the tragedy of human life. No writing of his is gentler or kinder than the well-known passage in which he moralises upon the death of old Mr. Sedley, yet he wastes no pity upon those who are born to servitude, and fail to be faithful servants. He has a kindly farewell for Miss Crawley, generous-minded old heathen, but is a fierce mocker of the Briggses and Firkinases, at such as fetch and carry.

Servants may consider Thackeray as an open enemy, and Dickens as but half a friend. He too hates the menials of the mighty, but he breaks them on the wheel with heavy blows, while Thackeray sets them up like so many St. Sebastians as marks for his arrows. Mr. John Smauker and Mr. Frederick Lightfoot are both mangled objects after the operation. Dickens's declared mission is to show how much good can be in humble folk, but in this, like most missionaries, he more often takes the wrong road. The servants of the poor, those who labour for labourers, are under his protection, and he defends them too much as Sergeant Buzfuz would have done; special pleading is not convincing. Is any one moved to a crusade by the sorrows of 'Guster, or the forlorn state of Sally Brass's slave, the Marchioness? But to censure Dickens's conception of pathos is to mutilate the slain. His life's work was to move English people to laughter,—neither the Scotch nor the Irish care for Dickens—and the two characters whom all novel-readers admire and cherish are both servants, Sam Weller and Mark Tapley. It may be held that they are only servants by accident, because the author is thus enabled to

bring them into contact with all sorts of people, especially those of higher station, so that they can take sides with their masters' friends and confute their masters' enemies. They are, for all the comedy, as true to their masters, self-imposed and otherwise, as if they had flourished in those stern days when honourable service was accounted perfect freedom. Diogenes was no freer of speech than Sam Weller; the latter's attempted self-restraint in Mr. Pickwick's presence only heightens the enjoyment of the liberties which he takes. He is as sturdy a servant as the henchmen of the Waverley novels, a Cockney valet worthy to stand with feudal retainers. Mark Tapley is true and tender, but not enough of a servant, and indeed too whimsical. Dickens could not help shading his sketches deeply and accentuating peculiarities until pictures become caricatures. What can any reader make of Mr. Littimer? Yet this impossible villain duly corresponds to Sam Weller; on the one hand eccentricity and virtue, on the other decorum and vice, the exaggeration and the complete suppression of humours. A study of Mr. Littimer and Major Pendennis's servant Morgan will be a study of Dickens and Thackeray, their different methods and their different aims.

Readers agree that it is a stale device to set forth the valet merely as a foil to his master, as ineffective for us as the *deus ex machina* or the three-card trick. But the perfect operator may be admired for his perfection; Houdin would be admirable while performing the three-card trick. No lesser man than Dumas would have dared so greatly as to create the four lackeys of the D'Artagnan cycle expressly after the image of their masters, their qualities corresponding as moonlight unto sunlight. But Dumas moved in an

ampler æther; his air was pure oxygen. He is the Achilles of novelists, as Thackeray is the Ulysses, or rather he is Achilles and Ulysses in one; to him were granted the power to do and the wit to know at once and not successively. Inconsistencies, anachronisms, errors of fact and manner, such as would slay any ten common novelists, vanish from the reader's mind when he hears Dumas speak out clear and loud, as the Trojans fled before the shout of Achilles. There is a middle region between the grand subtlety of D'Artagnan and the bourgeois cunning of Planchet, and it is that region which the ordinary novelist knows and illustrates. D'Artagnan's subtlety is Planchet's cunning raised to a higher power. D'Artagnan is not without that mercantile caution that bears Planchet safe through life; Planchet has divine moments in which he borrows his master's courage. So it is with the other three and their three servants; the lackeys want the spirit that informs the tenement of clay; they are the carbon which modified becomes a diamond. As becomes the disciple of Sir Walter, Dumas loves the virtues of the humble and is kindly tolerant to their faults. There is a like kindness in the three great dramatists, Plautus, Shakespeare, and Molière, who have a fellow-feeling for the class that Thackeray strips to open contempt, and Dickens degrades with ridicule or pity. It is so natural that they should be untruthful, that it is part of the arrangement of life; of course they get drunk when they get liquor, for who are they to be better than their masters?

No one would compare Lever with Scott, and by his carelessness of form and utter lack of method he falls below Dickens, but we hold that Micky

Free may stand unabashed in the presence of Sam Weller and Andrew Fairservice; they are indeed three representative knaves. Mr. Free is by no means out of date, like Sam and Andrew; changes come slowly in Ireland. Loyal, brave and eloquent, untrustworthy, idle, and drunken, the race is as Lever knew them, and Micky Free is a microcosm. It has been often said that all Irish vices are the defects of good qualities, and this is the thread that runs through all Lever's work. Charles O'Malley's servant is generated from the corruption of a Galway squire. He is of the same breed as Major O'Shaughnessy; both look on the world from the same point of view; a complete carelessness of responsibility marks them both. Such a servant could only serve a master like himself. To hard English eyes Irish servants are the worst in the world; as they were in the days of Lever so they are depicted now by the authors of *SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M.*, the only book since Lever died that has any of his high spirit and humour. Of course it lacks his inimitable verve in story-telling, and dares not defy, as he did, the bounds of space and time; but it shows all his love of the absurd, and his joyous sympathy with the incapable and weak-willed. The Resident Magistrate speaks with deep knowledge of the "simmering patience" necessary to those who have dealings with Irish servants. The South of Ireland to-day is full

of incomplete Micky Frees; Nature is unable to produce quite so versatile a performer. In other respects Ireland is changing. Life there has inevitably become more sordid under the influence of priests, politicians, and publicans. These great powers are altered for the worse. Micky's behaviour to his priest was of a piece with his behaviour to the rest of the world; the modern output of Maynooth would speedily amend him. The little attorneys whom Lever loved, for all their sins, are now Nationalist Justices of the Peace; the publicans in these days seem to die earlier and more unpleasantly than they did then. But the servants are as happy and as useless as ever; the world is their oyster. They have not the same ever-repeated struggle for life between a crop and a crop as the tillers of the earth, and they have the same dislike to doing a day's work for a day's wages. Every one remembers how Micky, on his arrival in the Peninsula, gets three veterans to do his work for him while he composes a song about a soldier's life. Sam Weller would have sung the song with great enjoyment of the situation, but he would have done his own work; Andrew Fairservice would have been forced to work for himself, but would have taken out the value in criticism of his veteran friends. By way of personal preference we hold these three servants as the brightest lights of their profession; their faults and blunders shine like a good deed in this naughty world.

GALLIA DEVOTA.

MANY books might be cited in illustration of the mystic renaissance which, slowly perhaps and subtly but none the less certainly, is making its way in France. We do not here propose to consider the various forms in which the movement is manifesting itself. Among other writers, M. l'Abbé Klein has investigated this view of the subject in a short but exhaustive treatise, *LE MOUVEMENT NEO-CHRETIEN DANS LA LITTERATURE CONTEMPORAINE*, which, although it was published some years ago, is not yet out of date. The limits of the movement are indeed, as he there tells us, indefinite. On one side they penetrate into true Christianity; on the other they are lost in the vagueness of that dilettantism which can see the beauty of the Christian life but can not accept, although it may admire, the dogmas of the Christian religion.

It is that form of the movement which has its root set deep in Christian dogma which we here propose to consider; a form which is to be seen not only in much of the literature of the day, not only in the works of more than one painter, but even visible in stone on the hill of Montmartre, where the great church of the national vow proclaims majestically, *Gallia pœnitens et devota*, and the Catholic renaissance.

While M. Dubosc de Pesquidoux, in *L'IMMACULEE CONCEPTION ET LA RENAISSANCE CATHOLIQUE* is tracing the history of this revival, we may take such books as M. Coppée's *LA BONNE SOUFFRANCE* and M. Huysman's *PAGES CATHOLIQUES* as illus-

trating its more subjective side. They are not perhaps so immediately modern as the history, but they tell a story which is still young, and they both illustrate in their different forms a world which is only known to us in its outward manifestations, and into whose interior life we have had little means of penetrating. It is very near to us, almost at our doors, and yet we know so little of it that these books come with something of the freshness of a revelation. They take us into the very souls of the men and women whom we have only seen kneeling in the dim shadows of their churches; and to those who have felt the overwhelming charm of those buildings, to those who have bewailed their inability to do more than catch little echoes, and those perhaps distorted ones, of the real life which animates the great machine, these books will be welcome. Mysticism takes different forms under different skies; it could hardly take a more attractive form than that in which it is here manifested.

Both the books aforementioned are histories of conversions. Never since the days of Augustine have men wearied of telling the story of what to them seems little short of a very miracle of grace. To all but the immediate actors in it the subject may seem singularly unattractive. But Matthew Arnold has put into words for us the fact which, in these particular cases, has power to lift them into a new atmosphere; the fact that while the religious life is at bottom everywhere alike, it has yet a variousness of setting and outward

circumstance, and that in Catholicism these accessories have, it cannot be denied, a nobleness and amplitude which in other forms of belief are often wanting. And conversion is a word which has been dragged in the mire of that something "provincial, mean, and prosaic" which might almost seem an attribute of the sects, until it has taken up into its sound, at least, that signal want of grace and charm which, to quote the same writer, has become not an indifferent matter, but a real source of weakness to some modern forms of belief. The subject of the books might therefore at first sight repel, but the setting has all that nobleness and amplitude which make a finer background to the history of the adventures of a soul than any other form can supply.

Having stated that these books are the histories of conversions, the thought at once suggests itself that the path of conversion is a far easier one in the country in which they were written than in our own. For there the Church alone, as a vast and unitive organisation, speaks to a man's soul. No sects compete with it. In spite of some recent utterances the question really lies between unbelief and Rome. Protestantism speaks a language France does not understand. This fact, then, simplifies conversion and its return to the faith. We use the word *return*, because in many cases conversion is only a going back to the impressions of childhood. In France most men have been brought up by the priests, and the traces of this education have rarely, if ever, been wholly eradicated. They carry about with them henceforth, as M. Doumic says in his *ECRIVAINS D'AUJOURD'HUI*, a sort of Christian nostalgia which may sleep profoundly but is capable of being roused. "I never dipped my finger

in the cold water of the *bénitiers*," says, of his unconverted days, the author of *LA BONNE SOUFFRANCE*, "without feeling a singular thrill which was perhaps that of remorse." Des Esseintes in *A REBOURS* remembers his innocent childhood, the Jesuit fathers, the plain-song chants. Durtal speaks eloquently of childish visits to cousins and aunts in their convents, visits which were not without effect in after-life. Remembrances, he says, came back to him of women "sweet and grave, white as holy bread," all the poetry of the cloister, of the convent-parlours with their "dim odour of wainscotting and beeswax," of the old convent-gardens with their silent fountains, their shadowy trees, — trifles in themselves, but when we remember, with Newman, that the heart is commonly reached not through the reason but through the imagination, these things may well become a formidable array of influences in after-years.

And if this homesickness of Christianity awakes, men brought up at the feet of the priest know what to do. Theirs need not be the misery of the struggle after truth without the basis of a definite theological teaching, or with the determination to have no man between their soul and God which is a Protestant's inheritance. They go straightway to a priest; and that the average French priest is a man of experience, of education to fit him for his work, and, above all, of profound piety, the literature of the day bears ample testimony. To read M. Fabre's *MA VOCATION* is to know that only "a nature of iron for earth and of fire for heaven" can live through the slow discipline by which the priesthood is reached; and M. Lemaitre's study of M. Fabre in *LES CONTEMPORAINES* bears outside testimony to the completeness of this training and that a soul must needs

come out of it strangely purified and spiritualised. And training over, the life of a priest is one to attract men to him in their spiritual needs. His house, grown over with wisteria, grey in winter, grey even in the wealth of summer, a little colourless and always with an air of quietude, almost of desertion, certainly of poverty, is itself a sign and symbol of those counsels of perfection which are the priest's inevitable choice. His very aloofness from other men is an attraction because, as George Eliot could discern, the impulse to confession "almost always requires a fresh ear and a fresh heart," and "the man to whom we have no tie but our common nature" is often the nearest to us in our moments of distress; and it must strike us very forcibly as we read these documents that the French priest knows how to deal with souls, and thereby simplifies the work of conversion as only he can whose youth has been spent in learning this one thing, and who is not permitted to exercise his knowledge until years have brought the philosophic mind to help the previous training.

Thus, with the skilful hand of the priest to help him, conversion becomes a very tangible thing, a change there is no mistaking; and the very fact of this so visible change leads a man to a fuller, if to some it might seem a more childlike, faith; though this change will hardly be made by those who remember that to become as little children has received no mean commendation. The man who is converted knows and feels that he has a miracle of his own to which he can appeal, and which stands him in good stead as an argument in all other miracles and mysteries. "I am," says the monk to Durtal, "more than ever before struck by the astonishing miracle which heaven has worked in you." "How," says M. Coppée

in LA BONNE SOUFFRANCE, "should I not henceforth believe in miracles and mysteries when there has been accomplished in me a transformation so profound and so mysterious? For my soul was blind to the light of faith, and she sees it now in all its splendour; she was deaf to the word of God and she hears it to-day in all its persuasive sweetness; she was paralysed by indifference, and now she has risen towards the heavens with all her might; the unclean demons which troubled and possessed her are for ever driven out." Here is a miracle as great as any physical one; perhaps to calm a soul is a greater miracle than to still the waves; to Coleridge at least the little heart of man seemed a larger, a more troubled thing than the great sea itself. Why then, they ask who have known this change, may not the physical miracles of the Gospel be possible too? Or those other, miracles in the eyes of some but, in the more exact and technical words of the Church, only *grâces extraordinaires*, which might still seem to be a living power at Lourdes or at Rocamadour?

For we must be prepared to find, mixed with the divinest calm and beauty, an element which to some of us may seriously vulgarise the charm of modern French mysticism. When we read, in M. Ribet's LA MYSTIQUE DIVINE, of the blessed Agnes of Bohemia caught up into the air and reappearing after an hour, her face radiant with a gracious joy; of St. Colette disappearing into space; of St. Christine flying over trees and churches,—this "*agilité surnaturelle*," these "*extases aériennes*," appeal to our sense of the ludicrous and to little else. Of such manifestations, indeed, we find none in the books we are especially considering; the miracles in the preface to PAGES

CATHOLIQUES attract only by their beauty and sweet reasonableness, and we should be unwilling indeed to narrow the limits of a great science to those "supernatural phenomena which precede, accompany and follow Divine contemplation" as some have wished to do. But belief in miracles exists in the mysticism of which we are thinking, and while the ACTA SANCTORUM drove Froude to unbelief, a closer intimacy with Catholic methods, or a more homely and yet less limited view of Divine economy, prevents the claim to supernatural manifestations being a stumbling-block to the modern mystic. Occasional supernatural phenomena are allowed by writers who are least in sympathy with modern Roman Catholic mysticism, and the charge of "savage survivals" seems confined to such phenomena as we have, wishing to put the case in its extreme form, given above from M. Ribet. In a recent work on Christian mysticism the writer appears to be in full sympathy with Hilton and Suso and Tauler, St. Theresa and Juliana of Norwich, but turns with a not unreasonable dislike from the aerial feats of St. Christine and St. Colette. But where, asks the modern mystic, if you accept mystic revelation and the undoubted miracle which it means, where can you stop? His method is, not to accept any wonder blindly, but to allow the existence of the supernatural, and to accept these manifestations so far as agreeable with fact; and many of them undoubtedly seem to rest on fact. It is of course possible to explain these facts by natural causes as yet dimly understood; but even this is a step beyond that spirit which denounces the whole system as one of fraud, and brands a whole body of honourable men as impostors only. It is impossible to deny, even Protestant

commentators do not deny, that St. Paul recognised such spiritual phenomena as gave the Corinthians occasion to jest at him as the Galilean who "walked through the sky to the third heaven" and that he was himself in doubt if spirit only, or body also had passed into the unseen. Indeed it may be said that every element of modern thaumaturgy is to be found in the Acts and the Epistles, and that it makes no greater demands on our wonder than do the miracles of St. Peter or St. Paul. There are honest and devout souls who think that if we throw aside these modern supernatural manifestations we must also throw aside St. Paul, or must shelter ourselves under the weak belief that the Divine Mind has changed, and that what was possible once is to be possible no more.

Or to take another subject which has had its share of external contempt, and look at it from within. It is interesting to see how the monastic life in its severest form appeals to the modern mystic, and why it holds, as it undoubtedly does, its attractive power unabated. The subject takes up much space in PAGES CATHOLIQUES; the OBLAT will, we may believe, treat even more exclusively of the religious life.

"What," in the words of Dr. Jessopp, "is its great function in the body politic?" The devout man answers unhesitatingly that its business is to keep the just wrath of Heaven from falling on an evil world. The contemplative orders have no other end in view but God's glory, and the substitution of their prayers and mortifications for the sins of the unbelieving crowd.

For while the world sees only waste of power in the cloisters, only men useful with head or hand lost to it

for ever, the religious sees the thing in another aspect, one which has altogether been left out of Protestant thought, but which, as it has still power over a large number of souls, might seem to deserve more than the moment's contemptuous pity that the majority of men deign to throw to it. The books we are considering take the real object of mortification to be, not suffering for suffering's sake, nor altogether to bring the body into subjection, although that view also of asceticism might well deserve consideration in an age when, in the words of an English clergyman, "We have come, I know not how, to imagine that Heaven may be gained in an easy chair, and that crowns of victorious amaranth will be dropped quite naturally on dozing brows," when we have come to believe that Christ came to live a life of suffering that we might live a life of ease. The spirit of the true religious is that of expiation, for others first, for himself last; and with this belief all modern French mysticism is embued. "Innocence assimilating itself with guilt, substituting itself for the consequence of faults which it ignores, which it has never known," filling up, in words which it is impossible to explain away or altogether leave out of any complete system of Christian thought, the measure of the sufferings of Christ, joining itself to that only offering from whose efficacy it can never detract but can assist through reflected merit,—this is to these men the secret of Christian mortification; this lifts all suffering, voluntary or involuntary, into a new and joyous atmosphere.

Viewed in the light of these words of the apostle of mysticism, many passages in these books will perhaps cease to grate. We must at any rate allow that no selfish desire to save their own souls, and leave a wicked

world to perish if it will, drives men into convents. The other argument, which might carry weight with some minds, that the lower must die to feed the higher, the body be mortified for the salvation of the soul, is not, so far as our memory serves, once made use of in modern mysticism.

It has been, and will be, objected that the heroic mortifications of the Christian monk in no way differ from those of the Buddhist or Mussulman saint. This is not the place to enlarge upon the distinction, very tangible if too subtle to be grasped by every mind, which undoubtedly exists between them. We may perhaps refer the reader to M. Joly's *PSYCHOLOGIE DES SAINTS*, where the subject is treated at length, and here merely hint that the spirit which actuates the Christian ascetic differentiates at once and for ever his mortifications from those of the heathen. The Church has learnt from the apostle of mysticism himself that Christ dwells in the souls of the faithful, and that the finished work of redemption which was fulfilled in the Head is still going on in the body. The simplicity of this modern mysticism does not find it necessary to remind itself that to say Christ is working through His saints, through them completing His redeeming work, is in no way to detract from His merits; it is not afraid to say with St. Paul that it fills up what is behind of the sufferings of Christ.

But whether in the cloister with its organised mortifications, or in the world with its necessary sufferings, what William Law said of the great mystic writers is true in its degree of all true mystics. They "passed through every kind of mortification and self-denial, every kind of trial and purification both inward and outward," and this they would tell us was their strength; this gave them, in the words of M. Ribet,

that "marvellous might which holy souls possess over body and over nature and better still over the heart of God." It is this that gave divine beauty not only to their lives, but which gave also an added beauty might even be said to be visible in their outward form—that "mystic amiability and unction" of which Pater took note, those "faces like a sacrament;" and which M. Fabre has made live for us in those few words of his on the nun who came to them "very peaceably and did not hasten any more than they hasten in heaven where they have eternity before them," whose face had that "very sweet resplendence which earth does not know."

In truth the picture revealed to us in these books is a delightful one. In an unsimple age its powerful simplicity has a strange charm. There is a breadth and a spaciousness about it as of Divinity itself. To be introduced into such a world is, in the words of him who has best realised the true mysticism of the seventeenth

century, already to breathe celestial air, already to walk the streets of God. We may well ask ourselves wherein lies the beauty and the strength of this foreign revival to which we have been attracted by its literature. And, if we are not mistaken, they are to be found, not in the unapproachable beauty of its ceremonies, not in the magnificence of its buildings, not in the attractive personality of its leaders, not in any outward thing at all; they are to be found in the feeling which it leaves so strongly impressed upon the mind that we have been by its help admitted into a calm bright land, a land of simple souls and child-like faith, of souls which have become as little children, a land of "intuitions which transcend all temporal categories of the understanding," and may not be judged by them, a land in which, to use another definition of mysticism, the best perhaps because the simplest, a land in which "God has ceased to be an object and has become an experience."

MAIDEN SPEECHES.

"SILENCE is the eternal duty of man," said Carlyle, the loud and persistent railer at men and institutions. But in the House of Commons it can hardly be said to be man's first duty to hold his tongue, though one is sometimes tempted to wish that it were. The gift of eloquence, or, at least, the knack of forcible exposition,—cleverness in stating a case, and in exposing the weak points of an adversary—is essential if a member is to exercise any influence on legislation, and is the surest passport to the highest offices of the State. It is always interesting, therefore, to note the first efforts at speaking in that assembly (awkward and halting struggles very often) of budding orators, statesmen, and politicians; to listen to the weak and uncertain voice of the young and obscure member, destined to rise to a position of predominance and power, and to shake with the thunders of his eloquence the House where now he is painfully stammering out a few disjointed and unintelligible sentences.

"The most peculiar audience in the world," was Macaulay's description of the House of Commons. "A place where Walpole succeeded and Addison failed; where Dundas succeeded and Burke failed; where Peel now succeeds and where Mackintosh failed; where Erskine and Scarlett were dinner-bells; where Lawrence and Jekyll, the two wittiest men, or nearly so, of their time, were thought bores is surely," he added, "a very strange place." To stand up to address that assembly, composed of men of various political views, pas-

sions, and prejudices, coldly critical and indifferent as a rule, is a feat requiring well-braced nerves. John Bright was always in deep distress on rising to speak, despite his outward aspect of self-possession and composure. "I suppose I ought to be ashamed of myself," he said late in his career, "but the fact is that I never rise in the House without a trembling at the knees and a secret wish that somebody else would catch the Speaker's eye and enable me to sit down again." With what an agony of apprehension then, must the young and inexperienced member of Parliament face the ordeal for the first time! It may be that only a few incoherent sentences of the able speech which he had repeated so glibly in his study comes to his parched lips. That is an old experience in Parliamentary annals. "My Lords," said the Earl of Rochester in the reign of Charles the Second, rising to make his maiden speech in the House of Lords, "my Lords, I rise this time for the first time,—the very first time. My lords, I divide my speech into four branches." Here there was an embarrassing pause of some seconds. "My lords," the Earl then ejaculated, "if ever I rise again in this House, you may cut me off, root and branches and all for ever." The brightest wits as well as the dullest have lost the thread of their thoughts in an access of helpless consternation on finding themselves on their feet for the first time, face to face with the House of Commons.

One night, early in 1833 (the year after he had failed in his contest as

a Radical for the borough of High Wycombe) Benjamin Disraeli, sitting in the Strangers' Gallery of the House of Commons, listened to the debate on the Address in which Lord John Russell, Macaulay, Stanley, Bulwer and other leading members of the House took part. Next day he wrote to his sister: "Was at the House of Commons yesterday during the whole of the debate,—one of the finest we have had for years. Macaulay was admirable, but, between ourselves, I could floor them all. This *entre nous*. I was never more confident of anything than that I could carry everything before me in that House. The time will come!" The time did come four years later, when on December 7th, 1837, Disraeli, having been returned as a Tory for Maidstone in the General Election of that year, stood up in the House of Commons to make his maiden speech. The story of that historic fiasco has never been fully told. What is generally known is that Disraeli was interrupted by bursts of ironical laughter almost from the beginning of his speech, and that at length, utterly unable to catch the ear of the House, he concluded by shouting at the utmost pitch of his voice the famous phrase: "Though I sit down now, the time will come when you will hear me." But the whole episode, what led up to it and what followed it, is most interesting. The subject of the debate was a motion by Mr. Smith O'Brien for a Select Committee to inquire into the alleged practice of vexatious petitioning against Irish members elected in the popular interest. Daniel O'Connell supported the motion, and it had been arranged that Sir Robert Peel should reply; but the strongly expressed wish of Disraeli that the duty might be given to him, backed as it was by many members of his party, induced the

Tory leader to give way to his ardent young recruit. There had been an absurd, though very bitter, quarrel between O'Connell and Disraeli. O'Connell was one of Disraeli's sponsors when he carried the Radical flag on the hustings at High Wycombe in 1832. Three years later Disraeli, having turned Tory, attacked the Melbourne Administration, which was retained in power by the Irish Party, for having clasped, as he put it, "the bloody hand of O'Connell." O'Connell retorted in a speech of savage vituperation in which he declared that Disraeli's life was "a living lie," and that he was "a descendant of the impenitent thief on the Cross." Disraeli challenged O'Connell, but the Irishman, after killing D'Esterre in 1815, had made a vow against duelling, and always wore a black kid glove on his right hand as a token of his life-long repentance for having shed another man's blood. "Then," wrote Disraeli, in a scathing letter to O'Connell, "we shall meet at Philippi." Now the two antagonists were face to face at Philippi,—in the House of Commons, with, happily, the floor between.

Disraeli's failure on this occasion was not due to nervous timidity, but to the less amiable fault of over-confident fluency, to the young member's irritating self-assurance of manner, inspired, obviously, by the conviction that he was about to leap into Parliamentary fame at a single bound. This, with his foppish attire, his affected gestures, and the knowledge of his rapid change of political opinion, caused the British Radicals and the Irish Repealers, both led by the lusty lungs of O'Connell, to indulge in roars of ironical laughter, and other disconcerting cries. The conclusion of the speech was as follows:

If the honourable gentlemen thought this treatment fair, he would submit.

He would not do so to others. That was all. (*Laughter.*) Nothing was so easy as to laugh. He wished before he sat down to show the House clearly their position. When they remembered that in spite of the support of the honourable and learned member for Dublin and his well-disciplined band of patriots, there was a little shyness exhibited by former supporters of Her Majesty's Government; when they recollected the "new loves" and the "old loves" in which so much of passion and recrimination was mixed up between the noble Tityrus of the Treasury Bench and the learned Daphne of Liskeard (*loud laughter*), notwithstanding the *amantium ira* had resulted as he had always expected in the *amoris integratio* (*renewed laughter*),—notwithstanding that political duel had been fought, in which more than one shot was interchanged, but in which recourse was had to the secure arbitrament of blank cartridges (*laughter*),—notwithstanding emancipated Ireland and enslaved England, the noble lord might wave in one hand the keys of St. Peter, and in the other—(*the shouts that followed drowned the conclusion of the sentence*). Let them see the philosophical prejudice of man. He would certainly gladly hear a cheer, even though it came from the lips of a political opponent. He was not at all surprised at the reception which he had experienced. He had begun several times many things and he had often succeeded at last. He would sit down now, but the time would come when they would hear him.

Macaulay writing to a friend in Paris, a few days later, said: "Speaking of the House, D'Israeli nearly killed it on Thursday night. You have, of course, seen his speech in GALIGNANI. Can you conceive the impudence of the Attorney-General not knowing him personally and going up to him in the lobby, saying, 'A very pleasant speech of yours, Mr. D'Israeli. Will you be kind enough to tell me what Lord John held beside the keys of St. Peter?' 'The red cap of Liberty, sir.' During the performance, Peel quite screamed with laughter." Disraeli, however, in an account of his interview with the Attorney-General in the lobby states

that Sir John Campbell was most complimentary about the speech. "A very good picture," was his remark when Disraeli, at his request, finished the interrupted sentence by describing Lord John Russell, secure on the pedestal of power, wielding in one hand the keys of St. Peter and in the other the red cap of Liberty. "Yes," said Disraeli, "but your friends will not allow me to finish my pictures." "I assure you," replied the Attorney-General, "there was the liveliest desire to hear you from us. It was a party at the bar over whom we have no control. But you have nothing to be afraid of."

The next day Disraeli described his failure in a letter to his sister, attributing it, naturally enough, to no incompetence on his part but to the physical powers of his adversaries. A few days later he wrote to her again in a much more cheerful strain, to describe a dinner with Bulwer, where he had met Sheil, and of the compliments the latter had paid him.

Sheil also gave him some curious advice as to his future conduct in the House of Commons. "If you had been listened to" said he, "what would have been the result? You would have made the best speech that you ever would have made. It would have been received frigidly, and you would have despaired of yourself. I did. As it is, you have shown to the House that you have a fine voice, that you have unlimited command of language, courage, temper, and readiness. Now get rid of your genius for a Session. Speak often, for you must not show yourself cowed, but speak shortly. Be very quiet. Try to be dull, only argue and reason imperfectly, for if you speak with precision they will think you are trying to be witty. Astonish them by speaking on subjects of detail. Quote figures, dates, calculations, and in a

short time the House will sigh for the wit and eloquence which they all know are in you; they will encourage you to pour them forth, and then you will have the ear of the House and be a favourite." Disraeli followed the advice. Seven days after his fiasco, he spoke again on the Copyright Bill, contenting himself with a few sentences. In the following Session he addressed the House several times; but it was not until 1839 that he, by a sympathetic speech on the Chartists, made any great impression.

Perhaps a more remarkable display of confidence and self-assurance was that of William Cobbett. In the General Election which followed the passing of the Reform Act in 1832 he was elected member for Oldham. The new Parliament met on January 29th, 1833, and on the very first question which arose that evening (the choice of a Speaker) Cobbett, after a few of the leading members on each side had spoken, interposed with characteristic egotism and impudence. His opening sentence astounded the House. "It appears to me," said he, "that since I have been sitting here I have heard a great deal of vain and unprofitable conversation." Daniel O'Connell who, like Cobbett, always entertained a lofty disdain of the House of Commons, also made his maiden speech on the night he took his seat, February 4th, 1830. The speech was in support of an amendment to the Address moved by the Radicals. A stupendous oration was expected by the crowded House, but "the wild Irishman" spoke with tact and good sense, and on the whole made a favourable impression. Another irrepressible speaker was Henry Brougham, who entered the House as member for the borough of Camelford on February 5th, 1810. Everyone who knew him

expected he would deliver his maiden speech on the same night, but he had made a vow of silence for a month, and kept it. On March 5th, exactly one month after he had taken his seat, he spoke in support of a vote of censure on Lord Chatham, a member of the Cabinet, for having written a narrative of the expedition to the Scheldt and delivered it to the King with a request that it should be kept secret even from his colleagues. The speech made no impression upon the House, Brougham, according to contemporary records, sitting down without a single cheer. He soon made up for his month's silence: "It was remarked," writes Campbell in his *LIVES OF THE LORD CHANCELLORS*, "that for the future he never was in his place the whole evening in either House of Parliament, without, regularly or irregularly, more than once taking part in the discussion."

But examples of perfect self-confidence in addressing the House of Commons for the first time are the exception. It is a trying ordeal even for the most practised speakers; to some members, indeed, it is attended by terrors which they can never brace up their nerves sufficiently to overcome. The maiden speech of Lord North's son, Frederic, afterwards Lord Guildford, was also his last. "I once attempted to speak in Parliament," he said, "and it was not unnatural when I rose that my family name should at once fix every eye upon me. I brought out two or three sentences, when a mist seemed to rise before my eyes. I then lost my recollection and could see nothing but the Speaker's wig, which swelled, and swelled, and swelled, till it covered the whole House. I then sank back on my seat and never attempted another speech, but quickly accepted the Chiltern Hundreds, assured that Parliament was not my vocation."

It is well known that Joseph Addison, the most charming and easy of writers, made but one attempt to speak, and that was an unredeemed and unredeemable failure. Yet his muteness was no bar to his promotion in office, for though his voice was never heard in the House of Commons he became a Secretary of State. In 1709 he went to Ireland as Chief Secretary and sat in the Irish House of Commons as member for Cavan, while, as was then the custom, retaining his seat in the British Parliament. His maiden speech in the Irish Legislature was even a more ludicrous failure. He began: "Mr. Speaker, I conceive," and then paused as if frightened by the sound of his own voice. "I conceive, Mr. Speaker," he said again in louder tones, as if to drown the still small voice that spoke upbraidingly to him within. Again he stopped and stood still, until aroused by the ironical cries of *hear him, hear him*, when he once more set out with, "Sir, I conceive." But power of further utterance was denied him, and he had, perforce, to resume his seat. A witty member rising immediately indulged in rather a broad joke. "Sir," said he, "the honourable member has conceived three times and brought forth nothing."

As a rule the House has always been noted for the encouragement it accords to a maiden speech, but Mr. Disraeli's is not the only exception to the rule; to Addison's friend, Sir Richard Steele, that notoriety also belongs. Steele entered the House of Commons as member for Stockbridge and a stout literary champion of the Whigs, at the meeting of the new Parliament, the twelfth of Queen Anne, on February 16th, 1714, and on the same afternoon he joined in the compliments that were paid to Sir Thomas Hanmer on his re-election

as Speaker. "I rise up," said Steele, "to do him honour in some measure, and distinguish myself, by saying I wish him our Speaker." The Tories, forming the overwhelming majority of the House, determined not to hear the man who had so often exasperated them by his trenchant political writings. "*The Tatler, The Tatler*," they roared, and kept up the cry so persistently, that Steele had to sit down; and as he walked out of the House, they continued their attacks, "It is not so easy a thing to speak in the House," they said. "He fancies that because he can scribble he can address an assembly of gentlemen. Out upon him!" Steele's first Parliamentary career was exceedingly brief. Within a month of his maiden speech a motion was made to expel him from the House of Commons for having accused the Tory Ministry, in a pamphlet called *THE CRISIS*, of an intention to prevent the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover by proclaiming the Chevalier St. George as King when the Queen died. On March 18th, 1714, during the debate on the motion, a remarkable maiden speech, which began as a failure and ended as a triumph, was delivered in defence of Steele by his young friend, Lord Finch, eldest son of the Earl of Nottingham. Shortly before, the sister of the young nobleman, Lady Charlotte Finch (afterwards Duchess of Somerset) had been attacked in *THE EXAMINER* for alleged misbehaviour in church, and Steele had written in *THE GUARDIAN* a scathing exposure of the libel. Lord Finch, therefore, felt he could not remain silent when Steele in his turn was assailed, but on rising to address the House, his modesty and his awe of the Assembly struck him almost dumb. A few confused sentences were all he could utter. "It is strange," he cried aloud, as he sat

down utterly discomfited, "that I cannot speak for this man when I would readily fight for him." The exclamation touched the chivalrous instinct of the House, bitterly hostile though it was against Steele, and in response to inviting cries of *hear him, hear him*, from both sides, the young speaker rose again and this time made an eloquent appeal on behalf of his friend. It did not, however, save Steele; the motion for his expulsion was carried by two hundred and forty-five votes to one hundred and fifty-two.

About a quarter of a century before, another break-down in a maiden speech was, by a happy thought, turned into a telling rhetorical success. Lord Ashley sat in the House of Commons, as member for Poole, for four years before he succeeded his father as third Earl of Shaftesbury in 1699, and became celebrated as the author of *CHARACTERISTICS*. He was a staunch supporter of a bill to grant the services of counsel to prisoners indicted for high treason; but when he rose to make his maiden speech in its behalf, he found himself devoid of language. The House encouraged him by their cheers to collect his thoughts and find words to give them expression; but he was unable to proceed. One sentence only did he utter before sitting down. "If, sir," said he, "I, who now rise only to give my opinion on the bill now pending, am so confounded that I am unable to express the least of what I proposed to say, what must the condition of that man be, who, without any assistance, is pleading for his life and is apprehensive of being deprived of it?" The elaborate speech which Lord Ashley had probably prepared with exceeding care could hardly have been more effective than this happy inspiration of the moment.

Among the famous statesmen whose

first words in the House of Commons firmly established their reputation, William Pitt and Sir Robert Peel are the most notable. Pitt entered the House as member for Appleby on January 23rd, 1781, in his twenty-second year. On February 26th following he made his maiden speech in support of a bill introduced by Edmund Burke for the reduction of the Civil List. Lord Nugent was speaking against the bill when Pitt, as a member of the Opposition, was asked by some supporter of the measure to reply. He gave a doubtful answer to the request, and later on, while Lord Nugent continued his speech, decided that, as he thought he had nothing of importance to say, he would not interpose in the debate. But his friends, understanding that he had agreed to speak, called upon him the moment Lord Nugent sat down. Pitt was, therefore, forced to rise; but though somewhat unprepared, he was neither embarrassed nor disconcerted, and he spoke very effectively in favour of economical reform. The young member's first appearance is thus described in *THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY* (which we now call *HANSARD*): "The Honourable William Pitt, son of the late Earl of Chatham, now rose for the first time, and in his speech directly in answer to a matter that had fallen out in the course of the debate, displayed great and astonishing powers of eloquence. His voice is rich and striking; his manner easy and eloquent; his language beautiful and luxuriant. He gave, in this first essay, a specimen of eloquence not unworthy the son of his immortal parent." We learn from other sources that Burke was moved to tears. "It is not a chip of the old block," he exclaimed to those sitting near him, "it is the old block itself." Lord North, the Prime Minister, declared that it was the best first speech

he had ever heard. "Young Pitt will be one of the first men in Parliament," said a member of the Opposition to Charles Fox. "He is already," was Fox's reply; and the moment Pitt resumed his seat the great Whig hastened to congratulate him on his success. While they were talking an old member named General Grant joined them. "Aye, Mr. Fox, you are praising young Pitt for his speech," said the new comer; "you may well do so, for except yourself there is not a man in the House can make such another, and old as I am I expect and hope to hear you both battling it within these walls, as I have heard your fathers before you." Fox was disconcerted by the awkward turn of the compliment; but Pitt with great readiness and wit answered, "I have no doubt, General, you would like to attain the age of Methuselah." Peel's father bought him the representation of the borough of Cashel in Ireland, and he entered the House of Commons in April, 1809, at the age of twenty-one. On January 23rd, 1810, he seconded the address to the King in reply to the speech from the Throne. "The best first speech since that of Mr. Pitt," was the judgment of the Speaker, Charles Abbot.

There is no record of Edmund Burke's maiden speech in HANSARD or in the newspapers of the time, but it would seem from the political gossip of the day to have been successful. He took his seat as member for the borough of Wendover on January 14th, 1766, at the opening of the Session, being then thirty-seven years old, and on the 27th of the same month he spoke on the complaints of the American Colonists, restless and discontented under the rule of the Mother Country. The elder Pitt, who was still the Great Commoner, honoured him by a complimentary

notice of the speech. "The young member has proved himself a very able advocate," said he. "I congratulate him on his success, and his friends on the value of the acquisition they have made." Burke was told by his friends that the praise of Pitt alone was a sure passport to fame. Dr. Johnson wrote to Langton that Burke had gained more reputation than any Parliamentarian at his first appearance had ever gained before, which, as Burke had preceded William Pitt, was probably true. It is curious that the maiden speech of Charles Fox should have been in censure of Burke to whose influence he subsequently surrendered himself. In March, 1768, Fox was returned for the borough of Midhurst in Sussex, being then just over nineteen years of age. On March 9th in the following year he made his first speech during the debate on the Address. Lord North defended the Grafton Ministry against the charge of having alienated the affections of the American people from their Sovereign, and Burke rose to reply on behalf of the Opposition. Members usually left the House when Burke spoke, but if all his speeches were as full of eccentric humour and as empty of philosophy as his reply to Lord North, it is probable that he never would have been given the disparaging nickname of the Dinner-bell. "Sir," he began, "the noble lord who spoke last, after extending his right leg a full yard before his left, rolling his flaming eyes, and moving his ponderous frame, has at length opened his mouth. I was all attention. After these portents I expected something still more awful and tremendous. I expected that the Tower would have been threatened in articulated thunder, but I have heard only a feeble remonstrance against violence and passion. When I expected the powers of de-

struction to 'cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war' an overblown bladder has burst and nobody has been hurt by the crack." Fox followed Burke. "He observed," HANSARD records, "that from the license gentlemen had taken in their language that day, it seemed as if the old decent freedom of debate was at an end, and they were endeavouring to establish new forms."

It is difficult to decide, so contradictory are the contemporary verdicts, how Sheridan fared in his maiden speech. Elected for Stafford, in his twenty-ninth year he took his seat on September 12th, 1780. In the account of his election expenses there is the following item: "two hundred and forty-eight Burgesses paid £5 5s. each." It is, therefore, not surprising that his first speech, on November 20th, should have been in reply to a charge of bribery and corruption brought against him and his colleague, Monckton, in a petition presented by their defeated opponent, Benjamin Whitworth. William Woodfall, the famous Parliamentary reporter of *THE MORNING CHRONICLE*, used to relate that Sheridan went up to the gallery where he sat taking notes, and asked him, with apparent anxiety, what he thought of the speech. "I am sorry to say I do not think that this is your line," replied Woodfall. "You had much better have stuck to your former pursuits." Sheridan, much perturbed by this judgment, stroked his forehead with his hand, and then exclaimed: "It is in me, however, and by God it shall come out." On the other hand Sir Nathaniel Wraxall states in his *HISTORICAL MEMOIRS* that it was a successful speech and was well received. "Even while pronouncing the few sentences which he uttered," writes Wraxall, "the fame of the author of *THE DUENNA*, *THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL*, and *THE*

CRITIC was already so well established as to procure him the greatest attention." Another verdict was: "Nature never intended him for an orator." Yet he was destined to become, according to contemporary opinion, one of the greatest orators of his day.

Sir Philip Francis is prominent among the literary men who have been failures in Parliament. In April, 1784, he was returned for the borough of Yarmouth in the Isle of Wight. On July 2nd he delivered his maiden speech on the affairs of the East India Company, a subject on which he might certainly have been expected to succeed; but though he devoted great care to its preparation, the effort was a dismal failure, and indeed he never succeeded as a speaker. To account for his unreadiness, which was his greatest defect, he used to quote Lord Bacon's well-known axiom: "'Reading makes a full man; writing an exact man; speaking a ready man.' I had enough and too much of the former and none of the latter in my youth," said he. "A vessel may be too full to part easily with its contents, and few orators are very exact men. Besides, I had too much sensibility and felt that the House was against me. The House was Pitt's, and Pitt could not despise me; but he tried to make it believe he did." Lady Francis advanced another and very curious reason for her husband's failure as a speaker,—his over-caution lest he might say anything that would give corroboration to the popular suspicion that he was Junius.

On the other hand Lord Byron's *début* as a politician in the House of Lords was, for a poet, a most promising performance. On February 27th, 1812, he made his maiden speech in opposition to a bill which aimed at the suppression of the labour-riots in Nottingham by extending the

penalty of death to the breaking of the newly-invented stocking-frames. Being *for* the people, though, as he was always careful to add, not *of* the people, he had espoused the Radical side in politics. In the course of his speech he said he was glad to think that the Bill would be ineffective. Two things were wanting to consign to the gallows a desperate weaver who wreaked his vengeance on the machinery which deprived him of employment, "twelve butchers for a jury and a Jeffries for a judge." Writing to a friend on the speech, a few days later, Byron said: "I have had many marvellous eulogies repeated to me since, in person and by proxy, from divers persons, *ministerial*—yea, *ministerial*!—as well as oppositionists; of them I shall only mention Sir F. Burdett. He says it is the best speech by a *lord* since the *Lord* knows when, probably from a fellow-feeling in the sentiments. Lord Holland tells me I shall beat them all if I persevere; and Lord Granville remarked that the construction of some of my periods are very like *Burke's*!! And so much for vanity. I spoke very violent sentences with a sort of modest impudence, abused everything and everybody, and put the Lord Chancellor (Eldon) very much out of humour, and, if I may believe what I hear, have not lost my character by the experiment. As to my delivery, loud and fluent and enough; perhaps a little theatrical." He adds an adverse reflection upon the Parliamentary reporting of the time. "I could not recognise myself, or anyone else in the newspapers." He, therefore, contributed a report in the first person to HANSARD (a practice still prevailing) which, like all such contributions, reads more like an essay than a speech.

Probably the most eloquent speaker which the English Bar has produced

was the great advocate Thomas Erskine, who became Lord Chancellor. Yet, like many another brilliant lawyer, he was a failure in Parliamentary debate. His maiden speech was disastrous. Entering the House of Commons in 1783 as member for Portsmouth when thirty-three years old, with a splendid reputation as a forensic orator, he made his maiden speech on November 20th on the first reading of Fox's East India Bill. He began with an attack on Pitt, who opposed the bill, for his solicitude on behalf of the chartered rights of the East India Company. Pitt, providing himself with pen and paper, took notes for a speech in reply. But Erskine's address was strangely destitute of the force and animation which characterised his efforts at the Bar; and, as he proceeded, it was noticed that Pitt paid less attention to him and took fewer and fewer notes, till at last he dashed the pen through the paper and, with a contemptuous smile, flung them on the floor. Erskine, who witnessed this act of disdain, struggled dispiritedly through the remainder of his speech and sank into his seat shorn of much of his fame. Later on Pitt rising to reply struck Erskine another cruel blow. "I will reply to both speeches," said Pitt, referring to Fox and Erskine; "but I shall make no mention of what was said by the honourable gentleman who spoke last. He did no more than regularly repeat what was said by the honourable member who preceded him, and regularly weaken all he repeated."

George Canning's first speech was remarkable neither way. He was twenty-four years old when he entered the House as member for Newport, in January, 1794. A few days later, on January 21st, he made his maiden speech in support of Pitt's proposal to grant a subsidy to the King of

Sardinia. But far more interesting than the speech is the graphic narrative of his feelings during the ordeal which he gives in a letter to his friend Lord Boringdon.

I intended to have told you, at full length, what were my feelings at getting up and being pointed at by the Speaker and hearing my name called from all sides of the House; how I trembled lest I should hesitate or misplace a word in the first two or three sentences, while all was dead silence around me, and my own voice sounded to my ears like some other gentleman's—how, in about ten minutes or less, I got warmed in collision with Fox's arguments and did not even care twopence for anybody or anything; how I was roused, in about half an hour, from this pleasing state of self-sufficiency by accidentally casting my eyes towards the Opposition Bench, for the purposes of paying compliments to Fox, and assuring him of my respect and admiration, and there seeing certain members of the Opposition laughing (as I thought) and quizzing me; how the accident abashed me; and, together with my being out of breath, rendered me incapable of uttering; how those who sat below me on the Treasury Bench, seeing what it was that distressed me, cheered loudly and the House joined them; and how, in less than a minute, straining every nerve in my body, and plucking up every bit of resolution in my heart, I went on more boldly than ever, and getting into a part of my subject that I liked, and having the House with me, got happily and triumphantly to the end.

Lord Palmerston was first returned to Parliament as member for Newport, Isle of Wight, at the General Election of 1807, being then twenty-three years old. He was appointed a Junior Lord of the Admiralty in the Duke of Portland's Administration, and on February 3rd he made his maiden speech. The Whigs moved for the production of papers to show on what grounds the Government had advised the expedition against Copenhagen. Palmerston displayed in his first speech on this motion (a vindication of the necessity of secrecy in

diplomatic correspondence) the shrewdness, tact, and humour that characterised most of his Parliamentary addresses. Writing to his sister the next day in an unwarranted mood of self-depreciation, he said: "You will see by this day's paper that I was tempted by some evil spirit to make a fool of myself for the entertainment of the House last night; however, I thought it was a good opportunity of breaking the ice although one should flounder a little in doing so, as it was impossible to talk any very egregious nonsense upon so good a case." On February 6th he wrote again to his sister: "Many thanks for your congratulations. I certainly felt glad when the thing was over; though I began to fear I had exposed myself, but my friends were so obliging as to say I did not talk much nonsense, and I began in a few hours afterwards to be reconciled to my fate. . . . I was about half an hour on my legs; I did not feel so much alarmed as I expected."

The speech with which Lord John Russell opened a Parliamentary career that lasted for close on half a century escaped the attention of the reporters and has consequently passed into oblivion. All that is known of it is that it was in opposition to the union of Norway and Sweden, to which England and Russia had made themselves parties in 1814.

"A more terrible audience there is not in the world," said Macaulay of the House of Commons, but he was on good terms with it from the first. Before he was quite thirty he entered the House of Commons as Member for Calne in 1830, and on April 5th of that year he made his maiden speech, which was a powerful appeal in support of a motion for the removal of the civil disabilities of the Jews. In the battle of Reform, which had just begun, he became a conspicuous

fighter. At the close of his famous speech on March 2nd, 1831, the Speaker sent for him, and told him that in all his prolonged experience he had never seen the House in such a state of excitement. "Portions of the speech," said Sir Robert Peel, "were as beautiful as anything I ever heard or read. It reminded one of the old times." Writing to his sister, in the following August, of a dinner given by Lord Althorp, Macaulay deals with the nervousness which seizes most members when they are about to address the House of Commons.

We talked about timidity in speaking. Lord Althorp said that he had only just got over his apprehensions. "I was as much afraid," he said, "last year as when I came into Parliament. But now I am forced to speak so often that I am quite hardened. Last Thursday I was up forty times." I was not much surprised at this in Lord Althorp as he is certainly one of the most modest men in existence. But I was surprised to hear Stanley say that he never rose without great uneasiness. "My throat and lips," he said, "when I am going to speak, are as dry as those of a man who is going to be hanged." Nothing can be more composed and cool than Stanley's manner. His fault is on that side. A little hesitation at the beginning of a speech is graceful, and many eminent speakers have practised it, merely in order to give the appearance of unpremeditated reply to prepared speeches; but Stanley speaks like a man who never knew what fear, or even modesty, was. Tierney, it is remarkable, who was the most ready and fluent speaker almost ever known, made a confession similar to Stanley's. He never spoke, he said, without feeling his knees knock together when he rose.

Gladstone's first appearance as a speaker in the arena in which he was for so long a period the most eloquent and predominant personality, was obscure and disappointing. He took his seat as member for Newark on January 29th, 1833,—the opening day of the first Session of the first

Parliament elected under the Reform Act—being then twenty-three years old. Three weeks later, on February 21st, he made his maiden speech. A petition signed by three thousand Whigs of Liverpool was presented alleging bribery and corruption against the Tory representatives of the town, and in the discussion which followed, Gladstone interposed on behalf of the electoral honour of his native place. "Every great orator from Demosthenes to Burke," Gladstone once said, "has suffered from nervousness on the eve of an important speech, and although I cannot claim to share their gift of golden speech, I can claim more than a fair share of their defect of nerves." Certainly, he was extremely nervous on this occasion, as his indistinctness of utterance and hesitancy of manner only too obviously showed. That voice which subsequently held so many thousands spellbound by its music was inaudible from the Gallery in which the reporters were taking notes. So little notice did this *debut* attract, that a speech delivered in the House a few months later by his brother Thomas, in defence of their father who was an owner of slaves on his estates at Demerara, has often been described in biographical sketches as Gladstone's maiden effort.

Lord Salisbury was twenty-four when, as Lord Robert Cecil, he took his seat in the House of Commons as member for Stamford, in February, 1854. Two months later, on April 7th, he delivered his first speech on Lord John Russell's University Bill. HANSARD gives it only eighteen lines of its narrow columns, and the members who immediately followed in the debate made no reference to it; but Gladstone, speaking later in the evening, recognised in generous terms the abilities of the young man

who was destined after the lapse of thirty years to become his chief political rival. "This first effort, rich with promise," said he, "indicates that there still issue forth from the maternal bosom of the University men who in the first days of their career give earnest of what they may afterwards accomplish for their country."

The most successful maiden speech of recent times was that of Sir William Harcourt. He was forty-one years old when he took his seat as member for Oxford on February 16th, 1869, and just a week later addressed the House for the first time. The subject was happily one in which he was well versed. Viscount Bury asked for leave to introduce a measure entitled the Vacating of Seats Bill, to repeal the statute of Queen Anne which makes it necessary for Members of the House to seek re-election on accepting office in the Government, on the ground that it served no useful purpose. Mr. Vernon Harcourt (as he was then called) protested against leave being given even to bring in such a bill. The speech, which occupies six columns in HANSARD and was loudly applauded throughout, induced Viscount Bury to withdraw his motion. It thus concluded.

The principle involved in the statute of Anne he regarded as part of the essential and living fabric of the Constitution. His noble friend, however, appeared to be dealing with it as if it were some old sword which having been a long time in the family was of no further use and which might, therefore, be sold off to some old curiosity-shop. But he, for one, did not look at the statute from that point of view. It had done great service, and he believed it might do

great service again. It was the sword of our forefathers and it was our duty to keep it bright and burnished as we had received it from our ancestors. While sailing on a calm and unruffled sea we ought not to confine our thoughts solely to the present because it seemed prosperous, but we should make provision also for the future when a political tempest might arise, and jealously preserve those safeguards which our forefathers had provided, those safeguards which had proved hitherto and might prove hereafter, alike a security for the stability of the Throne and for the liberties of the people.

Nervousness is not commonly recognised as an Irish failing, but at least three celebrated Irishmen have in this century owned its mastery when up for the first time before the House of Commons. On April 26th, 1875, when a Coercion Bill for Ireland was in Committee, Parnell rose to deliver his first speech. He was obviously and painfully nervous, and could only stammer out a few barely intelligible sentences about Ireland not being a geographical fragment. Eighty years or so ago a distinguished Irish member named Dogherty, who subsequently became Chief Justice of Ireland, asked Canning what he thought of his maiden speech. "The only fault I can find with it," said Canning, "is that you called the Speaker *Sir* too often." "My dear friend," said Dogherty, "if you knew the mental state I was in while speaking, you would not wonder if I had called him *Ma'am*." Whiteside, another Irish member who also became Chief Justice of Ireland, used to relate that when during his maiden speech he saw the Speaker's wig surrounded by blue flames he knew it was time to sit down.

MICHAEL MACDONAGH.

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

WITHOUT quoting the words of this or that public man, the resolution of this or that conference or association of teachers, it may be taken as generally admitted that the present tendency of opinion on educational reform lies in the direction of the study of Mathematics and of what arrogates to itself the exclusive use of the title of Science. It is in Chemistry and Physics, coupled with Mathematics, that the means of training our youth in the immediate future is to be found. It is true that into this solid pabulum a leaven of languages is to be infused; but the languages are to be modern, and French and German are to lend their assistance to Science and Mathematics in more effectually shouldering out Latin and Greek. Before, however, we run amuck among educational theories and ideals, it is well to ask ourselves whether there is not something still to be said for the old system before we condemn it wholesale to destruction. Hasty generalisation, indiscriminate and often ignorant panegyric on foreign methods, reckless confidence in weapons which we have not proved, may land us in the position of forsaking what we have found to be good for what we only conjecture may be better, of blowing out our light in a hurry and finding ourselves left with only a smell of gas.

Now whatever may be the peculiarities of our national system of secondary education, whatever may be the shortcomings of the public schools,—and the present writer, who has played the part of candid friend

upon occasion, would be the last to deny that they are many—it has always been a matter for pride and satisfaction among us that the system produces gentlemen. There is no better bred man on earth than the genuine English gentleman, and it is to the training of the public school that this fact is mainly due. Neither is this a small fact, viewed, as all things in these days seem to be viewed, from the point of material interest. That the administrators of the Empire should, from the statesmen at Whitehall to the subaltern in Burmah, be gentlemen in thought, in manner, and in deed, has its definite value in the maintenance of the great position of the Empire in the world. When Wellington said of Napoleon that he was no gentleman, he supplied a key to the enigma why the insulter of the Prussian Queen, the *parvenu* husband of a Royal Princess, died, though once the terror of half the world, in the custody of Sir Hudson Lowe at Longwood. It is not, of course, to be supposed for a moment that the sense of honour will melt in the crucible of Science, or that the hereditary character of English gentlemen will be deeply affected by a change in their youthful studies; yet we surely ought to pause before we run the risk of exchanging a type which has served, and serves, so well for one of which we can only know so little. The whole history of our race is one of the utmost caution in breaking with tradition, and it behoves us to exercise a staid discrimination before we yield too readily to the flurried

and impatient pressure of modern opinion. The deliverances of great men, such as Lord Rosebery and Mr. Chamberlain, upon subjects which have never been their actual business, but upon which they are enabled by their gift of fluent and practised speech to throw a light denied to meaner men, are worthy of consideration in a high degree; but those to whom education is the work of their lives cannot accept the oracles as absolutely infallible, from whatever shrine they come, Dalmeny or Birmingham.

For the thousandth time, then, be it recalled to mind that education is, in the first instance, training. Can a lad be trained to become an able man as well by Mathematics and Science as he can by Latin and Greek? Even from the point of view of practical utility, are there very many public school men to whose career Science is of imperative necessity; for whom a knowledge of Chemistry and Physics outweighs the knowledge of so much that is important for their conduct when they mix in the busy throng of men; so much that is conducive to breadth of vision, to tolerance, to a large-hearted conception of life, to comprehension of the modes of thought and feeling of other men, other ages, other phases of civilisation? Are our young men to be trained merely to be tradesmen? Is this age to be the apotheosis of the counter and the scales?

It is no time for those who believe in the advantages of a liberal education to hold their peace. Of the two functions of education, neither should be cultivated to the exclusion or oblivion of the other. To train is not everything; to inform is not everything. You must give the soldier his weapons; but you must also teach him how to use them. The acquisition of information is

important, but it is not, as we are being urged to believe, the one and only thing needful. The ignoramus of the public school, who is only too conspicuous a phenomenon of the day, will not cease to be an ignoramus if you alter his studies. He will merely be an ignoramus in Science instead of in the Classics. You may put him in a scientific strait-waistcoat instead of a classical toga; you will not change his skin.

A knowledge of Latin and Greek is, be it granted, of but slight practical value when it has been acquired; but it is not in the result, it is in the process of acquisition that the practical value of Classical study lies, and lies for all, for the inefficient many as well as for the proficient few. To anyone who contends that it is better to train the average schoolboy of merely ordinary abilities on a diet of Science and Mathematics in preference to Classics, a few considerations may be commended.

As man differs from brute in the possession of reason, it is the function of education to develop and discipline that reason, so that the boy, "the father of the man," may learn to exercise on a small scale the powers which the man will exercise on a large scale hereafter. The study of a Classical language seems to be the best method on the whole for the purpose of such training. It is a method which is peculiarly flexible; it adapts itself insensibly to every stage of intelligence; it works on the mind at all points of its development with a self-adjusting force. The reasoning processes involved are subtle but inevitable, and operate, similarly in kind but with appropriate difference in degree, as surely upon the urchin in knickerbockers as on the captain of the school. Science and Mathematics are not food for babes and suck-

lings, neither can French or German quite take the place of Greek or Latin. The language necessary for training the mind in the performance of its early processes must be free from fluctuations; it must not be exposed to the infusion of slang and new words; it must be limited in area. Its literature must not be spread over too extensive a period of time, so that the language at one end is practically a different tongue from that at the other. For instance, if English were the language selected, a knowledge of Chaucer would be of little more value than that of Hebrew for the perusal of Macaulay. English is further disqualified for the purpose by its lack of strict grammatical rule and its deficiency in inflexions. At all events, for whatever reason, most experienced teachers will agree that whenever the substitution of modern languages for the Classics as a means of training is attempted, failure is usually the result. It does not seem to produce an orderly mind. Perhaps the experiment has never been fairly tried; if it is to succeed, it must be tried on altogether new lines. Latin remains so far, if not the best conceivable, at all events the best possible medium for the training of the youthful mind. The discredit into which it is now by way of falling is not the fault of the subject itself; it is the fault of slovenly teaching.

A youthful mind, like a youthful body, requires general exercise. To attain a given degree of proficiency in Classics involves more effort than to attain an equal degree of proficiency in Science or Mathematics. In the use of the dictionary, in the mastering of inflexions, in the application of rules, in the effort to compose in another tongue, in a dozen acts involved in Classical study, all sorts of faculties and mental processes, such as memory, deduction, conjecture, esti-

mation of probability, sense of analogy, are called into play. As at the top of the scale, so at the bottom, as with the wrangler and the graduate so with the schoolboy, Mathematics and Science have a tendency to cramp and restrict the mental energies; Classics and the subjects allied to Classics help to expand them. "Men who leave the groves which witnessed the musings of Milton, of Bacon and of Gray, without one liberal or elegant image, and carry with them into the world minds contracted by unlimited attention to one part of Science and memories stored only with technicalities,"—so Macaulay wrote of the wranglers. Of the two great English Universities, neither can claim any superiority over the other as a whole; but it may fairly be contended, without offence, that he who has taken a first class in the Classical School at Oxford is a better educated man, in the true sense of the word, than the wrangler of Cambridge; better fitted to deal with men and affairs, with a wider range of vision, a more liberal estimate of other men's ideas, a larger, a better expanded and more cultivated mind. It may be accident, or it may be more, that the stronghold of Classics has contributed so many able public men to the service of this country both in the past and at the present moment, while the sister University has made her influence more emphatically felt in the less liberal sphere of the legal profession. The positive habit of mind engendered by Mathematical and Scientific studies, excellent as it is for the elucidation and display of a point of law, is not the best of qualifications for the give-and-take of practical life.

If this habit of mind is something of a drawback to men of brilliant attainments, except in the esoteric mysteries of a particular profession, it is a highly disagreeable pheno-

menon in those cases where the weed of arrogance shoots out of shallow soil. A little knowledge is not only a dangerous, it is an offensive thing. There is nothing that we more admire in an English boy or an English gentleman than his modesty. But there is nothing more conducive to conceit than a little easily obtained acquaintance with Science; while, whatever are the merits of Mathematical training, neither Mathematics nor Science have anything to do with taste. The schoolboy who has been educated on a Mathematical and Scientific basis is of a type by no means equal to that produced by the old curriculum of Latin and Greek. He is already among us. If we are to manufacture this type wholesale, we shall not only flood the market with a very unpleasing article, but the very ends of our utilitarian friends will be defeated. For it is not in the public service only and in the administration of empire, it is in the conduct of a world-wide commerce, it is in relations with people of every nationality as well, that the personal character of Englishmen has its weight. Does any one suppose that the whole duty of the administrator of a great business-house is done when he has inspected the performance of a chemical process and revised the posting of the ledger? To him, also, tact and resource, tolerance and enlightenment, elasticity of mind and capacity for adapting himself to circumstances are no less necessary than to the pro-consul. There are no absolute certainties in real life; it is not even true that because a dozen herrings can be bought for a shilling therefore one can be bought for a penny.

It must be remembered that the education which we receive as boys is only a preliminary part of the whole. Our education does not cease when we leave school. Very often, it is

only just beginning, on the great scale. If those of us who have reached middle life look back to what we were at the age of eighteen, what do we see? A callow stripling, whom experience, the greatest educator of all, is about to put through a strenuous curriculum, in a class where the prizes for success are of high value, and the penalties for failure are something more than a flogging or an imposition. Who has the teachable mind? Who is best adapted to learn from this stern pedagogue? Assuredly not one whom the easy acquisition of a little knowledge has made self-confident and opinionated.

Now the opponents of a Classical education cannot be allowed to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. "He had much better spend his time in learning Science and Mathematics, or French and German, than in getting a smattering of Latin and Greek which will be of no earthly use to him in after life;" this is an expression of opinion of such frequent occurrence that there is a danger of its passing into an axiom. It begs the question; for it assumes that a boy will be converted from idleness to industry by a change of studies. That point has been dealt with; but that apart, those who thus condemn Classical training ought to be logical and to exhibit the courage of their opinions. Little boys are, in existing circumstances, educated chiefly by means of Latin. How, otherwise, is it seriously proposed to begin the education of a child of nine and conduct it to the age of fourteen? Is it to be by Mathematics and Science? There was a royal baby once on whose tender head was placed a crown which killed it.

Equally with the opponents of the Classics, those who hold the views of the present writer are sensible of the

need for educational reform. An education that is all training is worthless without useful information; an education that is all useful information is worthless without training. We must take exercise before we eat and digest food; we must have food to eat and digest after we have taken exercise. Too much attention in the past has been concentrated on training; and the means has come to be confounded with the end. There has been too much nectar and ambrosia; we want more beer and beef-steak. Then let the acquisition of useful information supplement, not supersede, the Classical training. Let the boy for whom a knowledge of Science is necessary quit his public school a year or two earlier than at present is the rule, when a lad is often kept on to the last moment for the sake of his place in the eleven, or because his parents do not know what to do with him if he leaves. Let him then proceed to a proper technical school and learn his Science there, when he is of an age to take it seriously.

Perhaps, in this suggestion of separating what is of practical value in education from what is merely training, may be found a solution of the problem, at present apparently hopeless, of the school-teaching of modern languages. The cry for Science is urgent, but the cry for modern languages is more urgent still; it is to be heard in every counting-house and office in the country. There is not an intelligent man of business in Great Britain who does not demand that this ruinous ignorance should cease. There is no doubt whatever that school-teaching of French and German, to say nothing of any other modern language, is a failure, has always been a failure, and will always continue to be a failure,

unless some drastic measure of reform be discovered and adopted. To propose a remedy appears almost impossible, but it may be a useful contribution to that end to indicate a cause. With regard to French, with all hesitation be it said and with the most profound respect for the native French masters, for their ability, their industry, their invariably conscientious teaching, without imputing it to them for a moment as a fault, it must be owned that English schoolboys cannot learn from a Frenchman. In the first place, while they understand and admit the right of an Englishman to exercise authority over them, they will not yield to a foreigner the obedience which they will yield to one of their own countrymen. Thus the foreigner has more difficulty than the Englishman in that essential preliminary to effective instruction, the control of the class. In the second place, a Frenchman, as a rule, rarely attains to so complete a familiarity with the language of his English pupils as to make himself easily and naturally intelligible; and, to their keen sense of the ridiculous, which finds an agreeable relish in the personal peculiarities of any of their masters, the use of their language in an unfamiliar or incomprehensible fashion appears irresistibly amusing. What is worse, the foreigner's use of their language often appears to them incredible. He may be perfectly correct; he may know more of their language than they do themselves, which is not difficult; he may render French into English which is a little too good for their comprehension; or, on the other hand, he may miss some of the innumerable shades of meaning in our vast vocabulary which the boys are able to detect, in which case faith in him as an authority is gone. In any circumstances, they find it easier to believe that an Englishman can

understand French than that a Frenchman can understand English, and they repose their confidence accordingly. They would certainly learn French better, at all events in the stage during which they are acquiring their ground-work, in other words, so long as they are at school, from an English graduate of Oxford or Cambridge who had taken a first class in French than from a native *bachelier es lettres* of the University of Paris. In that case, it is true, some of the niceties of pronunciation would be sacrificed, but, as it is, the schoolboy never gets within a measurable distance of those niceties. The question of pronunciation is, in school-teaching, an almost insurmountable difficulty. It is one great reason why French cannot be used as a substitute for Latin in training young boys, in the case of whom it involves an amount of extra correction which is disheartening to the pupil. But to all English lads alike, of whatever age, accustomed to mutter a monotone through immobile lips, the facial movements, the nasal sounds, the very animation involved in the speaking of the exquisite language of politeness and diplomacy, seem nothing more or less than an ill-bred absurdity. "Mornin'," says the Englishman, with scarce a movement of his mouth. "Bon jour, M'sieu," says the Frenchman; and the phrase connotes the pursed lips, the heels drawn close together, the raised hat and the bow that seem naturally to accompany the verbal courtesy. An English boy will remark that "he can't pull his mouth into those sort of shapes." He is, in fact, a shy creature, acutely susceptible to ridicule and afraid of making a fool of himself. An English master, teaching French, will understand and sympathise with this feeling in a way that a foreigner, who has never experienced it, can never do;

and without such mutual comprehension it is impossible for the pupil to succeed in the object of his early efforts, the acquisition of a sound knowledge of the rules of syntax and of an extensive vocabulary. The speaking of a language can only be effectively mastered by actual residence among foreigners in their own country.

There is another point to be considered in this connection. It may be doubted whether French can ever be really taught at all to any practical purpose in the large classes inevitable in schools. Conversation is practically impossible in a large class. With German, experience shows that results are better. Gutturals, at least indifferent gutturals, do not present so much difficulty to English boys as do the sharp metallic sounds of French; and the good-humoured Teuton, possibly from remote racial affinity, has more in common with his English pupils than the vivacious and irascible Gaul. The size of the classes apart, it is just possible that if the teaching of foreign languages in schools be confided to Englishmen, possessing proper English University qualifications, this most perplexing and pressing of problems may attain a more satisfactory solution. For genuine colloquial proficiency, for ease of diction and ready comprehension of the speech of others, for the practical training of tongue and ear, it would seem that only actual residence abroad, among foreigners in their own country, can really be effective.

One word more. I have refrained from claiming for the Classics that measure of practical value, other than as a means of training, which they do undoubtedly possess; knowing that the objection would be impatiently raised that this is as nothing compared with the impor-

tance of the other interests involved. Yet the learning of Latin, at any rate, is not merely an exercise; it is a walk with an object. Latin, through Norman French, is one of the chief ingredients of the English tongue. Language and thought are close akin. Surely an educated Englishman ought to understand, and must often fail if he does not understand, the ingredients of the medium in which he thinks and speaks. Otherwise he is shut out from much which it is necessary for completeness that he should know. He is like a man who is not sufficiently familiar with the Bible to understand the allusions and illustrations which are constantly drawn from that source in everyday writing and speech. The fact is that the advocates of a new educational curriculum are men who already know their Classics, and are therefore unable to realise what would be their position if they did not know them.

Of the exclusion of Greek, it is hard to speak without bitterness. The modern side of the public school has banished the subject; and the very word is heard on every hand only as the name of something useless and superfluous. It is a strange anomaly. This is an age remarkable

for its intelligent appreciation and skilful interpretation of history; and of all events in history the Renaissance was one of the most critical and important. In that great dawn of new intellectual life, the clearest beam that shone athwart medieval barbarism and superstition was diffused by Greek. That star burns dim. But the scholar on whose mind its radiance once has fallen knows its inestimable worth; he knows, too, that there is no equivalent for it in the light and heat of the laboratory. Noble thoughts enshrined in noble words, a language beautiful and symmetrical as the statues and the temples of its native land, the rugged epic rooted in the deep truths of human nature, the polished periods of eloquence, the matchless narrative of history, the passion of the drama, the wisdom of philosophy, the records of a people which, in a few short years, attained an eminence in arms, in arts, in literature, in thought, that has left an indelible mark upon the history of the civilised world, it is not good that this treasure should be neglected as so much useless lumber, should be relegated to the sedate seclusion of common-rooms, or be left to moulder in dusty libraries.

A. W. READY.

A SOUTHERN VIEW OF THE NEGRO PROBLEM.

WHEN two independent observers, examining a subject from altogether different points of view, agree in their conclusions, the presumption is that those conclusions are substantially correct. The charges of sectional bitterness, hereditary prejudice, and racial antipathy, which are invariably brought against any view of the negro presented by a Southern writer, are of course inapplicable in the case of the author of *THE AMERICAN NEGRO*.¹ Indeed, every suspicion of racial animosity must necessarily be eliminated from the estimate of one who has nothing to gain and all to lose by an unflattering presentment of his own people. To those therefore who have read Mr. Thomas's work,—which, in its own country at least, has been as well abused as any book of its time—it may perhaps be interesting to see how nearly the views of its author correspond with the views of those who, approaching the subject from the opposite side, have made the negro character a life-long study.

When the war between the States ended in 1865, it was believed, by all but a few experienced Southerners, that the problem of the negro's future had been settled definitely and for ever. As the years went by, however, it became clearer and clearer to the country at large that emancipation, so far from having solved the problem, had in point of fact actually created it.

¹ *THE AMERICAN NEGRO*, *What he was, what he is, and what he may become*; by William Hannibal Thomas. New York, 1901.

The close of the Civil War left owners and slaves facing each other, the one in dazed dismay, the other in equally dazed elation. And to the credit of both races be it said that the new and strange relation suddenly established between them did not beget impotent hate in the one class or vindictive malice in the other. Had American slavery been indeed the cruel bondage, the hideous, revolting abomination that the world honestly believed it to be, no mortal power, in the circumstances then existing, could have restrained the bloody reprisals of a despised and down-trodden race and averted the ghastly Nemesis which would have followed emancipation. That the South was not converted into a pandemonium with fierce up-risings and massacres throughout its length and breadth, is surely a sufficient indication to the thoughtful mind that, below the surface, and hidden from outside view, there must have been conditions connected with the institution of slavery well worthy of careful consideration.

Up to the present time, however, the North has persistently closed its eyes to plain prosaic facts, so far as the negro is concerned, and indulging instead in high-flown flights of fancy, has woven around him a romantic glamour which has completely captivated its own imagination. But the signs of the times indicate that this voluntary colour-blindness is passing, and that prejudice is giving place to a desire for candid investigation. The time has come, therefore, when, without fear of misconception, the

South may present its side of the controversy; and although it dare not hope to convert its adversary to its own way of thinking, it may at least prove to him that its moral stand-point in this matter was not such an absolutely untenable one as he had judged it to be.

Whether, if the Mother Country had never imported African slaves into her American Colonies, and if at a later date the South had not been made the common receptacle for all the useless slave-chattels of the Northern States, it would have stood to-day upon a higher level of national attainment, is a question that must necessarily remain an open one. It is with the present and the future that we are concerned, not with the past, and it is useless therefore to revert to the fact that negro slavery was introduced into the South by no choice of its own. Neither need we speculate as to the comparative degrees of criminality involved in importing slaves or holding them, selling slaves or buying them. Let it suffice that slavery existed, and in order to judge it fairly and equitably three points must be taken into consideration: (1) The peculiar character of the negro; (2) The actual workings of the system; (3) The gigantic strides taken by social science during the last thirty years. These points I propose to touch upon briefly in turn.

And here at the outset, I wish it to be clearly understood that in this paper I am speaking of the ordinary average negro, the full-blooded African, who is the true typical representative of his race, not of those rare exceptional specimens occasionally to be met with; in other words, I write of the negro as Nature made him, not of that anomalous nondescript popularly known as the Afro-American.

First then, what is the character of the negro as viewed from the vantage-ground of close personal acquaintance?

Were I to be limited to a single descriptive sentence, it would be this: "The negro is not a white man with a black skin, and no degree of culture, no amount of education, can make him one." Education and culture can do no more than develop latent possibilities; they do not and cannot impart new powers. The misconception on this fundamental point has indeed been the fruitful source of all the trouble concerning the negro. Virtues he has and vices he has, but, as regards both the one and the other, he is a law unto himself.

Of the anatomical and physiological differences between the races I am not qualified to speak, though I believe that authorities are agreed that such differences do exist and are strongly marked. Neither will I lay stress upon the striking disparity in the intellectual endowments of the two races. The distinctive difference between the white man and the black is a difference of moral constitution. The negro is destitute of the moral consciousness. He may be trained, as one trains an animal, to regard any given action as right or wrong; but, as with the animal, the right or wrong of the act depends, not on its own essential moral quality, but solely upon the arbitrary fiat of his trainer. He labours, in short, under a racial disability to grasp and apply moral principles. There are good negroes and bad, just as there are good and bad white men; but whereas the good white man realises that the whole moral code is equally binding upon him, and according to his measure of goodness strives to attain to at least a certain degree of consistency in his conduct, the good black man fails absolutely to see that the several parts of the moral law are necessarily

interwoven, and he cannot be made to understand that an infringement in one particular is as virtual an abandonment of principle as a breach in all.

Owing to this peculiarity of mental constitution, it follows that religion, which to the white man is the grandest, the most elevating force in the Universe, is to the negro merely a species of pleasurable emotional excitement, exerting absolutely no influence on character, and being entirely powerless to control conduct. It is not that the negro is a hypocrite. He only does not, and by the limitations of his nature cannot, comprehend and conform to the white man's standard of ethics. By the people of the Old South this incapacity was so well-known and universally accepted that, even during the troublous and chaotic days of the mis-called Reconstruction period, with its grotesque political experiment of "bayonetting the bottom rail on top," the old slave-owners, with a tolerance born of personal knowledge, even while protecting themselves from indignity and outrage, fully recognised this idiosyncrasy of the negro, and judged him with a justice far more lenient than would have been meted out for similar offences to one of their own race.

As regards other distinguishing traits, the negro is superstitious, credulous, and emotional to a degree, and is consequently at the mercy of anyone who may choose to work upon his feelings. He is naturally dependant, is easily led, and, unless frenzied by excitement, is readily amenable to control. Free-handed, kind-hearted, with considerable power of personal attachment, naturally polite and obliging, easy-going, and for the most part cheerful and happy-tempered; lazy, dirty, improvident, innately untruthful, without foresight, energy, or perseverance, passionate, cowardly,

and with a strain of dormant but ineradicable savagery,—such was the negro of the days before the war; and such is the negro still in the woof and warp of his nature.

This was the race upon which the South was, through no choice of its own, dependent for its bread, which naturally brings us to the consideration of our second point; the actual workings of the system of slavery as it existed in the Southern States.

That the labour-system of a country lies at the very base of sound economics, being in fact the foundation-stone upon which rests the whole edifice of national prosperity, is a truism. As some one has wittily expressed it: "There must always be a 'mud-sill' to Creation." At the South, this "mud-sill" being composed of an altogether unstable material, the safety of the super-structure demanded that it should be held in place by outside pressure.

In plain terms, the negro being what he was and where he was, slavery was a foregone conclusion, considered even as an industrial measure. While as regards the vastly more momentous problem which confronted the South,—of restraining semi-barbarous violence, and protecting property and life—when we remember that the conditions existing throughout the Black Belt of the South were virtually the same as those prevailing in India, and read what might have been its direful fate in the lurid light of the Indian Mutiny, surely one should pause before hurling anathemas against slavery?

But I go farther. So far from relegating the institution of negro slavery to the limbo of exploded barbarisms, I honestly believe it to have been, not only the safe-guard of the white race, but the salvation of the negro race as well,—the only humane and practical way ever dis-

covered of bearing the white man's burden. For where, in the world's history, have a superior and an inferior race been known to occupy for any length of time the same territory on equal terms? Are not subjugation or extermination the only alternatives possible in such a case; and surely extermination will scarcely be pronounced the more merciful of the two?

While personally inclining to Carlyle's opinion that "only facts are greater liars than figures," statistics have yet a value of their own in a discussion like the present; and statistics show that in the Southern States the negroes thrive and multiplied exceedingly, notwithstanding the cruelties supposed to have been inflicted upon them by their masters. And this again brings us to the third point under consideration; the vast advances made within the last few decades in improving and ameliorating the condition of the lowly and helpless classes, as shown by compulsory education, shortening the hours of labour, protecting children from cruelty, and generally raising the condition of the poor.

In view of these very recent changes for the better, is it not manifestly unfair to compare a system necessarily governed by the rules and regulations of a by-gone code with the more enlightened standards of to-day; to condemn the South for imposing upon the black man the same stringent laws which at that time the North enforced quite as rigorously upon the white?

Had slavery continued, beyond doubt the humanitarian spirit of the age, which has wrought such wonderful changes at the North, would have operated as beneficently at the South in improving the status of the negro. But, in spite of the obloquy which

such a statement is sure to elicit, it is my sober conviction that the two races can only dwell together in amity, on the distinct and legalised understanding that the superior race shall rule and the inferior serve. Call it by some other name, some term less harrowing to modern sensibilities,—call it vassalage, if you will—but the fact remains that unless the negroes voluntarily leave the country *en masse*, or some expedient be devised to lessen the constantly increasing friction between the races at the South, the twentieth century will not be very far advanced before the choice is presented to the negro of expulsion or servitude.

To those who have eyes to see, many indications point significantly in this direction. For practically it is only the South which is the negro's habitat; north of Mason and Dixon's line he is an exotic. He would not live in the Northern States if he could, and quite as certainly he could not if he would. So long as the South was still the Old South the negro was sure of toleration, at least, within its borders, for he was understood by his former owners who appreciated his virtues and overlooked his failings; never indeed, let me say, will the negro find again so judicious, so indulgent, staunch, and true a friend as his old master. But this generation is fast passing away, carrying with it all the ancient traditions and softening associations of its youth. The South is the Old South no longer, and the rising generation entirely declines to look at the negro with the indulgent eyes of its forebears. Taking him at the Northern estimate, as a man like other men, it refuses to make any allowance for racial peculiarities, and sternly insists upon measuring him by the white man's rule and applying to him the same standard of rectitude, arguing,

logically enough, that if he is entitled to the white man's rights and enjoys his privileges, he shall be judged by the white man's laws as well.

Moreover, in place of the personal attachment formerly existing between the races, there is now developing a feeling of personal antagonism, constant compulsory contact with the negro in the unavoidable business of life producing in the Southern white a disgust and repulsion which, from the difference in his environment, the Northerner naturally does not feel.

Thus, when the few remaining links with the past have been severed and the old status of the negro in our midst is a forgotten memory, his presence will no longer be tolerated. And to tell the plain truth, this change of sentiment has but too much reason in it. With all their lenity and kindly feeling the Southerners of the old times would never have submitted to many things that their descendants are compelled to bear. The idle, careless, insolent negro of to-day is a new growth, and compares most unfavourably with his enslaved kinsman of former days. He is not only a constant aggravation and offence to the white man with whom he is brought into contact; he is also a standing menace to society and a perpetual peril to the peace of the community in which he lives.

This being so, the end is inevitable; and when patience is at last exhausted and forbearance pressed beyond its utmost limit of endurance, that end will surely come. Even if by some lethal draught we Southerners could forget the racial limitations of the negro and, like the rest of the world, look upon his defects as crudities consequent upon his present immature development, and therefore to be cured by time and education, even

then one could see no future for the negro in this "white man's country" save a future of subordination; for the very agencies working for this improvement and elevation, were they successful in their results, would but hasten his doom.

At the North the negro has been allowed to live, indeed, but it is only on sufferance, because he constitutes such an infinitesimal part of the population that he comes into conflict with no class or order of workers, and his very existence may be ignored. But at the South the conditions are totally reversed. Here, he is to be reckoned with as a most important factor in the general equation; and granting therefore, for argument's sake, that it were possible for the negro to become the rival of the white man in professional, commercial, and industrial pursuits, precisely in proportion as his qualifications for this rivalry increased would his hardships and difficulties increase also.

For the inexorable law of Nature, that the weakest shall go to the wall, has a national as well as a personal application. By right of racial superiority the white man claims this country for his own. It is a fair heritage and a goodly, and never will he consent to share it with an inferior race. Vanquished by force of that inferior's arms he cannot be; neither will the fate of the Central and South American Republics ever become the fate of these United States. The revolting tragedy of national degradation will never be enacted within the borders of this fair land, for the very genius of the Anglo-Saxon race forbids it to sully the purity of its escutcheon by debasing itself to the level of a mongrel people.

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THE KING OF THE SEDANGS.

(A FRAGMENT OF ASIATIC HISTORY.)

BORN out of due time, some centuries too late for his comfort and well-being, was Marie David de Mayréna, Comte de Ray, the man of striking personality, high courage, boundless self-confidence, and marvellous vanity, whom we of Eastern Asia will ever remember, 'twixt sighs and laughter, by the title in which he found so much compensation for adversity, of Marie the First, King of the Sedangs. We never knew him in the heyday of his glory and success; our acquaintance began when his trouble had come upon him, when France had set her spite against him, and later yet, when the little fairy-land of Tioman, the island in the China Sea off the coast of Pahang, had become at once his prison, and a peaceful refuge for his restless, wandering feet. We were all of us younger in those days, and his was a personality to impress wiser men than we; so we fell somewhat under the spell of the glamour that he ever cast upon those about him, called him King to his face with semi-humorous respect, and found some of the romance that was dear to us in this outcast with the strange history.

He was of heroic build, very long in the leg and broad in the shoulder, with black hair and moustaches, and a bushy grizzled beard. There was power in every line of that face, in the hard, determined, cruel mouth, the dark and heavy eyebrows which nearly joined one another across the bridge of the nose, in the broad smooth forehead, in the eyes them-

selves, keen, fierce, piercing, and cynical. He was an excellent shot, of great bodily strength, a man of violent passions, and uncontrollable temper; and as the leader of dissolute guerillas he had displayed a Gallic courage, dashing and reckless, and had writ his name large all over the *hinterland* of Annam, in days when none save the silent Roman Catholic missionaries had had the hardihood to penetrate into those savage countries. He had impressed the wild people of a little cluster of Native States in that locality so deeply with his valour, and with that magnetic power of personality, which among a barbarous race counts for more than all the virtues, that of their own free will they had elected this outcast European to be their king, and had bound themselves to him by treaties of allegiance, paying tribute of elephants and much precious gear. The French missionaries, who had more experience of native kings and of their winning ways than any man could desire, were delighted at the prospect of the turbulent tribesmen in their neighbourhood learning to live in peace and good-fellowship under the rule of a man they feared, one who had succeeded in inspiring in their savage hearts a passionate devotion. Therefore, the good priests, who, I doubt not, were dazzled somewhat by the glamour that blinded us all in after days, lent their aid and influence to the King, and he in return solemnly declared the Catholic religion to be that of the State of the

Sedangs. He was too wise, however, to attempt to interfere with the beliefs of his newly acquired subjects, and since they were Mahomedans, he too publicly declared himself a True Believer, and a follower of Allah and his Prophet.

Like the true Frenchman that he was, the King of the Sedangs had not been seated firmly on the throne for many days before he set to work to design the insignia of his new-found royalty. The national flag of the Sedangs was officially declared to be "on a blue ground a white cross with a red star in the centre;" pinchbeck jewelry, the Order of Marie the First, was fashioned by the goldsmiths of Hong-Kong, and the priests and chiefs were duly decorated; the King, magnificently attired, appeared in public seated upon a gorgeously caparisoned elephant, and the people of Sedang bowed down before him and did him reverence. He was king indeed, and for a while the display of his barbaric Court satisfied the cravings of his soul, and the French government on the coast winked at his kingdom with no unfriendly eye.

But Marie David de Mayréna, Comte de Ray and King of the Sedangs, was a dreamer of dreams. He had built his Castle in Spain during many years of toil, danger, and privation, had built it, as so many do, when it seemed well nigh impossible that he should ever come to inhabit it; and as is the manner of dreamers, having won his desire, he found his ambition still unsatisfied, and springing up in his heart new longings more hungry and importunate than the old. He dreamed of a time when he should make the land of the Sedangs a kingdom taking equal rank with other independent Asiatic principalities, when he should have fully developed the resources of the country, and have founded a

dynasty in the East that should be perpetuated in the person of the son that was not yet born to him. For the accomplishment of these schemes it was necessary that the King of the Sedangs should step down from his throne, and condescend to rub shoulders with the common-place men who inhabit European capitals; that he should quit the atmosphere of his thirteenth century kingdom, and learn for a space to breathe the fevered air of the white man's nineteenth century; that he should abandon pomp, and state, and ease, and the land which his own strong hand had won for him, and go forth into unromantic countries, like the simple adventurer that he was, to conquer new worlds. So in the spring of 1889 His Majesty Marie the First arrived in Hong-Kong, and called upon all the most influential people in the place, leaving behind him the impression of a powerful personality, and a large visiting-card bearing the legend *S. M. le Roi des Sedangs*. He conferred the Order of Marie the First upon a number of unwilling individuals, from the sorely embarrassed governor, who had not the remotest idea what to do with this undesirable decoration, to the sporting merchants, who could not induce their fellows to accept it in lieu of a two-dollar ante. Having thus made his presence known in a manner characteristic and ostentatious, with that inevitable touch of the ridiculous that ever marred his posing, the King of the Sedangs began to develop his plans.

He had thought that it would be easy to raise the funds which were needed for his projects locally, but here an unexpected obstacle to his success presented itself. The French authorities, who had informally recognised him as King of the Sedangs, so long as he was in his own State whence they were powerless to dis-

lodge him, now suddenly and publicly repudiated him and his claims, reducing the erstwhile king, by a stroke of the pen, to the position of an outcast in a foreign land, desperate and almost penniless. Then Marie the First, a prophet unhonoured in his own country, took a momentous step. Solemnly and publicly, in the name of himself and his people, with that complete lack of all sense of proportion and of the ridiculous that made him so delightful, he repudiated France. His action made us smile, his manner was so magnificent, so tremendously in earnest, but the very seriousness with which he regarded himself and his position as an outraged monarch, had more than a little of pathos underlying the humour. Having, so to speak, declared war against the land of his birth, the King lost no time in sending a telegram to Berlin, offering to the newly crowned Emperor William the allegiance of himself and all the people of Sedang in return for German protection. The Foreign Office of the Fatherland would probably have been sorely put to it to locate the whereabouts of the State which they were thus suddenly asked to take under their protection, had the King's telegram ever reached its destination. As a matter of fact, however, the missive never got any further on its journey than Saigon, for King Marie had been guilty of the folly of sending his offer in open German, undisguised by cypher, apparently forgetful of the fact that it must be transmitted from Hong-Kong through the telegraph stations of French Indo-China.

When it was discovered that the perfidious Marie had attempted to hand over the land which he had won to the hated Germans, the most maddening excitement prevailed in Saigon, where seventy-five per cent. of the European population are

officials, civil or military, and at least twenty per cent. more are French monopolists, daughters of the Horse-Leech, crying "Give, give!" Under similar circumstances, the authorities of an English colony would have smiled to themselves, and would then have taken such action as they deemed necessary, with a perfectly unbroken calm and a complete absence of noise. At Saigon, however, gentlemen in uniforms of many shades of red and blue rushed hither and thither screaming execrations, raged at the club, shook their fists at imaginary foes, fumed, stamped, cursed, gesticulated. Other gentlemen, suffocating in tightly buttoned frock-coats decorated with little tags of red ribbon, sat in their offices or took their *petits verres* in the *cafés* on the boulevards, working themselves into an indescribable state of excitement, as they discussed again and again the action of the King of the Sedangs. The inspired newspapers (and speaking broadly, all newspapers in French Indo-China are either inspired or are speedily suppressed) raved and howled in chorus. Whereupon, finding that his countrymen in the East were prepared to take him so seriously, Marie the First, King of the Sedangs, who never stood in any great need of encouragement to over-value his own importance, began to take himself with a profoundness of gravity that was truly portentous.

He spoke of himself as a martyr to the cause of liberty, as a lawful sovereign, at peace with England, basely kept from his own by the tyranny of France. He assumed airs which would hardly have sate becomingly on the last of the Stewarts; and he spoke darkly of a certain order for his summary execution which, so he averred, had been telegraphed from Paris, and was then lying hidden away in the official

pigeon-holes at Saigon, ready to be produced at the proper moment. The order, as he quoted it from a copy which he professed to have obtained by means of great cunning and strategy, was very simple and to the point. It contained only two words, —*Fusillez le !* “For thus,” he was wont to exclaim, “does France dare to treat Crowned Heads with whom she has cause for quarrel! What would you have? ’Tis in the blood, ever since that fatal day on which perished the King Louis the Sixteenth!”

But it was impossible to laugh at the King and at his pretensions when in his presence; he was so solemn, so brave, so injured, so impressive; and though men grinned behind his back, they sent the hat round for him in Hong-Kong, and had no difficulty in filling it to the brim with money to defray the cost of the King’s journey back to Europe. The King received the subscription with that grand air of his, which left the impression upon his friends that he was conferring rather than receiving a favour by so doing. He spoke of the special privileges which he would grant to the merchants of Hong-Kong in recognition of their loyalty, when in the fulness of time he should return to his kingdom; and he stepped on board the German mail-steamer, amid the half-ironical cheers of the spectators, bowing like a monarch in acknowledgment of the plaudits of his subjects.

The Hong-Kong merchants, who had paid his passage and had supplied his Majesty with a little ready money, had been actuated partly by a desire to remunerate one from whom they had derived so much entertainment, and partly by a truly British wish to see fair play, or, as they phrased it, “to give the beggar a chance.” Here was an unfortunate

white man, who had undoubtedly done doughty deeds in the past, battling bravely and entirely alone against one of the greatest Powers of modern times. In spite of the ridiculous posing, the egotism, the pomposity, and the pinchbeck jewelry and decorations, the figure of this lonely man engaged in a conflict so unequal, had in it something grand, romantic, pathetic, which fired their imaginations; and if a little ready money would help to improve his chances and to arm him for the fray, they were not the men to withhold it and to pass by on the other side, leaving him crippled and unbefriended.

When the King had started upon his homeward passage, the Hong-Kong police went from house to house collecting the pinchbeck orders which his Majesty had scattered broadcast among his acquaintances; and these pieces of jewelry they subsequently sold by auction for the benefit of the goldsmith who had fashioned them, for the King, like many of his prototypes in history, had proved himself to be a bad paymaster.

After the German mail bore him out of our lives, no more was heard concerning Marie David de Mayréna, King of the Sedangs, for many months. Then little puffs of news, vague and intangible as smoke, began to be blown eastwards. He was in prison at Ostend,—in prison for debt. *Les braves Belges* had had no more respect for his kinghood than to serve him as they served other ill-advised people who could not pay their way. We mourned over him a little, for we had hoped for better things, but we told one another that this was the logical conclusion to his chequered career. Then, of a sudden, fresh rumours came to us. His

Majesty Marie the First, King of the Sedangs, had paid a visit to the English House of Commons, where he had been received with every mark of respect and interest by some of our leading politicians; he had bragged to them, with the same unfettered freedom as he had used in his intercourse with us; he had impressed them, men used to bluff and swagger and the ways of political huxters, just as he had impressed us; and even the half humorous contempt which had underlain all our feelings towards him, had been lacking in the honourable members who were present at his entertainment. We began to wonder whether after all we had been fools, misreading this man whom our betters delighted to honour; and many among us who had hitherto been stolidly silent, arose noisy and triumphant, crying "I told you so!" It was with absolute relief that we learned a week or two later that the lady whom the King had introduced to our fascinated legislators as her Majesty the Queen of the Sedangs was a damsel not too honourably distinguished upon the boards of a Parisian *café chantant*. It was then our turn to say, "We told you so!" to our abashed comrades, and we said it many times.

After this daring escapade, which had been executed, we felt, altogether in the King's best manner, the curtain of silence dropped once more, hiding his Majesty from the eyes of his Eastern friends, who had learned to love his meteor-like appearances upon the stage where he strutted so vain-gloriously.

Then, with no word of warning, the King suddenly electrified us all by landing in Singapore, with a dozen Belgian gentlemen at his heels. *Le Congo* was at that time firing the slow blood of the Flemings to something not wholly unlike enthusiasm,

and any scheme which had for its object colonial expansion and the opening of a new market to Belgian goods, was sure of a hearty reception from the *bourgeoisie* of Brussels and other large towns. The King, who had ever had a keen eye for an opportunity, had realised this, and had not been slow to profit by it. Secretly a syndicate had been formed having for its object the development of the land of the Sedangs by means of Belgian capital, and the King had been placed in possession of a large sum of ready money. From the families of the Belgian *bourgeois*, who had thus opportunely come to his aid, his Majesty had selected a number of gentlemen to assist him in the administration of his country and the development of its wealth. He had made his choice cunningly from a class of men who thought much of titles and decorations, and who were withal sufficiently simple to walk open-eyed into such snares as the King might find occasion to set for their unwary feet. Thus they had all signed agreements with him by which he bound himself to grant to each a high-sounding official title, a position to match in the newly constituted kingdom of the Sedangs, and a princely salary. But tucked snugly away in the body of the document was a provision, to which none of the contracting parties seemed to have attached any importance, to the effect that no payments on account of salary were to be made until the land of the Sedangs had been reached in safety, and further that refunds to defray cost of passage to the East were to be similarly postponed. The titles, however, might be borne from the moment that the bearer quitted his native country.

We were all delighted when we learned that the King and his suite had arrived in our midst. Life in

the more remote corners of the earth has a trick of becoming achingly monotonous; and the figure of the King, strutting into our dull days with his train of Belgian cits at his heels, promised to afford us as much entertainment as we had any right to expect.

Our French neighbours, the officials and monopolists aforesaid, did not share our view of the situation. Now, as ever, they regarded the King and his actions with a portentous gravity. They tumbled over one another in excited groups, striving to get at the blocked telegraph-wires: they sent messages to Paris which might not unfittingly have heralded the return of a Napoleon; and the French Foreign Office, replying with voluminous instructions, turned about to hammer insistently at the doors of Downing Street. The ponderous and slow-moving British Government was hustled into something like nimbleness by the infectious agitation of its neighbour; and on a certain day Marie David de Mayréna received an intimation from a British official that he would not be permitted to make Singapore or any other of her Majesty's dominions the base of his operations. He replied in a letter signed *Marie, Roi*, that he sought only to return to the land of the Sedangs, that the throne of that country was his by right, and that he forbade anyone to interfere with him. He was thereupon informed that if he attempted to take any action hostile to the French Government, while he remained on British soil, his arrest would follow with lightning-like rapidity.

Then, probably for the first time in all his days, Marie the King lost his nerve. He recalled to mind the death-warrant, which he believed to be lying concealed in the bureaux of Saigon; he remembered the well-

known perfidy of Albion; he saw himself a political personage of the first importance, menacing France with his colossal hand while she crouched for the spring; he thought of all these things, and the more he meditated upon them the more certain did it appear to him that France would be prepared to pay any price for his surrender, and that England, perfidious and commercial as of old, would sell him to his enemies without scruple. The only reason why his arrest was delayed, he told himself, lay in the fact that the Government of the Nation of Shopkeepers was bent upon driving a bargain, knowing full well the value of the prize they held in their hands; and if France was in the end forced to pay a heavy price for him, she would be all the more sure to get her money's worth when he was delivered safely into her grip. The whole of the King's speculations were based upon an extravagant estimate of his own importance; and this in its turn was due to an ingrained weakness in his character, against which the arguments of his friends broke impotently like waves on a rocky shore. Of a sudden, without even warning his Belgian followers, and taking no one with him save only his Prime Minister, Marie the First, King of the Sedangs, fled from Singapore to the little island of Tioman in the China Sea, where, since Pahang, to which it belongs, is a British Protectorate and not a colony, he deemed himself to be secure.

Were a man in search of a lovely and secluded paradise, in which to lie him down to rest his tired bones, he could find few spots upon this earth more suited to his purpose than the island upon which the King now took up his abode. From the blue ripples of the China Sea the land runs upwards, in undulating slopes, till the summit of the mountain, which is the

heart of the island, is reached. The heavy Malayan jungle, a closely-woven warp and woof of greenery, covers all the land, and fringes the sides of the twin peaks which crown the whole. The ugly difference between the Occidental and the Oriental points of view is exemplified strikingly in the names which these peaks bear in the jargon of the British seamen and in the language of the Malayan fisher-folk respectively. The white man looking at the island, as his steamer ploughs and lurches past it, can find no more appropriate name to give to the lovely mountains than that of the Ass's Ears; the fisherman, gazing up at it out of eyes grown wise from looking Nature in the face, and filled with a childlike faith in the marvels of old-world legends, names them the Dragon's Horns.

On the eastern side of the island, at a spot where the ruddy dawn paints a lane of light along a vast stretch of uninterrupted sea, there lies a tiny bay, tucked snugly away between two rocky headlands. The sand is almost white, brilliant to look upon, and strewn with marvellous shells. Fifty yards inland the fronds of the cocoa-nut palms nod gracefully over the thatched roofs of a village; and all about the beach fishing-boats, nets, and tackle lie in the sunlight, bearing testimony to the manner in which the Tioman folk earn their scanty livelihood. No stranger visits this bay from year's end to year's end; and the villagers are born, and love, and marry, and are laid to rest under the *sadu* plants without having experience of any fuller, wider life than that which their island-home affords.

This was the place in which the hunted King sought refuge, building for himself a hut at a little distance from the Malay habitations, and paying royally for all he got with

coins of gold such as the natives had never seen before.

The Headman of Tioman was much exercised in mind at the arrival of this white man, who in broken Malay told all who came to see him that he was a king in his own country, and that a tyrannical European Government was keeping him out of his rights. The Headman made haste to Pekan, the Capital of Pahang, and laid his trouble and his perplexity before his own Sultan.

"Behold, oh King," he said; "this man who hath come to dwell among us is passing strange. He hath the appearance of a white man; but his hair is not white, as is the manner of the white men's hair, but black like unto our own, and his eyes also are black. He is a *wrong* sort of white man, having much that is black about him. Moreover he is not Ingggris [English], and yet when thy servant did ask him whether therefore he were a son of a Pranchis [French] behold his eyes waxed red, and he spat upon the ground making answer with curses very pungent and terrifying that the sons of Pranchis were his enemies. And in like manner he denieth that he is the son of a Blanda [Hollander, Dutchman]. Verily, thy servant opines that he is a very *wrong* kind of white man having much that is black about him, lacking birth-place and countrymen, and moreover he is of the Faith, a Mahommedan, and no infidel as are other white folk."

The Sultan referred the matter to his Resident, the problem being one which he found himself unable to solve; and the Resident sent instructions to a young District Officer, who dwelt on the coast some hundred miles from Pekan and other Europeans, bidding him visit Tioman, see the king, and report the result.

So Fortescue (as I will call the District Officer) got into the crank

little sailing-boat, in which he was accustomed to risk his life twenty times a month on the restless waters of the China Sea, and sailed across to Tioman. He arrived there when the sun was sinking behind the Dragon's Horns, and went ashore alone to talk with the King. As he approached the little house, which the King dignified with the name of La Maison du Roi, Fortescue perceived that the place was stoutly barricaded, and that two or three shining gun-barrels protruded their snouts from loop-holes cut in the shutters, and were trained carefully on to him. Being a young Englishman of the right sort, Fortescue walked calmly up to the house, for nerves he had none, and rapped upon the closed shutters with his walking-stick. "*Monseigneur le Roi,*" he called out gaily, "have the goodness to open the door."

The hirsute visage of the King showed itself for a moment at a crack in the wooden shutters, and grinned with many teeth at the young Englishman. "You are a brave man, friend," he said in French. "You are brave, and courage we admire, we love. Figure to yourself, we expect an army, and see 'tis only a child that comes to us. Enter, enter!"

So Fortescue was made welcome, and he and the King and the King's Prime Minister, Monsieur B., feasted on the simple fare of the island, which had doubtless been purchased with the ten-franc pieces supplied by the Belgian cits for quite other purposes, and which the King was engaged in scattering broadcast among the astonished fisher-folk of Tioman.

After dinner Fortescue had much business talk with the King, and gave him to understand very explicitly that the Government of Pahang would not suffer his Majesty to make Tioman a base of operations against the French, and the King gave his word,—*parole*

d'honneur d'un roi—not to abuse the hospitality of the land that had given him refuge by going counter to the wishes of his hosts in this respect.

He took an immense liking to the handsome young Englishman, and the latter was greatly impressed by the extraordinary personality of the King. Therefore, the twain made fast friends, and on that night, and on many a subsequent occasion, they sat talking together far into the small hours, while the Prime Minister snored in peace upon his mat in the adjoining room. The King's past held many memories worth recounting, and he had a dramatist's eye for an artistic effect. When he dwelt upon the days in which he was struggling to obtain the mastery over the wild tribes of the Sedangs, he had many hair-breadth escapes to narrate.

"Once, too, I had to face not savages, but my own countrymen. There is a law prohibiting all men from bringing munitions of war into the *hinterland* of Annam. That law, I defied it! I spat upon it! Not once but many times did I bring gunpowder in plenty, for I needed it in my strife with my enemies. The Administration tried to prevent me. I mocked myself of the Administration. I brought gunpowder, and more gunpowder, and again gunpowder. At last the Administration gets word that on a certain day I go inland and that much gunpowder is in my possession. They pursue. I fly, stomach on the ground, for I care much for the gunpowder; but I weep, for it is bitter to me to avoid my enemies. They pursue, stomach likewise on the ground. My *cochons d'indigènes* who port my gunpowder are hit with fear. They see the Administration which arrives. They disembarrass themselves of their loads. They fly. Figure to yourself! I am alone, I enrage myself. I light fire,

I seize a torch, I make explode the gunpowder; then I too fly, and I save myself, and again I mock myself of the Administration! But at what cost, my friend! See then!"

He bared his right arm, and slipped his loose coat from off his shoulder. All up his arm and far into the fell of his chest there spread a horrible bluish scar, telling unmistakably of the awful injury that this determined man had deliberately inflicted upon himself, rather than suffer his beloved gunpowder to fall into the hands of the Administration that he hated so whole-heartedly.

Shortly after the King had taken up his residence on Tioman, a small, rotund, very hot, and exceedingly angry gentleman in a faded frock-coat came to Pekan, and sought an interview with the Resident. It appeared that he was no less a person than the Minister of Public Justice in the kingdom of the Sedangs, and he visited Pekan as the emissary and spokesman of the other Belgian officials whom the King had left in Singapore, with only a very few half-franc pieces between the lot of them. He came, as befitted his high office, to seek for justice,—justice against the King of the Sedangs. He had a pitiful tale to tell, for when they found themselves penniless in a foreign land, the Belgian gentlemen had addressed a memorial to the King and his Prime Minister at Tioman, pointing out that their loyalty to the former had placed them in a position of extreme embarrassment, that they had hitherto obtained little but ridicule from those to whom they had applied for help, and that, in view of the fact that the King was the cause of all their woe, it was only right that he should furnish them with the means to defray the cost of their passages back to Belgium. The King, who, with all his faults, was not lacking in a sense

of humour where other folk were concerned, had replied to this petition through Monsieur B., his Prime Minister, in a letter decked with a royal coat of arms, and bearing the address of *La Maison du Roi, Tioman*. This letter stated, in courtly and official phraseology, that it was with infinite regret that his Majesty learned that his trusted followers had, through the tyranny of France and the treachery of Great Britain, suffered any inconvenience or annoyance. He had noted their request for funds, and was desolated to have to inform them that, in view of the present financial position of the treasury of the kingdom of the Sedangs, he found himself wholly unable to comply with a request so reasonable; but, having regard to their well-known loyalty to himself, and the value of the services which they had performed for the State of Sedang, he had much pleasure in acquainting them with his resolution, to raise each one of them one grade in the Service of which he was the Head. Thus the General would become a Field-Marshal, the Minister of Public Justice a Lord High Chancellor, and so on. I think that I can see the King and his Minister chuckling heartily as they concocted this most delightful of all State-papers.

To the little Belgian who repeated the gist of this document to the almost convulsed Resident, however, the humour of the affair, as was perhaps natural, appealed not at all; indeed, the memory of this reply from the King caused the excellent Minister of Public Justice to writhe with rage and impotence, while in his fury he executed a sort of war-dance on the verandah of the Residency. But the document of agreement, under which the Belgian gentlemen bound themselves to forego all claims for pay until such time as

they had arrived in safety in the land of the Sedangs, made it impossible for them to establish any case against the King's Most Excellent Majesty, and the Minister of Public Justice, still dancing with rage, and perspiring as he danced, returned sadly to Singapore, whence he and his fellows were presently shipped back to Belgium before the mast, sadder but wiser men.

Some months slipped by after this incident, and the King continued to dwell in peace on the island of Tioman; but his mind, restless and eager as of old, was for ever devising plans whose object was to effect his return to the land of the Sedangs. He had now grown strangely suspicious, and in every ship's captain who offered to carry him up the coast, and put him ashore at some point whence he might make his way disguised into his own territories, the King saw an emissary of the French or the British Government. He had with him the costume of a Roman Catholic missionary, and when he assumed it, he was altogether indistinguishable from one of those brave and bearded priests. That a missionary should be found wandering alone through a strange land would excite no suspicion, for no tribes are too wild, no country too difficult, no places too unsavoury for these self-sacrificing clergy. Had the King been able to overcome his fears of treachery, and had he accepted one of the many offers made to him by the masters of the coasting steamers, there can be little doubt but that the Sedangs would shortly have been gladdened by the presence of their King once more in their midst.

But for any such scheme money was necessary, and all the King's funds were lying at a bank in Singapore. He dared not visit that place in person and at last, after much

communing with himself and with Auguste, his half-bred, mangy, flesh-coloured French poodle, who was more dear to the King than any other being on earth, he decided to send Monsieur B. to Singapore with full powers to withdraw the whole of his balance at the bank. Monsieur B. set off accordingly, promising a speedy return, and the King, with Auguste for company, strode up and down the sandy beach at Tioman, now sunk in deep thought, now haranguing the waves with shouts and gesticulations, now talking confidentially to Auguste, planning, plotting, dreaming dreams, fighting imaginary enemies, and waiting anxiously for the return of his messenger. But alas, Monsieur B. never returned to Tioman. The money was drawn out of the bank, as had been arranged, but Monsieur B. disappeared, and the money with him. Perhaps the dead monotony of life at Tioman had proved too much for his nerves; perhaps the insufferable airs which the King often assumed towards him had turned his love and loyalty to hatred; or, perhaps, the tinkling tune of merry Paris, far away across the sea,—merry indeed for one with much good money in his pockets—proved too much for Monsieur B.'s powers of resistance and self-denial. Also, he may have told himself that the money was as much his own as it was the King's, or at any rate that he had as good a right to it as had any one,—save only the Belgian folk who, simple souls, had supplied it in the beginning.

The news of what had occurred was brought to the King by three Frenchmen who lolled up the coast in a native fishing-boat, which they had fitted up as a sort of yacht for the purpose of a summer cruise. And thus the King learned that his last chance had failed him. He was

at the end of his tether; his stock of ready money was running low, and when that was exhausted he would have no means of obtaining food or raiment. He was friendless and alone on a little island in the China Sea, and he dared not make a dash for Singapore, lest that order for his execution, in which he so firmly believed, should at last be used against him. On the night upon which the King received this news, he left his guests sleeping in the bungalow among the cocoa-nut fronds, and accompanied by Auguste, roamed up and down the beach until the sky was reddening for the dawn. Who shall say what melancholy musings were his during that lonely vigil, what long past dreams rose up to mock him, what pain, and anger, and bitterness, and grief came that night to rend his heart-strings?

But daylight found him calm, courteous to his visitors, gay in his speech, brave and determined as of old. Later the King and his three friends sailed across to Rompin on the mainland, where Fortescue had his home, and the party quartered itself on the young Englishman, who so rarely saw a white face that any visitors were welcome.

On the following morning the King drew up his will, and executed it formally in the presence of Fortescue, who was a magistrate. Then he called Auguste, and the two went out into the blazing sunshine for a stroll. Presently the King came running back in a state of great excitement, crying to Fortescue that he had been bitten by a snake. There was a small puncture in his leg, such as might have been made by a hypodermic syringe. Everything that was possible in that remote place was done to save him,

but, though no convulsions set in such as are the usual accompaniment of death by snake-bite, in an hour and a-half the King of the Sedangs had "passed to where beyond these voices there is peace."

He left the land, which his strong right hand had won, as a legacy to the Emperor William, but no claim has, I believe, ever been put forward from Berlin with a view to giving effect to this bequest. The Mahomedan priests and elders came at Fortescue's summons, for such was the King's dying request, and his body was prepared for burial after the manner of the followers of the Prophet. And so the frail casing of flesh and bone which had held that restless soul, was laid to sleep beneath the *sudu*-plants and the spear-grass in the little quiet graveyard of an obscure Malayan village; and no headstone or inscription serves to mark the last resting-place of the man whose only cause of failure lay in the fact that he was born into the world in an age which regards knight-errants and dauntless adventurers as insane anachronisms undeserving of the sympathy of respectable people.

But if you chance to visit Tioman (it lies some eight thousand weary miles away from Hyde Park Corner), the natives of the place will point out to you a number of strange-looking quadrupeds, half-pariah, half-poodle, and with pride will inform you that these are "*anjing pranchis* (French dogs)"; and these uncouth descendants of the well-beloved and redoubtable Auguste are the only traces left upon this little fairy island marking it as the erstwhile refuge of Marie David de Mayréna, Comte de Ray, and King of the Sedangs.

HUGH CLIFFORD.

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PRINCESS PUCK.

CHAPTER XI.

POLLY always declared she foresaw the end from the very beginning of the affair, and certainly at the outset of Miss Brownlow's illness she prophesied fatal results; but then she always did foretell the worst, and Bella said she did not believe her, though she sobbed as she said it. But it seemed so impossible: Miss Brownlow only slipped down the last four or five of the cellar-stairs; Jane was getting coals at the time, and declared she saw her and could swear it was not more than five steps. She must have struck her head on the corner at the bottom, for it was so long before she recovered consciousness and she seemed to so wander in her mind when she did recover. This was before she became very ill; after that took place Polly did not prophesy anything; the cousins only looked at one another in silence.

But before that time Theresa had come. Bella was so intensely relieved by her coming, that she did not for a moment dispute with Polly for the right of bringing her. She sat by Miss Brownlow's side alone while Polly was away; the room was so dark, for the blinds were pulled down and the day was overcast, that she could barely see to correct the pile of exercise-books before her. As yet the school had not been broken up;

but the noise of the children did not seem to disturb Miss Brownlow, hardly even to reach her as she lay in semi-stupor. Neither of the cousins felt it wise to dismiss their pupils lightly, and, notwithstanding Polly's prophetic warnings, neither really anticipated the worst, or fully realised the serious nature of the accident.

On account of the school Polly was not able to leave Wrugglesby till after four o'clock; but, seeing the grave nature of her errand, she ordered a fly from the Red Lion in spite of Bella's demur at the extravagance, and drove away in becoming state and solemnity. Bill was working in the garden at the time of the arrival at Haylands; when she went to the pump for water to wash her hands before tea she saw the fly standing in the yard.

"Whose is that?" she asked as she pumped water into a wooden bowl.

Sam, with the milk-pails on his way to the dairy, stood contemplating the object.

"Don't roightly know," he said.

Bill carried her bowl to a wooden bench outside the dairy door, brought a large piece of yellow soap from the wash-house, rolled up her sleeves and proceeded to wash; the refinements of life did not at that time greatly trouble her. The man with the pails followed her to the dairy, went in

and began pouring the milk into the pans.

"Oi shouldn't be s'prised if that b'longed to Wazzel," he said glancing down the yard; "looks loike 'is shay, that do."

"Wazzel of the Red Lion? Who has come from Wrugglesby?"

"Come fr' Wrugglesby? Oh, it's one o' the Misses's sisters as come, but I'm not sartin that is Wazzel's—"

"Which one? Bella, the pretty one?"

"No, the old 'un. Wazzel—"

But Bill had gone with still wet hands to see what had brought Polly to Ashelton. She knew, directly she looked into the room, that there was something wrong, or that Polly was persuading herself there was. There was an air of momentous gravity about Polly, of depressing, dignified solemnity which pervaded the whole room and infected all present. Even the frivolous young maid, who was setting out the tea-things, looked awed and spread the best cloth out of respect for the gravity of the visitor. Robert, who was also there, seemed glum and silent, and Polly was not attempting to entertain him according to her usual manner; she was acting up to the situation and enjoying it proportionately.

"What's the matter?" Bill asked.

Theresa turned, and Bill knew when she saw her face that there was real trouble.

"Aunt is very ill," Polly answered, "and I have come for Theresa."

"Ill?"

"Yes, but not dangerously," Theresa hastily explained; "at least we hope not,—we are sure it cannot be,—she was quite well a day or two ago. She has had a tumble down-stairs which has shaken her a good deal. It is so difficult for Polly and Bella to nurse her and look after the school too, that they want me to go and help."

"I see." Bill was greatly relieved. "How long has she been ill? How bad is she?"

They told her, Polly characteristically painting the case black, Theresa white. Bill was left to draw her own conclusions, based on the one fact that Polly usually served the truth in the sauce she considered most fitting, and on the other that Theresa really knew very little of the state of the case. In the end she did not know what to think; her fears were half aroused, yet she could not believe matters really were serious; nothing serious had happened within her memory, and it did not seem possible that it could now. That which needed the most consideration, however, was not so much what had happened as the more immediate question of Theresa's leaving home. This proved difficult to arrange; she hardly knew what to do.

"The dairy needs a lot of management just now," she said, "and Jessie really is very inexperienced; she has been with us such a little time too."

"Do you think I could do anything?" Bill asked.

Theresa looked at her doubtfully, but Robert, who was tired of the discussion, said shortly: "Of course she could; there is not such a lot to do. You had better get your things together and go back at once; there's no need for any more talk about it."

It was nice of Robert to give permission so readily, even if he did not give it graciously. No doubt Polly thought so, as she cast a quick, comprehending glance at him from the corner of her small dark eyes. "Thank you," she said; "I'm sure it is very nice of you to spare her; we are so much obliged, so very much. Now, Theresa, you can come with a light heart,—as soon as we have had tea; we may as well wait for that. We must have tea somewhere, and

it takes no longer in one place than another."

So Theresa drove away with Polly, leaving Bill for a day or two only, she said, though in her heart she thought it likely to be longer. Bill also thought it possible, and took over the charge of the house and dairy rather in anticipation of such an event. Taking over the charge was a serious matter in Bill's opinion; Jessie also found it a serious matter, for with the cheerful and friendly Bill she found herself working as she had never worked before. Bill loved work in all its branches, and somehow those with her usually had to work too, either because they were infected by her energy, or because they could not avoid it; but for some reason they usually worked. Jessie worked now as she never did before or afterwards, until she got a house of her own and a husband to keep.

It must be admitted Bill did a great deal more than there was any necessity to do, a great deal more than Theresa did or expected to be done; the only thing which prevented her from doing yet more was a desire to go on with her gardening. It was one morning when she was hurrying over the last of the butter-making so as to get out to her plants that Mr. Dane came and hindered her awhile. He came to ask if some of the skimmed milk could be sent to Mrs. Hutton, an old woman at Ashelton End. He was going to the front-door in the orthodox manner but, hearing Bill singing gaily in the dairy, he went round the end of the house and came to seek her at her work. He knew Theresa had gone to Wrugglesby; all Ashelton knew that for Miss Minchin, from the vantage-point of her corner window, had seen the fly from the Red Lion drive past. She had kept a careful

watch on the road till the same vehicle drove back, even sitting at tea with one eye on the window and the other on the tea-pot, so as to have a really good look at it on its return journey and to see Mrs. Morton and another lady inside.

* On account of this sight, doubting that Mrs. Morton could have left her cousin alone at Haylands, thinking that, had she done so, the young creature might be lonely, or want a little help, Miss Minchin set off to see her the very next afternoon. Bill was in the garden at the time, fortunately out of sight of the drawing-room window, when Jessie came to tell her of the visitor.

"What does she want?" Bill asked.

"To see you, miss. I expect she wants to find out about the Missis, if the truth were known." Jessie knew Miss Minchin by reputation.

"Well, you could have told her that," said Bill, loth to leave her gardening.

"But she didn't ask me. Lor', miss, she pretends she's come to see you."

"To call?" Bill asked, and Jessie nodded.

"Oh!" said Bill delighted, and ran to the pump. She made a back-door toilette and presented herself in the drawing-room quite unconscious of the quantity of loam on her short skirts. Miss Minchin found out all Bill could tell her, offered (and really meant it) any assistance she could give, and had, as she said, "a very nice little chat," Bill playing hostess most successfully. She went away quite satisfied, told Miss Gruet all she had heard and all she surmised, and at the end of three days everyone in Ashelton and Ashelton End and Brook Ashelton, even including Mr. Dane, knew something of Mrs. Morton's summons to Wrugglesby.

Consequently, when on that sunny April morning the rector heard the vigorous young voice singing in the dairy, he knew that the lady of the house was to be found there.

Bill was singing a perfectly irreproachable hymn, occasionally, when her work became very engrossing, leaving off or perhaps humming a bar or two; but just as Mr. Dane drew near she broke out at the top of her voice so that she did not hear his approach, nor did she know that he was there until he stopped in the doorway.

"Good-morning," he said.

"Good-morning," she replied, giving him a large smile of welcome. "Do you want me?"

"Yes, but please don't let me interrupt you; you look very busy."

Bill was making butter-pats, and apparently had been churning earlier for the buttermilk still dripped from her bare elbows. She was standing on a small inverted wash-tub, for the shelves were high and she liked to be well above her work. "I am rather busy," she said; "come in and sit down, won't you? That pickle-tub is quite safe; the lid won't give way."

The rector came in and sat down, making his request for milk at the same time.

"She shall have some," Bill said after a moment's thought. "I will take her some by-and-bye, if that will do; or do you want her to have it earlier?"

Mr. Dane said that would do, though on second thoughts, he suggested that, if convenient, he would take the milk himself as he was going to Mrs. Hutton.

Bill mentally re-arranged the milk at her disposal and said he could have it now. Had she been Theresa, she would have insisted that the boy should carry the can to the cottage;

being Bill she did no such thing, for she had set the boy some weeding which would take all his time. She volunteered to carry it herself as soon as the butter should be done, and would have been pleased to do so. It never occurred to her that the carrying of a milk-can could appear to Mr. Dane in a different light from that in which it did to her; and fortunately she was right.

She went off to find a can, and it took her some few minutes to do so. As she searched, the old man heard her softly complete the interrupted verse of the hymn she had been singing, and the varied richness of her voice struck him forcibly.

"You have a very remarkable voice, my child," he said when she came back.

Bill coloured a little with pleasure. "I believe I can imitate other sounds better than I can do anything else," she said; and to illustrate her words she mimicked with rare perfection the liquid recurrent whistle of a thrush in the apple-tree outside the window. "Perhaps it is because I have got a correct ear," she added, as if apologising for her own skill.

"I think you must have," he answered, "and a good memory too. You remember what you have once heard perhaps? Yes? Tell me, then, where did you hear the song you sang at Mrs. Dawson's?"

The old man was looking at her very keenly, almost eagerly. She gave the butter an unnecessary thump as she answered, "I don't know," and then added somewhat defiantly, "I never thought they would mind it."

"Mind it? Who minded it? How did you learn it? Think,—tell me whom you have heard sing it."

Bill saw that Mr. Dane had found no offence in the song, and being reassured she set herself to answer his question. "I cannot tell you how I

came to know it," she said; "I have never seen the music in print that I can remember. The greater part of the words I found with some letters and things which are kept in an old box at home. When I read them I seemed to recognise them, and remembered the part that was missing,—you know the way I mean, the way you grope things out of your mind. At first I thought I would take the paper away; then I thought I ought not to, so I just learned them by heart. As for the music, it seems to belong to the words—don't you think so? I can only suppose my father used to sing the song, perhaps very often, and I have remembered it, though in that case it may not be quite right."

"There was one mistake; you did not repeat the refrain with sufficient accuracy in the earlier part of the song."

"You have heard it before!" Bill exclaimed in astonishment. "You know it too!"

"Yes, I have heard it—many years ago, very many; that is why I wondered how you came to know it; I did not think it had been sung lately."

He rose as he spoke, and held out his hand for the can. He looked old and weary, yet withal a very fine and courteous gentleman though standing among milk-pans talking to a little dairy-maid. Bill wondered if he had heard the song when he was young, and if it were very long ago. She gave him the milk-can saying, "I will send the same quantity to-morrow."

"Thank you, thank you, little Mistress Bill. Bill,—it's a name to fit you."

She laughed. "Better than Wilhelmina," she said. "That is ever so much too long; I was called Wilhelmina after my grandmother."

He stopped on the threshold. For a moment he leaned against the door-

post; the lined face looked gray in the shaded light, though perhaps only by reason of it, for he merely said, "Yes, yes, of course, Wilhelmina Alardy,—good-bye," and so went away with his milk-can.

Wilhelmina Alardy! Of course she was Wilhelmina Alardy; he knew that before. And the other Wilhelmina was her grandmother; of course he had known that too, or at least he almost felt as if he had. Not that she was like, not like at all, not even in face; he could trace no resemblance to the first Wilhelmina, tall and slim and queenly, with her beautiful black hair. Bill's hair was dark, it is true, but with a glowing, coppery darkness, brown shot with red, a colour of which a man was never sure even when he thought he saw it in her eyes. Wilhelmina's eyes were different, dark, proud, passionate. Bill's were not proud, nor were they passionate; but they took possession of a man's mind; they held an indescribable charm not to be forgotten, they were—there were other eyes, another face—

Mr. Dane turned abruptly from the painting he was contemplating; he was at home now, his visit to Mrs. Hutton having been an unusually brief one. When he reached home, he locked himself in his study so that he should not be disturbed. His housekeeper thought he was busy over his sermon; but if he was, his text was an old portrait taken from a locked drawer, and his subject a beautiful woman, young and proud, to whom the painter had given a milk-white skin and curling black hair. Her gown sloped away on the shoulders in the fashion of forty years ago, and her brow curved softly in that fashion too; but the painter, in spite of a laudable desire to bring the face within the then prevailing standard of beauty, had not been able to flatter

the chin out of its imperious waywardness nor the eyes out of their proud unrest.

There was no likeness to Bill in this face of the other Wilhelmina; and yet—this was but one of the looks she had worn—who should say there was not some of her sleeping undeveloped in the girl of to-day? Men know so little of the working of such things. Who could say how many of Wilhelmina's reckless ancestors had gone to the making of Bill, had revived in Bill, gipsy Bill? Of course she was gipsy; Anthony Alardy was half a gipsy, dark-faced, lawless, part sinner, part saint, knight and churl in one; a child of nature alive with a glowing vitality, impregnated with a magnetism, a charm, a quality without a name, hard to define yet harder still to defy. To this day the man who sat with the old portrait in his hand could recall, ay, and acknowledge, the charm, even though he owed to it so much of sorrow and dishonour in the long ago. And the voice! He remembered the voice too; the musician in him could never forget it, for he would never hear such another. He might hate it, —he did hate it, all the man in him hated it—but the musician could not, and could never forget.

Red is the rose thou hast bound in
thy hair.

That night there were red roses in her hair, he remembered,—how he remembered! And the song—what music, what passion of melody! It was not art, it was nature, man's nature, woman's nature crying out, passion which swelled up and spoke, to be answered, to be satisfied.

Mr. Dane put the portrait of his young wife away, put it away and, by degrees put away too the scenes and memories which had returned to him.

Strange that after so many years the past should return thus, stranger still, since it did return, that pain should outweigh all other feelings now. Where had gone the sense of injury, the shame, the agony, the unforgiving hate? They were gone, all was only a pain now; thank God for it, and for the mercy of the years, the pity and the merciful wisdom learned of the long patient years.

He locked the drawer and put away the key. She was dead, dead long ago. And her grandchild was here, singing the old passionate song: looking out on the world with eager, unknowing eyes; containing in herself funded possibilities handed down from a dead past, acquired from circumstance, environment, a hundred things of which a man cannot judge, on which he cannot reason. Her grandchild! A little brown creature full of untold possibilities! Her grandchild? Almost she might have been his own—for a moment he fancied he hated her for it. Might have been? Had she been she would not have been such as she now was; and after all, that was the thing which concerned him, the thing which he had, if need be, to help.

CHAPTER XII.

BILL, of course, knew nothing of what was in the rector's mind; she only wondered once or twice about the song, and decided to sing it no more in public since the greater number of her acquaintances disapproved of it, and the one whose opinion she most valued did not like it. Harborough liked it, or had seemed to like it on the night she sang it at the Dawsons'. But she was not quite sure of him, for she had begun to think there were two separate persons in Gilchrist Harborough,—one a strong, cool, some-

what old young man whose only weakness was theories, and who was the normal and usual person in possession; the other a very different person, who only looked out now and then, by accident as it were. It was to this last that the song appealed, this last who waked once or twice under her influence. She was not sure, but she rather fancied Harborough despised this second self, even denied its existence. That was a pity, in her opinion, for the second self was the thing in him which played, which laughed, and enjoyed life and despised theories. For this reason, and also for pure mischief, Bill tried occasionally to rouse this other self.

She had not many opportunities, for Harborough was very guarded, and by degrees, since she was much absorbed in her work, she forgot all about it, though she saw him often while Theresa was at Wrugglesby. It is true, if he passed when she was working in the garden he did not usually stop to say more than "good-afternoon;" indeed, had she only known it, his demeanour on those occasions suggested "lead us not into temptation" in a manner which was scarcely complimentary. However, as it happened, about this time business brought Harborough to Robert, and Robert brought him to Haylands where of necessity he saw Bill. Even when he did not come to the house, he met her in the yard or barns or dairy, "looking diligently to the ways of her household." There could be no doubt as to her capabilities and diligence as a housewife; Harborough never saw her now without being impressed with her ability and, indeed, with her great suitability for the post of mistress of a working-farm.

Events, or rather his opinions, culminated on the afternoon when he invited her to take shelter from the

rain in Crows' Farm. It was very heavy rain and very sudden, and she had on her best hat; in ordinary circumstances she would have declined his hospitality and padded cheerfully home, but the hat was not ordinary; so she accepted his offer and took shelter under his roof for the hour that the rain lasted. While there she made tea for him without disturbing the method of his arrangements; she washed the cups without splashing his scrubbed table, and she did not, even when asked for her opinion, say that his way of keeping kitchen-utensils was wrong. Finally she sat by the smouldering log with folded hands saying with unmistakable sincerity that his manner of living was one after her own heart.

"You would like it?" he asked.

"Yes, better than anything except gipsying."

"You would not like that," he told her smiling. "At least when you came to know what it was really like, you would not."

"You think not? Perhaps so; I don't know much about it; have you tried?"

"Rather not," he said; "I have tried bush-life though."

"Is that like it?"

"No; not altogether. There are not so many fellow-gipsies in that; also there are not necessarily dirt and dishonesty."

"But there are sometimes?" Bill asked as if she were anxious there should be.

"Occasionally you run against queer customers, men from the ends of the earth, who had very much better have stayed there, if they could not contrive to drop off altogether."

"I should think they were worse than fellow-gipsies," Bill observed.

"That's a matter of opinion; besides, there is always plenty of room

there, and you don't come across them often. I think the thing which strikes me most of all here is the smallness; it is all so 'preserved.'

Bill was interested. "I should like to see the Bush," she said.

"It is not much to see," he told her, but added, "station-life would suit you; I believe you would like that."

"Tell me about it." And he told her what he thought would interest her, she listening with eager face.

And thus they spent the time pleasantly enough until the rain ceased sufficiently for her to go home. He walked to the gate with her, and then went back to his barns and sheds revolving in his mind a theory he had not much considered before,—the theory of natural selection, which he interpreted to mean the wisdom of choosing your wife as you choose your horse, for general suitability to your purpose.

She was young, it is true, and perhaps a little wild, but she could be trained; she would also sober down of herself, and she would probably never develop her latent possibilities for mischief if she married early. She was not what one would describe as tractable, though she was accommodating, far too accommodating not to be more or less submissive to superior experience. And she was all one could desire for practical purposes.

Practical purposes! That was just it; in adopting a practical farmer's life he found he needed a practical farmer's wife; there was no room at his hearth for the stately lady whom fancy (not yet dead) had once painted in that position. There was something wrong with the present arrangement; a man either wanted to be something less or else to have something more than modern codes allowed. The patriarch Abraham supplied what

must even then have been a long-felt want in taking, besides the chief and lady wife, a humbler working partner.

Harborough was not a man given to acting hastily, at least the paramount person in his character was not; concerning the other person he did not know much. He thought a long time of Bill and her suitability for his purpose, entirely oblivious for the moment of her curious attractions; but he could come to no conclusion either as to whether he wanted her or whether, if he did, she wanted him. However, he need not have wearied himself with the consideration that night, for, as it chanced, he had almost a month in which to think it over before he saw her again. That very evening she went to Wrugglesby and did not come back to Ashelton for some weeks.

As she crossed the yard on her homeward way Robert met her, his heavy face wearing a look of real concern.

"Bear up, little girl!" was his greeting, for he saw that his face had already broken the bad news. "Cheer up! It hasn't come to the worst yet, and we're not going to be frightened into thinking it's coming, either;—we're just going to drive in to Wrugglesby and see."

"Have they sent for me?" she asked, her face whitening.

"Yes,—you're not going to cry, are you? It mayn't be so bad as all that. There's a brave girl! Run in and get a wrap or something, you'll be cold before you get there. They'll have Beauty in the cart in a twinkling, and you shall drive her if you like."

Bill smiled a little; he was trying to comfort her as well as he could and she was grateful for the intention. She even pretended to be pleased to

drive the spirited mare hitherto forbidden to her; it might have hurt him if she had not. It might have hurt him if she had refused the sweetmeats he kept popping in her mouth, and she ate them though each one seemed as if it would choke her.

He talked a little during the first part of the drive and she tried to answer him, but after a while he felt the wisdom of silence, and they both became quiet until just as he handed her out at Langford House he said awkwardly: "You shall never want for anything while I live, I swear you sha'n't! Theresa and I will always have a home for you,—mind that, little girl."

CHAPTER XIII.

MR. JAMES BROWNLOW was a busy man; a hard-working solicitor, partner in an old firm, and a good firm though scarcely a rich one. He was not rich himself; he had worked hard all his life to attain moderate comfort, and he continued to work hard, though he was now past middle-age, partly to maintain the same standard of comfort, and partly because he cherished a delusion that nothing in the firm could go on without him. But, in spite of his business and its importance, he felt bound to devote a certain amount of time to the affairs of the late Miss Isabella Brownlow. It is true she was not a very near relation, but he had been legal adviser as well as relation, and moreover, the nieces she left seemed to be in a particularly solitary condition.

"But one is married, I thought," Mrs. Brownlow objected from the further end of the dinner-table. The train from Wrugglesby had been late, and made the dinner late too; accordingly the lamb was overcooked, and the clockwork regularity of the

household disturbed. Mrs. Brownlow felt slightly annoyed; also she considered that if one of the nieces was married her husband should have taken over the affairs of the family, instead of troubling somebody else's husband,—and, incidentally, somebody else's excellent cook.

Mr. Brownlow probably knew these sentiments, but he was not disturbed by them that night for the importance of business was great in his eyes; moreover, he had been discreetly handled earlier in the day. "Yes," he said, "yes, one is married, comfortably married, I should say; but a man is not bound to take over his wife's family. He has professed himself quite ready to give a home to the youngest girl; the others will carry on the school."

"A wise plan, I should think," Mrs. Brownlow said, with a sigh. She was always sadly affected by the delinquencies of the present age, which she possessed great abilities for discovering. "It is liberal of him," she went on. "I suppose he will be repaid by the girl finding out one day that she is unable to bear a dependent position and must make her own way in the world, after having had a long training for it at somebody else's expense. Girls usually get such ideas nowadays."

Mr. Brownlow agreed with the general sentiment, but defended this particular girl. "I don't think she is that sort at all," he said. "She is very young, a plain, quiet little thing; she looked docile; Miss Hains spoke of her as if she were a child."

"There is no family?" Mrs. Brownlow asked. "I mean the married one,—Mrs. Morton, didn't you say the name was—has no family?"

"No."

"But if she has by-and-bye, what will become of this girl? Can they

afford to keep her? Is it wise, do you think?"

"I have talked it all over with Miss Hains who really is a sensible woman. She is five and thirty, I dare say, and a sensible, clever woman." Polly might have been considered clever in some senses of the word; that she had certain claims to ability was proved by the opinion she had produced in Mr. Brownlow's mind. "She and I," went on the worthy gentleman unconsciously placing the persons in their right order of importance, "she and I have decided that her cousin Wilhelmina had better return home with Mrs. Morton for the present. The school is not larger than she herself, with the assistance of Miss Waring, can manage. In the course of time they hope to increase it, when Wilhelmina can come back to help them with the younger pupils."

Mrs. Brownlow thought this an excellent arrangement and asked for personal details of its originator.

"Miss Hains? No, she is not handsome," her husband said in answer to her question, "but a sensible, practical woman. Really it is quite surprising how business-like she is when you come to think that she has lived so long in that little country town,—how business-like and yet how very womanly, how essentially feminine, not in the least self-assertive and opinionated."

Such were the golden opinions Polly had won from Mr. Brownlow. Hardly so flattering was her opinion of him, which she was at that same time expressing to Bella and Bill as they sat together in the twilight.

The first shock of their grief was over now. It is true there was an aching blank left in their lives by the death of this kindly, not over-wise aunt, but the first sharpness was over, the first ache a little dulled.

Bella and Theresa had lost their own mother not so many years ago, and though they had dearly loved their aunt, the loss of her was not what the earlier grief had been, nor yet what it was to Bill who could remember no mother. Bill's loss was greatest, and greatest also to her was the shock, for this was the first time real sorrow had touched her life. She had, too, more time and opportunity to think about it, having, as the youngest, but little to do with all the plans and work consequent upon Miss Brownlow's death. Polly, of course, was very busy; mourning alone offered a large field for her energies, for the cousins could not afford to employ even the local milliner and dressmaker.

"We must let them dress us for the funeral," Polly had said, but added, "I hardly think we need get Bill's hat there; I will do that myself, for we must save wherever we can. As for other clothes, we must manage somehow; one good dress apiece is all we can afford."

And she had sighed; extensive mourning would have compensated her somewhat for a much heavier bereavement. Not but that she did mourn for Miss Brownlow; her grief was real, though perhaps not quite so deep as theirs, thought Bella and Theresa. As for Bill, when she had cried herself sick with the abandonment of childhood, she felt an hysterical inclination to laugh as she watched the perfection of Polly's sorrow. It was real, as real as any other of Polly's feelings; she felt it after her fashion, but principally because it was the fashion to feel it.

By the May evening when Mr. Brownlow so much commended Polly, that "sensible and practical woman" considered it time to abate the first intensity of her grief. She had been abating it by degrees, and during

Mr. Brownlow's visit had shown a demeanour of subdued sorrow blent with practical common-sense. After his departure she subdued her sorrow still more, and when the cousins sat together that evening she discussed matters with the air of one who, having paid off the funeral *cortège*, now opens the shutters and prepares to return to the normal condition of things. Theresa had gone home to Haylands; she had been obliged to go back there some time before, but had driven to Wrugglesby with Robert that day so as to be present during Mr. Brownlow's visit. The school was to re-open at the beginning of the next week, the holidays on account of Miss Brownlow's death being deducted from the midsummer vacation; an unavoidable arrangement not much to Polly's taste.

"We are too poor to afford sorrow," she observed, "at least comfortable sorrow."

"As if comfort mattered at such a time!" Bella replied with scorn. She was leaning with her elbows on the sill, looking through the open window into the street.

Polly was of opinion that it did matter, but she did not explain her views at length for she wanted to talk over Mr. Brownlow's suggestion.

"You and I," she said to Bella, "are to keep on this school for the rest of our lives. We must move into a smaller house to do it when the lease of this one is up. How would Chestnut Villa do? It is empty now, and I don't expect anyone will take it before then; it is too mouldy."

"Yes," acquiesced Bella in a spiritless voice. She looked across the empty, darkening street to the doctor's prim house opposite; the scent of the laburnums came to her from his garden, the sound of a

wheel-barrow from a neighbour's close by. It was all very dull and narrow and small—and the prospect offered? It is hard to be young and fair and told at two-and-twenty that to live at Chestnut Villa (too mouldy for anyone else) and teach small girls is one's fate beyond redemption.

"We are to keep on with the school," Polly was saying.

"I suppose so." Bella did not look round.

"Do you?" Polly retorted. "I don't then! For one thing, I don't suppose the school will keep on with us."

Bella did look round now. "It will, it must!" she exclaimed. "What else are we to do?"

"It won't," Polly affirmed with confidence. "Look how it has gone down even while poor Aunt, whom everyone knew, was here. If she,—and people sent their children to her out of friendship or because their cousins or someone used to come—if she could not keep it together, what are we likely to do? You can teach, but you have not passed many examinations, and you are young and not at all imposing; as for me, I have no certificates at all."

"But, Polly, you are clever in your own way; surely you could get pupils?"

Polly did not think so, and she proceeded to make a statement of the case,—which girls were leaving, which likely to leave, and which among those living in the district were likely to come to Langford House, the last appearing to be very few. The case as set forth by her was not inspiring.

"But," said Bella at last, "why did you not tell Mr. Brownlow this? You seemed to think it all satisfactory when you were talking to him."

"Mr. Brownlow!" replied Polly

contemptuously. "What would be the good of telling a person like that?"

"We have no one else to advise or help us, no one at all; Robert does not know and I am sure you don't think much of his opinion."

Seeing Bella in real consternation, Bill shut her book. It was *A MID-SUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM*, recommended by Mr. Dane, and she had found a great delight in it during those days. "What is your plan?" she asked Polly, as she put the book away and seated herself on the table.

"I cannot say I have a plan," Polly answered slowly, "not exactly a plan, —I may not do it; it depends on several things."

"Several persons?" Bill suggested; "persons or a person?" Polly did not answer, and Bill followed up her suspicions: "A person who you are not sure will do what you want?"

Polly shifted uneasily; she seldom reckoned persons as obstacles to her plans, but in this case Bill was right, for she herself was the person in question, and Polly was not at all sure of the worth of her own authority over her ward,—she and Theresa having been appointed guardians.

"It is all very perplexing," she said with a sigh. "I hardly know what will be best to do for you and me. It principally concerns you and me, as poor Aunt said, for Bella has a little money of her own, and, even if she does not marry, she is never likely to want a home with Theresa living so near."

"Neither is Bill," Bella said. "Robert has offered it to Bill; I don't see how you can expect him to take us both. I am very glad he has offered it to her; she wants it much more than I do."

Polly agreed. "But," she added, "I should not think Bill would like

to quarter herself on Robert and Theresa for the rest of her life; that is what it would amount to, for she could never be a governess and come and go as you could. It was very kind of them to offer it, but I should not think Bill would take it, except, of course, just for the present. I know I should not."

"You will mostly take all you can get," Bill observed not without truth. Before Polly could deny the charge she asked: "On whom does your plan depend? Not on Bella; she evidently has nothing to do with it; have I?"

"Yes, Bill," Polly said severely; "it is for your good as well as mine. You don't deserve to be considered, but I have a sense of responsibility."

"What can I do that is any good to you?" Bill speculated. "What is it, Polly? Something you hardly expect me to do?"

"Nothing of the sort! I should always expect you to do as I wished, especially as I am your guardian."

An audience of two was quite sufficient for Polly, who even when alone could hardly refrain from taking a part. Bill knew the value of her efforts. "What is your plan?" she asked simply, and Polly, after a few more preliminary flourishes, set it forth. Briefly it was this: to let things remain as arranged with Mr. Brownlow until Christmas, when the lease of the house expired; then to give up the school,—sell it if there was anything to sell—Bella to obtain a situation as resident governess, making Haylands her home in the holidays; Polly and Bill to move to London or the suburbs—

"And take lodgers!" cried Bill.

"Yes, probably," Polly said; "we should not have enough to live on without doing something, and that would be the best we could do. I have thought about boarders, but that won't do; you want more

capital for a boarding-house; besides boarders are a nuisance nor do they really pay so well as lodgers, though of course they sound much better. We need not tell people about here that we are letting lodgings; we can say we are taking a few paying guests, because we could not get a house small enough for just our two selves."

This plan, except for the unnecessary deception, met with Bella's entire approval. Bill, to Polly's annoyance, did not give an opinion, but sat thinking, probably of what part she was to play and why she, rather than Bella, had been chosen for the venture. The same question occurred to Bella. "Why should not you and I do this?" she asked. "I should do just as well as Bill, and besides, we should have more capital as I could put my money into it. And then there would be no need to upset Robert's arrangement; I am sure he really meant Bill to make Haylands her home."

"My dear Bella," said Polly in her most motherly manner, "there are two or three reasons why it should not be you. To begin with, you are too pretty, and our lodgers will probably be men, very likely young city men,—you understand? To go on with, why should not Bill be independent? If she puts her share of the money in and helps me she would be independent in a measure, and I certainly know of no other way in which she could be."

Bella was not altogether satisfied; but Bill was, for she had solved the problem on her own account. "There is going to be no servant kept in that house!" she exclaimed.

"What nonsense!" Bella said, and Polly explained that she should have a girl. Then they talked the plan over afresh, Bill remaining aggravatingly silent. At last, Bella going

into the kitchen to speak to the maid, Polly turned angrily to the table where the small figure was almost lost in the darkness. "I suppose," she said sharply, "you are going to oppose me?"

Bill laughed softly. "Fancy you being afraid of me and my opposition," she said half to herself.

Polly did not attempt to deny the fact. "You are the most obstinate, contrary, silly little creature in the world," was her only answer.

Bill seemed still more amused. "Why did you let me know you were afraid?" she asked.

"What is the good of pretending?" was Polly's only answer, and Bill quoted some past words of her cousin's in reply. "'Truth is a luxury poor people cannot always afford;' I have heard you give that to somebody as an excuse for your pretending. I don't think it a very good one myself, but I have heard you make it. I suppose you can afford to be truthful with me?"

"I am not going to pretend with you," Polly said. "Look here, Bill, you are only a child and you are very ignorant and not at all clever,—I hope you don't mind me saying these things, I am only telling the plain truth—you are all this, but in some respects you have much more sense than Bella and Theresa; you have more vitality, more—I don't know what—but more backbone; you are not so much a Brownlow, not a Brownlow at all."

"Thank you," said Bill, who did not seem overwhelmed with the flattery.

"What is your objection?" Polly asked after a pause. "I suppose you think you would have to work too hard."

"No I don't. Oh, no I don't at all; we should share the work out fairly, Polly, very fairly."

Just then Bella came back, and the discussion was dropped; but Polly was not altogether dissatisfied, concluding from Bill's manner then, and later, that she would probably fall in with the plan when the time came. As for Bill, there was no hesitation in her mind about accepting the proposition; there was nothing else she could do, for she could not live with Robert and Theresa permanently, unless they would let her work their garden for a profit and look upon the proceeds as payment from her. They would not let her do this, so, though she would have preferred the garden to the lodgings, she was quite willing to accept the latter, since the former was unattainable. Live with Theresa without the garden she would not, for she had discovered, or rather she had gradually come to know of certain things which led her to believe that Theresa and Robert could not afford to offer her a permanent home. "I don't believe Theresa knows," she said to herself, "or if she does, she does not realise how things are. I wonder if Robert does? He was always telling me separate bits; I wonder if he looks at things whole; but he must, of course he must do so."

These thoughts occupied Bill's mind a good deal, and another was added to them at this time, surprise at her own power over Polly. Either openly or covertly Polly's will had been supreme at Langford House; she had always planned and decided for them all; it was a strange and wonderful thing that she should have considered Bill in this plan, feared her opposition even while she sought her help—strange, yet perhaps not altogether unreasonable. Bill felt a childish amusement in the novelty of the situation, and also a sense of responsibility. But of course she had, and she knew she had, a certain compelling power over Polly, else why

had she taken her to Wood Hall? Shrewd, unprincipled Polly! To be sure, Bill did not call her that; she did not think about her principles, but, true to her nature, accepted her cousin as she found her, and never judged her at all.

What with one thing and another Bill seemed to be fast growing older; when she went back to Ashelton at the end of May she felt that years instead of weeks had elapsed since she had left it. A month makes a difference to the country in the spring-time, and she noticed many changes during the drive to Haylands. The grass had grown: in some of the fields it had come up into little billows, where a patch of more fertile soil had caused some part to rise above the rest; in other fields it was all long and soft, spiked here and there with the shafts of its unopened flowers. Everywhere there were buttercups, a golden cloth of buttercups; everywhere hawthorn, each hedge snow-powdered with its blossom, each thorn-bush a bride in its white veil. The earth had been busy, Bill felt, very busy; the early fruit was set in the orchard, the blossom off the apples, the oaks fully in leaf, the cow-parsley, waist-high, made every ditch a fairy-land.

It had all changed very much, and Bill felt that she had changed too; then she turned to the garden, and in a sudden rebound from the trouble of the past weeks forgot about herself and her changes. There was so much, so very much to be done, that to have lost a month at this time of year was a sad thing. She worked desperately, enthusiastically, to make up for it; and at dusk she struck work and forgot all about her age and her responsibilities, wandering forth with Shakespeare's fairies (she knew them all by heart now) into the orchard and the fields and the deep, grass-grown

ditches almost as if she expected to find the fairy-folk there.

And thus it was that Gilchrist Harborough found her. During her absence at Wrugglesby he had debated his problem of natural selection more than once, and had at last decided to let matters drift. He did not phrase his decision thus; he put it that, since he was not likely to see her again for a long time, it was not worth thinking about it any more. So he did not think; indeed, he thought so little that, when he saw Bill again, he forgot the problem and never for an instant thought of her as an integral part of it, or as a practical farmer's wife, or anything else practical. He himself on that occasion could hardly be regarded as a practical person seeking a wife in a cool and reasonable manner. There was no suggestion of a carefully thought out plan about it; it was just man and woman, and the dewy fragrance of trodden grass in the dusk of an evening when May and June meet to make it neither spring nor summer but a mid-heaven between.

He heard Bill's curious many-noted voice as he passed down the lane where he had talked with her on the day they first spoke of Robert Morton. She had been in the orchard then, as she was now. She had discovered an echo in the orchard,—the back of some barns, the end of an old wall, something caused it; it pleased her, and she sang softly, pausing to hear the repeated sound. "Fearest to love me"—and "love me" came the echo distinctly. "Love me," she cried again to the clear repetition, "love me—me!" answering the sound as it answered her, till the twilight seemed filled with passionate whispering melody.

Harborough stopped abruptly. If he had been wise he would have gone on, but he forgot to be wise; we are

none of us always wise. The old love-song had wooed another on a summer night long ago; it held him now, it roused something in him, and he could not go. The singer ceased; she must have felt his presence, for she turned where she stood knee-deep in the coarse grasses and white-flowered weeds, and saw him leaning against the gate.

"Go on," he said; "finish it."

It was perhaps not a polite form of greeting after her weeks of absence and trouble, but he had forgotten that; he had forgotten everything in his desire to hear the words that he knew should follow. The natural man in him was urging him to leap the gate, to stand beside her, and to make her say those words for him.

She hesitated in silence for a moment. In the dusk she could not see his face very clearly, yet she must have known that the self in him to which she appealed was in the ascendant; she wanted to play and to make him play, yet she was half afraid. "No," she said standing still among the grasses.

"Yes," he answered, "yes—I will come and make you!"

Then the witchcraft of the night took possession of her, and the unnamed irresistible impulses, thought of our simple ancestry to be born of the elfin-folk, came upon her. "Come then!" she cried.

In an instant he was over the gate, under the green twilight of the apple-trees, around the grasses where she stood. But she, now wild as a kitten at evening, had fled; from the denser shadow of the nut-bushes she called to him, yet when he reached their shade her voice came from a far corner of the orchard—"Fearest to love me—fearest"—and because she was now in the best possible position for her echo the answer came back "Fearest," "fearest!"

till it was hard to say which was the fickle varying voice and which the repeated sound.

It was like hunting a shadow, about as easy, about as wise, but—but he was young and she was younger still, and the earth redecked was young too, young with eternal youth. The fragrance of its breath was like wine to them, the scent of the falling laburnum and lilac in the garden, the smell of the hawthorn in the hedge, the trodden grass under foot, the dew that was upon the ground, the wind that whispered in the darkness of the trees. He was intoxicated with it, intoxicated with the chase; an instinct of the days when man wooed maid with swiftness of foot and strength of arm was upon him. He was—ah, well, it did not matter, there was no explanation; only when suddenly he startled her all unawares among the tall weeds, he completed the line which surprise had stayed on her lips. "Fearest," she had called thinking him far away; and "To love me?" he finished crushing her to silence in his arms.

For a moment she was still in his arms; it might have been her will, it might not;—then, with a sudden effort she wrenched herself free, and he was alone in the darkening orchard.

CHAPTER XIV.

MAN is a triple development; call him body, soul and spirit, or mind, matter and extension,—he is, however regarded, a trinity. A man who recognises his three natures (which fortunately all do not), and who in his wife or work gratifies two of the three, is asking much of Providence when he complains that the third is unsatisfied. Yet this was Gilchrist Harborough's case. Mind had counselled him to seek Wilhelmina Alardy

as his wife; reason pointed out her unique suitability to his requirements; common sense told him that she was exactly and precisely the person for all practical purposes. Yet he had hesitated, perhaps because he had an intuitive, if unexpressed, idea that such excellent logic was not always the best foundation for domestic happiness. That was a month ago; but then, last night in the twilight came Matter, and, forgetting Mind's cool selection, discovered that the girl was desirable, sought and made her captive in a somewhat savage fashion, asking no better reason than her voice, no stronger proof than her contact when his arms held her.

Yet in the morning the man was not satisfied with this double choice. To begin with, he despised himself because he had allowed Matter to get the upper hand; as a consequence he—well, no, he did not exactly despise the cause—but at least he did not altogether respect her just then. "The woman tempted me,"—it was a coward's excuse and he would not make it. She was not to blame, at least not much; he would do her justice. And he honestly tried, though he did not altogether succeed, for he did not understand the childish folly which had prompted her to the game in the orchard. Sheer folly it had been, and nothing more; she knew nothing of his sensations and emotions, and his capture of her at the end had come like a thunder-clap in its stunning suddenness and left her even now not fully aware of the true state of the case.

So Harborough in his mind did her justice so far as he could; and in his actions he determined without delay to explain his equivocal words of last night and make her a formal offer of marriage. And when he felt not altogether glad about this deci-

sion, he reminded himself how entirely reason had chosen her before impulse had dictated last night's words. As for the ideal, the fair and stately woman, a queen with holy face and ways of gentle dignity,—there was not room at his hearth for her. She could not rise early to milk his cows; she could not toil and work and stand beside him in the dirt and drudgery of his daily round; at least his queen could not, for so she would not be queen. There is doubtless a dignity in labour, but it is not easily discernible when labour is translated into soap and water, mud and ashes, red hands and tumbled hair. He could not afford an ideal; he did not need a woman to worship, but one to live with, human, likeable, one to work with, strong, capable,—and he went to look for Bill.

But Bill was not easy to find; she should have been working in the garden at this time, but from the field-path he could not see her. He retraced his steps, and from another point sought her as unsuccessfully. He climbed a little hill and looked down upon the garden, but she was not there. Then he went back, by way of the lane, to the orchard, but she was not there either; she must have gone on some message for Theresa; he would come again in the afternoon, and find her then. But he did not find her, for then, as earlier, she saw him coming and ran away to hide. She did not exactly know why; she was afraid of what he would say, of what he had said; she did not altogether understand herself or him or anything; only she was afraid. She longed to tell someone,—Mr. Dane—her world held no one else who was likely to be of any use. She would have liked to tell him as she told him of Harborough of Gurnett, but, for one reason that she could not

fathom, she was ashamed; so she only worked hard and tried not to think, and when she saw her lover coming (if lover he was) she hid herself.

But Gilchrist Harborough was not to be turned from his purpose like this, and, having sought her in vain on the next day, he presented himself at the house in the evening and asked Jessie for Miss Alardy. It was raining, a fine soft rain, which rejoiced the heart and made things almost grow before the eyes. Bill would be indoors now, for the rain-clouds had closed the evening in early, and in the drawing-room, where he waited, it seemed already dark.

Jessie went to find Bill. "She has just gone to the attic to look for a sieve," Theresa said, and Jessie went up the attic-stairs. "Miss Bill!" she called, standing at the top and looking down the long passage from the right of which the three attics opened. The place looked ghostly in the grey twilight; there was a spot of wet on the low ceiling, the roof leaked by the chimney where the starlings had built last year, there was a great hole in the floor under the window, and there were rats in the attic. Jessie gathered her skirts about her, and, after a preliminary *sh-oo!* to frighten any chance creatures that might be about, came into the passage. "Miss Bill," she called again, "you're wanted; Mr. Harborough wants to see you."

Now that was precisely the information for which Bill was waiting. She had heard the door-bell ring as she looked over some tools in the back attic, but she had not associated the sound with herself until Jessie began to ascend the stairs. Then she had guessed that the visitor was Gilchrist Harborough, and that he had come to see her. She fully intended to go down and see him; it was, of

course, what she must do, and there certainly was no reason why she should not; yet when she heard Jessie's voice an uncontrollable impulse to escape took possession of her. She looked round; there was no escape, no way out but the door by which Jessie would enter. The door of a big cupboard, however, stood ajar behind her; quick as thought she opened it, pulled it to after her and stood pressed against the wall within, holding the door close by its rough planking.

Jessie peeped into each of the attics in turn, and then muttering, "She ain't here after all," went down-stairs again; but Bill remained in the cupboard till she heard the front door shut after Harborough. It was some time, for they looked thoroughly for her before he went away. Her prison was cramped, dark, and very close, and there was a warm smell of old hops about it which afterwards she always associated with that evening and her folly. It was folly, and as such she regretted it when it was too late and would have gladly undone it if she could.

Later, when she came down-stairs, Theresa told her of Harborough's visit and asked her where she was when they called her. She did not tell and her reply, guardedly given, left only a vague impression on her cousin's mind. Theresa, believing she must have gone to the barn with her tools, thought no more about it until the next afternoon when Harborough presented himself again. This time he asked for Theresa, having learned from Robert that his wife and Polly were left guardians of their young cousin.

It was Sunday, and by Theresa's invitation Bella and Polly had walked from Wrugglesby that morning to spend the day at Haylands; they had come early and would stay till

the evening, when Robert was going to drive them home. Polly was dozing placidly on the dining-room sofa when Harborough came, and Bill was curled up in the orchard with a book, oblivious alike of impending events and the dampness of the grass. Harborough might almost have caught her now had he tried; but he did not, for he decided that his best plan would be to apply in the old-fashioned way to Mrs. Morton for permission to address her cousin.

Accordingly he did so, and he did it with some self-possession, for the whole thing was now very clear in his own mind and he wished to get it settled. It was, after all, to him a very simple and straightforward matter now.

But to Theresa it was very different, very overwhelming it might almost be said, in its unexpectedness. She gazed at him blankly for a moment, too much astonished for speech. "Bill?" she said at last, "Bill? She is a child!"

"She is young," Harborough admitted, "but she must be nearly eighteen; that is not so very young, you know."

"She is not eighteen till the winter; we have always looked upon her as a child. You must forgive my astonishment, she seems such a child to us."

Harborough said he could easily understand her feelings; indeed, he allowed, in some respects Bill seemed a child to him, though in others the very reverse.

"She is very capable," Theresa said, "but I am afraid when you come to speak to her on this subject you will find her very childish,—I mean, she will be so unprepared for it, it will be difficult."

Harborough smiled slightly. "I do not think it will be an entire surprise to her," he said. "I do not mean that I know how she will re-

ceive me, but that I should come will not, I fancy, altogether astonish her."

Theresa felt more and more bewildered. "I think you must be mistaken," was all she could say; but he was persistent in his opinion, and certainly, whether he was right or wrong, there was no valid reason why he should not speak to Bill. Theresa, however, still believing in the girl's complete ignorance, stipulated for one thing: Bill's decision whatever it was, should not be considered final. "For," Theresa said, "I am very much afraid she will not really know her own mind."

Harborough acquiesced to this, and also to the suggestion that Polly should be consulted. "She is here now," Theresa told him; "perhaps it would be better if you were to see her, as Bill is really more her charge than mine."

Harborough had no particular wish to consult the unknown Polly, but he could not do less than agree, so Theresa went to find her. She was still dozing on the sofa in the dining-room, and there was no one else there. Theresa roused her and told her the news briefly, wishing the while that Polly had not slept so soundly, and fearing lest she should not fully understand. But she need have had no fears; Polly grasped the situation completely. "Has he any money?" she asked.

"Yes, oh yes, some, not a great deal, of course; he has a little farm. But, Polly, Bill—"

"A farm? Oh, he is the man who lives by himself and does his own work to prove something, I remember. That will just suit Bill."

Polly got up, went to the glass above the mantelpiece and began to arrange her front hair.

"It is impossible to think of that child marrying him, of her marrying anyone yet," Theresa protested.

Polly did not think so. "I don't see why she should not," she said coolly; "you may be pretty sure she has given him encouragement, or he would not come here like this."

"That proves nothing," said Theresa. "He does not know in the least whether she will have him or not; he spoke to me first because she is so very young."

"Possibly, but she knows what is coming; he as good as told you so."

"He is mistaken; I am sure he is."

"I'll tell you whether I think so or not after I have seen him. I don't much expect he is; and knowing Bill as well as I do, well—" Polly broke off and with an impressive silence conveyed more than words could.

Theresa did not altogether believe her, but she felt that she herself was far from understanding Bill. "At all events," she said, "I told him he could speak to her. There is nothing against him as far as I know, and whatever she says now is not to be considered absolutely binding."

"What do you mean?" Polly stopped abruptly to ask the question as she was opening the door.

"I mean," Theresa answered, "that if she accepts him she is not to be considered engaged; she shall be free to change her mind if she likes, for I am sure she cannot really know anything about it."

"Not to be engaged?" Polly repeated. "Is it to be kept private? No one is to be told, we are to have no hold over him?"

"I will not have her bound; it is not right,—you can't think it right."

Theresa was surprised at Polly's manner, and still more surprised when she turned upon her in low-voiced wrath,—*"You idiot!"* she said.

"Polly!" Theresa exclaimed reddening, and then added: "I will not have it; mind, I will not have her bound!"

And then the two passed into the drawing-room. Polly was affability itself; she spoke of "dear little Wilhelm's" youth, and of her own surprise, but held out some hopes of success to Harborough, who did not altogether trust her, though owing to her cleverness he did not distrust her as much as might have been expected. Nothing was said about Theresa's condition, except that as Harborough was leaving she repeated it, and Polly, unable to do anything else, seconded her.

"I expect he wanted to see Bill this afternoon," Theresa said when he had gone.

"I expect he did," Polly replied; "but I want to see her first. I mean to know what she has been doing."

"What she intends to do," was also part of Polly's meaning, and she set off at once to the orchard, feeling the remainder of the afternoon was all too short for her investigations.

"Bill," she said, sitting down beside her cousin on a cushion she had brought for the purpose, "Bill, what about Mr. Harborough?" Polly wasted no time over preliminaries. "The Mr. Harborough who lives here, I mean."

"What about him?" Bill inquired, looking up from her book.

Polly closed the book for her. "Yes, what?" she said. "When and where have you seen him?"

"Oh in lots of places,—why? He does not belong to Wood Hall."

"I know that. Bill," she added suddenly, "has he been making love to you?"

Then the time had come; Bill felt it intuitively and braced herself to meet it. But for the life of her she would have found it hard to say whether he had or had not committed the offence in question. She would not commit herself to do more than ask cautiously, "Why?"

"He has!" Polly exclaimed.

"Well, I'm not sure;" and Bill so evidently meant what she said that Polly for a moment was nonplussed. "He has been here this afternoon," she said.

"To see me?" Bill asked, and Polly felt that was something of an admission. "No," she answered, "to see Theresa and me about you."

"Whatever for?"

"To ask our permission—"

"To make love to me?" At first the idea struck Bill as comical, but its gravity soon came home to her.

"I suppose you think that absurd," Polly said, "since he has already done it without our permission; and he has done it, Bill, or something very like it. It is no use denying it; something must have happened, something fairly pronounced, before a man of his stamp would come to Theresa and me as he came this afternoon. You must have given him very direct encouragement."

Polly paused for Bill to deny the charge, but the denial did not come; the girl sat silently considering the matter, tearing a leaf to pieces as she did so.

"Well?" Polly said at last interrogatively.

"Did he tell you I had encouraged him? I mean, did he absolutely say so? I shall ask him myself if I think you are deceiving me."

Polly thought it very likely that she would do so, and accordingly made answer: "No, of course he did not say so in so many words, but his coming to us showed it; besides he told Theresa, when she said you would be astonished, that he did not think you would be, that he had reason to believe you expected him." *Not be surprised to see him and expected him* were convertible, if not synonymous, terms.

"Oh," was Bill's only answer.

"Did you expect him?" Polly demanded.

"I suppose I did; I don't know."

"You must know what you expect if you are not absolutely stupid, and you might as well be honest about it; some people would have a good deal to say about your under-hand dealings."

Bill suggested that her cousin should say all she wished on the subject, but Polly, regarding it as a waste of time, went on to observe with dignity: "I don't want to inquire into your actions nor yet your intentions, but all I can say is that you have made an honourable man,—a good man, Bill—believe you care for him; and if you do not, if you mean nothing, you must settle the matter with him."

"I don't believe you!" Bill exclaimed. "I ran away from him, though I did tell him to come—I was only in fun—he hardly held—"

She broke off, feeling that she could not lay the matter bare to her cousin. Polly was disappointed at the confession ending so abruptly, but she only said: "Tell him you were only in fun. If he knew you as well as I do he might not be surprised at such a questionable proceeding; but as he loves you, I am afraid it will be rather a shock to him."

"Loves me!—he loves me!" Bill repeated the words gently, her whole face softening. She had not thought of this before. She had such high, idyllic notions of love, hardly definite notions at all, only feeling that it was very great and supreme and far removed from her own life.

"Of course he does," Polly said, surprised at having touched an answering chord here, "else why should he want to marry you? You have nothing to recommend you."

"No," Bill admitted, "no, I have not. How strange that he should want to marry me,—how strange and wonderful!"

She sat looking across the orchard, her eyes filled with a great shining, her heart thrilled with gratitude to one who could love her. For herself, she did not know; his emotion would arouse an answering emotion in her; if he loved her she could not choose but love him, just as when he held her she could not choose but stay for just a moment. She was very humble and submissive in heart just then.

On the whole Polly was well satisfied with her talk. Bill would accept Harborough. Two things were in his favour, the girl's joy and pride in this, the first love offered to her, her innocence of life and all it held, and also her curious, one-sided sense of honour. The first, aided by her oddly sympathetic, almost reflective, nature, would make her wish to accept the lover; the second, aided by Polly's statement of the case, would make it impossible for her to refuse the man. So Polly was satisfied that Bill would marry Harborough; probably next summer, as Theresa would not allow it before then, and Polly herself did not wish it. She wanted to begin her lodging-venture in the winter, and, though she would take Bella into partnership when Bill was married, she would prefer to have the younger cousin at the beginning of the enterprise. She considered that Bill was now settled for life, her future assured in a most unexpected fashion. Harborough, she judged, was the sort of man she could depend upon to do his duty by his wife, and in spite of Theresa's words, she would take care that at least a little of the arrangement was known to a few mutual friends. In this laudable intention, however, she was eventually frus-

trated by Bill. She had reckoned that Bill would see no reason for secrecy; being sure of herself, whatever motives ruled her decision now would rule it in a year's time, and so she would oppose Theresa. But she did no such thing, not because she objected to publicity or saw any reason against it, but because Polly was in favour of it and Theresa against it.

"It may be wise," she said to Polly, "if you urge it, but if Theresa does it is right; in this I would rather do what is right than wise."

In vain Polly pointed out the wisdom, and explained that publicity was the only hold they had. Bill retorted haughtily that she wished for no hold, and went on to add that, if any rumour of her affairs should get about, she should consider Polly the culprit and behave accordingly. And Polly, having an inward conviction that she would keep her word in some unpleasant way, was obliged to remain silent.

On that same Sunday evening, when Harborough spoke to the cousins, came Theresa to Bill's room after she had gone to bed, and kissed her and cried over her and asked her if she really loved him. And Bill flung her arms round the young wife's neck, almost suffocating her in the wealth of her hair, and said she did not know, feeling vaguely sorry for Theresa, and wondering if loving and being loved always brought tears.

All the next day she was quiet and subdued, and in the evening the time came. She went into the orchard, thinking it likely that he would come down the lane to her. He did come; he saw her, and jumped the gate and came to her as she stood in the soft grass, her heart beating, a shy fearing happiness in her half awakened soul. He came to her striding over the grass in the

twilight of the apple-trees; but he did not know the tumult in her breast, did not recognise the half-awakened womanhood. He was not to-night, as once before, the strong man wooing the maid, nor was he the lover come to claim a girl's heart. He came to ask her to be his wife because he believed it right to do so, because he believed it wise, because he thought for all practical purposes she was the woman best suited to his needs. He had desired her, it is true, but to-night it was not desire, not impulse; it was a deliberate plan, the wise performance of a wise act. But it lacked fire, lacked it woefully. And she, who shyly lifted shining eyes to those of the sober lover, could not kindle it; nay, she herself was not the same as the alluring shadow of the other night. He did not love the woman; the elf-child fascinated him, the housewife pleased him, but the woman he did not recognise. The best of his nature was untouched by her; he knew that he did not in the highest sense love her, and he did not pretend that he did. But, the pity was she thought he did; they had told her so, and, after all, as *to love* is often translated into daily life, perhaps they were right, though in her idyllic, almost childish rendering of the word, they were entirely and hopelessly wrong.

So the question was asked and answered under the lichen-covered branches; coolly, dispassionately, yet withal gently he asked; shyly she answered, not yet aware of the lack in it all. She was so ignorant, what should she know of love's ways? So awed, she could not criticise his words, so subdued and humble she could not doubt him. Thus she gave her word not knowing, stood awhile under the trees a little disappointed but not yet aware, and bade him good-bye with only a half wakened doubt.

He left her, thinking perhaps she would prefer to see her cousin alone first, refusing her invitation to come to the house from a sense of delicacy. She did not know his reason, but she was vaguely glad he refused. They walked together to the gate, talking ordinarily, rationally, his manner as usual, hers as calm as it was reflective of his. There was no passion, no shyness; it would not have been embarrassing to meet Theresa, though she was glad they were not going to meet her. Glad, too, she was, consciously glad that he was going; she wanted him to go,—she hated to have him there — she was beginning to realise the lack in it all.

They parted at the orchard-gate; the first wild roses were opening then, their fragrance filling the air, and a spray showed faintly pink against the girl's hair as she leaned over the gate. Something in the scent and the face, half seen in the twilight, stirred Harborough; he made an impulsive movement, but he had himself well in hand that night, and the impulse ended in nothing more than stooping to kiss her without any demonstration of emotion. So he bade her good-bye and went, she standing to watch him till he was lost in the dusk of the summer night, standing to watch him quite calmly though her breast heaved, until he was out of sight; then with a movement of passionate rage she wiped the kiss from her face and flung the handkerchief into the hedge.

"He made no love to me!" she

wailed. 'Will you marry me?' 'Will you scrub the floor?' It might as well have been one as the other. 'Can you make butter?' 'Can you love me?' Can I? I could hate you! How I shall hate you, if you don't take care!"

There was someone talking in the garden, Theresa and Robert perhaps; she almost thought it was, and fearful of discovery crept into the deep dry ditch and lay hid among the tall stalks of the cow-parsley. In that green darkness she sobbed out her grief for the loss of her dream, the dream of loving and being loved which comes to all women at some time. It had come to her only yesterday; it had died unborn to-day,—unborn, for she did not love the man; had he loved her, or had he wooed her with the passion of the other night, her responsive nature might have replied, or at least she would have thought it did. But he had not done so, and the thing was only a dream; loving and being loved,—both must be mourned as never known, both buried together in the twilight of the white-flowered weeds.

Nevertheless she was in honour bound to the man, that curious, distorted, inviolable law of honour which she had from some ancestry and could not break. The spoken word must be fulfilled, the unspoken pledge redeemed, the unconscious engagement, of which Polly had made so much, justified. Polly had done well to trust to this other bond.

(To be continued.)

THE FLY-FISHER'S AFTERMATH.

"THE may-fly goes out, summer comes in, and trout-fishing is over." This was the strong statement made to us the other day by a friend who was somewhat disappointed at the poor results which had attended his efforts on a noted dry-fly water. We upbraided him for being a pessimist, and a not strictly truthful one to boot; but, though we would be the last to admit it to his face, we are by no means sure that there is not a good deal of justice in his observation. We ourselves are not so far gone in pessimism as to assert that trout-fishing is altogether over, but the hammer of adversity has impressed us with the fact that the glory of it is departed. The progress of the trout-fisher's year is not unlike that of courtship. The trout is as capricious as any maid, now hot, now cold, now kind, now disdainful, never to be depended on until its capture is an accomplished fact, and, as the convenient Irishman would say, not always then, for there are such things as unfastened creels, and rotten landing-nets, and even unretentive hands. We could pursue our illustration a little further. Let us say that the angler has had the privilege of an introduction to the trout on some west-country stream in March. If it leads to even so much as acquaintanceship, and recollection at the next meeting, he may consider himself fortunate, for there is a certain vile east wind which commonly blows in March, and is most biting to all young things, love among the rest. However, now and then towards the end of the month

he will find that his intimacy is progressing, for even an east wind will not blow for ever, and when it is not blowing sport is always possible. As he angles on into April he will meet with still more success, and by the end of the month he may almost dare to call it friendship. We are not speaking of the past most miserable April, when the wind blew steadily, mercilessly and unceasingly, from the east. All through May he may venture to use more and more the privileges of a friend, and on the first day of June he may seek for his opportunity. It will come very soon afterwards, on a day when he reaches the river, and finds that the may-fly is really up, the river boiling with hungry trout, and the air alive with equally hungry swallows. The chances are that he will need no encouragement then, but if he should, let the settling of a may-fly on his nose be a signal for putting it to the issue. If after that he does not win his suit, write him down a blunderer and unworthy to succeed.

It is an open question which is the happier, the lover at the supreme moment of affirmative, or the fisherman when he sees his may-fly taken at the first cast by a fish that seems to disturb the whole river by its size and eagerness. To avoid controversy we will say that they are equally happy. On this summit of the good things of life, however, we must pause, for the pursuance of the illustration down the other side might prove distressing to love's young dream, and we would shatter no ideals. We have, in fact, sorrowfully

to confess that in fishing at least "the great too much," as Shakespeare feelingly calls it, induces satiety in the fish if not in the man. And we have no hesitation in speaking of the may-fly as too much; viewed from any aspect it deserves the censure. The fish eat too much; they eat too quickly, and they are too full afterwards. Indeed we might almost say that the angler catches too many. There is nothing in the least admirable about the pride which many men take in being able to say that on Friday last they took five dozen fish, weighing anything they care to put them at, or best omitting the weight as Christopher North in the *NOCTES AMBROSIANÆ*. "A hundred and thirty in one day in Loch Awe, James, as I hope to be saved,—not one of them under—" And the candid Shepherd puts in the details for him: "A dizzen pun'—and two thirds o' them aboon't. A' thegither a ton." With growing candour he elaborates a little story for himself wherein he figures as the captor of some sixty-three dozen trout in one day, "a cartfu',—the kintra-folk thought it was a cartfu' o' herrins." But we digress. We admit that it is a pleasant thing to have a good basket of fish, but an inordinate basket does not materially add to the angler's satisfaction, and it does materially injure the stream on which he fishes. Many good fly-fishermen have a private limit of size below which they never retain a fish, and this is an excellent method of being sure of not taking too many, though for different streams it is necessary to fix a different standard. It would naturally be absurd to return everything under a pound in the West-Country, for instance, where a fish of that weight is a great rarity; but in such rivers as the Kennet a pound and a half would not be too high a limit, at any rate in the may-

fly season. And as a matter of fact on some waters it is possible to take as many fish with the may-fly as one can carry. We have known one rod on the Teme to catch over four dozen trout up to two pounds and a half, and none of them under a pound, in one day, but that we admit is somewhat exceptional. At any rate the fact remains that given a good rise of the may-fly a moderately skilful angler is practically certain to take a good basket of fish on almost any water.

It is natural that after so large a banquet as is provided for them by the short-lived insect the trout should not feed so well as they did before it, and that the angler should consequently fare worse; and it is also natural that he should grow somewhat weary of the ill luck which is usual in July and August. By *usual* we do not mean to say invariable, for of course fish may be caught on the most hopeless days; but in these two months blank days are sure to be frequent, and the sport on the whole poor.

The general fisherman will not complain at the behaviour of the trout in the dog-days, for he has his bottom-rod to keep him employed; and there is really no reason for the fly-fisher to complain either, if he follows the example of his fellow-angler and directs his energies to the capture of other kinds of fish, which provide excellent sport to the fly, and are in their several ways just as interesting to fish for as trout.

We think that angling writers have never yet done sufficient justice to the pleasure of fly-fishing for coarse fish. Many of them describe it in detail with full instructions, but they all seem to regard it as something inferior and subordinate to trout-fishing, whereas in our opinion it is an entirely separate branch of the art and

entitled to quite as much respect. It has, moreover, the advantage of being at its best when trout-fishing is at its worst; and it has still another advantage over trout-fishing in that it is less practised and yet far more easily obtained. Happily for those who know its attractions, most fly-fishers despise it, and, therefore, we consider that we are performing a truly unselfish action in trying to set these attractions forth as best we can, in the hope of persuading others to give it a trial. There must be many busy men who can only take their holiday in August and September who rush away to Wales or Devonshire for fly-fishing. They get little sport,—as is to be expected in rivers which are probably low, and which have been fished hard and often in the spring months—and they are disappointed. Were they to apply their skill to the despised coarse fish, their sport would almost certainly be quite good enough to satisfy them.

The coarse fish that take a fly best are roach, rudd, dace, and chub, in an ascending scale of merit. Of the two first we will say but little. Roach take a fly as a rule in very hot weather, and most of the remarks which we shall have to make on dace will apply to them. Rudd are not very widely distributed over England, but where they are found (principally in the rivers and broads of the Eastern Counties, and in the tidal pools of the South Coast) they give splendid sport to the fly, as they are bold risers and plucky fighters. They grow to a considerable size too; fish of two pounds or more are not uncommon in some waters.

Both dace and chub will best repay the trouble of the fly-fisher. One or other of them is found in nearly every river in England, and in most they are both common. But they require to be fished for in somewhat different ways, for though a chub may take a

dace-fly and *vice versa*, it is best to aim specially at one or the other and to use different sorts of tackle.

Dace do not grow to a great size; a fish of a pound is an uncommonly large one, and though we have heard of dace of a pound and a half we suspend our judgment until we have actually seen them. Our own aspirations (at present unrealised) do not go beyond the pound. Fish up to three quarters of a pound, however, are fairly common in some rivers, notably the Colne and the Dorsetshire Stour and some of the tributaries of the Great Ouse. The Cam is famous among anglers, first for the size and beauty of its dace, and next because of the town to which it gives its name, though the great unthinking world would possibly reverse the order. The small size of the dace is no adequate criterion of its fighting-power. In our opinion a dace of half a pound will fight as well as a grayling of the same size, and that is as much as to say as well as need be. Someone will no doubt hurl Cotton at us here; "a grayling, who is one of the deadest-hearted fishes in the world, and the bigger he is, the more easily taken." This appears to us as if Cotton had only fished for the grayling in the trout-season when it is in poor condition, though he certainly does say later that it is a winter fish. However this may be, we mean that the dace fights uncommonly well, and on fine tackle takes a good deal of landing.

There is one point in connection with this fish on which most of the writers on angling seem to us to speak without duly weighing their words. They advise the young angler to practise fly-fishing for dace as an excellent initiation into the more difficult art of trout-fishing. Here we confess ourselves at variance with them, for it is our experience that, whether

with wet or dry fly, dace are far more difficult to catch than trout. This is due to the lightning rapidity with which they rise, seize the fly and let it go again, and also to their too frequent habit of rising short. If a man fishes much for short-rising dace he will find that when he turns to trout his tendency will be to strike much too quickly. One *can* strike too quickly for trout, but for dace one can hardly strike quickly enough. Hence we do not consider dace-fishing as very useful practice for trout, except of course in so far as any sort of fly-fishing teaches a man how to throw a good line.

We ought perhaps to say a few words with regard to tackle. The rod which we prefer for dace-fishing is a cheap American split cane. It throws a good enough line, is very light, and is pliant enough to obviate the natural tendency to strike too hard which accompanies one's frantic efforts to strike instantaneously. But this is only our private prejudice. As a matter of fact any fly-rod does well enough for dace, so it be very light and whippy rather than stiff. The reel-line should be tapered, and not too heavy for the rod; with the American cane one can use a very light line even more or less across the wind. But the essential thing in dace-fishing is that the gut cast should be tapered as fine as possible; by *possible* we mean as fine as the lightness of the angler's hand will permit. A man who cannot get out of the habit of striking hard loses both time and trouble in fishing too fine, as the chances are that he will find himself continuously putting on new flies in place of those which he has whipped or struck off. But those who can use the finest tackle will catch most fish. With regard to flies, they must be small, but it does not very much matter what pattern one uses if the

fish are rising. It is a mistake to carry too many varieties, as it leads to the difficulty of making up one's mind. If we ourselves were restricted to half a dozen patterns, we should choose the Coachman, Black Great, Wickham's Fancy, Red Tag, Black Palmer, and Soldier Palmer. But this again is only our private prejudice; no doubt there are many other flies equally good. These, however, we have tried, and we speak, therefore, what we know.

We next come to the question of where and how to fish. Dace are usually on shallows in summer, and it is there that most will be caught, but in some rivers there are few shallows and the dace are in deep water. In the latter case it is no use fishing for them unless they can be seen rising, and even then they will only take a dry fly as a rule. On the shallows a wet fly is often as good as a dry one, sometimes better; if there is much wind it is decidedly better. Taking dace-fishing all in all, however, our experience is that the dry fly proves killing to the largest fish, and is moreover easier to fish with, as a dace rises at it more visibly and the angler stands a better chance of striking in time. How to use the dry fly, and the various recipes for anointing both fly and reel-line to make them float, do not really come within the scope of this paper. We have another prejudice, of course, in favour of vaseline as an ointment. Any modern book on fly-fishing will give the ignorant and curious full instructions as to how to use both wet and dry fly. For the former let the novice take note of the advice that he will there find about adding a fragment of kid glove to the tip of his fly. He will find it invaluable. There are such things as gentles, too, but they are unpleasant to handle and they whip off. Finally in recom-

mending the dace to the notice of fly-fishers, we cannot praise him more highly than by saying that we would as lief fish for him in rivers where he is large and abundant as for the trout of any mountain-stream.

Before we begin to speak of the chub, we will confess to a further private prejudice, strongly in his favour. In fact we are not sure that we do not prefer him to all fish that swim. Therefore it is pain and grief to us to read the undeserved reproaches that are cast at him by all manner of fishermen. Even that most charming writer, the Amateur Angler, whose nature it is to speak well of all men, fish, and things, confesses that he has never caught a chub, and if we read aright we do not detect in him any desire to do so. But he regards him from the point of view of the dinner-table, and that explains his attitude. Yet we maintain that a fish is not to be proved, basely like a mere pudding, from the eating; and even if it must be so we would not dismiss the chub without some attempt at vindication. We remember once catching a most lovely trout, lovely that is in point of condition and colour. We had it cooked; it cut a seductive pink, but its savour was of foul mud, and we had to breakfast on something else. Yet this trout lived on a shallow of the fairest gravel, and the water that rippled over it was pure crystal. On the other hand, we can remember eating some chub caught in a deep muddy river, which, in comparison with this deceptive trout, were delicious. To be strictly honest we will admit that this happened on a camping-out expedition when provisions were running low, and thus it was practically a case of chub or nothing. Even that, however, does not detract from the fact that those chub were eatable. We will leave

the matter there; many a case has been ruined by over-elaboration.

It is surprising what a number of angling-writers appear to have one eye consistently fixed on the larder, and how few of them see anything worthy of admiration in the chub with the other eye. Some, however, have spoken well of him, Dame Juliana Berners for one. "The chevyn," says that learned, if somewhat apocryphal, lady, "is a stately fish, and his head is a dainty morsel. There is no fish so strongly enamored with scales on the body." A stately fish is the very name for him; when he comes out of the water in August with his red fins, and great silver scales deepening into golden brown on the back, he looks truly a broad, strong, stately fish. His shape is not so graceful as that of a trout, but it is suggestive of enormous strength. The difference between them is as the difference between a cart-horse and a hunter. The hunter is much more active and much quicker, but the cart-horse has more pulling-power. The chub may not be quite as strong as a cart-horse, but he can pull hard enough when hooked to make his capture a matter of grievous uncertainty. He grows to a considerable size. One may justly expect to catch chub of three pounds in most rivers which contain them, and one can see much bigger ones. We know of several rivers where on any sunny day in August chub of four and five pounds may be seen basking on the top of the water. The Great Ouse is full of big chub, and in the neighbourhood of St. Ives, where much of the river is free, many really large ones are caught every summer. The Thames, too, is a splendid river for them; it seems to be much better than it used to be, for Palmer Hackle, Esq., who wrote in the middle of the last century, chronicled the

capture of a four-pound chub in the Thames in 1844 as a remarkable occurrence. Even more remarkable, however, seems to us the conduct of the fish: "He was a very strong active fish, shot across the river like an arrow on feeling himself hooked, and fought well for a full hour, before he could be got out of the water. He was caught with a common gut line; and therefore required considerable indulgence before he could be overcome." Considerable indulgence indeed! An hour! Chub may be larger nowadays, but they seem to have sacrificed quality to size, for though we have caught chub of four pounds we never found it necessary to indulge them for more than five minutes, and we also fish with a common gut line.

But we digress again, and by an odious comparison we run the risk of belittling our favourite fish, who is still really an excellent fighter, especially if hooked near a bed of weeds or the roots of a tree.

We will now turn to the tackle which is required for chub-fishing with a fly. By far the best sport may be obtained with a rod such as we described as our favourite weapon for dace, but it is only possible to use it under certain conditions. We remember a spot on the River Severn near the small town of Tewkesbury which we used to fish for many years. There is a stretch of about four hundred yards of shallow water just below the junction of a branch of the Avon with the Severn. It could not technically be described as a shallow, as it is about three feet deep, but it is considerably shallower than the rest of the river in that neighbourhood. In this piece of water there always used to be, and no doubt still are, great numbers of chub which were generally on the rise. We could fish it either from the bank

or from a boat, and it was possible to use very light tackle, as there were neither trees nor weeds, and playing a fish was perfectly straightforward. The chub did not run very large, but, averaging from three-quarters of a pound to two pounds and a half, they gave magnificent sport on a light rod and fine tackle. This would apply to any similar piece of water, but unfortunately such spots are rare except on the Severn. Most rivers abound in natural obstacles, and it is necessary to use strong tackle for that reason.

For general use against the chub we should recommend the dry-fly-fisher's outfit, a powerful split cane rod of from ten to eleven feet with a heavy tapered reel-line forty yards in length. With this combination it is possible to cast a long line with wonderful accuracy, and also to hold a heavy fish which is trying to make for weeds or roots. The gut-cast should also be tapered, but not too much, as the fly which is to be attached to it is heavy and liable to whip off. Chub do not seem to mind how thick the tackle is if the gut and fly are all that they see. With regard to flies, different rivers have their own patterns, but we know of one fly which will kill on any river, and that is Charles Kingsley's favourite, the Alder. It should be dressed lake-trout size and should have a kid tail. It may be classed as another of our prejudices if we say that we think a man really needs to use no other pattern; but of course there are other excellent flies. Big black, red, and Soldier Palmers, Bluebottle, Zulu, Francis, Coachman, all kill and kill well. It is also worth noting that on a very rough and stormy day chub will sometimes take a large white moth when they will not look at anything else, and this is also the case in the rough water below a

weir. All chub-flies are improved by the addition of a kid tail.

The tackle ready, the next point is to consider where and how to fish for chub. On a strange river the experienced fisherman will first look for a mill-pool or weir-pool, next for the mouths of tributary streams, ditches, and backwaters, and lastly for rows of trees along the bank. These places are the natural homes of chub because they all ensure an abundant supply of food. We ourselves always make for the nearest backwater in the daytime, if it is possible and permissible to fish it, and for the weir-pool or mill-pool in the evening. In the ordinary river it is to be presumed that the biggest fish of all will be in the mill-pool because of the grain and flour which come from the mill. Some mills stop working about six in the evening and then is the time to see what a rise of chub really means. It is almost as exciting as a rise of trout at the may-fly, but, as Sir Edward Grey says in his delightful book, the look of the evening rise is, alas, the best part of it. We do not know why it is, but the mill-pool chub has always seemed to us harder to catch than any other; perhaps he is too well fed. However, one is sure to get a few fish in any mill-pool when the rise is on.

Evening fishing is quite straightforward. One puts on one or two flies and simply casts at the spot where one imagines the fish to be. If one is casting on the shallows below a weir the flies may be worked salmon-fashion, that is to say cast straight across the river and allowed to work down and across stream. If one is fishing in the open river, they should be cast under the opposite bank and drawn slowly away from it. Very often a river must be fished from a boat, but the principle is the same; the fly has to move slowly

across the spot where the fish are. The principal difficulty in this sort of fishing is striking at the right moment. It is a great mistake to strike in a hurry. We know some first-rate trout-fishermen who, when they first fished for chub, failed sadly because they struck much too quickly. The stately fish requires to be treated in a stately manner, and one must strike with pomp and circumstance. Sometimes a sort of wave may be seen following the fly; this means that the chub has spied it from a distance and is coming after it; it does not mean that the fish has already risen. The trout-fisher, whose experience has taught him to strike at any movement of the water, strikes when he sees this wave, but the chub-fisher draws his fly steadily on in front of the wave until he feels or sees his line tighten. Then he knows that the chub has really taken the fly, and that he may strike. Of course it sometimes happens that the fly falls just above the chub's nose, and then he will rise as quickly as a trout and may be struck at once; but more often he will follow it for some distance before he takes it. In rough water one often sees neither wave nor rise, but a little practice makes it possible to tell with certainty from the tightening of the line when a fish has taken the fly. A chub will often hold an artificial fly in his mouth for a long time before he discovers his mistake.

So much for the straightforward method of chub-fishing in the evening. We now come to fishing for them in the daytime, which is to our mind far more fascinating as well as more difficult. The hotter and finer the day the more we are pleased, and herein lies much of the fascination. A real summer's day is the most perfect thing conceivable, but we know of no other branch of the sport of

fishing to which it is suitable. On a day when the cows are standing in the stream, middle-deep, when the air is heavy with the scent of river-thyme and vibrating with heat and the hum of bees, let the angler clothe himself in grey flannel and a cricket-shirt and cover his head with the broadest-brimmed hat he possesses, and then make his way down to the river about ten of the clock. Let him take no boat,—a boat on such a day is worse than useless—but let him go afoot along the river-bank. Now he must display what powers of scouting he possesses, for he must take advantage of every inch of cover that is to be found and must be ready to kneel and crawl, and even to go like the serpent of Scripture.

In small rivers there is usually plenty of cover in the shape of bushes, and in large ones there are often fringes of rushes and reeds behind which a man may stand seeing and yet unseen. Let us suppose that the angler has found his bit of cover, and is standing behind a clump of reeds which come about up to his chin. His first action is to peer very carefully over them; he sees that there is a sort of still pool just at his feet, formed by a surrounding belt of weeds. If the chub in the river are at all right-minded, there will be a fish of size and importance basking on the surface of that little pool just as surely as we are writing these words. Having seen his chub it becomes somewhat a matter of chance. If the chub has not seen his head, if he can flick his fly just in front of its nose, if it does not see his rod as he does so, if he hooks it when it rises (as granting the other contingencies it certainly will), and if when he has hooked it he can keep it out of the weeds and land it through the reeds, that chub is his. But it sounds easier than it is. As a rule

the chub will see his head, or his rod, and will disappear at once. Very often the angler will strike too quickly and jerk the fly out of its mouth; for it is a thing to test the strongest nerves to watch a big fish taking a fly, and to make sure of not missing it through excitement. Then again, beds of reeds or rushes are excellent cover but they are bad landing-stages. We have often had to put our whole trust in Providence, grasp the line in our hands, and pull. It is worth remembering that a line will in an emergency stand an immense strain; if it will not, it is a bad line and not to be fished with.

Of course the chub will not always be lying under the angler's own bank. Very often he will see a dark shape lying in the middle of the river, or under the opposite bank. The farther away the fish is, the easier it is to approach it. Sometimes it is lying very far off indeed, in fact out of reach of an ordinary cast. It can then be sometimes reached by what is called shooting the line, that is to say, by getting out as much as one can in the ordinary way and then keeping an extra yard or two of slack line in the left hand which is released when the line is nearly extended. It is possible to cast as much as three yards more in this way.

The angler will thus work his way along the bank, stalking every fish he sees, and catching one here and there. By being subtle as the serpent and working very hard there is no reason why he should not get several brace of big fish, and that on a hot August day ought to satisfy anyone. We remember once filling a big creel as full as it would hold on such a day in a little backwater about a mile long. In size it was no more than a brook, but every hole displayed two or three chub lying on the surface. The backwater possessed an

invaluable series of bushes along its banks, and by creeping from bush to bush we could catch a chub in every few yards. The fish fought as well as trout, and we got broken up several times by their getting round stumps and under roots. We have never enjoyed a day more. Oddly enough, though we have fished that backwater several times since we have hardly caught anything there. We put it down to the fact that we have never again been fortunate enough to go there on a really hot day. This, among other reasons, has brought us to the conclusion that the hotter the weather the better it is for stalking chub.

This mode of fishing naturally recalls the methods of dry-fly-fishing for trout. It is not necessary to fish so fine and it does not much matter whether the fly be dry or wet (sometimes the dry fly works wonders with chub, but as a rule they will take the wet fly equally well), but it is even more difficult to stalk a chub than a trout, and the fish caught are on the whole larger. Add to this that chub may be taken readily on a day when trout will not look at anything, and here is a branch of sport ready to one's hand which it is impossible to despise. The ordinary evening fishing for chub from a boat, when all one has to do is to hook and play one's

fish, is easy enough; but to catch them in the way we have described in clear water under a broiling sun requires quite as much skill as any form of fishing, and the man who catches his five brace may, in our opinion, take fully as great a pride in his achievement as the man who captures his five brace of trout on the Itchen. We commend the sport to any of our brother anglers who have not yet tried it; and if their success be proportionate to our good wishes they will not complain.

There are two pieces of advice which occur to us. They are trite, but they cannot be too often insisted on. One deals with the question of how to get a fish out of weeds. Keep a steady strain on him straight down stream if possible. If you hang on long enough he is almost certain to come out. We have waited for a fish for ten minutes and got him out at last; and this applies to all fish, even to eels. The other is, never by any chance go fishing without a landing-net. Many sad things have happened to us by neglecting this. This also applies to all fishing, even to dace-fishing, for sometimes *the* trout of one's life is hooked when dace-fishing, and that is always the trout that is lost for want of a net.

H. T. SHERINGHAM.

THE LAND OF THE POPPY.

I.—AMONG THE OPIUM VATS.

It is an æsthetic pleasure to wander among the dewy fields in the soft sunshine of the Indian winter, to watch the alabaster cups of the poppy flowers shimmering upon the vivid green of their setting, and to listen to the hum of countless bees hovering around them. The mind, soothed by these surroundings, falls into a gentle reverie in which bright visions of the dreams called up by the awful sleep-compeller pass before it. But there is a reverse to the medal; all is not alabaster cups, humming of bees, and bright dreams in the land of the poppy. The stern skeleton of business underlies the comely features of the flowery landscape. To the cultivator the production of opium is the object on which his mental eye is fixed; his dreams are of fat capsules and many lancings, mingled with the pleasant chink of silver coins.

The produce of all these thousands of acres of poppy-fields is destined to soothe the pain or minister to the pleasures of the world in general, but more particularly of the Mongolian races, who, being epicures of repose, are fond of carrying a portable dream-god about with them. This ocean of sleep has only two sluice-gates through which it can find its way into the world, and these are the two opium-factories of Ghazipur and Patna.

In a preceding article it was related how the visitor to Ghazipur, after forcing his way past the clamorous beggardon of its landing-stage, had to endure the miseries of a long drive in a quaint receptacle on wheels

known as a *palki gharri*.¹ Dusty and hot, but safe, he is at last deposited before a solid red brick structure lying just outside the walls of the opium-factory. This building, the architectural style of which is peculiar to the Public Works Department of India, and combines with much ingenuity, though not always with a happy effect, the flat roofs of native houses with Gothic arches and highly decorated friezes, is the office of the Factory-Superintendent. The factory is as jealously guarded from promiscuous contact with the outer world as a mint. Besides the usual notice, warning the public that there is no admittance except on business, massive gates and an armed guard are there to intercept the progress of the loiterer. The visitor need not, however, stand disconsolate, like the *peri* at the gate of Paradise, in consequence of this grim array of defence. All he has to do is to send in his card to the Factory-Superintendent, and that courteous gentleman will forthwith provide him with a pass and a guide. Armed with these visible signs of authority the gateway may be approached fearlessly. Before the main-gate of the factory are mounted two old twelve-pounders, relics of some pre-Mutiny siege-train. No one knows exactly whence they came, or when they found their way to the factory; but they are now as much a part and parcel of it as are its walls and gates. They have been carefully

¹ See MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE for January, 1898.

mounted on stone platforms, and are relegated to the peaceful duty of warning the good people of Ghazipur that it is twelve-o'clock in the day. Having passed the main gate and the guard the visitor finds that he has only penetrated the outer shell of the citadel, and that another formidable line of fortifications consisting of railings covered with wire netting and dominated by a second gateway, has still to be surmounted. Before the irresistible authority of his pass this barrier also falls before him, and he is at last in the inmost shrine of the world's opium-house. Skirting some lofty buildings, the use of which will be explained later on, the explorer arrives at a large courtyard in which about twelve hundred earthen jars are lying arranged in batches of a hundred each. These jars contain the opium as it comes in from the districts; and their contents, having just undergone a rigorous examination by the Superintendent, are now being carried away one by one by a train of brawny half-naked coolies. Each of these jars contains a maund of opium equal in weight to eighty-two pounds avoirdupois, but the men poise them on their heads, and trot away as unconcerned as a party of ants hurrying to their nest with booty from a neighbouring corn-field. We follow the men through a doorway on the left into a room in which for a few seconds it is not possible to make out what is going on, so confusing to the sight is the abrupt change from the white glare of the courtyard to the twilight of this lofty chamber. It is soon, however, discovered to be quadrangular in shape, and its central portion is seen to be occupied by a number of stone cisterns or vats with walls raised about five feet from the floor. Between every group of three or four of these vats runs a narrow alley at right angles to the passage

round the edges of the room. To the uninitiated visitor the scene is one of indescribable confusion. Men carrying jars of opium run in different directions, others empty-handed hurry back to the courtyard; women with basins of opium on their heads race down the alleys and disappear; a jangling sound as of falling metal weights mingles with a continuous dull splashing as of stones being thrown into a well; the high-pitched tones of the women run through the hoarser rumble of the men's voices, while now and then the strident notes of some person in authority cut across this chaos of sound as the lightning-flash pierces the heavy gloom of a storm-cloud.

It is somewhat surprising to find that nothing but bustle and activity reign in the very heart of the Sleep-god's stronghold. Hundreds of thousands of pounds of opium lie stored in this room, but there is nothing in the quick movements, bright eyes, and healthy faces of the swarming coolies, to show that the drug has any attraction for them. Each one of them, we notice, who carries an opium-jar, halts a moment at the doorway, where he receives directions to what particular vat he has to take his load. There a gang of men await his arrival, part of them seated on the flat walls of the vat, while the others help the carrier to remove the load from his head. The latter also hand up full jars to the men seated on the walls, who proceed to scrape out the contents with their hands, and throw the opium in masses into the vats, thus producing the dull splashing sound aforesaid. Climbing up the steps alongside the walls of one of the vats (marked as holding two thousand one hundred maunds or over fifteen hundred hundredweights), we find it is full to the brim of a soft mahogany-coloured substance, which here and

there has begun to harden into a glistening crust. This substance is opium, and we are informed that most of the vats we see in the room will be filled and emptied several times before the season's work is concluded. To step into one of these vats would be as dangerous as stepping into a quicksand; yet they have daily to be entered by men whose duty it is to remove a certain quantity of their contents for the day's work. The difficulty is overcome by means of a broad plank on which the men stand as on a raft. Outside the vat, on the quivering spongy surface of the contents of which these men are floating, a number of women stand, each with a brass basin in her hands, eagerly waiting her turn to have it filled. The men scoop up the opium with their hands, and fill the basins, which are instantly hurried off to be weighed at a neighbouring scale, and then taken by the nearest alley to the check-scales, where a crowd of impatient fellow-carriers surround a weary-eyed assistant, who is so busy that he has scarcely time to breathe. The jangling noise of weights and scales is caused by the operation we have been watching, and the apparent confusion existing in this part of the factory now unravels itself into order and methodical work. As fast as the men at the check-scales weigh off a *tagar* of opium (as the brass basin is called), the woman to whom it belongs hastens with it to an adjoining room where four oblong shallow stone cisterns occupy each of the four corners, leaving a cross-shaped passage in the middle. In each of these vats stand three or four muscular coolies, whose brawny limbs shining with sweat look as if they had been cast in bronze. They are armed with large wooden rakes which they wheel round their heads, and bring down as a boiler-maker uses a sledge-hammer, striking

the teeth of their weapons deep into the masses of opium, and dragging away portions of it which they deposit in different directions around them.

This furious battle is only one of the processes by which the opium is properly mixed. When the men with the rakes have worked at it a sufficient time, their place is taken by another set of men who leap into the vats, and seizing hold of a series of long cords hanging from the roof-trees, commence a slow procession through the adhesive substance in which they are standing knee-deep. The men are often in this foot-bath of opium for several hours, but no ill effects have ever been observed to follow from this partial immersion in so powerful a drug. This treading of opium has a very different meaning from the treading of grapes during a vintage. No ruddy juices stream from purple masses of fruit, to be converted afterwards into the liquid ruby that Hafiz vows in impassioned verse to be better than the sweet waters of Ruknabad or the fountains of Mosul; no songs and laughter accompany the strenuous exertions of the men, converting their duties into festival and work at the same time; no halo of light verse encircles their memory. To most people it is a prosaic thing, a mere detail connected with the better mixing of the opium, a preparatory step to the process of manufacture. Yet there is much that is picturesque in it. The naked men straining at their task with swelling muscles, their brown skins gleaming in the shafts of yellow sunlight pouring through the long narrow windows above the vats, all go to make a picture to which perhaps the pencil of Mr. Clausen alone could do justice.

Passing from this scene of stress and turmoil we enter another room of precisely the same size and arrange-

ments. The vats in this room contain the opium of a previous mixing, and are already giving up their contents to the busy hands of the workmen in the manufacturing-room. Here are a number of scales at which large tin vessels filled with opium from the vats are being weighed. As each vessel passes the scales, a carrier snatches it up and darts into the caking-room where the opium is being packed in the form in which John Chinaman is accustomed to obtain it from the merchant-princes who deal in this expensive luxury.

The hum of many voices gradually increasing in strength has for some time warned us that we are near the caking-room. As one steps into this long and crowded hall the first sensation is one of bewilderment. A thousand men are around us, all working as if their lives depended upon the rate at which they could turn out their task. Again it strikes one very forcibly that, if the poppy-god sleeps, his workmen are unusually wide-awake.

A number of iron cages occupy the central portion of the room, in each of which sits a placid weighman, weighing out opium as calmly as the fat *bunniyah* in the bazaar weighs out his doles of adulterated flour and weevil-eaten grain. To each cage there is a little door at which, platter in hand, stoops an expectant sprite. The help of opium is deftly tilted into the platter and the sprite is off and lost in the long line of similar brown imps, all standing before their masters the cake-makers. The movements of this sepia squire guide us to where the cake-makers sit, arranged in two long rows on the opposite sides of the room. Upon the walls over each man's head is a white circle with his number in black painted on it.

Let us stand before No. 1, who presumably from his number is the

doyen of the craft, and see what his deft fingers are making. He himself is a man in the prime of life with shapely head and fine aquiline features; a small well-trimmed black moustache curls fiercely over his lips, his large eyes are full of intelligence, and his long slender fingers move swiftly and almost mechanically about his work. He is a Brahman of the Brahmans and is courteously addressed by all men of inferior caste as "*Maharaj* (Great King)" when they speak to him. He is sitting on a low sloping stool, stripped to his waist-cloth, for it is May and the temperature of the room is unspeakable, although it is only about nine o'clock in the morning. Great beads of perspiration stand on his back, and little streams trickle down his shoulders to his elbows. We ourselves, though our progress has been a leisurely walk, are mopping our foreheads as we go along. But Mahadeo Maharaj, as he is popularly known, is too absorbed in his work to pay much attention to the heat.

He bends down to a tray before his feet in which lies a brass cup. Near the edge of the tray is a platter with a pat of opium on it. A small cup full of some liquid substance which we are told is opium, is on his right, and on his left is a pile of what looks not unlike a number of pancakes, but which are really wrappers made of the petals of the poppy-flower. Hooked on to the edge of his tray is a little tin box full of paper tickets bearing his number. Before him his assistant kneels, reverently holding one of the wrappers in his hands. Mahadeo shoots one glance at us out of those keen eyes of his, and then sets to work with complete calmness. He has played before a bigger audience ere now, for the great Lord Sahib who rules over

Bengal has watched him making cakes. Tearing the leaf his assistant hands him to a convenient size, he deftly arranges it in the brass cup and smears it over with the liquid opium. Bit after bit he adds, his fingers moving like the needle of a sewing machine until a nice soft bed of leaf has been made. Then in a moment he turns the opium into it and drawing up the edge of the leaf covers it up, and, in a manner which baffles description, makes in a few minutes a perfect sphere which he shakes out of the cup on to the palm of his left hand and adorns with one of the little tickets from his tin box. He then hands the cake, as this sphere is called, to his attendant who receives it carefully in the palms of his joined hands, for it is yet soft and pulpy, and bears it away to the examiner. The examiner has not much trouble with this cake, which is symmetrical in shape and of the correct weight. It is once more handed to the sprite, who takes it off to a large box in which a powdery-looking substance resembling fine bran is kept, and dusts half of it with this. Next, fitting it with a little earthen cup from a stack of these articles, he carries it out into the large stone-paved yard we crossed when on our way to the *malkhana* or store-room. Here he deposits it in front of a metal plaque bearing the workman's number and hurries back to see that his master's wants are properly attended to.

Crossing the courtyard, now dotted with cakes lying snugly in their earthen cups, we enter one of the several lofty buildings lying to the right. The interior of the building we enter is occupied by vast wooden racks that extend almost up to the roof-trees. These racks are entirely filled with opium-cakes in their cups; a board at the entrance informs us

that this godown, as it is called, contains two hundred thousand cakes. The racks are so arranged as to allow free ventilation, and passages run on all sides. Gangs of coolies are at work taking down the cakes from the racks and inspecting them. The manner in which the cakes are taken down is interesting and forms one of the sights of the factory. A few boys swarm up the sides of a rack, and the topmost one, removing a cake with its cup from its place, throws it down to the boy below, who passes it on to the next until it reaches the leader of the gang standing on the ground. In this manner a rack containing from two to three thousand cakes is emptied with inconceivable rapidity. The cakes are replaced in the same way, being thrown two at a time from boy to boy; the cup, although not in any way attached to the cake, follows it as closely as if actually adhering to it. The sight is a pretty one, and the feat can only be performed by men who, like these coolies, have spent years at this work. It very rarely happens that a cake is missed, either in its upward or downward journey. When this does happen, there is woe in the godown, and high factory-officials swarm to the scene of the catastrophe, where the case is immediately enquired into and decided on its merits.

The cake of opium is in shape much more like a thirty-pound round-shot, or some large fruit, than a cake. The name has, however, become so wedded with the history of the manufacture that, although inappropriate, it cannot now be changed. A cake of opium, then, when mature is not unlike an overgrown wood-apple in appearance and colour. The outer surface is greyish and smooth. When cut open the likeness to a fruit of some kind is still more striking, for the layers of leaf in which the cake is wrapped

then present the appearance of a rind about half an inch thick, while the opium resembles the pulp of the fruit.

It is not until the winter begins, or some six months after manufacture, that the cakes are considered mature enough for export. They are then packed in large wooden chests made in the North-Western Provinces of mango wood, and are sent to Calcutta, where they are disposed of by monthly sales to the opium-merchants, and through them find their way to China and the Straits, the market for all the opium made up in this form. That which is used in India itself is manufactured differently, being first dried in shallow trays in the sun till it reaches a certain degree of hardness, and then pressed into large square blocks looking extremely like cakes of transparent soap.

By the time we have completed the

tour of one of the cake-godowns and returned to the outer air the courtyard has become covered with batches of shining freshly-made cakes. The day's output, we are told, is twenty thousand cakes; this means a consumption of sixty-one thousand five hundred pounds avoirdupois of opium, and the work lasts for about fifty days.

There are many other departments of this vast factory, all interesting in their way, but everything pales before the scene we have just witnessed. The noise, heat and, perhaps, also the powerful odour of the great narcotic are beginning now to have an effect upon our unaccustomed senses, and we are glad to get out into the open air; albeit the sun is blazing with a fury that it is capable of only in the heated plains of Upper India.

G. A. LEVETT-YEATS.

IN THE EVENING OF HER DAYS.

"You were just remarking," said the Doctor, raising his voice and looking at the three friends seated with him in his library after dinner, "on the phenomenal character of the life in a large sea-port city like this, and wondering whether the customs of the poorer classes are affected to any appreciable extent by the speech or manners of the foreign sailors who are continually among them. I myself incline to think that such influence is not so formidable as might be supposed, but incredible things happen at times in the obscure parts of our maritime cities. I can tell you a story which came under my own observation not so very long ago. You know that for some years I was house-surgeon in the S—— hospital? Well, to-day I have been looking at the alterations they are making between that institution and the Duke's Dock, and I see that among the buildings which are being dismantled there is an old lodging-house called The Rovers' Return in which a strange incident occurred during my stay in that part of the town.

"This house, which, on account of its situation near the dock-gates, was frequented solely by sea-faring men and emigrants of the poorest type, was kept for many years by an old woman, then sixty-five years of age, — a good-humoured contented soul who could neither read nor write, and who never in her life had set foot beyond her native town. Whether the stories which filtered to her through her sea-going clients from all quarters of the globe had been too much for her, I cannot say; but she

was known to have a strong prejudice against those strange and wicked lands beyond the sea, and had been often heard to declare, when anyone spoke in her hearing of foreign people, that 'Thank heaven she knewed nothing of them!' and 'Please God she'd live and die in a Christian country!' She was a favourite in the district, since she was chatty, good-natured, and in no way held herself to be better than her neighbours, and had besides, what I have often noticed in illiterate people, an extraordinarily tenacious memory for all the family histories and interests of the district.

"Her husband was a morose old Scot, once, I believe, a weaver, but at that time earning ten shillings a week as a night watchman in the streets. Wrinkled like sea-weed, with a mouth so contracted that his nose and chin almost met, and with an inscrutable expression of the eyes, this man, who scarcely ever spoke, had been in his youth a strong Radical, a member of several societies for the destruction of society, and actually at the time of his marriage labouring to save the required sum for admission to some Utopian colony in America whose chief law was to be community of goods. But he had met his fate and married, and nothing further was heard of this land of promise. The ten pounds which he had scraped together for this project remained in the savings-bank, a provision for old age. This strangely-mated couple had one son, a hunch-backed cobbler who had hard work to live, and who cherished a secret dislike towards his father.

"The old man was, I should think, the most silent person under heaven ; but certainly, for a man who said so little, he appeared to have a good deal confided to him. The box, like a coffin planted on end, in which he sat out the night behind his brazier of glowing coals, so attractive a sight in the cold dark street, seemed to be a meeting-place for wanderers and odd fish of all kinds. Out of the darkness of the overhanging storages these night-birds would appear singly, in twos and threes, sometimes in whole companies, attracted like moths to the irresistible centre of light and warmth. Watching this circle of haggard faces under the impish freaks of the firelight, one might have thought that this gathering in the midst of heaped timber and road-wreckage had the appearance of a conspiracy, as if some dark understanding drew these aliens together.

"As might be supposed, the queerest wanderers afloat came to lodge in that part of the town, mariners who appeared at night from one end of the globe and set out in the morning for the other ; and on an afternoon in winter two men came to *The Rovers' Return*, one the captain of a small sailing-vessel, surly and red-eyed and full of oaths, and with him his only passenger, a lean, bilious-looking man of no settled occupation. The old woman, Isabel Ferguson, took a sudden and violent dislike to this lodger, for no apparent reason, seeing that he paid regularly and gave no trouble. But she called him a spy and, as was remembered afterwards, she had been heard to say, 'When that man comes into the room it's time for me to go out.'

"The captain, in his turn, had settled with himself that it was a point of honour in him to escort his passenger round the sights of the port. Every day, therefore, while the vessel re-

mained in dock he and his friend would set out to see the sights, and since these, to the sailor, meant often the red lamps of the taverns, their journey would always end in one of the innumerable places which entertain those engaged in or attached to maritime pursuits. Once settled in one of these places the captain would refuse to stir ; and there he would sit so long as he had money in his pocket, burning himself up with rum, and calling on the crowd who came and went between the swinging doors, to live merrily, by which he apparently meant to drink deeply.

"Then his companion, freed from this old man of the sea, would wander about the port, finding his way always at nightfall to the place where old David Ferguson watched by his fire. Seated on a pile of timber, he would observe the gloomy looks of his companions, and with commiseration for their misfortunes would talk much of America and of freedom, of unequal marriage-laws, of the shackles of Englishmen, of freedom again and always of America and once more America, until the circle of outcasts, who had nothing to gain or lose if an empire fell, would sit half through the night in pity for themselves and their mismanaged country. Happening to pass one night, and seeing the close interest of the men I stayed for a minute to listen. The speaker was describing some ideal State which existed in America, but not until he named the State did it occur to me what the man was after. 'In Utah,' were his words. 'Why! the fellow's a Mormon,' said I to myself ; and just then old Ferguson, who had been leaning out of his shed, his eyes fixed on the fire, his mouth so contracted that it seemed to have disappeared altogether, his attitude expressing the closest attention, bent down to reach coal for his fire, at the same time

asking some question of the Mormon which I did not hear.

“‘As old as he likes to join,’ replied the man. As I came away, an old man left the circle and joined me. ‘He’s got a deal to say for himself that theer,’ he observed.

“‘It’s none of it worth much?’ I asked.

“‘Eh, I don’t know. I pay no attention. I just sits me down and warms myself as always, and then I comes away and leaves him to his talking. But he’s plenty to say.’ I laughed and bade the old man a good-night, and went on home, thinking no more of the matter.

“For nearly two months, it seems, the vessel remained in dock undergoing repairs, and at the end of that time the bibulous captain and his friend disappeared and were never heard of again to my knowledge. Their place at *The Rovers’ Return* was filled at once by other lodgers, and in a short time almost every one had forgotten them.

“It was about a month later that the singular incident occurred which I am about to relate to you. Returning to my house one night I stood for a moment or two at the top of a street looking down upon the river, which, with its lights and signals, had the appearance of a vast illumination. Straight down the hill dipped the double row of street-lamps, displaying a whirligig of figures in the dark space between. In front of me, upon a blurred expanse which I knew for the opposite bank of the river, was a multitude of tiny twinkling stars, and stationary, or moving vaguely about on the darkness, like men searching with lanterns, were the red lights of passing steamers. On either side of the river long rows of lamps flung a steady gleam upon that liquid street; high above them swung the enormous lantern of the

tower, and far down the great water-way the signal-light flashed against the sky swiftly, mechanically, showing the entrance to ships in the channel. Here and there on the dim surface of the river, troubled blots of light were floating like lamps washed out to sea. Behind me, turning suddenly, I saw the moon, a great yellow moon rising behind the chimneys and adding its share to the general illumination. It was as if the streets and the heavens were so many blazing ways lighting the wanderers of two worlds to the rim of the great divining-cup of the sea in whose uncertain surface they might discern the phantom shapes and figures of futurity.

“Suddenly, as I turned to go down the hill, I became aware of two figures advancing towards me, an old woman, bare-headed and making a moaning sound as she walked, and with her, as it seemed a guard upon her, a small hunch-backed man. I recognised them as the landlady of *The Rovers’ Return* and her son, and as they came nearer I could hear that the moaning sound which came from the old woman was in reality the rapid utterance of words. Without looking at anything round her she cried: ‘Let me go after my old lad, I tell you! I’ll not stop here and him on the other side of the world. Oh my poor old lad, I’ll follow you—I’ll find you somewhere—I’ll come to the world’s end after you!’

“Here the hunch-back caught her by the arm and endeavoured to distract her attention. ‘Come back home, Mother,’ he said. ‘How can you find him in the wide world, you that never was out of this place in your life? You’ll never find him on this side the grave. He’s left you for good, and let him go,—curse him!’

“‘How can I go home?’ returned

the old woman distracted for a moment. 'There's no home for me except where my old lad is,—him going astray somewhere in the world and perhaps on the sea this very night! There's people in the world that'll tell an old woman the road. Oh my poor old lad, how could you do it to me? But I'll follow you, I'll follow you!'

"'Come out of the street, Mother,' repeated the son.

"'It wasn't well done by me,' continued the old woman. 'I've been a married woman for forty years, and I wish I was dead before I see this day.'

"'And so do I,' returned the son; 'but you must make up your mind to do without him. Come home now, Mother, and let him go where he wants. You've got a son left.'

"'It isn't a husband,' cried the old woman. 'My poor old man, wherever have you gone to?' And with that they turned into an alley and I saw them no more.

"As I stood hesitating at the end of the street, which was one of eyeless warehouses, with lamps hung on the wall and niches in which outcasts were lurking, two women came up the hill and stopped not far from me. 'That's what comes of a man that never opens his mouth,' said one angrily. 'I'd sooner have a man that knocks you about a bit than one of them that you never know what they're thinking of. To leave his lawful wife, and them married forty years! And she's never shed a tear, nor she won't go home. She's wandering in the streets, saying she'll go after him and find him and she a woman of sixty-five! Oh, them wicked Mormons!'

"At that word, as if I had remembered some sin of my youth, the thought of the bilious stranger of the night-circle startled me, hit me with

such a sense of catastrophe that I turned and spoke to the woman. 'What is the matter?' I asked; 'what has happened?' Confused by my sudden attack their story was incoherent and fantastic to a degree but it amounted to this. Unknown to all, possibly even unsuspected by himself, some inexplicable and fatal tenacity of purpose had never ceased to exist in the brain of the old Scot. The passion, which seemed to have slept for forty years, had been by the chance visit of the Morman missionary wrought to such a height that without a word he had gone his way, leaving home and wife at the age of seventy, taking with him the savings gathered so many years before, voyaging to discover in that America of promise the fulfilment of his youthful dream.

"For many days this incident haunted me, but there was a good deal of sickness that year, and through the pressure of other thoughts and much work, its outline had begun to fade, when, one day, a bright day with a blue sky, I went to the stage to see the American steamer sail. I amused myself for a time in the keen alert atmosphere, watching that meeting-place of all nations. The tide was rushing with the speed of a mill-slucice, and the tiniest scrap of a sail was visible on that buoyant path. The huge vessel hove above the stage, bowing slowly with the action of the tide like a tethered horse impatient to start. In mid-channel the small river-steamers hurried panting about their business: a great liner with men at work in her rigging lay a dead-weight on the water; and a line of barges, uneasy with such a swell of water beneath them, were towed to their quiet dock by a screaming tug. On the stage itself I watched the crowd outside the barriers, the folk in a line on the

deck of the vessel, the trim gloved officers, the porters coming and going along the gangway like figures in a child's toy; then, returning on the roadway above the river, I saw the scene from a higher level, catching glimpses, across a deep pit of green water, of the crowd moving to and fro against the hull of the great steamer. A few seconds more, and I saw that the huge vessel had moved a step outwards and was cautiously feeling her way like a blind creature moving a step at a time. Then, with two tugs leading her in ropes she went off slowly, the flail of her great propeller rising and beating the water, leaving behind her a writhing trail of foam. Presently, finding no check upon her but the two ropes, she stood still for a moment to rid herself of them, and then went away down the middle stream between a line of watching ships and people.

"As I withdrew my eyes from the beautiful creature, they were caught by a ludicrous figure not many yards from me. By my side, with his eyes fixed on the lessening steamer, standing on tip-toe so that his chin just appeared above the iron railing, and holding high above his head with both hands a two-foot rule with a spotted

handkerchief fluttering from the end, was my friend the hunch-backed cobbler with tears running down his face, unheeding everything but that black steerage-deck on which it was impossible longer to distinguish a single figure. Then once again I remembered that belated emigrant, and understood, as certainly as if it had been told me, that somewhere in the heart of that great vessel which I had watched so carelessly, was the forsaken old woman who had never set foot outside her native port, journeying at the age of sixty-five on an impossible quest over strange and dreaded waters. I guessed how it had been. The neighbours, full of pity for her madness, and seeing that she could never rest, had gathered a sum of money and allowed her to set forth on her hopeless journey. 'So that is the end of it,' I said to myself; and it was virtually the end, for though I was at some trouble to discover what became of the old couple, no one in the town ever heard of them again. Nor did the son, whose poverty kept him behind, hear; and indeed, when I think of it, how should he, for his mother could not write, and his father had gone to join the Mormons."

THE GREAT INVITATION.

I.

WHAT is the scent of moonlight? Ah, sceptic, some nerve is lacking in your nostrils. And you, poet of gentle and languorous sentiment, my heart is not answering nor envying at all when you whisper of roses. Fresh, pungent, awakening, it comes back to me, borrowing and refining the odour of burning turf and resinous pine. So always to me, at least, since I received the Great Invitation, which in my best hours,—well, then, my blest hours, rare enough—I have been accepting ever since.

It came long ago, at the back of my serious school-days, when I was a little street-bred urchin whose world behind it had been Camden Town. Some feverish malady, I think, was the immediate means that the divine power took to draw me out of the dinginess. Convalescent, my white face was an annoyance, and a visit was manœuvred to a distant relative. This, by the way, was not the Great Invitation, though it seemed big enough to my mother. I heard her boasting up two flights of stairs of the high respectability of her cousin, my hostess to be. So respectable was she that before I could be her guest the household days and nights were given over to the revision of my garments. To my brothers and sisters I was an object of almost tearful envy. Tom suggested the delights of bird-nesting. I snubbed him with a knowledge, drawn from I know not where, that January was not the best time for that sport. Mary asked me to bring home water-cress, and was haughtily smiled down,

“Then what *will* you do?” they asked, a little maliciously.

I made lofty and vague reply. But to that comprehensive vast, the Country, perhaps my imagination reached no nearer than a Regent's Park without railings or policemen. With passionate injunctions to behave buzzing meaninglessly in my ear, I set out, never before so new and clean, to meet the unknown.

If it had not been for the name of the thing, at the end of three or four days I would gladly have been back in the dingy warmth of the Camden Road. My cousin's respectability froze me to a painful rigour. Her pasty-faced children were no use as comrades, and when we quarrelled, hers was a terrible tribunal to be haled before. It was January, mild, hazy, rainy, and she dreaded mud for herself and her brats. Muffled and goloshed, we were dragged out every afternoon in solemn procession for a mile or so along a bye-road, between dripping hedges. Save for that, we were cooped up in a back-yard which to an urchin with the key of the London streets seemed a very narrow prison.

Never have I seen such domesticated children as hers. A magnet held them fast to the kitchen-door and the yard of Myrtle Villa. Other back-yards, of Smith's Villa and of Fairfax Lodge, abutted on each side, while the coal-cellar, the wash-house, and a few square feet of brick paving, confined our entertainment. The worst of it was, I could smell the country; but all my hints of farther adventure were ignored. We were a terribly

respectable household. Certain neighbours were not to be spoken to under grave penalties which Billy and Sam never had to undergo. Noisy games (save whining) were forbidden. Outside the precincts of Myrtle Villa horrid vulgar dangers were said to lurk. The constant night-mare of Sam was tinkers. He told me shuddering tales of the customs of these folks, who were always about plotting evil, and as I had never seen them amid the lawless opportunities of the country, I confused them now with my colossal dreams of highway robbers. So there, in an ugly little island amid undiscovered oceans of beauty, we played mild housekeeping, shopkeeping games, and quarrelled and idled and detested each other. Inside, the cousins showed marked house-maiding talents. I was allowed to clean the spoons, and the privilege I mistook for a penalty. In the evening they lamented out of a hymn-book to their mother's wailing on the harmonium, to my secret admiration, be it said, till my cousin told me not to put them out, and Billy pinched me because I looked over his shoulder. Then I sat apart in the stuffy parlour, and wondered what Mary and Kate and Tom were doing. It was Saturday night; they were marketing, leisurely, jovially with mother in the brilliant Camden Road. I could bear it no longer, and escaped out into the night.

II.

I had forgotten it was night, and I was frankly afraid. In my fright I took the wrong turning, got entangled among plantations, and ran head down ashamed of thus abusing my freedom. But I soon discovered it was not dark after all, and stopped to reconnoitre, my heart beating wildly. I found myself on the edge

of a long white line, the high road, and it would lead me right enough; but there on the other side my eyes met what made home seem a very far thing. First, a dark bounding heath, with tufted hillocks that made me think, I know not why, of sleeping and dead soldiers. Then, beyond the dark belt, a plain of molten silver, a quivering sea for angels to bathe in, fringed with feathery trees. I suppose I knew the moon was riding up above; but moonlight I had never seen before. How should I? The moon has a shabby way of treating Camden Town, at least in a boy's waking hours. And now the spirit of Beauty made its way through the thick tough hide of an ignorant lad, and in its usual fashion, with the keen probing edge of pain. My feet were on the road, a little trembling and a little hasty, for the wood on my left was dark and ominous. But my eyes were on the shining land of light, and a new awe fought my lower fears.

It was then there came to me the breath of the night, faint, fragrant, aromatic, as might be the smoke from the silver fires in the angel-land down there. More pungent was it every step, exciting now, encouraging. Then came sounds for which I pricked my ear. I was nearing them. They turned me hot and cold, but they drew me on, they and that fragrance in my nostrils, till they declared themselves the most assuring of all sounds to a child's ear, the voices of other children at play. They came from a little wood of fine saplings, with broken spaces where figures seemed moving in a dance. The place was alive with elves or mannikins, and glimmers of light ruddier than the moon's shone between them. A queer company this, of stumbling babies and half-grown lads and lasses, with shrill tongues and the

accent of vigour so inevitably attractive. From the fire in the nearest clearing the blue smoke curled up, waking me into eagerness with its resinous taste. Before it danced a dozen or more children, shrieking, laughing, quarrelling in some game like *Touch me who can*, now hiding amid the trees, now swinging the saplings, now upsetting each other, till they swayed round to my side of the wood, and surrounded me; and I felt a light hand flick my shoulder.

It was the Great Invitation; but I did not pause as I do now. It was accepted as soon as given, in my sudden pursuit of the long-skirted slip of a girl who had touched me. Round the fire, between trees, floundering on the slippery pine-needles till I caught an apron-corner and held it fast. Then was I pursued again in the midst of whirling black things with gleaming white faces, till a rough hand pushed me with, "Halloa! who's here?" The suspicious questioner was thrust away with a confident, "Dick Smith's van o' course," authoritatively from the lanky girl, who pulled me by the hand out of danger's way just as the game was changed, by some unseen lawgiver, into hide-and-seek.

Oh, but it was a glorified hide-and-seek to a town child! In the uneven wood there were black ditches unvisited by the moon; there were stacked twigs whose shadow you could borrow for covering; there was a deep hole into which my patroness gave me a friendly and painful shove; and there were pursuers, very sleuth hounds to follow the scent, or rather the defiant sounds, the queer unfamiliar shrieks, which I imitated lest my natural tones should betray me a foreigner. When caught, you were haled with violence to the Robber's Cave, a place of torment there was much mention

of. Tracked hard by a persevering leader and his bloodhounds, I fled farther afield to meet another fire, and near it two black mound-like objects, alarming certainly. I guessed them habitations, though I had never seen their like. Very uncanny, very horrid were they under the shadow of the trees. A sound came from within, too, and terror kept me glued there while the fabric of the building visibly moved. I knew now, the tinkers! Oh, the tales of them! Already I felt the hand that was to grab me where I stood. A shriek was on my lips as the flame sprang higher, and showed two white dots tearing aside a black flap of the tent, making an opening just wide enough to show a long-frocked, two-foot, bald-headed, gurgling baby. The shriek changed to a laugh; but still, if that black mound were the Robber's Cave I would gladly miss the chance of investigating it.

They were on my track again, when once more the girl's hand touched me and beckoned. She was clinging to the bank of a deep narrow road. "Come," she whispered. We were down. There was a hooting, a howling, a shrieking of "Licia" above us; there were demands for vengeance. She had been captured, I gathered, and had escaped, against all law and order. Under the shadow of the bank we crept, crossed the high road at a bound, and lay flat till the hot pursuit had spent itself. On a lower level of the dark ground we were hidden and safe.

III.

"What's your name?"

"Dick Smith, *you* know," I answered with a laugh.

"No, but down here." Her hand pointed to our new surroundings.

I told her, and in courtesy, asked hers.

"Felicia Stanley. Where do you come from?"

"London."

"Are you on the road?"

"What?"

She looked at me, and said meditatively: "Of course not. What are you here for?"

"I am on a visit."

"Oh!"

The rest of her interrogatory was deferred while we made our way along. Silence took hold of us. Suddenly I was aware of our both walking on soft tiptoe, and holding our breath. I wondered then why we did it, but I know it now for a sign of the born night-wanderers, the night-lovers. We slid down again, backed by a tussock of heath, she very white, with stiff black hanks of hair, a creature of that pale world yonder from which perhaps she came. Was that why I asked her: "Is that the sea?"

"Where?"

"There, where the trees are swimming."

"No," said she, with decision; "and they aren't swimming."

"Are they just real trees? Eh? Why—"

Then a little white hand, with spreading drooping fingers, raised itself level with the white phosphorescent face, leaving on my dark garments and the black ground a trail of light for a fleet second.

Something in me half awoke. There was a moving stream of silver down there to the left. She pointed, swayed a finger, and said regretfully: "My shadows are not very shiny."

"Shadows are black," I objected.

"The shadow of *that* isn't," she answered stoutly.

"That? What?"

"It's a Hand. See, it goes so—" and she imitated the tender trembling of the illuminated track beyond.

"Will it come up here?"

"No, it never comes quite up to us."

"Is it always here at night?"

"It moves, sending a place to sleep."

The ready assurance of this vagrant's mythology, which explained to her the silver glory of her nights, silenced me for the moment; and since then the wistful longing of the moonlight has had for symbol the Hand of Peace blessing and hushing that country which is just beyond us, and to which we must ever be voyaging.

But it was too old, too settled a conviction of hers to keep her still. The wind came crackling and hissing over the heather. We whispered in imitation, and lay back and counted the stars, faint by the greater light, and blinked with Sirius, and disputed whether they grew on stalks or no, —till a wild yell came over from the wood behind, and Felicia sent back another in answer.

"I'm off," she said; and she was, leaving a great blank, and to me, not yet initiate, the terror of the vast again.

The wood was silent when I reached it. The children had moved away. Perhaps it was the supper-time of the Ishmaelites. I trotted homewards, too, dashing into my cousin's with the wind in my head and the light in my eyes, dazed and absent to all her questions. I answered awry, ate my supper in haste, and mounted to my garret washed white by the river of the moon, rendered fearful by the radiance of the Hand. I hid my head, then peered, and hid again, lest I should feel its touch upon my head.

IV.

Of course, it was a very different thing by day. My escape made from dust-shovels and frying-pans, I hung

about the little wood, and crept close to the camping-ground; three painted vans, blackened fire-circles, a family's washing, a horse or two, babies of all ages,—and beyond these, my dark mound-like tents of the night before, an upturned cart, and more babies. I knew I was in a desperate neighbourhood, but by daylight, and with the road in sight, I dared be curious. Of course I was waiting for Felicia. There she was, alternately scrubbing an old kettle and setting a top-heavy infant on its legs. Then business took her afield with two pails. I followed discreetly. Truth to tell, in the broad garish daylight I sought not her so much as her re-introduction to the wild wicked company of last night. Since the grown folks were mostly invisible, she permitted me to take a turn of the camp in a wide circle. One yellow van I admired with enthusiasm. Was it hers?

"Oh, no," she said scornfully, turning up her nose as she spoke something incomprehensible about Mumpers. Her folks had no van. She pointed to the upturned cart, the dingy meagre horse, and the round black tent. I was aghast. That! Her pride was mysterious, but impressive even when I did not guess that Felicia's stiff black hair and the shape of her ragged dwelling were patents of nobility, linking her to the older race of vagrants.

Housekeeping duties over, she led me into a field, and some younger children joined us. It should have seemed tame play to me, but I had hopes of something better to follow, and perhaps my sense of humour was awakened. For it was at visits of ceremony these little vagrants played and by the hours together. I was the host, inside a house whose walls were marked by pebbles. On a stone I sat and gravely shook hands with each, when they had rapped a flint

and come in. They asked after my health, and I solemnly offered them fir-cone cakes to eat and water-wine to drink before they had time to sit down. Orientally lavish was my hospitality. Then we shook hands again, and parted without a smile. I returned their visit each time with more than royal punctuality, riding on a pine-branch steed. It was my first introduction to rigorous etiquette.

The approach of bigger boys, who paid ominous attentions to myself, suggested I had better not outstay my welcome. I backed towards the wood and the road, Felicia maintaining a non-committal attitude between me and my tormentors.

V.

There had been a tame afternoon walk with a neighbour and her baby, a prisoned evening with hymns in the stuffy parlour, and then bed. I had been nodding with sleep; but the chilly stairs woke me, and the white light swimming in my room made me uneasy and fearful. I did not want to be alone with the Great White Hand. Out there with the queer girl it was different. She knew it, and was not afraid. Out there— Ah! just now she and her free kindred were at play.

But I would go too and look on. The lattice could be squeezed through. Cap and muffler lay ready to my hand. Just below the sloping roof jutted a bit of wall. I got hold of it, scrambled, slid, swung, till I was on the ground. I was in the lane, in the high road, flying like a deer. There was the plantation; in its depths still glimmered a fire; and then to my nostrils came the scent that stung to desire. But all was silent. No play! These folks were really very irregular in their habits.

I waited for movement. Creeping in the shadow of the trees, I peered wistfully, and stole nearer. An old man looked at me suspiciously, and a woman smiled in what I thought was a guileful way. No youngsters were to be seen, and my heart was growing chill, when a rattling noise about the yellow waggon, and a voice encouraging a sleepy horse to action, sent me flying in nervous bounds, to seek Felicia's dwelling deeper in the wood at the edge of a field. But the neighbourhood of the mound-like tents was awesome. There was I, a trembling waif in the midst of the night, hemmed in by creeping shadows, by a strong odour of supper I was not to share, and by a faint human stir which I could not think friendly.

Suddenly there sounded a shriek of laughter, of pain, then of laughter again. A fleet thing was being chased by another thing as fleet, and bigger, that bore a long stick. To drive its prey into the dark hillock Felicia called home, was the big one's object. And I scented a further purpose—to tie her to base offices. Oh, I knew! Myrtle Villa had taught me. Then should I wait in vain. A bit of turf from my hand caught the pursuer full in the chest. The tall woman stopped to wonder, and to swear in a way unfamiliar to a native of the Camden Road. Felicia was safe, and I, horrified at my deed, was fast on her track. The girl paused for a moment, swung her head round, sniffed the air, then slipped along a ditch to the road, where she stopped. I reached her out of breath, and found her cool and not very grateful.

"You mout 'ave killed the old 'un. She's my mother," she said, indignant at my attack on a tender parent.

"Better go back and put her to bed," I answered crossly.

"Not just yet," she answered, and then bade me hush and hide down behind some bushes at the roadside. There was a sound of wheels; a slow van came along led by a man with a long whip. Felicia nudged me, crooked her fore-finger beckoningly, and put it to her lips. A second after she was sitting, all unknown to the man, on the back step of the waggon, I beside her. It was the despised yellow van of the Mumpers; but, like other persons of high degree, she knew the moment to efface her contempt for the sake of benefit and convenience. We had gone half a mile before she explained: "They'll be asleep before I go back, and I'll scoot off first thing in the morning, and keep away till they be right glad to see me again."

"Where are we going?" I asked.

"*They're* going to Portsmouth, I 'spect."

"Is that near London?"

"No, t'other way."

"Oh!" That meant space and chaos—not home. But it was better than my cousin's back-yard. On then!

By this time our presence had been discovered and objected to. Felicia Stanley was admonished to go back to her mother, and the man flicked his whip at us. But we stuck like limpets, and when a baby inside wailed and, in spite of many disciplinary slaps, refused to be quiet, a weary dishevelled woman was glad to hand it into 'Licia's outstretched arms. The baby gurgled and laughed at the moon, pushed off its woollen cap as if it could not have enough of the night-air, defied every hygienic nursery law, and made itself agreeable company. A further expansion of the heart within the yellow van showed itself in gifts of bread and dripping. A sense of well-being stole over me that blotted out all terror

and misgiving, as we munched and fed the baby and made our slow way along the white road, and counted the pale stars. No, decidedly, I should never go back any more. The world beyond Camden Road and Myrtle Villa was thrilling with delight. I was on the threshold of a Wonder-house.

'Licia called me back from dreams by a renewed questioning. Had I a father? Had I a mother? Had I a brother? But, quite particularly, had I any sister? Two? Bigger than she? Fair or dark? The fair one at once engaged her affections; what was her name? Mary was a very common name. What kind of clothes did she wear? Here I was at fault in my memories and my description. 'Licia snorted her disdain of my fair sister's modest apparel and of me; and rolling the baby over on her lap invited me to play cat's cradle across its body with a bit of string she drew from a full and interesting pocket. Truly she was a person of quick action. I was still fingering the string when she rose suddenly, handed the sleeping baby to its mother, plucked me like a flower off the step, without a word of farewell to our conveyors, and turned my face backwards. I hesitated, and gave in. The one clear thought in my mind was that, without the traditional pistol of every boy's romance, how could I face the unknown world? 'Licia was racing along. I must not be left behind, and hard running dulled thought. Besides, the wonder of the night was not all over.

More than half our journey back lay a great moorland pond by the roadside. Even far off it beckoned us with a bright eye. When we reached it, it drew us down its bank like a flash. Our feet squeaked in the swampy borders; the night-birds whirred up at our approach; moving

shadows bent and rose on its farther sides; strange lappings sounded in our ears. I suppose I pointed apprehensively.

"They come down to drink at night," said 'Licia.

"Who?"

"Oh, the boars, and deer, and things."

It was an old tale she was telling me, a heritage from her wandering folk, who had been passing by its banks for centuries; but I believed her implicitly, and looked round at the dark hunting-ground, which the great game had left to the rabbits for more than a hundred years, and peopled it at her hint with prowling, shaggy creatures, swift-coursing, antlered stags, and running huntsmen, all dark, in my picture, all shadowy, like the stealthy things that seemed to lurk over there and lap so thirstingly.

Felicia had strayed apart. When I ran to her for company, she hushed me with her finger and peered into the water.

"Fishes?" I whispered.

"No. They do say the full moon draws the dead folk up. Let's watch."

"What dead folks?"

"Drowned, of course. Let's look."

Obediently I joined in the lurid quest. "See," she would say eagerly, and then, "No" with decision each time. But surely I saw glimpses of upturned cheeks and strands of black floating hair. They could not rest, the poor dead things, with that moon calling. There might well have been a general *noyade* for the sights I saw, before she called me off and made her shadow dance elfishly in the water, stooping down on all fours till her stiff locks were dripping. Of course I did the same, and waggled my face in time with hers, and laughed, but shyly in that silence.

"That's how I'll look when I'm

dead," she said cheerfully. That was not so disturbing as the sight of people really dead now. And, besides, just then I was falling under the spell of that shining sea of peace behind the low black land. As I looked, the goodwill of the strange country came to me; terror had gone, and for ever.

I only felt my fatigue at the end of our trotting walk, when Felicia gave me a touch, half a pat, half a shove, and disappeared to her tent among the saplings. Fain would I have lingered, but I had been effectively dismissed.

I did not climb back by my command. The door of Myrtle Villa stood open. A woman's head peered out, and I was spied. Then followed glaring and shaking, but no articulate word till she turned the key on me in my cold attic. I slept till nearly seven, but the household was not astir when I woke resolved to imitate Felicia's prudence. I would run off and stay till they would be glad to have me back. Of course, it was to the tents I ran. Alas! in the grey light I discerned that the camp was no more, only blackened circles where the fires had been, a broken vessel or two, and

some rags. I kicked them about in my desolation, and slunk back to my cousin's with no heart for further enterprise. A painful interview followed. I had not the wisdom to hide my late companion's way of life, and Billy's screams at the name of gipsies were added to my iniquities. But this is hardly worth mentioning. Aching within and without, I was despatched to Camden Town in the afternoon, where my holiday tales sounded vague and unsatisfactory in the ears of my family.

Since then I have looked on all the roads for a lanky, black-haired maid, with a lively eye, and cheeks burnt to an old ivory hue by the sun. Was her freedom ever marred by domesticities? For her sake I have made queer friends and my bed in strange places. I have never met her again in the body; but on every dark heath by night, in the streaks of mist, in the moonlight on the pools, I see her white face, and her steps are lithe by my side. She has made my spirit a vagrant since she gave me the Great Invitation, and I know not yet where it may lead me.

A. MACDONELL.

SABRINÆ COROLLA

AN enthusiastic lady once wrote an article to prove that *IL PENSEROSO* and *L'ALLEGRO* were composed by Milton after his Italian travels, and when his recollection was full of Italian scenery. With just as little reason, I am completely prepossessed with the belief that Milton had paid a visit to Ludlow before writing *COMUS*, even if he was not present at its performance; and that either on this occasion, or on some other, he became familiar with the country round the old border-town of Shrewsbury. The "towers and battlements," "bosom'd high in tufted trees," belong (and nothing in the world should persuade me to the contrary) to some old Shropshire mansion, one of those which with "towers and terrace" crown the "lofty head" of "Sabrina fair."

There is a bond of connection between Ludlow and Shrewsbury which should have inseparably united them in the mind of the poet of *COMUS*. The republican iconoclast might style the *ARCADIA* "vain and amatorious," but the sweet singer of earlier and happier days must have felt a natural attraction to the youthful haunts of Britannia's Phoenix,—the low, dark-browed chambers in which Philip Sidney learned the rudiments, and the stately castle where the Lord President held court, and to which the Lord President's little son returned for his holidays.

The old-time traces are slowly but relentlessly being wiped out from the streets of Shrewsbury. Only a fragment of the old town-walls remain. A great part of St. Mary's church has

been destroyed by a terrible storm,—a divine visitation, so the good vicar believes, upon an apostate town which proposed to erect a statue to Darwin. The statue was erected none the less, and a hideous mass of bronze disfigures the front of the old grammar-school, now deserted by the inheritors of Sir Philip's school-tradition, and sadly transmogrified into a free library and museum. Yet its fate might have been more cruel. A few habitual loungers doze through the afternoon over the London papers. A few tired sempstresses and curly-headed errand-boys wait patiently every evening in a gas-laden atmosphere for a somnambulist curator to hand out dog-eared and dirty novels. But in all other parts of the building solitude broods undisturbed over shadowy passages, chambers steeped in an ambiguous twilight by narrow, mullioned windows, and stair-cases that would resent a human footstep as an outrage. Here seems to linger the memory of ancient Elizabethan worthies, who, like Thomas Ashton, acted Latin plays of their own composition to the amazement of all the spectators, ranged in turf-cut seats in the Quarry; or, like Thomas Lawrence, paid their compliments in Latin epigrams to Sir Henry Sidney when he celebrated with special splendour the feast of St. George at the council-house; or, like Richard Atkys, filled a more lowly place, and, after a service of some twenty-six years or so, went to their long home in the scholars' chapel in St. Mary's church, the whole school leaving their lessons for that day and

following the bier, on which, in scholar's fashion, copies of verses were pinned, praising the single talent which the Eternal Master found not unemployed. Nor can the past fail to project on so congenial a back-ground the simulacra of those Elizabethan school-boys whose fantastical and aptly padded trunk-hose were so faithfully belaboured by the rod, birch, or ferula of the painful accident-master, and who so often yawned at the tedious discourses of the town-preacher at St. Alkmund's, and so often, when friends had been liberal, ran the risk of being "summarily expelled," for wagering something higher than a penny a game and fourpence a match, over their wrestling and their shooting with the long-bow. Little did they dream that they would live to fight the great Armada, or singe the beard of the King of Spain in some buccaneering expedition, or to hunt the wild Irishes under Norreys and Bagenall, or to earn a fleeting renown among men-of-letters by distorting the stubborn mother-tongue into unnatural hexameters.

In this dark and low-roofed chamber on the second floor Ralph Gittins harboured one Humphry Leach, a disguised Papist, who afterwards fled the kingdom, and published divers books against the Estate of the Realm. From this window Ralph Gittens looked out, when the town-bailiffs were trying to eject him from his place as second master, and cried to the townsfolk down in the street, "Burgesses, I stand for your rights," thus provoking a riot which lasted three days and two nights. Down these stairs the same Ralph Gittens threw, or procured to be thrown, a piece of timber, which had like to have "killed or spoiled" the worshipful Mr. Jones. Another window is confronted by the venerable timber gate-way of the council-house. Here

the Lord-President of the Marches held his court for one term in the year. Here, too, Charles made his head-quarters in the September of 1642, while Thomas Chaloner (the witty, learned, unlucky head-master) entertained Lord Keeper Littleton, Archbishop Williams, and other leading Royalists. Chaloner was himself an ardent Royalist, and he afterwards suffered much for his faith. The time came when he had to fly from the school which he had made so famous, but, before that time came, rumours of the impending fate of Archbishop Laud had been carried to Shrewsbury, and Chaloner had penned in the school-register (fearing the insufficiency of the disguise even of an ancient tongue) that cryptic imprecation on Prynne,—*babad seggi orraban*—which baffles Salopian antiquaries to this day. Never again would he enjoy such happy reunions as relieved the long tedium of the siege,—those gatherings of "a company of good fellows" at the Sextry, a tavern in one of the *shutts*, or dark alleys communicating between street and street, which are a prominent feature of Shrewsbury. A few years and most of that cheerful fellowship had perished, some fallen at the taking of the town, others put to the sword by ruthless Ironsides far away in Irish leaguers. They were all staunch king's men, those friends of Chaloner. Still, the instincts of a scholar rose in natural revolt when he saw a council-of-war holding its deliberations in the school-library, a copy of Heinsius's NOTES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT stolen away by one of the Commission for Artillery, and Dr. Andrewe's SERMONS "basely torn by the sacrilegious fingers of a Scotch camp-chaplain."

When James the Second paid a visit to Shrewsbury, the conduits ran with wine, but the head-master was

secretly plotting to prevent the appointment of a Roman Catholic successor. With what thoughts did Jeffreys revisit the haunts of his boyhood? And was it with admiration or horror, or a doubtful mingling of both, that light-hearted youngsters gazed on that handsome face, in which so many despairing eyes had sought for some hint of clemency in vain?

A kind of waking dream hovers in this memory-laden atmosphere. Shadows become reality, and reality has dwindled to a shadow. These figures of a distant past lack the incisive actuality of life; they have ceased to be men who work for good or evil, act and suffer, and are animated by passions and desires. They have become a piece of antiquity; their personality has submitted to the lingering touches which transmute grim use into delicate beauty, and change an insolent and frowning fortalice into a grey and tender dream.

While the memories of Elizabethan and Caroline days centre in the school-close and the council-house, the Middle Ages have taken refuge in the abbey-church, which looks across the river from the east side, at the spires of Shrewsbury, and the castle rising steeply from the river's bank. Roger de Montgomery, who built the castle, growing in his old age weary of warfare and fearful of his soul, raised an abbey to St. Peter and St. Paul, and being, by consent of his countess Adelaiza, shorn a monk of his own foundation, there died and was buried in the garb of sanctity. When the sun is setting behind the opposite spires, the great west window, under the tower, glows with gorgeous blazonries of Beauchamp and Talbot, Fitz-alan and Mauleverer. And when the sunshine sleeps on the massive buttresses and

the Norman arches of the clerestory, or loses itself in the obscurity of deep-set door-ways, the sordid details of modern life which, with their ubiquitous obtrusiveness are not absent even here, are all conjured away. The jackdaws, which nest in undiscoverable niches and crannies, are possessed by the spirits of monks whose dry bones crumble under the cold pavement of the aisles. And all who live under the shadow of the ancient church have caught something of the prevailing tone. They are only half of the present day. A secret spell is upon them, which they scarcely suspect, and they have fallen unconsciously into the part of mere accessories to a historic picture. As I stand in the grassy precincts of the solemn pile, the life and business of modern Shrewsbury vanishes like a mirage. The old town is endenized again by those good burghers who nightly kept watch and ward along the walls that command the Severn fords, or slept peaceably in their beds, not without some apprehensions of a sudden onslaught of wild Welsh, bursting into the town with keen blades bared for the burgher's throat and pitch-pine torches flaming for the burgher's roof-tree.

There is something in the atmosphere of Shrewsbury which leaves an indelible impression on those who have been submitted to its influence. However practical, hard-headed, and successful a Salopian may become, it is always possible for one who is in the secret to detect the traces of his initiation,—of having passed under that grey, free-stone arch, surmounted by those quaint Elizabethan figures, with the sententious motto from Isocrates inscribed upon them in Greek and gold. It is as impossible for one who has received the instruction of a Jesuit seminary to shake himself clear of that intangible something which

stamps him with the note of mediocrity, even if he should slough the clerical skin to turn civil engineer, opportunist politician, or pamphleteer of anarchy, as for the son of the foundation of the Sixth Edward and Eliza Regina to renounce the spirit of the place which possessed his most impressionable years. I have felt the mysterious emanation radiate from a hard-driven editor, while the gas-laden air of a dreary office was vibrating with the clang of hungry machinery clamouring for copy. I have known bronzed and bearded war-correspondents, sated with battle and adventure, from whose lives the stricken fields of Africa and the bivouacs of Thessaly have not erased the dreamy touches of romance sealed in the grey border-town of their boyhood. I know a certain wit of the interior cabinet of PUNCH who betrays himself even in laughing at Mr. Chamberlain or rallying Lord Rosebery. I know a laborious and trusted servant of the State, bristling with statistics and steeped in jurisprudence, who sometimes finds visions of blue hills intercepting his application to a State Paper, and sometimes is lulled to sleep in the Upper Chamber, not by the prosing of a noble lord, but by the pouring and plashing of a broad river over Shelton Fords. It is not the recollection of boyish pranks, the fascination of long summer days in the cricket-field and on the river, or the fiercer excitement of the charges and rallies of the winter sport, nor the good-fellowship that recalls interminable stories and half-forgotten jests,—it is not this that I mean, for this is the prerogative of every public school. It is a trick of the imagination, that is the creature of such old-world and romantic surroundings as only Shrewsbury can give. Eton and Harrow and Rugby are too exposed to the echoes of the outer world. As Renan,

for all the wit and the *finesse* that he borrowed from Paris, remained a Breton at heart to the day of his death, so the Salopian remains a Salopian, wherever his future lot may be cast. This spirit, when it is found in the scholar, wooing him to long excursions that are guided by invisible filaments of association and that have no definite aim, or in the man-of-letters, tempting him to dwell in a twilight dream-land, rather than in the regions of sharp reality, the world calls pedantry; but when it occurs no less in the hard-riding, unlettered country squire, the world is at a loss for a name.

It must not be thought that the Salopian is of a gentler fibre than men of another breeding. The old Shrewsbury steeple-chase was remarkable among all such contests for its savage thoroughness. Butler's and Kennedy's boys were the terror of the country-side for their poaching and poultry-stealing abilities. I never heard that the Breton was suspected of over-civilisation or ultra-refinement, and the Salopian is the English Breton. The modern Salopian has found that the set of modern opinion, and perhaps the superior organisation of the modern police, have rendered poultry-stealing and poaching an anachronism. But he makes up for these lost opportunities of activity by an increased hardihood on the football field, and the boat-captains of Oxford and Cambridge have discovered that Shrewsbury rowing, though not remarkable for polish or style, is distinguished by a peculiar combination of dash and doggedness.

I have never known the grey buildings, which Meighen erected, except as the home of Egyptian mummies and relics from Uriconium, of stuffed birds and beasts and alligators. The school had migrated, before my time, to the green slope which looks

down, across the river, to the tall, rook-haunted lindens of the Quarry. I do not think that the new abode is less impressive than the old. It is true that the houses are new, though one of them occupies the site of the old Apothecaries' Hall, and in the garden may be seen strange plants which have sprung from seeds dormant for some hundred years. The most respectable memory attached to the actual school tenement is of the French prisoners who were kept in confinement here during the Great War. In the head-master's house is a magnificently carved mantel-piece, the work of one of these poor captives who must have been an artist of no mean ability. The beauty of the situation more than compensates for the slight antiquity of the structure. The breath of spring whispers lovingly through the glossy elms and fragrant limes. The gusts of autumn strew the wide, fair fields with the crimson eddies and burnished gold of falling foliage. On one side there is a prospect of the blue summits of the Breidden Hills surmounted by Rodney's pillar. On another the grey lines of ancient fortifications continue the circuit of the stately Quarry trees, till the horizon is closed on the east by the purple crest of the Wrekin; and at the other extremity the river is suddenly shut in by a dense clump of bosage, which in the fall of the year flames with a thousand sunset hues.

How often, as the last line of fire has faded away from the autumn sky, and the melancholy clang of the call-over bell has echoed through the gathering dark, have the "long, long thoughts of youth" surged up, mingling retrospect with anticipation, the vast desires of vague, illimitable pleasure, untasted, wildly dreamed of, with the equally vague memories of those who, in like circumstances, have

dreamed the same dreams, been agitated by the same anticipations, and have vanished from the regretless earth, like the gleam that has been engulfed by darkness!

Coldly, sadly descends
 The autumn-evening. The field
 Strewn with its dank yellow drifts
 Of wither'd leaves, and the elms,
 Fade into silence apace,
 Silent;—hardly a shout
 From a few boys late at their play!
 The lights come out
 In the school-room windows—but
 cold,
 Solemn, unlighted, austere,
 Through the gathering darkness, rise
 The chapel-walls.

Anything that lends charm to my studies, or softens the austerity of worldly thoughts, with an unsuspected grace of poetry, was, for me, garnered there. I have learned much since, that I fain would forget; I learned little there. I have thought long and bitterly; there I only dreamed. The cold, relentless processes of science which now seem to me to reduce the natural order of development to the level of a gigantic machinery, in which life and limb are wont to be cruelly entangled, looked then, as they were viewed from a tiny laboratory illuminated by the crystalline lucidity of summer evenings, a vision of faëry. The study of history seems to me now only the useless re-perusing of the record of past follies, crimes, and failures, which one keeps up for no better reason than the force of habit, as the old cricketer turns instinctively to the annals of the forgotten fields of his youth. There was a time when history seemed to hold the secret of unimagined progress and perfection for the human race. If I should ever take down Buckle now from my shelves, it would be with a languid curiosity to review such an instance of misplaced ingenuity, and

to place him in his relative position to Utilitarian and Positive tendencies, as a collector arranges the lifeless minerals in his cabinets. When I first read the HISTORY OF CIVILISATION at Shrewsbury the author seemed to have lit up all the past, the present, and the future, with a blaze of prophetic genius. I can recall as vividly as if it had been a moment of passionate intensity the first time when I learned of the existence of Edgar Poe. I should now perhaps fall to, with the brutal coldness of a demonstrator in the dissecting-room, and appraise the very narrow limitations of his lyric gift, and calculate his kinship to Dr. Conan Doyle and Mr. H. G. Wells. When I was a boy at Shrewsbury he had suffused all dark streets and ancient mansions and lonely places with a brooding sense of mystery.

Probably there is no more sordid, dreary, soul-crushing work than the schoolmaster's. I think at most schools the boys have at least an indistinct apprehension of this. But at Shrewsbury, whatever may have been the case with others, I know that I used to feel in the rooms of a young Oxford master (most of the staff were Cambridge men, and the school curriculum was singular in its exclusive austerity of scholarship) that the engravings, the books of authors like Pater and Symonds, luminaries then first swimming into my ken, the very atmosphere blending a prevailing tone of russia leather

with the subdued aroma of latakia, were a sensitive medium conveying electric intimations of a distant world of culture. Another master, of a different type, stood to some of us as a symbol of the heroic. A blonde, blue-eyed Viking he was, who had read the ALCESTIS at the age of six, whose sympathetic rendering of BALAUSTION'S ADVENTURE whispered to us, depressed with the drudgery of construing and parsing, hints of a mysterious realm of antiquity that was not dreary and dusty with crabbed particles and paradigms, but thrilling with young romance, and who yet had often thrown the pavilion at Lord's into a rapture of applause by his hard, clean hitting.

Boyhood has this much of the poet about it, that it can realise so many different parts. Of all the countless dreams of youth, perhaps the most persistent is the dream of martial enthusiasm. This dream I shared with one of the gentlest natures that ever shuddered at the plunge from the affectionate shelter of home into the rough scramble of school-life. He seemed the least fitted of all whom I knew to translate his martial dreams into the stern reality of action. Yet he lies, not wholly forgotten by the rough men whom he had heartened in many a desperate encounter, a Boer bullet through his gentle heart, on a lonely kopje that looks down, across the barren veldt, on to the dreary village of Potchefstroom.

J. A. N.

THE LETTERS OF ELIZABETH.

THANKS to the industry of the painful biographer and the garrulity of the recorder of reminiscences, our knowledge of the political, literary, and fashionable celebrities who flourished a century ago is sufficiently ample and minute. For the upper-middle class, those comfortable squires and clergymen who, with their large families, constituted the provincial aristocracy, we are, through the Dutch paintings of the inimitable Jane Austen, as intimate with them as with our own relations and personal friends. But when we take a step downwards in the social scale, and seek to make acquaintance with that lower middle-class which is chiefly represented by farmers, factors, and prosperous tradesmen, we find ourselves at a loss. In her unfinished novel, *THE WATSONS*, Miss Austen seems to have set herself to deal with this class; and she was just beginning to revel in the affairs of the big homely family at the farm, and to sketch their humours and foibles with her usual unerring touch, when the pen fell for ever from the hand that could alone have done justice to such a theme.

That the yeoman-class of the period might afford excellent material to the humourist and student of manners some evidence may be found in a bundle of frayed, time-stained letters written by Elizabeth Girling, the daughter of a farmer living in easy circumstances at Weston in Norfolk, to various members of her family, between the years 1796 and 1805. These sprightly effusions seem to have been carefully treasured by the recipients, who probably looked

upon Sister Bet as the wit, if not the genius, of the family. Her education at a boarding-school at East Dereham had not, fortunately, resulted in the repression of her high spirits, the quenching of her innate sense of humour, or the conversion of her racy methods of expression into conventional platitudes. She had learned to write an admirable little copper-plate hand, to do fancy-work, to draw and paint in a fashion to please herself, and to sing and play in a fashion to alarm her family; but she had imbibed no spurious gentility, nor was she, like so many of her fellows at the present day, a cheap imitation of the daughters of the neighbouring gentry. Although Elizabeth and her sisters knew nothing of lawn-tennis or croquet, they had gaieties for every season of the year in the shape of Assize Week at Norwich, Wroxham Waterfrolic, Wymondham Fair, Lenwade Races, the annual sheep-shearing, and frequent visits to the Norwich theatre which then maintained a good stock company. There were plenty of beaux, if not many serious ones, at these festivities, for the land could still support her sons, and Australia was still a convict-settlement. Of literature we hear nothing in these letters, and of the outside world very little, beyond occasional rumours of wars, more especially of a threatened French invasion; but the inner life of the large closely-united family, its marriages, deaths, and betrothals, its comediettas and its minor tragedies—all these are sketched for us by Elizabeth's lively pen.

Even in her school-girl days our

heroine occasionally contrived to be thrilling, as when she informs her family that a man at East Dereham had sold his wife and all the furniture for ten shillings, and that the blacksmith had sent all the dogs mad by pouring melted quicksilver into their ears. On November 30th, 1798, she reports that, "We had a holiday on Thursday, and hot apple-pie for supper, which was charmingly good, and drunk his Majesty's health and Lord Nelson's for this late noble victory." In 1801 the young lady is home for good, her education finished, and her head full of lovers, as appears from the following extract from a letter to her sister Maria, then on a visit to some relations.

"I am much obliged to my dear Sister for her generosity in giving me what she had some idea I had no great aversion to, that is—a—a—sweetheart, but too late. I have set my cap, I mean my eye, at a Scotch Laddy. Oh, he have such a dimpled face, and then such a penetrating eye, such grace in every motion—'twas very well you was not in the way, or I am sure you would have lost your heart. Ha, ha, ha, what do you think of him? I wish the description don't set your head a-gadding. But never mind me. If the young man you propose be a decent well-behaved young fellow, you may tell him you have a sister at home, a well-meaning young woman and a very clever—but enough, I have altered my mind all of a sudden. I'll have nothing to say about any of them, but mean to live and die an old maid."

Another letter to Maria records a feat of horsemanship on which Elizabeth not unjustifiably prides herself.

"Last Monday," she writes, "I rode my brother Tom's spiritty mare from the farmhouse with a man's saddle and without stirrups—there's for you! Had my mother met me,

Zooks, what a fright she would have been in, and faith, so should I, for I don't doubt but I should have had the cramp and fell off."

The young lady was evidently a better horsewoman than musician, for she continues :

"And now for what I call a sad piece of news. I was last Tuesday morning very earnest singing *Bright Chanticleer*, when I heard a bustling noise on the stairs. Presently I heard my mother say, 'I am sure 'twas she.' The maid answered, 'No, ma'am, Miss Bet is in the kitchen.' At that I went to see what was the matter, when, would you believe it, Maria, my mother had taken my singing for moaning, and positively declared she thought I was dying, and I had every reason in the world to believe she was in earnest, for she stood upon the stairs with nothing but a loose white morning dress on. The alarm was, I believe, owing to my not having sung very lately, so had not the right tune, or in all probability, by its being taken for moaning, no tune at all. 'Tis very disheartening. However, I don't think I shall ever attempt to sound my musical pipe again. . . . I have made myself a hat and handkerchief to walk in. Our gowns are like your mother's, black, with a small purple zig-zag. I hear you intend going to Wymondham Fair. I wish you would buy me a heart, as I am under great apprehension with regard to my own. Pray let it be a sweet one. Adieu."

In the spring of 1803 Bet's brother William goes to Manchester, apparently into some business, and she undertakes to keep him informed of the family affairs. On August 19th she writes :

"Well, my dear William, here I am just returned from these bustling Assizes [at Norwich] to the still more bustling Harvest. The hot meat,

hot pudding, and hot weather all together are fit to put anybody into a high fever, especially such as I. The Assize Week I spent at Mr. Clipperton's, and a very pleasant one it was, so you may perceive I like a bustle very well. They had a deal of company the whole week, but on the Wednesday we were obliged to sleep four in a bed." [Then follows a list of twelve ladies and five gentlemen, all of whom were entertained by the hospitable Mr. Clipperton.] "The play on Wednesday was *John Bull*, a very good thing, and quite new. On the Thursday we went to the great church, and were very well entertained. [This was probably St. Andrew's Hall, formerly a church.] We, that is Mrs. C.'s party, went to the Gardens on the Friday night; the singing was very moderate, but the fireworks very good. On the Saturday we went to the play, which was *Old Whims*: rather silly. The entertainment *A House to be Let*; liked it very much. . . . Home on Saturday with my Father and Mother, and ever since I've felt shockingly dull and lazy, so you see the effect of frolicking. I saw your sister Maria on Saturday. She gave me a terrible account of her time—not one single day without paying or receiving visits, worse than I a good deal.

"We have very little talked of amongst us but the French. Great preparations are made to receive them should they attempt to pay us a visit. Your Father is superintendent of Weston, and have to see that the names of people, cattle, &c., are taken down. The men are all going to learn the use of a gun. Some people are quite terrified about it. When I called at Mrs. Willings on Saturday she was crying, and had been, she told me, for above three hours. Your brother John intend, should they attempt coming, to send his wife

and child over to us. I hope we shall never see them on such an occasion. The little girl begin to step about prettily, and talk a wonderful deal, but not to be understood.

"You never gave me any account of your Manchester ladies, whether they are pretty or ugly, merry or grave. Do they wear caps, or go much the same as we? In a former letter I believe you said something about perfect witches, but you know, my dear Brother, there are such things as young witches. Pray don't forget to tell me all about it."

In a letter to Brother William dated November 18th, 1803, we have an account of a domestic event which seems thoroughly to have bored Elizabeth. After apologising for the length of time that has elapsed since her last letter, she continues.

"But you will, nay must, forgive the omission when you have heard the cause. In the first place your sister's wedding kept us in continual employ for some weeks [this was the marriage of the eldest sister Sarah]. I don't know how it is, but I don't like weddings. They are so dull, so very dull. I never will be at another, that's poz. There was your Grandmother, your Uncle and Aunt Howlett, your Father and Mother, the Bride and Bridegroom, Maria and myself, all moved as stately as if we went upon wires. Then such a formal drinking of health and happiness, 'twas fit to give anybody the vapours for a month at least.

"The next reason why I did not write is this: six of our servants are very ill of a bad fever. There is one of them given over by the doctors, and the others have no more strength than an infant, and are at times quite delirious. Your Father have sent five of them to their homes, so we have now a little more time. . . .

"Most of the cavalry have volun-

teered themselves to go to Yarmouth for a week or a fortnight. The Norfolk Rangers were there last week, and used no better than common soldiers. They are obliged to get up at any time of the night if they hear the Bugle, and sometimes are taken six or seven miles by the sea-side. One of them was put into the Black Hole for helping himself to some corn for his horse, not being in the way when it was given out. The talk is now that when they have once volunteered they can be sent anywhere. The people seem very dissatisfied about it. Your brothers neither of them intend leaving their homes till the French come.

"W. Wright have got a steward's place fifty miles beyond London, but I don't suppose he'll stay long, as Mr. Wright said the people were Barbarians, and his son was afraid of being murdered as he went about. Besides all this, he left his heart with Eliza Foster."

A couple of letters written during the summer of 1804 give some further account of the gaieties enjoyed by a country girl at that remote period.

"This last fortnight [writes Elizabeth on May 18th] I spent at Hautboys [a little village near Wroxham, whose melodious name is pronounced Hobbice] and came home by Norwich, where I met a party for the play, which was *He would be a Soldier*. The entertainment was to have been *Who is the Dupe?* But owing to a bustle in the play-house we were all dupes, for we had no entertainment at all. It was occasioned by the farewell address of Eastmere, who Mr. Kines, the manager, have dismissed the stage. He being a good actor, the people in general did not approve it, so called Kines on to give his reasons, and the moment he made his appearance they hissed him. He sneered at them, and went

off, which provoked the people so they would not let the play go on, so after setting a considerable time, we were obliged to leave the house. . . .

"*July 27th*. I should have answered your letter sooner, but waited to include Lenwade Races, which were last Wednesday. It was a very rainy day, yet I think we had as much company as usual at ours. . . . And now let me introduce you to a wedding, so pray guess whose. 'Who? why one of my sisters, I suppose.' 'Your sister! Oh no, no, I am sadly afraid they are doomed to be old maids. Only think, these eighteen years they have been living, and never a sweetheart yet.' 'Well then, there are the Miss C's or P's.' 'No.' 'Any of your near neighbours?' 'No.' 'Oh then, I have it, Miss Burton.' Right, my good brother, for last Thursday she was married to Mr. Palmer of Carleton Rode. I shall expect a piece of wedding-cake to draw through a ring, and then only think how sweetly I shall dream. . . .

"The Assizes are next week, to which we are going for two days only. The week after is Wroxham Water Frolic to which we are invited, but I am afraid I cannot go. . . . We went yesterday with our company to look over Weston House and gardens. The family were away, so we ranged about as we pleased. The butler played us several tunes upon the organ, violin and german flute—the silliest man I ever saw in my life. He walked down to ours once with Mr. Smith, and talking about music, he said he frequently took his flute, and stretched himself under a spreading tree, and played himself into sweet oblivion. I saw Richard Wright yesterday, and you can't think what a beau he is become. His shirt-collar up to his eyes, his waistcoat hardly above a finger's length, with a very

deep frill, and a remarkable opera-glass hung on the outside. . . .

"September 21st. And so you have leave of absence for a month or six weeks, yet don't mean to come and see us. Only think how glad we should be to see you, and what a while it is since we have seen you. Here is Father, Mother, Brothers and Sisters all, and you talk of going to quite another part of the world. Your Father seem to think you right to see about as much as possible, but if you have not particularly engaged yourself, we should be very very glad to see you at Weston. We intend sending you a Haunch of Venison when the weather gets a little cooler, and when you have a mind to any birds you must let us know. Your brother Tom is got to be a pretty good shot, and will shoot eight or ten brace a day, which considering last season he used to manage but one a week, is getting on. . . . I wish you were here to see Maria's and my painting and drawing, for we keep doing a little of both, and think we improve, though 'tis but slowly. Your Mother came up just now, and bade me be sure and caution you, should you go to Liverpool, not to venture on the sea. The same fearful Mother, you see, as ever."

In March, 1805, Elizabeth has just returned from a visit to the neighbouring village of Melton, and finds that her brother has not written during her absence, nor acknowledged the gift of some turkeys.

"I begin to think, [she observes], that the old maids, or what is most probable, the young maids take up a deal of leisure time; if so, why we must excuse you for not writing so frequently. Now I should vastly like to know who it is (so you see I've made up my mind there is somebody). Depend upon my keeping the secret. Now, pox, if I had a serious beau I

would give you his whole pedigree, age, stature, and temper, though you'll allow the latter rather a difficult matter. You men are so cunning; you don't often sport your tempers till after the knot is tied (I allow some exceptions), but if I ever should have a beau, I'll use him to contradiction at first. Don't you think that would be a very good plan? Apropos, talking of beaux, remind me that ours have made a very handsome addition to the hind parts of their heads in form of a tail, quite irresistible, I assure you. As to our ladies, why wigs are quite prevalent now; some, I find, wear them instead of hats to walk in. . . .

"By the by, we go out a good deal more than we used to do, and the married ladies tell us now is the time, for should we fall into the matrimonial trap, our Dearys will be for tying us closer to the table's foot. God forbid that should ever be my case. Maria and I have made up our minds not to marry farmers (but women's minds are very apt to alter) and so if you can find a couple of spare linendrapers or grocers, why you may send them over. Or as you give us some hopes you are coming yourself, why you may bring them with you.

"June 20th, 1805. To-morrow Maria and I are going to Norwich to take another look at Fashions, as we have not yet suited ourselves with summer hats, nor indeed have we wanted them, as the weather is very cold for the time of year. . . . Maria and I were finely frightened this afternoon. We walked down to Attlebridge to invite Mrs. and Miss Betts [connections of the Girlings] to tea. When we got a little better than half way we saw a great smoke, but did not think about fire till we met a little girl, who told us Mrs.

Betts's house was on fire. We ran till we were just malten [very hot], but they had nearly put it out when we got there, but I am hardly come to myself yet, I was so frightened. There was little or no harm done. When we got nigh we found it was only the chimney; there were some very old chambers adjoining, but luckily it was put out before it reached them. . . .

"We clip sheep next Tuesday, and expect to spend a pleasant day or two, as we expect a few friends who think it quite a treat to see the sheep clipt. My pen was so very bad I sent to borrow a knife, not being worth one myself, and here I've got Mr. Young's. He is our Lyng shop-keeper, and such a little snaffling [chattering] man, if I may use the expression, I hardly ever heard. He is going to bring Mrs. Young here in his gig on Sunday. She is not seventeen. He married her against her friends' consent: that is he stole her. She was kept locked up, but bolts and bars were no use. As she said, he wore silk stockings and drove a very handsome gig, so you know he must be irresistible. Apropos, don't you really think I had better give up all thoughts of a city beau (that is, something of a shop-keeper) when you hear how smart even the country

ones are, and take a plodding countryman, that is if a plodding countryman will take me, which is doubtful, but seriously, I should very well like to stand behind a counter."

This is the last letter of the bundle, and we have no further information as to the fate of Elizabeth. It would be interesting to know whether she declined upon a plodding countryman, or achieved her ambition of standing behind a counter. The love-letters of Elizabeth would, one fancies, have been pleasant reading, but it may have been that her quick wit, her lively tongue, and her disposition to quiz were too much for the beaux,—snaffling or otherwise—of her period, and that she suffered the fate feared by Beatrix,—to lead apes in hell. She passes out of our knowledge to all appearance fancy-free, though not before she has given a good deal of careful attention to the important subject of matrimony. As a type of country-life she is now practically extinct, for the yeoman's daughter of the present day would certainly consider Bet Girling shockingly ungentle; but whatever her shortcomings, she reveals herself to us in her letters as a real live girl, with a warm heart, a high spirit, a keen contempt for shams and affectations, and, best of all, a saving sense of humour.

OUR LADY OF LITTLE CAÑON.

I.

"BAD cess to it, thin, for a crown!" complained King Melchior, with pardonable exasperation, for it was the second time within a quarter of an hour that one of the points of his diadem had been burned off in the Star in the East.

King Melchior had always maintained that the Star was hung too low, and he now, very naturally, reverted with considerable warmth to his original opinion.

"If it was higher," King Gaspar declared, "no one would see it from the back of the room, and we might as well not have a Star in the East at all."

Mrs. Schneider basely endeavoured to use this as an argument on her side; she had always been against the Star, and was more than ever convinced it was dangerous. But King Belshazzar was positive that there was no danger whatever, if only Melchior would keep his head to himself. "And indeed," he added, "it's time ye remembered that it's kneeling down ye should be, and try and break yerself of this trick of standing up ye've got into. No one's got to stand up except Joseph, and he's got to be sawing a plank, in a half-bent position; and when he's full drawn he's not up to me shouldther."

King Belshazzar was originator and chief stage-director of the tableau. He liked Melchior, but felt that his huge compatriot was out of drawing. That monarch was now cutting off the scorched portions of his diadem with a pair of scissors.

"They were full tall, them points," declared Mrs. Schneider, who always accepted fate's arrangements as if she herself had made them; "I knew you'd have to cut 'em down to reason."

"It's a good thing now," said St. Joseph, emulating his aunt's cheerful optimism, "as we decided not to have tin crowns. You couldn't have cut them down so easy with a pair of nail-scissors."

"Tin crowns wouldn't have got burnt," objected Melchior; "there'd ha' been no need for cutting 'em."

"I wish you'd attend to them cattle instid of talking so much," grumbled Belshazzar. "The way they are now you can see there's no bodies to 'em; the shadows of the poles fall right across the mountains of Judea."

It was these cattle that had originally suggested the tableau; there were four of them, a bullock's head, a pony's, and two horned sheep, all stuffed and mounted. At present they protruded in the most life-like manner from behind the shepherds; but it was true that the shadows of the poles, on which they had been temporarily set up, mingled oddly with the landscape.

"I do hate kneeling on one knee," complained a shepherd in a kilt (with pink tights underneath, for Little Cañon is apt to be censorious).

The composition was taken with conscientious fidelity from a picture of the Epiphany in Mrs. Schneider's bible, and the costumes were those of no known epoch or country. Mrs. Schneider herself, who was no Orientalist, said they "looked Circussian," and perhaps she was nearer

the truth than she knew for she merely meant Circassian.

"Where's them treasures?" demanded King Belshazzar, and a small, but singularly unportable, ottoman was lugged from under the manger. It contained a number of walnuts covered with gold-foil, two biscuit-tins peeled and labelled *F. Incense*, and a two-gallon jar of myrrh, which had left Ireland on a more secular errand.

"Do for anny sake keep your crook out of them rocks," Belshazzar requested with gathering heat, of an absent-minded shepherd whose crook was indeed driven up to the hilt into a brown paper precipice that beetled above him. "And, Gaspar, man, try and recollect that's a golden sceptre ye've got a holt of, and carry it accordin'. Disabuse your mind once and for all of the notion that it's annything in life to do wid' Mrs. Schneider's brass drawing-room poker."

Melchior laughed, and the curtain went up, while the plaudits of Mrs. Schneider and Aunt Kezia rent the air.

There was no other audience as yet, but at any moment now the guests might begin to arrive.

"The curtain goes up beautiful!" cried Aunt Kezia, who was responsible for that part of the entertainment. "It was drefful sticky at first."

"Now King Gaspar," said Belshazzar sternly, "you've got to keep your hand on your *own* waist. That shepherd's a perfect stranger to you, you'll remember, and is no doubt a married man into the bargain."

Two of the shepherds were ladies. In the picture they had long fair hair, and not very long skirts, so it had been thought convenient to assign the parts to Elsie Schneider and her cousin Cora. A small moustache had been allotted to each, and thus confusion as to the sex intended was avoided; but the moustache was not

always a sufficient reminder to Gaspar, who was an ardent monarch, and of a Cophetuan disregard to mere differences of station. He now removed his hand from the interdicted site with ruddy embarrassment.

"Don't he look sheepish!" commented St. Joseph over his shoulder.

"The shepherd'll like him all the better," retorted Belshazzar, whose talent for repartee was locally much esteemed.

II.

No one had been surprised in all Little Cañon and Blue Gulch when the Schneiders' invitation arrived. For several years the Gulch and the Cañon had been growing used to the spectacle of their rising prosperity; and with prosperity an obvious social ambitiousness had been generated. And Blue Gulch liked originality, as did Little Cañon, both being fairly original themselves, though that they would have believed reluctantly.

Now Bible Acting, as the Settlements pleased to call the Schneider tableaux, was entirely a new departure in their neighbourhood, and the appropriateness of having it on Twelfth Night had only to be pointed out to be appreciated. The Judge it is true, being literary, still persisted that Twelfth Night was called after a play of Shakespeare's; but most of Little Cañon and Blue Gulch was contentedly ignorant and believed what Carry Schneider told it.

They were a good sort of people, the Schneiders, and on the whole popular, the German father and Irish-American mother producing a better combination than might have been imagined.

The guests were arriving, and Carry was beginning to think it time she went to fetch the baby. She was the central figure of the tableau, and Mrs.

Falck had been persuaded to promise the loan of her baby; but not till the last minute was it to be handed over.

Carry was a young wife herself, though after three years of wedded life still childless. Sometimes she wondered why, with a half-resentful superstitiousness. She was sure she had done nothing to deserve it. Carry did not herself belong to Little Cañon, and had not very often been there. But her husband was the eldest of Schneider's five sons and had three years ago been given charge of his father's branch business down at Santa Rosa, where he had met Miss Caroline Roche and made haste to fall in love with her. His marriage, declared many of his friends, had been the making of him. Old Schneider was, silently, very much indeed of that opinion, for he had not sent Roddy to Santa Rosa merely to have him in charge of the branch; his time at Little Cañon had not latterly been spent to edification. Roddy, however, had been from the start a model husband, and Carry never even dreamed there had been a Pre-Reformation era.

She and her husband had come up for Christmas to a family gathering; and Carry was inclined to wake her mother and sisters-in-law up a little.

"Carmela has come back," observed King Melchior confidentially to his brother monarch, Gaspar.

"From Santa Fè?" said the latter.

Melchior nodded. "They say," he added, "she's about finished."

King Gaspar made a note of interrogation, and Melchior nodded again. "Yes; dying, I fancy," he explained.

Neither of the men looked at the other, and yet each was sensible that he was being watched by the other.

"Is she back at the same old shanty?" asked Gaspar.

"Yes," replied Melchior, and then

after a pause added: "Not at the same old trade, though." He paused again, and concluded: "She never really took to it."

Gaspar sighed, and tried to pretend he had been only drawing a long breath because his royal belt was tight. "Seems as if she was forced to it, in a fashion," he observed presently.

This time it was Melchior who sighed, and looked round as if to see whence the sound came.

"I didn't know her myself," remarked Gaspar, adding "scarcely," with reluctant concession to the truth, or to the other's knowledge.

"Nor I," hastily averred Melchior, "till just before she went off to Santa Fè."

"The Rip, he began it," declared Gaspar; and this time both young men nodded together.

"Well, *that* I've never done," said one of them. "Nor me, thank Gawd!" chorused the other. Then both paused, and scarcely saved themselves from another sigh apiece.

"So she's going out?"

"In the shanty past Falck's."

III.

Now Carrie Schneider had heard this, and luckily had no notion that the Rip was an old nickname of her husband's which absence and matrimony had caused to become obsolete. But she had understood the rest of the conversation pretty plainly, and it was occupying much of her thought as she set forth for Mrs. Falck's to borrow the baby. Carrie was a good girl, though so refined that she would call a buggy a *baggy*, and so much afraid of being thought to say *hoom-boog* that she would call a disingenuous person a *ham-bag*. Therefore (and for other reasons) some superficial judges were apt to declare that she

was conceited; after all there's no use in having a piano if one is never to allude to it, and why go to the expense of plated fish-knives if one is not to indicate their use to guests who insist on employing a piece of bread?

The night was so still that the great cold scarcely made itself felt. The snow was frozen hard and glittered like metal in the broad moonlight, while the shadows were black as ink. Only the middle of the valley was moonlit, and the shadows of the rocks on either side were much broader than the dividing band of silver. The creek flows close under the west wall of the cañon and one could hear it, though it was out of sight in the darkness.

The guests would all come the other way and Carrie knew she would meet none of them. She was glad, for she did not want to be seen in her tableau dress till the proper moment, and she felt an unusual pleasure in being alone. She was a very simple, primary young woman, and mostly innocent of introspection or self-communing, though by the standards of Little Cañon she was judged worldly and artificial. But now there was something she had never enjoyed before in the lonely presence of the night. Perhaps she was not capable of a very large or explicit revelation, but a certain lifting of the veil behind which God walks was in some vague fashion accomplishing itself for her; and it came through every sense and faculty at once. A misgiving of something too great for her, something she had never suspected, a misgiving that caused at once a flutter and sinking of the heart, and an odd elation: a sense of wings and of the divine perils of flying. The river talked of it; the immense vague whiteness of the snow hinted it; the voice and

silence of the night equally told and treasured it.

Her foot fell, as she walked, with a different purport; it was a good firm tread always, but to-night it was the step of one that seeks, that follows a great leading with courage and generosity. She became aware that on every side were things much greater than herself; even the trees, standing back in the shadow with only their high tops lifting white pyramids into the light, had a sort of lordliness she had never thought of. A sense came over her that she was very unimportant; not so important even to herself as she had supposed. Other things outside ourselves matter more to us, she suddenly divined, than we do to ourselves.

And yet this was not in the least depressing, but rather gave a sort of elation; like a balloon unanchored she felt the little world dropping beneath her feet. She hardly knew if she was afraid. She had a purpose too, a purpose to-night something over and above the borrowing of Mrs. Falck's baby and the tableau, and she hardly knew if she was aware of it or no. At all events she did not form it; it formed itself in her.

The moon up in the sky looked colder than the snow. She wondered why; perhaps because it was so far off and alone. Her face, as she lifted it to the chilly Queen of Night, had a new look that none of her friends would have recognised. It suited oddly with the dress she was wearing, but of that she was unconscious; indeed the look could not have been there and she be conscious of it.

IV.

Carmela, all alone in her desolate cabin, beyond Falck's, was dying, and she knew it. It was about all she did know, for she was slipping swiftly

beyond the bounds of all knowledge and consciousness,—what we call consciousness.

She was dying, and, for Little Cañon or Blue Gulch, she was dying absolutely alone. None of the women would go near her, not solely out of pharisaism, though perhaps chiefly. The truth was that scarcely any of them had ever known her, and now, though they knew of her state, their knowledge was exceedingly unofficial, gleaned in most instances, like Carrie's, through scraps of conversation overheard from the men.

As for the men it would be hard to define the feeling that kept them away. With some, like Deacon Perks, it was sheer pharisaism; the lonely terrors of a sinner's death-bed should not be weakly mitigated, though of course a spiritual visit might be paid if besought with duly contrite abjection. Had Deacon Perks been the father of the Prodigal Son he would certainly not have gone to meet him had he espied him afar off; on the contrary he would have shut himself up for several days, and only consented to accord an interview after repeated applications. But with most of the younger men it was a better feeling, though an odd one, that held them from any show of memory or compassion. Carmela had better, in the circumstances, be occupied with a species of business that was not in their line; and they had a straightforward consciousness that any reminder of their friendship would be unseasonable. One or two, however, of the women had not realised this, and had no idea that the girl was wholly deserted. They supposed some of the men would be doing what they could.

Carmela knew that she was dying, and she was very frightened; to tell the truth, chiefly because she was alone, and out of sheer physical dread.

Had she been able to possess a certain knowledge that after death she would go forthwith to Heaven, the death itself, all by herself in the lonely cabin, would have terrified her. But she had no such knowledge; on the contrary Memory sat beside her threatening angrily. After all, she had always been a coward,—afraid of the hard gripes of poverty, afraid of ghosts, and mice, and spiders; naturally she was a coward now; even the brave draw back from what she had to face.

For it had to be faced; she entirely realised that. She was not one to rave and shriek and tear her hair, and beat her head against the earth, as against fate, and protest that she *would* not die. To the inevitable she had always submitted with a silent hopelessness; it was only the evils that might be avoided that she had never dared to meet.

So now she lay in shuddering, unprotesting patience watching Death draw near. Ah, if only there were someone there to comfort her by their mere presence! It was dreadful listening alone to the noise of his nearing feet. How long would he be, she wondered? Would she die to-night? Yes, yes, of course, but how soon? Before the fire went out? Before the clock cuckooed again? It only cuckooed every three hours, and it was nearly two hours since it had cuckooed at six o'clock. Suddenly she felt an extraordinary desire to hear it once again, though it was not a pretty noise, or one she had ever been fond of. She wished she had stayed at Santa Rosa, where there was a priest. He was an old man with a kind face, and once she had nearly made up her mind to go to confession to him; but—but she had not been able to afford it. If she went how could she live? Yet that old priest would come, she felt sure,

if he knew she was dying. At Little Cañon there was no priest, only Deacon Perks, whose face was not at all kind, though he never denied that he was the best man in the two Settlements. Though Carmela had never spoken to Deacon Perks she thought she knew what he would say to her, and she did not want to hear it. No doubt it was true; in a little while (when the clock cuckooed again, perhaps,) she would be in Hell. Of course Deacon Phaniel Perks would go to Heaven; so would Rip (now he was married), though neither would want to go yet. . . .

No, she did not want the Deacon; nor, for quite other reasons, did she wish any of the other men to come—or the women, either. But she wanted *someone*—so as not to be alone. . . .

Presently she scraped all her poor remnants of waning strength together, as one rakes together the chilling embers on a dying hearth, and lifted herself up in bed. If she could, she would go to the window; she could see a light or two from it, and that would be a little less lonely.

It took a long time, a long time even to drag herself on to the side of the bed: perhaps the clock would cuckoo again before she would be able to reach the window, but it did not; and she got to the window at last.

A checked blue and white curtain, short and rather ragged, hung before the little window; she drew it aside and then steadied herself by it, as she peered out.

Yes, she could see two lights, and, though they were in houses a quarter of a mile away, they made her feel less alone.

The shadows lay very black under the walls of the cañon, even the trees, tall as they were, were swallowed up in the blackness, and only their tops were pushed up into the moonlight;

but here, where the cabin stood in the middle of the valley it was broad moonlight.

She made things out slowly, but little by little she got them all right. There was only one thing unexpected. A woman stood in the moonlight with a child in her arms; she had a crown on her long hair, and a mantle with severe folds, clasped by a sort of brooch in front. Her gown was straight and girdled with a metal zone; it was powdered with the silver heads of lilies, not natural, but stiff and heraldic. The blue cloak was powdered too, but with little stars. The child leaned against her shoulder in an attitude made familiar to Carmela by many pictures.

Perhaps the dying girl fainted; for presently she found herself in bed, and the woman with the child was standing near her in the flickering light of the log-fire.

She had not any pain now, only a strange and rather pleasant sensation of sinking into some warm liquid, that was not water. Nor was she now afraid; her loneliness and fear were gone, she did not know where or how.

She lifted one of her hands towards the child,—a very thin and trembling hand, but one could see she desired to touch the chubby, pink foot. The woman moved a step nearer and stooped a little; then Carmela touched the little foot and kissed her own fingers that had touched it. Her hand was so cold that the child shrank back a little; but Carmela's eyes were fixed on his mother,—as she thought—and did not notice it.

"I am sorry," she said, but her thoughts were gone back a long way, "that I hurt him."

Presently her eyes fell back on the child, and half closed. "I never had one," she said.

"Nor have I," whispered the woman,

but much louder tones would have been needed to pierce those closing ears.

The clock ticked noisily and the logs sputtered and cracked a little; there was no other sound. Carmela lay with wide, unwinking eyes that saw nothing.

"Look!" she said at last, pointing out into the room; "he has grown into a man. And it is summer again. The pavement is all in sunlight, except where the shadow of the wall is, and the shadow of the pomegranate-tree that he is leaning against—the sky shows there through it; what a lot of them, and all with stones!" For a moment Carmela shivered; she paused and frowned a little; then her brow cleared. "But they are going away, one by one, Deacon Perks, and all of them. How big the stones were, and dirty! But they are dropping them, pretending they never had them in their hands."

There came another pause; it seemed, almost, to the woman who held the child that she too could see it all, the broad sunlit court, the white

walls topped with the pitiless blue sky, the thinning crowd, the—

"They are all gone now," said Carmela, "all except him, and he is writing, writing with his finger on the ground. The wind blows it round and round,—it won't let God's writing be,—no one shall ever read it. Now it is all blown away, and he has finished. He is coming close to me, to speak—listen!"

Again there was no sound but the noisy clock, and the crackling logs.

Carmela's lips were parted; her eyes were bent upward and there were no tears in them. "Neither do I condemn thee," she said loudly, and turned to the woman against whose shoulder the child was pressed.

The woman bowed her head, "I know," she said baldly; "it is all right."

"But," cried Carmela, "he must forgive Rip too. It was not Rip's fault; it was all mine—only mine!" And on that noble falsehood the portals of her speech closed for ever.

JOHN AYS COUGH.

INVASION OR RAID.

It is excellently said by Bacon in his essay on Unity in Religion that, "A man that is of judgment and understanding shall sometimes hear ignorant men differ, and know well within himself, that those which so differ mean one thing, and yet they themselves would never agree." Politeness, or perhaps a commendable desire to err, if at all, on the safe side, probably accounts for the philosopher's use of the word *sometimes* and the adjective *ignorant*. Whoever follows any of the numerous controversies conducted by letters to THE TIMES, must have seen, not only sometimes but very often, that men, whom it would be no less unjust than unmannerly to call ignorant, can dispute with heat, and at length, when there is in reality no essential difference between them. An example, and a very good one, may be found in a late interchange of contradictions, and mutual hurling of half-baked terms of art which took place in THE TIMES, under the heading of "Invasion or Raid." Extreme Naval Theorist and Navalis on one side, Lieut.-Colonel Eustace Balfour, and Sir Edmund Du Cane on the other, asserted and counter-asserted, and threw *Command of the Sea* and *Intermediate Stage*, and other terms more or less in need of definition, at one another's heads. To the attentive spectator, who would fain be a man of judgment and understanding, it was impossible to see what the eager combatants were fighting about. At first sight Theorist and Navalis appeared to have set out to argue that the fleet could prevent all inroads into this country big or little.

From this it was not absurd to draw the conclusion that, in their opinion, we have no need of military forces at home, and could safely rely on the Navy alone to keep every invader at a distance, whether he came with many soldiers or few; but both emphatically disclaim any such opinion. About what then are they arguing with Colonel Balfour and Sir Edmund Du Cane? These gentlemen both agree as to the necessity of a strong fleet; but they both also maintain that something more is required for our protection, and that it is a military force on shore. As this is already conceded by Theorist and Navalis, it would appear that all parties to the controversy were agreed on the principle, and that nothing remained but to settle the quantity and quality of the home-army which all acknowledge to be necessary.

And yet "they themselves would never agree," and that for a cause which soon becomes apparent to the reader who knows something about mankind. We rarely takes sides for the reasons we allege. The genuine motive is commonly some professional preference, or other kindred sentiment which nobody cares to avow openly, but which colours all his judgments, and makes him, in the most innocent way in the world, play abominably fast and loose with what he presents as facts relevant to the issue. It is not my intention to go over a controversy which, short as it was, contrived to be perfectly futile, and has already fallen into the limbo of forgotten files. As, however, it contained some exceptionally fine examples of

the wild way in which questions of extreme national importance are discussed, I will take leave to linger by it for a few moments.

The secret and controlling thoughts which a man commonly shrinks from producing cannot always, or even often, be kept wholly hidden. They slip out, when the disputant is not aware they are escaping. In this case they stood revealed on both sides with exceptional clearness. On May 28th we find Navalís saying: "The cost of the Navy and Army for the present year is about £62,000,000. There must apparently be a limit to the sum which a nation can devote to its fighting services. . . . If there is any clear lesson to be derived from our long history it is that the Navy alone has stood between us and invasion, and that the periods at which raids were attempted were those of naval weakness." This statement is contrary to historic fact, but the accuracy of the writer is not the present question. Later on we find him acknowledging the need for military forces, but for offensive purposes. He will not say plainly that he thinks it could be safe for us to send all the Army abroad while we were at war with a power possessing a fleet and within striking distance, though he certainly ought to be prepared to maintain that position if he holds that the Navy alone can prevent invasion. Obviously Navalís fears that the Navy will be sacrificed to the Army. Therefore he leans towards an exaggeration of the value of a purely naval defence. On the other hand, and a few days later, we hear Colonel Balfour saying with astounding candour that, "If the arguments of the 'Extreme Naval Theorist' and those of 'Navalís' are left unanswered or regarded as unanswerable, the logical conclusion is the resignation of the Volunteer force

bodily." The Colonel of the London Scottish Rifles speaks *pro domo sua*, and one sees that he would never be persuaded of the ability of the fleet to prevent invasion if Aristotle came back from the dead for no other purpose than to carry conviction to his mind. "If you are right of what degree of importance, or of what use am I?" This is the question which each is really asking, and in his heart each says to the other, "No evidence shall ever persuade me that you are right."

Again these half dozen or so of letters abound in examples of that love of precise-looking terms which is the fashionable pedantry of the day. Dickens describes Mr. Dorrit and his friends in the Marshalsea rolling the sonorous formulas of their petition on their tongues with a sense of absolute physical pleasure. *Strategical and tactical and command of the sea* seem to give the disputants of our day the gratification which the hungry debtors found in *Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled*. But the formulas of the petition had at least a definite sense. No final authority has decided what is meant by *command of the sea*. "It means several different things," says Colonel Balfour. "It requires qualifications. It may be local or potential. It may have the combinations or permutations of these particular qualifications." To him the Extreme Naval Theorist answers in the Dorritian manner: "Here I join issue directly. *Command of the sea* means only one thing. It means control of the sea-communications between each and every point of the strategic area involved. It is never local except accidentally. Essentially it is universal in all cases. It is either actual or it does not exist." No wonder the British public turns wearily from these discussions. The

disputants seem to act in all seriousness on the maxim laid down by Mephistopheles to the student in a passage of unsurpassed irony in *FAUST*. Stick to words, said the Spirit who denies, for it is just when understanding fails that a word is useful. The ignorance of naval history, which ought to supply the examples for such a discussion as this, displayed on both sides, begs description; and, if anything, it is more gross in the naval advocates than among their opponents. Extreme Naval Theorist commits himself to the assertion that local defeat has never cleared the Channel of our warships in a thousand years. This takes us back to 900, and the period includes the double invasion of England by Harald Hadrada of Norway and William of Normandy in 1066; many successful attacks on our coast-towns in the last years of Edward the Third and the minority of Richard the Second; the long stay of D'Annebault with a French fleet at St. Helens, and on the coast of Sussex, in the last year of Henry the Eighth; the defeat of Monk and Rupert by de Ruyter in 1666, after which the Dutch blockaded the Thames for weeks; the defeat of Torrington off Beachy Head in 1690, after which the Frenchman ranged along our coast unchecked; and the retreat of Hardy with his overmatched fleet before the French and Spaniards in 1779.

The questions whether we have to look upon invasion as a possible danger, and if so in what circumstances it may be expected to come, and what will be its probable extent, are of the utmost importance to us. On the answer given to them must depend the quality, size, and cost of the Army we propose to support. If Lord Wolseley is right in maintaining that only a madman would trust to the Navy alone to prevent

invasion, then we must have a force on shore capable of dealing with a considerable host. The late Commander-in-Chief does not mean two, or four, or five thousand men when he speaks of invasion, but a real army of one hundred thousand at least. If he is right, we stand in need of an efficient military force of at least half as much again to be kept permanently at home, and that is putting it very low, for if France or Germany could throw one hundred thousand soldiers on our shore, it does not appear clear why either of them should not send twice or thrice that number. Indeed, if Lord Wolseley's view be sound we need an army on more than continental proportions, for we are subject to the same danger as our neighbours, and our obligations over sea, which show no tendency to diminish, are incomparably greater. Mr. Brodrick's scheme will not supply a defence of these proportions. Neither will the £62,000,000 mentioned by Navalists nearly meet the necessary charges of such a colossal military establishment, and the greatest fleet in the world which we shall still be bound to maintain. On the other hand, if the fleet is our effectual defence we can be content with a smaller Army, and can safely use it for offensive purposes only, leaving ourselves without a single soldier on shore at home. In that case Militia and Volunteers for home-defence become a mere wasteful superfluity. My own opinion, which I shall endeavour to justify by argument and example, is that we are landed in absurdity by carrying either view to what is called its logical extreme. We need not bear the burden which would be imposed on us by Lord Wolseley, neither can we run the real risk which would be incurred by acting on the doctrine of the naval school when it is stated in its most developed form. There is a middle

path, and it is one we have hitherto followed.

Ever since war grew beyond the stage of a scuffling of kites and crows, a distinction has been drawn between the great inroad meant to conquer and to hold, and the lesser incursion designed to plunder and disturb. We cannot make an exact formula for each, but the difference between them belongs to the class of things which are easily recognised when seen,—poetry, for instance, or light, or the manners of a gentleman. When Edward the First marched into Scotland to defeat Wallace at Falkirk, he was making an invasion. When the Douglas met the Percy at Otterburn he was making a raid into Northumberland. It was invasion when Napoleon went into Spain, and raid when Humbert landed at Killala. There are enterprises on the borderland between the two, such as Napoleon's expedition to Egypt, but they are rare. It took a combination of the French Revolution, the entire overthrow of order in Europe, and the character of Napoleon to make that wild venture possible. To constitute an invasion you must take a great part of your national forces with you, a vast apparatus of transport, and stores must be provided. One hundred thousand men will eat up ten square miles of highly cultivated country in a day, and therefore cannot rely wholly on the food they take as they go along, neither can they rely entirely on the ammunition they carry with them. No nation can afford to lose so large a part of its forces wholly in case of failure, and therefore it is necessary when making an invasion to have a safe line of communication and of retreat. With a raid it is wholly different. It is small, rapid, anxious rather to destroy than to fight, and forms so trifling a part of the forces of the army it

belongs to, that it can be lost without materially weakening them, and may even be spent profitably if it has caused great disturbance before it is destroyed.

If there is any validity in the distinction made here, I think that we are entitled to say that while an invasion is inconceivable till our fleet has been routed, we cannot rely wholly on the Navy as a defence against raids. That the country could be invaded if we were to lose another Four Days' Battle, or another Battle of Beachy Head, cannot surely be disputed by any reasoning man. But even if none took place the consequences would be disastrous. The country could no longer bear the suspension of its commerce as well as it could in 1666 or 1690, when it was mainly agricultural and could feed itself. An enemy successful on the sea would be able to extort almost any terms less than the surrender of our national independence. Here I venture to ask the naval advocates whether they cannot find something better to do than to plunge into conflicts of professional sentiment with soldiers and volunteers on the relative value of armies and fleets as national defences. Let them tell their countrymen, in season and out of season, that we live by sending out coal and manufactured goods to buy food and raw material; that in order to do this we must have free access to, and egress from, our ports; and that this absolute necessity can only be secured to us by a fleet which can police the four seas of Britain. This is a proposition which can be made clear to all men, from the agricultural labourer to the millowner who employs three thousand hands. With this truth well planted in their heads, Englishmen will take care that the fleet is not neglected, and if some part of our defences has to be sacri-

ficed it will not be the ships. We shall see to it that we have a fleet which can prevent any enemy from cruising for weeks between Finisterre and the Old Head of Kinsale, or riding at the mouth of the Thames between the Gunfleet and the Long Sand as De Ruyter did. And if it can prevent a hostile fleet from doing this, it can equally stop it from bringing over a hundred thousand men. The first we must see to, and in the execution of that duty we shall incidentally fulfil the second.

Does it follow that we can also bar the road to the smaller expeditions designed to disturb and destroy? There is a tempting air of plausibility about the proposition that what will accomplish the greater will serve for the less; but in reality it is very far from being so wise as it wishes to look. The net which will catch the cod will let the sprat through. It may very well be that a naval defence capable of blockading an enemy's battleships might fail to mew up all his swift and active cruisers. The question is whether, if we so arrange our defences that our Army is all, or nearly all, oversea, it will not become very much the interest of our foe to use his quick vessels for the purpose of throwing raiders ashore. To me it seems clear that this would be the case, and that it is a danger to be guarded against only less carefully than the loss of the free use of the four seas.

Whoever reads the naval history of this country, with even a moderate degree of attention, must have come across many occasions on which small bodies of foreigners have succeeded in reaching our coast even when our Navy was unquestionably superior. Reference has been made to Humbert's incursion into Ireland, and other examples may be quoted. In using historical instances it is

always desirable to remember the warning given by Mr. Froude's great maxim. His critics say that he paid little attention to it himself, but it is an admirable one none the less. The facts of history, he said, are like the letters of the alphabet; you can spell any word you please by selecting only those you want, and leaving the others. So you can prove any proposition (or profess to prove it) by picking just the facts which serve your purpose, and ignoring all others. If advocates of land-defences knew anything of naval history, they might take the expedition of Châteaurenault to Ireland, in 1689, as a proof that a fleet cannot prevent invasion. He was looked for at Brest by Herbert, but went on unstopped. He was sighted off the Old Head, but continued on his voyage to Bantry Bay, and began to land the troops he was bringing to King James. He was followed and brought to a battle which we claimed as a victory, and for which Herbert was made Lord Torrington. Yet he landed his men, and returned home safely. Any such use of this passage in our history would be intensely uncritical. Our fleet was rather the weaker of the two: our admiral a man who had no quality of an officer but personal courage; and as King James was then master of the greater part of Ireland, the French troops landed in what was in truth a friendly country. Yet if the supposed advocate of land-defences were to quote Châteaurenault's success as telling for him, he would not be more uncritical, or more unfair, than those not uncommonly are who argue that a fleet can prevent all invasions. They constantly argue that the ultimate failure of the raids which have taken place proves that we have nothing to fear from them in future, and they draw the deduction that it was the Navy which caused the

failure. No wilder fallacy was ever propounded by what is falsely called logic. They were beaten by troops on shore, and what their failure proves is the necessity for having a military force to deal with invaders who escape the vigilance of the fleet. That such expeditions have not been very numerous is true; but there have been quite enough of them to show that they are possible, and it is taking a great deal for granted to suppose that the known existence of large bodies of armed forces on shore had no part in deterring the enemy from employing them more frequently. Indeed the mere absence of raids, and the ill success of such as have been made, do not, of themselves, establish the presumption that the nation attacked possesses any naval power at all. We were beaten off at Corunna and Lisbon after we had defeated the Armada, and when Philip the Second did not dare to bring home his treasure-ships for fear of our cruisers. Brest repulsed us in the reign of King William. St. Malo defied us again and again in the wars of Queen Anne. The expeditions sent to "break windows with guineas" by the elder Pitt ended in blood and rout at the Bay of St. Cas. We never dared to raid Napoleon's coast because we knew that any men we landed would be cut to pieces. The real teaching of history is that strong land-forces can stop raids altogether. If the extreme naval advocate shifts his ground, as he is pretty apt to do, and answers that though we could effect little by landing on our enemy's territory, we did a great deal by stopping his trade, the answer is that he is right, and that this is precisely why he should stick to the water, and preach the absolute necessity there is for us to have free access to, and regress from, the ocean, which can only be attained by keeping hostile

fleets well away from the Channel and the North Sea.

The teaching of history too, when we look at it candidly, shows that naval forces alone, be they ever so numerous and good, cannot prevent raids. It is not necessary to prove that there have been many in order to demonstrate that they are possible in spite of our fleet, and there have been quite enough of them to establish this proposition. Nor is it the fact that they have taken place only when we were weak in naval forces. It was after the defeat of the Armada that the Spanish galleys came over from Blavet, and burned Penzance, and it was at the very close of the Elizabethan war that Don Alonso del Aguila brought a body of soldiers to Ireland. Our naval superiority was never more clearly manifested than in 1760, the year following that which included Boscawen's destruction of the squadron of M. de La Clue at Lagos, and the magnificent victory won by Hawke over Marshal de Conflans in Quiberon Bay. Yet it was just at this time that Thurot took Carrickfergus and was able to stay for some weeks on the west coast of Scotland.

Nor can it be said that we were weak at sea when Paul Jones landed in Kirkcudbright and stole Lady Selkirk's plated silver tea-service during the American war of 1778-83, or when Humbert invaded Ireland, and the handful of galley-slaves who finally surrendered to Lord Cawdor's militia was put ashore at Fishguard in South Wales in 1797. But there is a still better example to prove that a small force which means only to make a visit to our coast for the single purpose of landing men can carry out its purpose in spite of a vastly superior British Navy. In 1718 the folly of Philip the Fifth, the first Bourbon King of Spain, led

him into war not only with us but with Holland, France, and the Empire. The Spanish navy was just attempting to recover from the general prostration of the seventeenth century. Our own was as emphatically the first in the world at the Peace of Utrecht as it was on the fall of Napoleon. If ever there was a case in which a superiority of strength at sea might have been expected to prevent a raid it was this. Yet in 1719 a small squadron of Spanish frigates sailed from Corunna carrying three hundred soldiers, and several of the Jacobite leaders, the Earl Marischal with his brother and Lord Tullibardine among them. They reached Loch Alsh, the men were landed, and the ships got away. It is true that the Spanish captains were very nervous lest they should be interrupted by the appearance of British ships, and that they hurried on the disembarkation. The point is that they did land their soldiers, and did get clear away. Neither is anything gained for the contention of those who maintain that the fleet alone is a sufficient defence, by quoting the undoubted fact that the invasion proved insignificant, and ended in speedy surrender. It failed to do any harm for reasons which in no way establish the power of the Navy to prevent all raids. The government of King George had a substantial body of troops in Scotland, consisting partly of Dutchmen whom we applied for, and obtained under the terms of our treaty with the United Provinces. The clans, utterly dispirited by the losses and sufferings of the unsuccessful rising in 1715, would commit themselves to no further adventures. The few who were brought together would not stand, and the Spaniards laid down their arms after a confused scuffle, for it hardly deserved to be called a skirmish, at Glenshiel. One example would be enough to show that

confidence in the Navy to prevent all harassing attacks by small bodies of troops landed to disturb and injure us would be ill-founded. But there are other cases which may be cited. Prince Charles Edward effected his landing though he was attacked on the way, and some stores, officers, and money reached him from France later. In the wars of the eighteenth century French, American, and even Spanish privateers from the Basque ports, made visits to our coasts and captured our merchant-ships in sight of them. They could have landed men if they had seen any prospect of gain to themselves, or injury to us by the operation.

That the thing was not more frequently done, or proved of so little injury to us when actually tried with some measure of preliminary success, was due to causes which writers who judge with the critical standard of *Navalis* habitually ignore. Sometimes the expedition suffered from defects ruinous to its efficiency. This was true, for instance, of Thurot's little squadron. He was himself a fine fellow and a good seaman; but he was a privateer and not a noble, and therefore regular French officers served under him with something more than reluctance. His squadron too was sent out by the corrupt government of Louis the Fifteenth and was ill-fated. Between the bad quality of his ships and the mutinous conduct of his subordinates he was sorely crippled, and it required all his resolution of character to achieve anything. Even so he was not defeated and killed in action with Captain Elliot at sea till he had captured Carrickfergus. With a well-appointed squadron commanded by a Suffren, and a landing party of good troops under such an officer as Humbert, the result might have been very different. But in the main the reason why these inroads have been few and

unsuccessful must be looked for elsewhere. It has to be sought in the existence at all times on shore of a solid body of military forces, which could meet the enemy when he did land. In the Seven Years' War Pitt embodied the Militia, and the French knew that if they landed they must choose some remote part of Scotland, or Ireland, or else that they would be instantly crushed. During the Napoleonic wars, the force we maintained at home was always greater than the army we sent to the Peninsula. An enemy who might have risked capture by our cruisers on the way (which was unquestionably always a great danger), if he had a reasonable security of meeting no troops on shore, would not come with the certainty before him that he would be overpowered at once when he had landed. Our government did not forget the lesson taught by the uninterrupted march of the Highlanders to Derby in 1745. It knew that what a mere handful of clansmen had done could be repeated by a flying column of foreign troops. It did not forget how we had been compelled to recall our soldiers from Flanders, and to appeal for Dutch and German troops, nor did it fail to bear in mind how much we owed to the calls made on the French Army for the war in Flanders and on the Rhine, and to the state into which the Navy of France had been allowed to sink during the long administration of Cardinal Fleury. Therefore it was that the Great Commoner raised the Militia, and his successors kept an Army at home.

A disputant who is resolved to make any point, and does not care, or does not know, whether it is relevant or not, may answer that the Spaniards who landed in 1719 expected to find help on shore. They did, but to an invader it is every whit as encouraging to know that he will

meet no well-armed and well-organised opposition as that he will find domestic allies. Indeed it is more, for civil war presupposes the existence of hostile troops, and the possibility of defeat. A country stripped of all its soldiers would be at the mercy of even two thousand invaders with half a dozen machine guns. They could not of course occupy the whole surface, but they could disturb its industry to a ruinous degree, and give a staggering blow to its confidence. Let anybody, who is not content with generalities, look at the panic which filled England at the beginning of the Seven Years' War. That generation had seen the Highland rebellion in 1745 and knew the danger by experience. Yet if those are right who, leaving their own invincible position, which is the need of a strong fleet in home-waters to protect our trade and food-supply, undertake to demonstrate the capacity of the Navy to prevent all kinds of invasion, it ought to be safe for us to send every disciplined soldier we have abroad, and leave ourselves without a single company to oppose to some better appointed, and better obeyed, Thurot who threw a flying column ashore near the mouth of the Tyne or the Clyde. To be sure when the attack on them is pushed home to this degree, they generally run from their guns, and profess that of course we must have land-forces as a part of our home-defences, even if it is only "a residuary deposit" of the Army we keep for service abroad. What this last phrase, which we owe to Extreme Naval Theorist, may mean, I have to profess my inability to understand. It looks as if it ought to mean raw recruits, drill-sergeants, invalids, commissariat and general staff. But no extremist maker of theories would, while in his sober senses, advance an absurdity of these proportions. He must mean that part of the Army we

keep for foreign service, must be held back for home-defence,—which truly seems as like as like can be to maintaining a contradiction in terms.

In truth nobody who looks at the teaching of history taken as a whole, when alone it is of value, and not in selected examples chosen for a purpose, can doubt that an efficient force on shore makes an indispensable part of our home-defences. It is not a whit the less needed because, while the Navy can prevent invasion on a great scale, it need never have to fire a shot, nor yet because, if the fleet does fail in this duty, we may be ruined though no enemy land. It is wanted to prevent any Power which has an interest in compelling us to recall troops from abroad, and shaking our nerve, from again putting us in the position we occupied during the Scotch Rebellion. We have no right to calculate that in future our foes will be as corrupt as the French in the decadence of the Monarchy, as nerveless as Spain, or as exhausted as Holland in the eighteenth century. Bold opponents could afford to lose two raids at sea, in order that a third might repeat the march of the clans to Derby. For them it is but surrendering at the last; for us it would be a blow to make us stagger. To speak, as the more hot-headed do, about the fears of old women is bad manners, and borrowed wit misquoted, or at any rate misapplied, from St. Vincent. It is no small matter to give a country a sense of security against even imaginary dangers, and this one is real.

How the military forces for home-defence are to be obtained, and organised, is too large a question to be argued here. But there are a few leading considerations which can be briefly stated, and which also ought to govern our whole policy. The British Empire consists of a central

body in Great Britain and Ireland, with vast territories oversea connected with the heart of the Empire by ocean-routes, and subject to peril from rebellion, and invasion by foes whose communications are over-land, and therefore not liable to be cut by our fleet. To all who do not think that patriotism consists in waving banners and blustering about our imperial race, these frontiers, the danger menacing them, the Army needed to guard them, and the doubt how far it can be maintained together with a fleet capable of holding the ocean-routes against all competitors, present subjects for very sober reflection. But that is a great matter. For the present it is enough to keep to the problem before us, which is sufficiently considerable. Given an Empire thus composed certain obvious considerations follow. The first is the peremptory need of a great fleet to cover the homeward and outward bound movements of our commerce, and to see our troops safe to their distant destinations. Then we need a more numerous Army than we now possess formed for foreign service, capable of going anywhere, and bound to do garrison duty in all climates. To get the full use of that Army we ought to be able to dispense with it wholly at home. We sometimes, indeed very often, hear foolish talk of the Militia and Volunteers leaving the Navy free for its proper duties, as if it could have any more proper duty than to keep the sea round our coasts clear of all comers, or as if any number of men ashore could avert the destruction of our commerce before our eyes if the Navy were not there to give protection. But if we say that an efficient force for home-defence would leave the Regular Army free to discharge its proper duties, then we shall be talking sense. It would not be at liberty while there

was a possibility that two or three thousand raiders might be found on the great north road tearing up the line, blowing up bridges, upsetting all business, and filling the country with disturbance and panic. Against this peril we need a home-defence,—not a large Army as modern Armies go, but such a one as could be sure of meeting any raid at once with five or six thousand efficient men, or with twenty thousand in a few days. That

we have such a force in the Volunteers with their drill on Saturday afternoons, and the few days' continuous practice which a small part of them get at holiday-time, is not credible. That we shall get it by virtue of Mr. Brodrick's scheme is what I do not believe, nor have I met anybody who does. Yet we ought to have it; and we can, if only we clear our heads on the subject of home-defence.

DAVID HANNAY.

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PRINCESS PUCK.

CHAPTER XV.

MR. WAGNALL was an antiquary, avowedly an antiquary. A man of means and leisure, he had ample time to devote to his subject, and so well had he devoted it that there was unknown to him little that was strange in family tradition and village history throughout the Eastern Counties, which, as his birthplace and home, were the principal scenes of his research. He never studied architecture or building to any great extent; churches, Druidical stones, and Roman remains had little charm for him; the land and those who owned it chiefly claimed his attention. He had at one time intended to follow the profession of the law, and had spent his earlier days in a solicitor's office; it was this early training, possibly, which gave him his taste for family histories and involved land-tenures. One other thing he owed to it,—and that was of more obvious value than his love of land-lore—a friend, in the person of a former fellow-student now developed into Stevens, solicitor of Wrugglesby, consulted by Mr. Johnson on the subject of the Harborough chapel and the service held therein.

Now and again Mr. Wagnall visited his friend at Wrugglesby, and it happened that this very subject of the Harborough chapel and service

brought him there at the time that Gilchrist Harborough was arranging his matrimonial affairs at Ashelton. About that time Mr. Stevens, remembering that he had not seen his friend lately, wrote to invite him to the little town, at the same time mentioning such affairs of interest as had recently taken place. The Harborough service was not a recent event, but he had not written since it occurred, and, knowing his friend's love of such things, he used it, and the chance of investigating it, as an inducement to his friend to visit Wrugglesby. Events justified his expectations; Mr. Wagnall accepted his invitation, came to Wrugglesby at the earliest possible date, and plagued his host with questions, seeking information about "this most interesting revival."

Mr. Stevens was obliged to confess himself not very well informed on the subject, but in a happy moment Mrs. Stevens thought of inviting Mr. and Mrs. Johnson to meet the antiquary. She had no notion of satisfying his thirst for information, her idea being solely to give an entertainment. She was a lady of aspiring mind, and longed for society on other lines than those obtainable at the solemn dinners and more humble teas which were the vogue in Wrugglesby.

Mr. Johnson was particularly flattered by the pointed way in which

Mr. Wagnall singled him out for conversation, and the interest with which he listened to all he had to say about the Harborough chapel and service. Considering the warmth his feelings still retained on these subjects, he was a little disappointed to find his patient listener of the opinion that the family had a right to hold a service in their own chapel, according to their professed religion, even during the time of morning-prayer.

"Mind, I do not say they have a legal right," the antiquary said, "though I am of opinion it would be difficult to get a decision against them; but whatever their legal right, they have a moral right, most decidedly a moral right. I think your rector was wise in his determination to take no steps in the matter; it is not an occurrence likely to be repeated. It has not been done within anyone's memory until this time; it has not been repeated since then, and take my word for it, sir, it never will be. It was done to revive an old right, my dear sir, that is what it was done for, to revive an old right and establish a claim; an old family does not like to let its traditions lapse entirely."

Mr. Johnson thought this was a very probable explanation of the "outrage," though, as he pointed out, there was no necessity for the mass to have been said during morning-service; the claim could have been established without that.

"Well, yes, yes," Mr. Wagnall admitted; "still it would hardly have been so emphatic; no, in those circumstances, it would not have been so emphatic."

Mr. Johnson again agreed with him. He also asked Mr. Wagnall if he would care to walk over some day and have a look at the Harborough chapel, offering to act as cicerone should he do so. Mr.

Wagnall accepted the offer with pleasure, and from that they got to talking about the Harboroughs and their family history, with which Mr. Wagnall was very well acquainted, though he did not attempt to set the clergyman right even when he gave sundry strange pieces of information about them. There was, however, one piece of information given which was both new and interesting to Mr. Wagnall,—the existence of Gilchrist Harborough of Crows' Farm.

"A member of the family he—" "may be," Mr. Johnson was going to say, preparatory to enlarging upon his nature and pursuits, but Mr. Wagnall cut him short.

"Of course he is a member of the family," he said; "Gilchrist is a family name, the next heir to the property is a Gilchrist. You would not get Gilchrist and Harborough in combination without some connection with the old stock."

"Just so," said Mr. Johnson, "just so, a member of the family, although he comes from Australia; a younger branch, I have heard it suggested, though he claims no connection with the Harboroughs of Gurnett."

"Not a younger branch," Mr. Wagnall's tone was emphatic; "not a younger branch, or he could claim something more than a connection."

Unfortunately for Mr. Johnson's further enlightenment the conversation was interrupted here, not to be resumed again that evening, and he had to content himself with waiting to hear more until Mr. Wagnall should come to Ashelton. But Mr. Wagnall did not have to wait so long for his enlightenment, for he questioned his host at the earliest opportunity. From him he learnt little, for Mr. Stevens was not professionally connected with Harborough of Gurnett, although he had sometimes done a little legal

work for the agent during the master's long absences abroad. Owing to this he knew something of the affairs of the estate, and, like most people in the neighbourhood, he also knew the name, age, and whereabouts of the next heir, and sundry of the reports concerning Mr. Harborough besides. But of Harborough of Crows' Farm he knew little, except that he was an Australian with a theory, that he worked his own farm, and that he himself had been favourably impressed by the young man on the occasion when he had personally come across him. "But," he concluded, "I shouldn't wonder if he was in at the office to-morrow as it is market-day. He is thinking of buying a bit of meadow which cuts into his land, and I should not wonder if he were to look in during the afternoon to see me about it. You might drop in and meet him if you like; but I tell you beforehand that he won't repay investigation or appreciate it either, and he certainly won't know anything about the affair of the mass."

Mr. Wagnall was by no means discouraged, and determined to look in at the office on Thursday afternoon in case the lawyer's anticipation proved correct. It did so; Harborough presented himself somewhere about four o'clock, and almost before his business was discussed, Mr. Wagnall also presented himself and was duly introduced to the younger man as one interested in antiquities in general and family histories in particular. Harborough himself had small interest in such things, but he was quite willing to sympathise with another, and obligingly gave all the information he could concerning himself and his family. Of the Harboroughs of Gurnett, their history and chapel, he knew even less than Mr. Johnson, but of himself and his own people he told all he could.

"But," he asked, "what purpose does it serve? We are a long way from this part of the family, a younger branch who emigrated years ago."

"If you are a younger branch in direct line, if you can prove such a thing,—and I cannot help saying I think it would be difficult—it would be—very interesting."

"Why? Is there no younger branch? You mean to say you think we come of bastard stock?"

"No, oh dear no, not at all, not necessarily. Only the Harboroughs used to hold their estates according to an old tenure by which the property goes to the youngest instead of the eldest son, and if you really were the representative of a younger branch than those in possession—"

"I could claim?"

"Nonsense," the lawyer here broke in, "the Harboroughs have given up that manner of succession for several generations."

"It could be revived," Mr. Wagnall suggested; "it would be interesting to revive it, as interesting as reviving the right to hold service in the chapel."

"Interesting from an antiquarian point of view it might be," Mr. Stevens observed drily; "but Mr. Harborough here would find it an expensive form of amusement. Old Mr. Harborough has been in possession at Wood Hall for over fifty years, and it would take something considerable to turn him out now. Why, bless you, my friend, if I had squatted unmolested at Wood Hall for all those years you would find it difficult to turn me out, though I had not a shadow of right to the place originally. Possession is rather more than nine points of the law if you only have it long enough; whatever the weakness of Old Harborough's original claim you would find it a tough and expensive job to make your own good now."

Gilchrist Harborough laughed at the lawyer's warmth. "I was not thinking of making a claim," he said; "I would rather invest my surplus cash in other and more profitable ways than fighting for encumbered estates."

Mr. Stevens applauded such a decision. "Quite right," he said, "quite right, though the estate is hardly so much encumbered as people think; of late years old Harborough has lived carefully, and things are not so bad as they are made out to be. I don't mean to say the place is free; it is not, and no doubt the next man will get into a worse state than ever, for they are all alike, an extravagant lot. But I believe a careful man with a little capital and reasonable ideas, in fact not a Harborough—beg pardon, I was not thinking of you—might do a good deal towards getting things straight."

"You think so?" Harborough asked. "They have got to get their reasonable man first, and they don't seem great at producing such articles. As for me, I don't belong to them; and if I did I don't know that I can lay claim to all your requirements, small capital and reasonable ideas as well. At any rate, I don't think I am the man for the job; it does not seem that I am within measurable distance of the base of operations."

He turned to Mr. Wagnall as he spoke, but the lawyer answered for him. "No, no, certainly not," he said; but Mr. Wagnall asked: "Are you sure that your family is a younger branch? May it not be an elder, but, owing to the fact that the idea of disqualification is usually associated with the younger ones, you have in the course of time come to consider yourself as such?"

Harborough allowed this to be possible, though he hardly thought it the case. Mr. Wagnall hardly

thought it likely either. "So far as I know anything about the family," he said, "it is not very likely, the Harboroughs have not been such a prolific family that the elder and younger ones need be confused. There never have been many of them; the heads of the house, as a rule, lived hard and died young, their legitimate children have been few in number. Indeed," the antiquary went on turning to Stevens, "when you say the old manner of succession has fallen into disuse you are hardly doing them justice, for there has not been much choice lately. The family is practically extinct when the old man dies; he has no children living; the heir is the only grandson of his only sister, not a Harborough at all except that he has been given the name. He is an only son, too, the sole representative of the younger generation,—strange how these old families seem to wear themselves out."

Gilchrist Harborough did not think it strange at all, neither did he think it to be regretted; the only thing which surprised him in the matter was the interest felt in them and the detailed record kept of their history. "It is not as if they were anything much," he said, "or had done anything much; they are only twopenny-halfpenny country squires who have never done anything worth remembering; in fact, the only thing which can be said about them is that they have been a little more rich and a good deal less respectable than their yeoman neighbours."

Such a view was not likely to commend itself to the antiquary, but as he was unable to make his own view any more commendable to young Harborough, he had to content himself with admitting the family under discussion to be country squires, and

to have been country squires so long that they counted themselves at least the equals of the newer nobility, and moreover to have kept their own records and traditions with jealous care from the days when their manor was first granted to them, at which times, doubtless, they were far other than they now were in the days of their decadence.

"If the records are kept with such care," Harborough observed, "it should be easy to see where I come in, if come in I do."

"Yes," Mr. Wagnall agreed; "I can put my finger on the only spot where at all recently we can expect to find that your people joined the common stock. I know something about the Harborough history; I was enabled through the good offices of a friend to study it at the time that I was writing my little volume on *EAST ANGLIAN HEIRSHIPS*. You have perhaps seen the book? It was noticed in several of the papers."

Harborough had not seen it, and it is to be feared he was less interested in it than in the family history. Mr. Stevens, seeing that his friend was now well mounted on his hobby, suggested that he and his listener should go into the private room, and leave the office clear for other visitors.

He half regretted being obliged to do so, for he felt he was giving the elder man an admirable opportunity for firing the imagination and ambition of the younger. Still, as the kind-hearted lawyer reflected, the young Australian was a cool and well-balanced individual with a not too exalted opinion of the value of landed property and old families to depreciate his idea of the prize at stake. "He won't take fire like a young fellow from about here," thought the lawyer, "but if he does he'll fight and fight to the end."

And again he wished he could have prevented this unearthing of family history. But it was too late, as he found when, after the young man had gone, he asked the elder one what had passed.

"He was very interested, very interested indeed," Mr. Wagnall said. "He seems to think it highly probable that he derives from the Gilchrist Harborough who turned Protestant and left England in 1843."

"In 1843," the lawyer said raising his eyebrows; "that brings it very near."

"Very near indeed," Mr. Wagnall replied with satisfaction; "but so he seems to think."

"Seems to think," Stevens repeated; "that is not worth much."

"To think that he is legitimately derived I should have said; he is positive that he is derived, he has excellent reasons for thinking so; it is a mere question of legitimacy."

"It often is with these respectable old families," Stevens observed drily. "What did you want to put all these ideas in his head for? You had much better have let him alone."

Mr. Wagnall did not think so; he considered the whole subject most interesting, and, as he pointed out, there was a good deal of information he could not have obtained without this talk with young Harborough.

"Who," Mr. Stevens said, "naturally does not regard the matter in the same placid way in which you do, seeing that he has a personal interest in it. By Jove, though, if it is as you say, and he can prove the legitimacy, he would have a good case, a very good case indeed. But he won't be able to prove it, sure not,—he would have an infernally good case if he could!"

From a purely legal point of view the subject had less interest for Mr.

Wagnall, who had no particular desire that the right man should come to his own; and in spite of a genial nature, he felt small compunction about the trouble which might possibly arise from his investigations.

"A nice hornet's nest you are likely to have routed out," said Mr. Stevens, who was differently constituted, "and a nice squabble there will be! If Harborough of Crows' Farm waits till the old man dies (and the chances are he won't last another winter), I should say it will be a bad look-out for young Kit Harborough. Not that the place is worth such a great deal, and I dare say he would muddle it if he got it; but it is hard to lose what you have always looked upon as your own. The Australian—" the lawyer laughed a little—"he's the man I described after all, the man with a little capital and reasonable ideas. He might pull the place round, cut down the timber, put some of the park-land under cultivation, drive the plough—"

But Mr. Wagnall cried out in dismay at such impossible barbarity. Nevertheless it was exactly what Gilchrist Harborough was thinking as he drove home by way of Gurnett, and looked thoughtfully at the woods and broad park-lands which surrounded the hall. It was exactly too what he said to Bill in the orchard on the next Sunday afternoon.

CHAPTER XVI.

It was now three weeks since the day when Gilchrist Harborough came to see Theresa and Polly, three weeks since they told Bill he loved her, almost three weeks since she found out what they meant by love and buried her dream among the tall weeds in the orchard-ditch. The grass was long in the orchard now, its flowers were covered in seed, brown

and yellow and purple dust blowing off at the lightest breath. The leaves on the trees were thick, so thick that when one looked up it seemed an unbroken roof of green. The year had grown older, much older, it was the first maturity of summer; the light was the warmer light of summer, the shadows the slow-moving shadows of summer; the scents, richer, fuller, were the scents of summer,—the pink briar-roses in the hedge, the wreath of honeysuckle from the tree, the hay half cut in the field beyond the lane. Spring had gone, and even if its indescribable freshness and youth were missing one could hardly ask for anything more than summer.

Bill's was a supremely contented disposition; after her one outburst on the night when Harborough did not make love to her she accepted fate resignedly. There was, as she herself had said, always to get up and have breakfast next morning even after a tragedy, and she was herself what in domestic parlance is called "a good getter up." So in the early morning after Harborough's formal offer of marriage, she thought the matter out and put it on a reasonable basis.

It is true he did not love her in the superlative and ideal way she had imagined, but then neither did other people seem to love in that way. She thought over the married couples of her acquaintance, and came to the conclusion that they loved each other after a fashion. Harborough must have loved her in a fashion, too, or else why had he sought to marry her, seeing how little she had to commend her? Yes, he must have loved her, even though he did not make love to her that night. There were two of him, she knew, and she also knew that she sometimes appealed to one of the two, the one that made love, the lesser and weaker part of his nature. In these circumstances

the other part, the cleverer, more dominant part, liked her well enough to ask her to be his wife. On the whole she did not find the situation impossible. Why should she? Her limited experience showed her no better things; her sunny philosophy led her to take the world as she found it, teaching her to judge it according to a more lenient and elastic standard than any ideal one. It is true that she did not in the present case quite extend this tolerance to Harborough; perhaps she unconsciously gauged his nature, and, measuring it by his own standards found his love wanting.

But on the whole she was moderately content, and certainly there was no possibility of avoiding the contract; honour demanded its fulfilment, and since it was unavoidable Bill was not likely to dwell on the dark side. She was pre-eminently of that nature which, when its hopes are wrecked, makes a fire of the driftwood to warm itself and its friends. Moreover, let it be remembered, to supreme ignorance and a sunny temperament the life marked out did not seem an unendurable one. "Besides," so she had concluded her reflections that morning when she faced facts, "there will be the farm and the dairy and heaps to do."

So Bill accepted matters, and she and Harborough established themselves on an easy and friendly footing in which love-making played but a small part. Theresa thought them an extraordinarily prosaic and matter-of-fact couple, but it suited Harborough well enough; he did not, as a rule, want to make love to Bill, and she did not now want him to make love to her; in fact, she would not now meet any of his overtures, and had a curiously wayward but uncompromising way of receiving his occasional tendernesses. Even in these early days

she had reason to be glad that he found there was a tantalising, untamed trait in her nature with which it would be hard to deal, and yet which constantly attracted while it annoyed him. He felt once or twice that he should like to come to close quarters with and understand it, even as he had come to close quarters on the night when he chased her like a shadow; but the moment for that was passed, and he could not recapture it; the shadow always eluded him now. This feeling occasionally troubled him, but not often, and in other respects he was satisfied. It was as a matter of course that he turned his steps to the orchard that Sunday afternoon, and as a matter of course he told Bill of Mr. Wagnall's words and the extraordinary possibilities they presented.

Bill listened with absorbed attention. Wood Hall, and all that concerned it, had a great fascination for her, but she could hardly realise that his words contained a bare chance of its coming within her own reach.

"You don't mean to say," she said at last, "that there is any way by which you could claim?"

"I am not sure," Harborough answered cautiously, anxious not to encourage the building of any castles in the air.

"Tell me what you mean then," she said, and he explained the case as clearly as he could.

"My grandfather," he said, "is the nearest we can get to the Harboroughs of Gurnett; he was called Gilchrist as I am, and was the middle one of three brothers. About the year 1843 he quarrelled with his family and left England; I think he turned Protestant."

"He must have had convictions; I wonder if he was like you," Bill observed under her breath with a particularly provoking look; but Har-

borough ignored the remark and went on with his history.

"Part of this," he said, "I heard from Mr. Wagnall on Thursday, part I knew before. I have always been told that my grandfather left England on account of a quarrel; the story was usually told me as a warning against quarrelling, but I don't know that it made much impression. What he did after he left England I do not know, travelled a bit I think at first, and then the next year he married in Paris. But his wife's family, though they were living in France, were English; indeed it was from my grandmother, who knew this part of the country, that we had the tradition of our people. She does not seem to have known much about them; my father always said she was vague in her tales, and never knew anything personally of her husband's relations. My grandfather died the same year that he married and before his son was born; my grandmother continued to live on in Paris with her own people, teaching English I think, for she must have been poor from what my father said."

"And he?" Bill asked.

"Lived in Paris too till he was about nineteen when, my grandmother being dead, he emigrated to Australia with a notion of gold-mining. At first he was unlucky; then he married when he was only twenty-two, and after that his luck changed, but as soon as he had made enough he cut the mining and bought a share in a sheep-run. I don't know if he would have made anything more at the mining, but he was not very successful with the sheep; still there was always enough to live on as far back as I can remember. I am the second of his three sons; my elder brother died when he was a boy, my younger in 1882."

"And your mother and father?"

"Yes, they died some while ago."

"You are the only one left?"

"Yes, the only son of an only son. The family curse seems to have fallen upon us inoffensive colonists too; we are near dying out."

Bill looked at him thoughtfully. "You are a long way from dead," she remarked and then inquired as to the fate of the brothers of the elder Gilchrist.

"The younger," Harborough answered, "died in 1845, so Mr. Wagnall told me, that is the year after my grandfather's death; the elder came into the property and has it still. He is the man at Wood Hall now, a childless widower with no one nearer than a sister's grandson to succeed him. He was two years older than my grandfather, I think, born in 1820."

"In 1820," Bill repeated thoughtfully; "then he was thirteen in 1833. Of course he remembered about the old Squire's body; why he was the same age as the granddaughter who planned it!"

"Planned what? Whose granddaughter? What are you talking about?"

"Only a tale that is told in Gurnet," Bill made answer; "I will tell you some other time; finish your family history first."

He knew nothing as yet about her visit to Wood Hall. She would tell him of course, as she saw no reason why he should object to it; but it was a pity to interrupt his narrative, so she asked him to go on and explain the way in which all this family history bore on his connection with Wood Hall. Accordingly he told her of the custom of the succession of the youngest. "And it appears," he concluded, "that, as the Harboroughs inherited according to this custom, the youngest son should always have succeeded to the estates."

"Why?"

"I don't know why," he answered, feeling the question to be entirely beside the point. "It does not matter why; it was so, that is all. It is a tenure called Borough English by which some estates are held, and apparently the Harboroughs' originally was so held."

"I see," Bill cried; "until the time of your grandfather Gilchrist it was so, and then, owing to his going away before his son was born and the other man not knowing he had a son at all, the elder brother got it."

"Something of the sort." Harborough was not inclined so entirely to attribute the chain of events to the ignorance of those in possession, but that did not matter to Bill.

"And you are going to claim through your grandfather?" she said.

"Yes, I expect so, in time," Gilchrist answered. "But you are in too much of a hurry; wait a bit, and I will explain. Most likely I shall not claim in the present owner's lifetime, that is if I ever do it at all; he is an old man in bad health, and they say he is not likely to outlast the year; I think I should wait till after his death."

"It would be kinder," said Bill.

But that was not Harborough's reason, and though he did not say so, he made his real motive fairly clear. "It is a very difficult thing," he said, "to turn out a man who has been in possession such a long time; indeed, it is just possible that if I could not prove that neither I nor my father knew that we had the right to claim for all those years, I should not be able to do it at all. If we had known it, and had for some reason left Mr. Harborough in possession, I don't believe we could turn him out; but as we did not know I ought to be able to do it, though I don't think I shall try unless he shows signs

of living longer than now seems likely."

"I see; then he will never know you have a claim?"

"No, not if I can prevent it. I will tell you why. He does not care much for the heir, it is said, though he wishes him to have the property for family reasons; he is altogether rather an eccentric old man"—Bill knew that—"and it is possible that if he is left to himself he will make no will. Now, I don't want him to make a will, which would only complicate the case. If he has no right to the property he can't bequeath it; but the existence of a will, bequeathing it to the recognised heir, would give him a show of right which he would not otherwise have. So, you see, I do not want a will made, and do not want to give Mr. Harborough any reason for making one by hinting at my claim yet."

"Is that fair?" Bill asked.

"Of course it is fair. What do you mean?"

"I don't know, I am not quite sure," she answered thoughtfully; "I shall have to think about it. But don't let's bother now; tell me about your case."

"I don't know what you mean by fairness," Harborough said somewhat severely. "If there is anything unfair it is the way in which my people have been kept out all these years. As to my case, there is very little more to tell about it, except, of course, that I shall have to prove my legitimate descent from Gilchrist Harborough, that my grandmother was legally married to him, and all that."

"How could she be anything else?" Bill asked wondering.

"He could have had another wife living at the same time, or he could have been married before, or something of the sort."

This was a new but impossible diffi-

culty to Bill. "Oh, but he wouldn't, —at least, seeing that he was a Harborough —" She paused and then added demurely: "I thought you did not wish to belong to that played-out family, and had a poor opinion of their mortgaged property."

"I can't help my ancestors," Harborough replied, "and besides, they are some way back; we have been honest working men for two generations. As for the property, it is not so much encumbered as is usually thought, so Stevens, the lawyer at Wrugglesby, says; it is his opinion that a practical man with a small capital and reasonable notions could pull the place together yet."

"You!" Bill cried. "Thou art the man!" and she made the best obeisance to him that she could without getting down from her perch on the low branch of an apple-tree.

"I don't know about the reasonable notions," Harborough said seriously, "and as for the small capital, what I have is not large for such a job; still, since I made the lucky speculation which emboldened me to ask you to be my wife, I suppose I can lay claim to a little capital. Something could be done with the place I am sure; I drove past the other day and made observations; there is a lot of fine timber still among all the rubbish in the wood and more in the open park-land—that's worth something; then a good lot of that park could be cultivated profitably; it would take time but I believe it could be done."

"And the house," Bill added, "is big too. If we lived there we could take boarders in the summer; if we advertised among the seaside and farm-house lodgings in the time-table, we should be sure to get some answers."

Harborough never was quite sure whether she was in fun or in earnest; he was not sure now, but in either

case he was annoyed and felt his annoyance to be justifiable. "That would be impossible," he said severely, though had he given expression to what was in his mind he would have requested her not to be absurd. However, for politeness sake he contented himself with the milder speech, rising as he uttered it.

"Why?" Bill asked jumping down from her perch.

"Why? Because it would be out of the question. As Mrs. Harborough of Wood Hall how could you receive boarders? It may be all very well for you and Miss Hains to do it in London, though, as you know, I don't altogether approve of the plan, but here—here it would be impossible."

"Why impossible? You don't explain."

He was holding the gate open for her, and jerked it with annoyance as he answered. "To begin with, in that position—"

"Oh, but there wouldn't be one," Bill interrupted; "there would be no position. The stiff-necked county would hardly recognise you on the strength of your grandfather if you ploughed your park; and as for me, —even if I were Madame La Princesse your wife I should still be 'only Bill.'"

She uttered the name with the wealth of contempt and annoyance which Polly, at times of extreme irritation, could concentrate into its one syllable. Harborough felt irritated too; no man who has all his life assumed an indifference to position likes to be shown that he too has a trace of the universal respect for it.

"If you think," he said coldly, "that I care for the county you are very much mistaken. Other people's opinion is not of the slightest importance to me as you should know, and though I care a good deal what manner of woman my wife is, it is

for myself I care not for my neighbours."

CHAPTER XVII.

"It is my belief," said Miss Minchin to Miss Gruet, when the sultry days of August had reduced the two ladies to visiting one another in the cool of the evening only, "it's my belief that Mr. Harborough is courting Mrs. Morton's cousin; he goes to Haylands so very regularly now."

"Very likely," Miss Gruet made answer, "although I should hardly have thought so poorly of him."

"So poorly?" Miss Minchin repeated.

"Yes, so poorly, for she is little more than a child."

"Oh, I don't know." Miss Minchin bridled at some recollection. "I had an offer before I was her age."

That was true, although, since the suitor was still younger it could hardly be regarded as eligible. Miss Gruet, having no such testimony to bring forward, contented herself with saying, "Girls don't marry so young nowadays."

"No," Miss Minchin was forced to admit, "no, perhaps you are right. But what takes Mr. Harborough so often to Haylands? He must go to see someone; who is it?"

Now, oddly enough, that was exactly the question Polly was propounding to herself, and seeing how entirely she considered the engagement (except for the secrecy) her own arrangement, it was strange. Fortunately about this time she had ample opportunities for studying the question, for she and Bella came to Ashelton as often as they could during the summer months. They usually walked from Wrugglesby, nearly a six miles' tramp along dusty country roads; but as compensation they always drove home with a cer-

tain quantity of spoil stowed under the seat. Sometimes it was butter they brought back packed in a damp cloth, or eggs carefully held in Bella's lap, or chickens showing under the back seat; sometimes it was only vegetables, or a basket of fruit, or a pigeon pie, or a basin of dripping, or some equally humble subscription to the larder. Polly despised nothing and refused nothing. When Theresa hardly liked to offer such trifles to the elder housekeeper, Bill relieved her of any difficulties by putting various small articles in the old safe which stood in the corner of the wash-house, and which came in the course of time to be kept for Polly's sole use. "That'll do for Polly," she would say when Theresa debated how to use this or that; and if Theresa demurred saying, "I can't offer her such things," Bill assured her: "You can offer her anything you don't mind her having; the only thing you can't offer her is anything you don't want her to have and only offer out of politeness. Put it in her cupboard; she'll take it."

And take it she always did. So, partly because this collecting of odds and ends suited her near, but effective, style of housekeeping, and partly from a sense of responsibility which prompted her to see how things went on at Haylands, Polly came often to Ashelton that summer. And what she saw there led her to ask herself the question which Miss Minchin asked: "Whom did Gilchrist Harborough come to see?" And the answer she gave herself was the one which with great truthfulness she gave in different words to Miss Minchin, "I don't know."

Miss Minchin asked the question, or rather, by less bald methods sought the answer, when Polly came to stay at Haylands in August. It was the middle of the month when she and

Bella came ; they had had to continue school during the earlier part of the month to compensate the pupils for the time lost at Miss Brownlow's death, but by the middle they came to Ashelton to stay for a fortnight. For the first week Theresa would be there ; for the second the three cousins would be left in charge as she and Robert were going away. It was a busy time for a farmer to leave, but Robert did not seem to mind ; as he said that he would much rather leave now than in September, partridge-shooting possibly had more to do with his decision than farming. However that might be, he decided to go, and Polly and Bella came to Haylands with the understanding that they would look after Bill and the house during Theresa's absence. It was a few days after their arrival that Polly met Miss Minchin in the lane. As they were going the same way they walked on together, Miss Minchin making many enquiries as to the health and general welfare of the cousins. Polly gave all suitable answers, and talked in her best style, with perhaps more regard for effect than accuracy. What she said in reference to Harborough, however, was mainly true, more true than she herself liked in the circumstances.

Of course, so she told herself, Harborough came to see Bill, and since, being a busy man with no spare time, his visits were paid at fixed hours, he usually did see Bill. It sometimes happened, though not often, that the time of his coming varied a little, and also it sometimes happened, even when he was regular, that Bill was busy or not to be found for a few minutes. On these occasions Theresa entertained him until Bill appeared, when she would have been quite willing to leave them to enjoy each other's society undisturbed. But they did not show the least wish for such a

thing. "We haven't got anything private to say," Bill told her once when Theresa remonstrated with her. So by degrees it came about that if the cousins were indoors Harborough joined them, and if they were out of doors he sat under the elm-tree with them, helping Bill to shell peas or string currants, or whatever peaceful occupation she might be engaged upon that evening. Theresa would willingly have taken such work from her on the evenings when Harborough came, but if she did Bill only got something else to do, and that possibly of a less suitable nature. Theresa could not understand the girl at all ; she never seemed shy or eager to see her lover ; she was never anxious to put on her best frock for his coming ; and yet she appeared happy in the engagement. Of course Harborough himself was not demonstrative ; he was always grave and serious when Theresa saw him, but no doubt, so she thought, he was different in her absence, thinking which she went away. Whereupon, the currants being done, the pair took to watering the garden with a silent industry and a strict attention to business.

Polly saw all this and more still with her shrewd little eyes, and before Theresa went away she spoke to her on the subject.

"You have noticed it too ?" Theresa said, as if relieved to find it not all her own fancy. "Do you think Bill is really fond of him ?"

"Yes, I do, and I think it is very hard on her that you should take so much of his attention."

"I !" exclaimed Theresa flushing. "I ! How can you say such a thing, Polly ?"

Polly both could and did say such a thing, and she said it with the repetitions and variations she so well knew how to use, until Theresa, hurt and angry and mortified by turns, first

denied the charge and then defended the action.

"Somebody must be civil to him," she said at last. "Bill never wants to see him alone; she makes him work in the garden if I leave them; she won't be nice to him or put her best dress on, or anything."

"Bill is a little goose, and the chances are she does all that out of pride and contradiction because she is jealous of you."

"She can't be jealous of me, it is impossible," Theresa said, and the next moment added, "and if she is, why does she not try to please him? When he wants her to talk seriously she won't; she says the most ridiculous things in the gravest manner, and the gravest in the most ridiculous, till he never knows how to take her, and that's annoying to a man, you know. And then she will persist in calling him Theo. For a long time she did not call him anything, at least not when I was there, always beginning, 'I say,' just as if that was his name; it was so rude, I told her about it. She said she did not like Gilchrist, there had been too many of them. I told her to settle that with him, but I'm sure I don't know what she said, for now she calls him Theo which she says is short for theory, and I know he can't bear it."

To this recital of Bill's misdeeds Polly only said: "I must have a good talk with Bill, I think she minds me more than you; only, you know, my dear Theresa, your being nice to Gilchrist will hardly compensate for Bill being nasty. I am sure you don't mean anything but the very best, still, quite unintentionally of course, you sometimes make it a little hard for her."

Theresa was truly grieved as Polly meant her to be, and determined to be very careful of her conversation with Harborough in the future. It

must be admitted that she could not disguise from herself the fact that she really did enjoy talking to him, and he could not disguise from her woman's wit the respectful and quite impersonal admiration he had for her.

Theresa was easy enough to deal with; Bill was the real difficulty, as Polly knew, a difficulty she did not feel at all sure of being able to tackle successfully. She thought over the subject for some time, and finally decided to leave it for the present. Theresa was going away in a day or two, and when she returned Bill herself was to leave with Polly and Bella. In these circumstances it hardly seemed necessary to open the question now, and Polly determined to study the matter for the present and speak of it while they were away together.

Theresa was only away for a week, but the three cousins left behind contrived to get a certain amount of excitement into the week. It was really Bill's fault, Polly said, Bill and her plums. Plums were very scarce that year, not only in Ashelton but in all that part of the country. There had been every promise of a good yield in the spring, but a few late frosts had terribly damaged the crop; many trees were quite bare and many others had but little fruit; those in the Haylands orchard had escaped. The plums were decidedly the best of the trees in the orchard; they were younger and in better condition than the apples or pears, and they were, moreover, very good kinds. In the spring they had shown every promise of abundance of fruit, and when the late frosts came, damaging the neighbouring trees, they did not suffer much owing to good luck and a sheltered position. Bill was delighted by their escape, and during the summer took great interest in the

health of the trees, propping up the overloaded branches and regretfully thinning the too abundant crop. By the end of August the fruit was ripe and a source of great satisfaction to her.

"I don't see what you are going to do with them," Polly said one morning as she looked at the trees from which Bill was filling Bella's pudding-basin.

"We can't eat them all," Bella said, biting one as she spoke, "nor make jam, nor pies, nor give them away; there are far too many; they have all got ripe together. What a pity Theresa is not here; I wonder what she does with the fruit."

"Sells it," said Bill as she went on to look at the next tree.

"To whom?"

"I don't know. The apples used to go away last year; I have seen some of the baskets about. These plums ought to be picked; they are quite ripe and the wasps are getting at them."

"Yes," Polly said judicially, "they ought to be picked to-day. I think, Bill, you had better get what we want for jam and perhaps you might get a basketful for Mrs. Dawson. Mr. Dawson was saying the other day that they had none at all. You had better gather all we can use this morning."

"I mean to," Bill replied, "but you have got to help. Oh, yes you have; they must be all, or at least the greater part picked to-day; you will have to help."

"Bill," Polly began with dignity, but Bella, disturbed about her sister's property, interposed. "It does seem a pity not to sell them; I do think it is silly of Theresa not to have left any orders about them; can't we write to her?"

"Not in time," Bill answered. "I expect she left no orders because

she did not think; she and Robert always call these my trees, because I take such an interest in them. Robert said I should keep anything I could make out of them; I don't want to do that, but I mean to make something."

"I don't see how you are going to sell them," Polly called from the gate as she was leaving the orchard.

"Don't you? I have seen for several days. Don't go, Polly, you must help to pick; it is going to be a busy day and you will have to help; you might begin at once while I find the baskets."

"I'll come too as soon as I have taken this to Jessie," and Bella went away with the basin as she spoke, leaving Bill and Polly in animated conversation. When she came back to begin her share of the plum-picking she found Polly at work; Bill had coerced her into it somehow, and, what was more remarkable still, kept her at it. They all three worked steadily, finding it decidedly more tiring than they had anticipated. Not only did they gather the fruit, but they also packed it in the baskets in which it was to travel. In time the baskets gave out, and Bill proposed to borrow some from Mr. Dane. "I know he has got some," she said; "I saw them round by his back door the last time I went for books. It won't take me long to go and borrow them."

"You can't," Polly said; "besides we have done enough; it is nearly four o'clock."

"We sha'n't have done enough," Bill observed, descending her ladder, "until we have done all we can."

"It would be a great pity to waste any," Bella added; "there are heaps more just perfect, and this weather they won't hang."

"Do you intend to keep on till

dark?" Polly demanded. "How absurd! Have you forgotten that Gilchrist Harborough is coming this evening?"

"All the better,—he can help," was the only answer, and the gate closed after Bill as she went in quest of the rector's baskets.

"It is perfect nonsense," Polly said wrathfully; "why couldn't she have got one of the men about the farm to do this work?"

"They are busy," Bella answered; "I expect she does not want to take their time, more especially as Robert said she could have the profits."

"There won't be any; and if there are I see no reason why I should work for her profit."

"It is not bad work. I wonder how she found out where to sell them; I expect she made Theo tell her. Do you like him, Polly? I think I do."

"I don't like this work," was Polly's only answer, "and I am not going to do any more of it at present; I shall lie down for half an hour."

And away she went, calculating that Bill could not be less than half an hour in borrowing the baskets, and in any case she would hear her return through the open window. Bella, left to herself, went on industriously with her work until the sound of footsteps in the lane arrested her attention. She was standing on a high rung of the ladder, and peering through the plum-branches, she looked to see who might be passing, secure that she herself was unseen. In this belief she was, however, mistaken, for the passer by glancing up at that moment had the vision of a flushed face and a frame of golden hair, the curls all loosened and caught by the tiresome interwoven branches, the whole surrounded by those same branches in a way which he found almost bewildering.

"Good afternoon, Miss Waring,"

he said. "I was just on my way to Haylands about the bees,—is any one at home?"

Polly was at home, but Polly might not like to be disturbed; still of course the bees were a matter of business, so Bella looked out again, or rather, partly looked out, having in the moment's retirement given some infinitesimal but effective touches to her tie and hair. Jack Dawson found her irresistible, but he had found her that before. Mrs. Dawson could hardly have selected a more momentous time for acquiring a hive of bees than the one she did, for her son Jack discovered that the Mortons' bees were the best, in fact the only really good bees to be had, and even these he found needed a great deal of investigation before purchase. At least such must have been the case to judge by the number of calls of inquiry he paid and the length of time he spent looking at the hives with Bella. Mrs. Dawson is reported to have said at the end of the month that that hive cost her more than anything she ever bought, but eventually she came to a gentler way of thinking; for after all, though it undoubtedly is a criminal offence for only sons to marry, it is an offence they will commit and Jack's partner in guilt, or rather promised partner, won her way into Mrs. Dawson's heart in time.

But that was all in the future; in the present, Jack, on his mother's behalf was industriously following up his quest for bees, and Bella, on her sister's behalf, was helping him. It is to be presumed that these were their motives, though a casual observer might have thought their interests, though mutual, were more circumscribed on the occasion when they helped each other to gather Bill's plums. Bella said she could not leave off till Bill came back; it

would be so unkind if both she and Polly went away without a word of explanation. Jack agreed, saying that there was no hurry and he could wait any time, and while he waited he helped to make up for Polly's desertion. Polly, meanwhile, slept peacefully, and Bill went by way of the rector's back-door into the rector's presence.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Bill was a privileged intruder at the rectory now, coming and going as she chose, saying and doing what she chose, with no one to hinder her.

At first the old rector had not known whether he hated or loved this grandchild of the dead past, this creature who was Wilhelmina, and Gipsy Alardy, and a score of other things half bitter and half sweet. But after a time he forgot to think of hatred or love; he never thought now of that dead past, for she was not Wilhelmina, nor Gipsy Alardy, nor anything but her untutored, half-developed self. So he buried the past again, and, accepting the present as he found it, turned to the work in hand. In that work he included Bill, and the queerest, pleasantest, most incomprehensible work he found her. So to the rectory she came for all manner of things and to the rector for all manner of information; he seldom refused her, never repulsed her, listened to her plans and fancies, never condemned nor ridiculed, lending a sympathetic ear to all things, even including those which some would have had him condemn. From her heart Bill longed to tell him of her promise to Harborough, feeling it almost a breach of confidence to shut him out of this secret; but when she asked Theresa if she might speak, Theresa said she had better not. She knew

Mr. Dane was kind to her young cousin, but she did not understand the odd friendship there was between them, and, as she no doubt wisely said, should Bill tell one person, Harborough could justly claim the right to tell one on his side, and the secret would be a secret no longer; it must either remain among themselves or else be public to all the world. Bill saw no reason why it should be a secret, but as Polly advised her to say just what she thought best to Mr. Dane, she let the matter drop; she did not know Polly's motives, but she would not in this follow her advice in opposition to Theresa's. So Mr. Dane knew nothing about the arrangement, knowing only, as all Ashelton knew, that Gilchrist Harborough went to Haylands, but, owing to what he himself knew of Bill, he attached little importance to that.

On the day when Bill came to borrow the baskets the rector was busy, so busy that he was not disturbed by her light footstep nor aware of her presence until she was by his chair making her request.

"Baskets, Princess Puck?" he said; "of course, take what you like."

And she had gone again before the ink in his pen was dry.

"Away already?" he said, looking up as the handle rattled when she closed the door after her.

"Yes, I'm very busy, and so are you." She opened the door again an inch or two to say it.

"Ah, I see; you're always busy."

"I'm gathering plums. We have all three been doing it most of the day, and we shall keep on till dark; there are heaps to be gathered, as the whole lot are ripe together. Would you like some? I'll send some this evening."

"Thank you, thank you, you are very kind. I dare say I shall be down your lane this evening, and if I am

perhaps I can take them away with me; that will save your time and let me see you busy people at work."

"You will come?" Bill opened the door wider to put the question joyously. "Monseigneur, you shall have the biggest and best, and as many as you can carry!"

Harborough's visit had passed entirely out of her mind, and when it came back to her on her way home with the baskets she did not regret the rector's promise to come. She went to the orchard with a light heart, and an ungainly appearance, having slung the two biggest hampers across her shoulders, to facilitate their transport, while she carried the smaller baskets in her hands. She went by way of the fields, and as Miss Minchin was engaged in chasing the course of the sun, with her window-blinds on the other side of the house, she reached the orchard unobserved.

Jack Dawson and Bella were on the same ladder, and in the heart of the same plum-tree. They did not see Bill until she, having unburdened herself and discovered Polly's absence, announced herself by the question, "Where is Polly?"

A ripe plum fell heavily from the branch above as Bella started at the voice. "I,—she's gone in,—Mr. Dawson is helping me while she rests."

"How long has she been resting?"

"Ever since you went away,—but, Bill—"

"Don't disturb her," entreated a masculine voice from the branches, and the masculine legs descended the ladder a little way. "I can stay and take her place; she must be awfully tired, you know."

"She isn't," announced the inexorable Bill; "she's lazy, that's all. It is very good of you to offer to take her place, but, if you really will help, you had much better take Bella's;

she has worked hard, as hard as possible."

"If Miss Waring will allow me to help her?" Jack suggested persuasively.

"You will, won't you, Bella?" Bill said; "and I'll go and fetch Polly." And she suited the action to the word.

"It is a pity to disturb Miss Hains," Jack said and Bella agreed with him, sincerely hoping Bill would not succeed in the difficult task of uprooting the reposeful Polly.

However she was disappointed; in a very short time Polly, gracious and serene, accompanied Bill to the orchard. But the indefatigable couple were not disturbed in their industry, Polly, after polite greeting, going to work on a distant tree and taking Bill with her.

Jack Dawson helped them all the remainder of the afternoon, and even Harborough found him still hard at work on his own arrival in the evening. Polly, in her position of chaperone, regarded the two pairs with a judicial eye and felt dissatisfied. Jack and Bella were well enough, and their relative output of work and conversation was more calculated to satisfy her than the amateur market-gardener; it was the market-gardener herself and Gilchrist Harborough who displeased Polly.

"That young man is a splendid agricultural implement," was her opinion as she watched him. "He might as well be Darby's digger or somebody's steam-plough, and Bill,—well." Here Polly sniffed aloud, but whether from contempt for Bill or sympathy with her own difficulties one could not say. At that moment her attention was arrested by Bill's voice.

"You have come then, Monseigneur! You shall have the very best."

Polly looked round sharply; the tone of the girl's voice was so unlike that in which she usually spoke to Harborough, suggesting something of caress in it, of the frank familiarity of assured welcome and response. It was not wonderful that Polly looked to see if Theo answered to this new nickname, and when it was evident he did not, that she looked still more eagerly to see who did.

Mr. Dane, the courteous but somewhat exclusive rector of Ashelton! He was Monseigneur, it was for him Bill was opening the rickety gate, he whom she welcomed so gladly! It was surprising, Polly felt, but safe. Perhaps Harborough felt the same, for he did not seem to resent Bill's evident satisfaction in Mr. Dane's presence, and he did not, as Polly did, lecture Bill afterwards on the impropriety of addressing elderly gentlemen in so free and easy a fashion.

Of course Bill did not in the least mind what was said, and went to bed as indifferent to Polly's remarks as Mr. Dane himself would have been. He went home thinking kindly of the young folks under the orchard-trees, pretty Bella and her suitors, as he took both young men to be, the favoured and the unfavoured one. The favoured one,—and in judging Jack Dawson to be such the rector was right—did not retire to rest in the peaceful manner of the other plum-gatherers, having first had to endure an extremely stormy interview with his mother.

Perhaps Bella had some idea of what might be taking place, for she lay awake long that night, though Bill, with whom she shared the room, did not know it. The younger girl slept soundly and dreamlessly, not troubling at all about Jack or Harborough, nor yet about her own plans for the morrow. Those same plans necessitated getting up at a

very early hour the next morning; fortunately Bella was sleeping quietly at the time, so without challenge Bill dressed and went out.

It was cold out of doors, everything drenched with dew; everything deadly, almost awfully, still,—the dead world, the motionless air, the opaque sky, dark except where at the horizon's rim it showed faintly grey like the ashes of yesterday. It was not really dark; Bill wondered why all things were so clear in this ghostly, shadowless twilight. "It is as if the world were dead," she thought, "burned out and finished, resurrection and judgment over, and just me left behind forgotten."

Then she unlocked the stable-door and, putting fancies aside, set seriously to work, first harnessing the old roan horse to the roomy light cart, and afterwards climbing in beside the hampers of plums placed there over-night. She had told Polly and Bella that she herself would take the plums away, and that she would have to start before breakfast to do it. Bella was too much disturbed about her own concerns to feel much interest, and Polly saw no reason to object, as had Theresa been at home she possibly might have done. As it was, the two remaining cousins had breakfast without Bill, though Polly was much annoyed by a note the girl had left saying she would not be back till the afternoon. All thoughts of Bill, however, were soon driven out of her head by the confidence Bella could withhold no longer.

And thus it was that Bill drove away with her plums in the grey dawn, not to Wrugglesby and the railway-station, but to Darvel the regimental town, a far longer distance but a bigger town with richer inhabitants, military and civil. The strawberry roan was a good old horse though terribly ugly; he would

trot well along the winding lanes and empty highways on the journey, and at the journey's end stand patiently beside the curb while Bill went to the back door to sell her plums. That was her notion of doing business; untroubled by any idea of license, and fortunately remaining untaught by painful experience, she went from house to house selling her fruit by the pound, having taken the dairy-scales with her for the purpose. And a very good trade she did, for plums were scarce and hers were beyond reproach; she asked a fair price and gave good weight, dealing as an honest and humble trader should.

It was with a clear conscience and satisfied mind that she drove home, light in load and heavy in pocket. She came back by the Wrugglesby road, which was further but better going now that dry weather had loosened the roads. The afternoon was far advanced and the shadows stretched long on the cropped grass fields and matted seed-clover. In the distance the air still quivered with heat, and the red-roofed farms glowed warmly in it. Now and again came the whir of machinery, some stack in process of erection or a reaper in a wheat-field near at hand. Bill looked around her, at the dusty hedgerows, the deep green trees, the poppies by the road, it was all very good in the drowsy afternoon; the whole world was so good, she could have sung aloud for joy.

Propriety, however, demanded that she should not, and moreover some one accosted her at that moment, a stranger asking the way to Sales Cross. She pulled up to tell him and then, as she was passing that way herself, offered him a lift. He accepted, glancing at her curiously; the voice and manner were not quite what he had expected from the general

appearance of herself and her equipage. However, he seated himself beside her and began to speak of the harvest-prospects and the weather, equally popular topics of conversation just then. A small farmer or bailiff's daughter, he thought her, concluding that latter-day education must in some way be responsible for her unusual manner.

So he talked to her on various topics, incidentally learning a little about herself, among other things that she had been to Darvel to sell fruit. In this way, Bill making no effort to learn anything of him and his business, they reached Sales Cross and there for the first time she asked him of his concerns, inquiring which way he wanted to go.

"There is a foot-path leading off from the road on the left, I am told," he said, and when she pointed it out to him he got down and bidding her good-afternoon went on his way.

"I wonder where he is going," she thought. "He could get to part of Ashelton that way, but I don't suppose he is going there, and he could get to several other places equally well." Then she drove on dismissing the subject from her mind.

Now, Polly, though she had talked and thought principally about Bella that day, had found time, as the afternoon wore on, to wonder a little what mischief Bill had in hand, and to wonder a great deal more as to who would find her out. Polly's morals were of a strictly utilitarian character, and being a great believer in the eleventh commandment *Thou shalt not be found out*, she was prepared to measure her wrath with Bill's misdoings in proportion to the publicity of their nature. Therefore when, at about five o'clock in the afternoon the offender came to her on the lawn, she proceeded to catechise her in a brief and business-like

way, reserving her most important question till the last.

"And whom did you meet? Who knows about this?"

"Who? Why, of course, all the people I sold plums to, and—"

"No, no, the people about here I mean, people whom we know."

"Oh, no one."

"No one in Ashelton or Wrugglesby? Didn't you see anyone to speak to?"

"Yes; I gave a lift to a stranger who wanted to find the way to Sales Cross. He asked me if I had been to Wrugglesby market, and I told him that it was not market-day, and that I had been to Darvel with fruit."

Polly was extremely angry at this indiscretion, and said so in no measured terms. She reflected, however, that, the man being a stranger, no harm had been done unless he happened to be visiting any of their acquaintances in the neighbourhood, in which case he might perhaps recognise Bill on some future occasion.

"But I don't see what harm I have done," Bill objected. "I dare say T. won't like it when I tell her, as she is rather particular, but you are not proud and it is no good saying you are; there is no reason why you should object any more than Theo will when I tell him."

But Polly was not at all sure that Theo would approve of Bill's performance, and she said so, without convincing Bill; she also reproved her sharply without showing her wherein lay the wrong. Bill, who did not at all believe in Polly, was entirely unimpressed, and Bella just then came out from the house.

"Have you told her?" she asked, and Bill noticed that she looked troubled and excited.

"No," Polly said, "I have not; I had enough to do thinking about her behaviour."

"Told me what?" Bill asked, "What is it?"

And because they felt the news they had to tell was of greater importance than her own comparatively obscure misdoings, they told her. Soon even Polly had forgotten about Bill in the greater news; as for Bill herself, she thought no more of anything but Bella and her happiness in Jack's love and her fear of Jack's mother. Bill could not quite understand the fear; if you were sure of the love, in her opinion, you could not be afraid, for nothing would matter. And the love,—she looked rather wistfully at Bella, wondering why she could not feel as this cousin did. But she said nothing of these things, forgetting them for the time being in the engrossing talk which was only closed when they all went indoors, Bill saying as they went: "But, Polly, how about your lodgings now? By next summer you will have no one to help you."

"I shall go on alone," Polly answered magnanimously. "I shall be able to do it, and even if I could not, I should not dream of standing in the way of either of you."

"But you seem to want us both to get married," Bill said.

"I do, if you marry well. I am sure that neither of you would forget all I have done for you, and I am sure you will both remember how valuable even trifles are to me."

There was something faintly suggestive of the beggar's whine in Polly's tone, which made both the younger cousins laugh as they went into the house completely forgetful of Bill's doings.

But there was one who did not forget them, who felt he had good reason to be angry with them, and that one was Gilchrist Harborough. It was to him that the stranger Bill met was going. He was a Sydney lawyer and the fortunate possessor of private

means, who had been a friend of Harborough in the new country, and now that he was home for a holiday in the old, Harborough had thought it worth while to tell him the story of his claim to the Gurnett estates, asking his opinion rather than his help. The lawyer, however, was so much impressed with the strength of the case when he first heard the story in June, that he immediately set to work on his own account to verify one or two necessary points. Having by this week's mail received from Australia the information he wanted, he came to tell Harborough of his success. At first he intended to write, but as he was going to stay a week or two with some friends further down the line, he broke his journey at Wruglesby and spent a couple of hours discussing the situation with Harborough.

Unfortunately, he did not confine himself entirely to business during that couple of hours, for he casually mentioned the little fruit-seller who

gave him a lift in her empty cart. "The queerest little oddity I have ever seen," he said. "I wonder if you know who she is; let's see if I can describe her. She was small, dark, shabby, shabbier than any cottage-girl I have yet come across in this well-favoured old country—untidy, simple, though 'cute I should say, frank as an American, brown as a berry, hair dark but reddish, face,—I don't know, a provoking little face and perfectly irresistible eyes."

Harborough knew who she was though he did not say; a slighter description would have served him. There were not two such about; two brown girls who spoke good English and sold fruit by the pound in Darvel, who wore their right boots laced with string (Harborough knew that boot well) and had brown eyes with the sunshine in them; who made friends with all comers, who whistled to the birds in the hedges, who was, in fact, —Bill, his promised wife.

(To be continued.)

THE MONTENEGRIN JUBILEE.

EXACTLY half a century will have passed this autumn since the accession of Danilo the Second to the "rough rock-throne" of Montenegro led to the conversion of that remarkable State from a theocratic government to a temporal principality. Ever since the year 1516 the Black Mountain had been governed by a prince-bishop, or *vladika*; and since 1696 that dignity had been made hereditary in the family of Petrovich, of which the present Prince Nicholas is the worthy descendant. But the inconveniences of a system which prevented the Montenegrin ruler from marrying, the consequent transmission of the hereditary headship of the country from uncle to nephew instead of from father to son, and the banter of the Czar Nicholas the First induced Danilo to change the time-honoured practice which had made Montenegro unique among the European States of the nineteenth century. Early in 1852 the new ruler's proposals were accepted by the Montenegrin senate, and it was solemnly announced that Montenegro was a secular State under the hereditary government of a Prince. Since that date the wild and unknown highland principality, which was generally regarded by Europe as a nest of brigands and savages, has entered the great family of European nations, and its reigning House has become connected with some of the most distinguished of European monarchs. Now therefore, when just fifty years have passed since the accession of the first Petrovich prince and when his nephew and successor, the real founder of modern Montenegro, is

about to celebrate his own sixtieth birthday, it may be worth while to trace the progress made in one of the most interesting and least known of existing States.

Bella gerant alii, tu, felix Austria, nube.

Such was the saying which in by-gone days attributed the piecemeal formation of the Hapsburg dominions to a policy of marriage rather than of war. Prince Nicholas of Montenegro, in spite of a recent protest of his affection, does not love the Austrians, whose occupation of the Herzegovina, that cradle of the Petrovich family, he can never forget, and whose representatives at his capital have not been always to his liking; but he seems to have taken to heart the Austrian maxim of matrimonial politics. Neither of his two wars against the Turks, in 1862 and again in 1876-7, though they both attracted the attention of Europe and the latter ultimately led to the large increase of his territory and its extension down to the Adriatic, has been of such service to him as the possession of seven charming and marriageable daughters. The union of one of them, now dead, with Prince Peter Karageorgevich, the head of the rival Servian family which disputes with the House of Obrenovich the uneasy Servian throne, has placed Prince Nicholas in the position of the near relative of a claimant, possibly in that of a claimant himself, to that troublesome heritage. From time to time the historic dream of a re-union of

the two Serb States, separated since the fatal field of Kossovo, under the sceptre of a new Dushan, more fortunate than the medieval monarch of that name, has vexed the pacific slumbers of the Prince. The absence of an heir in the Obrenovich family has led some Servian politicians to cast their eyes on the ruler of Montenegro; and others, aware that Austria-Hungary would never permit a union of the two Serb States across her possessions, which might serve as a magnet for the Austrian and Hungarian Serbs, have lately talked of the Prince's second son Mirko, now twenty-two years of age, as a possible successor of King Alexander. Prince Mirko is a young man of talent, a poet (like his father) and a musician of distinction, one of whose compositions was recently performed in Rome, and he is sure to play a considerable part in the politics of the Balkans. But neither he nor yet his elder brother, the Crown-Prince Danilo, who was married two years ago to the Duchess Jutta of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, has so far been of such social and political service to his father as the present Queen of Italy. The Italian royal marriage was a love-affair of the most romantic character, and ever since the accession of his son-in-law to the Italian throne last year, Prince Nicholas has been a personage of much importance. The quidnuncs credit him with the part of a mediator whenever Italy and Russia are desirous of coming into closer relations with one another, and he has even been assumed, without much evidence it is true, to be desirous of breaking up the Triple Alliance for the benefit of his Russian patron and for the furtherance of his own schemes at the cost of Austria. While he has publicly denied the truth of these rumours, Prince Nicholas has adopted the style of a Royal Highness, nominally

ally to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of his own accession last year, really to give himself a social status more in accordance with his altered circumstances. Moreover the marriages of two others of his daughters with connexions of the Russian Imperial family, the Grand-Duke Peter Nikolaievich and the Duke of Leuchtenberg, and that of yet a fifth daughter with Prince Francis Joseph of Battenberg (a particular favourite of Queen Victoria) have brought the ruler of the Black Mountain, whose predecessors were regarded as almost outside the pale of civilisation, into close personal relations with the heads of both the Russian and the British Empire. Alexander the Third called him his "only friend": Nicholas the Second, despite his own pacific aims, has furnished him with rifles and ammunition for his warlike subjects; and the Prince's visit to our late Queen three years ago greatly interested both hostess and guest.

As the Prince has two unmarried daughters in reserve, it is possible that he may add yet further to the already long list of his distinguished sons-in-law. Princess Xenia may perhaps hold sway in Crete, and Princess Vera, at present too young to think of wedlock, may find in due course an orthodox spouse in Holy Russia. At the same time, these matrimonial alliances, like all good things, have had their disadvantages. When Freeman, exactly a quarter of a century ago, wrote in these columns his memorable article on his visit to Montenegro, that country was poor, but the needs of its sovereign were small. At the opening of the twentieth century, the Black Mountain, even though its area has been so much increased since then, is still a poor land in the main, while the expenditure of the reigning family has been inevitably increased. Frequent journeys, under-

taken in royal style, occasional hospitalities at Cetinje when everything has to be brought from Cattaro or Ragusa, the erection and furnishing of a palace for the Crown-Prince and his wife, the greater number of diplomats who are accredited to the village-capital,—all these are sources of additional expense. It is said that on one occasion, when the Prince returned from one of his European tours, there was only £20 in the treasury. Hence, Montenegro, like every other Balkan State, has undergone of late years a financial crisis, which, after attempts to raise a loan in England and France, culminated in the inspection of its finances by a Russian expert. Hopes are, however, entertained of a rich return from the newly discovered deposits of iron ore in the principality, and a narrow-gauge railway, the first ever projected along the granite sides of the Montenegrin mountains, is to be constructed for the purpose of developing them from the inland town of Nikshich down to the beautiful bay of Antivari. There is something incongruous in the association of the steam-engine with the

warriors beating back the swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred
years,

but in these days the Prince and his hereditary enemy are on visiting terms, while, in spite of his poetic temperament, the royal dramatist of Cetinje has always had a keen eye to the main chance. He has, no doubt, been partly responsible for the newly developed interest which the Italian Government has been taking in the commercial possibilities of Albania, and he has long cherished the scheme of a great Slav railway which shall unite the Russian, Roumanian, and Servian systems with the Adriatic at the now almost de-

serted port of San Giovanni di Medua, once famous as the scene of Skanderbeg's heroic achievements, where Italy has just established a post-office to supplement the efforts of the new Italian steamship-service from Bari to Scutari. But neither funds nor the political good-will of other Powers than Russia are forthcoming for the vast undertaking of the Pan-Slav railway. Meanwhile, like the practical man that he is, the Prince has devoted his energies to the making of roads, and has connected all the principal towns of his dominion with highways, which are indeed a marvel after the miserable bridle-tracks of Turkey. He avowedly aims at the gradual conversion of his people from the militant to the commercial state of society under the auspices of his benevolent despotism. The philosopher and the economist may rejoice when this transformation is accomplished, but the Montenegro of the future will in that case be a less romantic country than the Homeric land which, till some twenty years or so ago had been the scene of one long Iliad of war.

But the Prince, though aware of the importance of trade, has not neglected his defences. He has thoroughly reorganised his military system, and at the present moment he could put upwards of forty thousand armed men into the field, who, if useless, or nearly so, outside their own country, would rival the Boers at guerilla tactics within its rocky boundaries. Occasional brushes with the Albanians, though much less frequent than of old, still keep the warriors' hands in, and a permanent instructional battalion has been introduced, which is the most lasting memorial of the bicentenary of the Petrovich dynasty five years ago.

Although he personally superintends almost every department of

government and takes a deep interest in foreign, and especially English, politics, the Prince has also found time for much literary work. His best known drama, *THE EMPRESS OF THE BALKANS*, which, written like all his other works in Serb, has been translated into one German and two different Italian versions, deals with the heroic age of Montenegro in the fifteenth century and was composed under the influences of the last war with Turkey. It is thus not only an historical play, but contains obvious allusions to the existing state of the Balkan Peninsula at the time of its composition. In such a sentiment as that put into the mouth of one of the characters, "Every man of Servia is our brother, whatever be his religion," we may see an allusion to the idea of a great Servian kingdom, which shall embrace the Catholic Croats no less than the orthodox Serbs. In the proud boast of a Montenegrin, "Our land, if it be no fountain of riches, yet conceals something great and noble," we may read the Prince's own conviction of Montenegro's inborn superiority over all other Balkan lands. When one of those women of Montenegro, to whom the play is dedicated, complains that "a rapacious people has made its nest in Dalmatia," we may be sure that the Royal dramatist is thinking not of Venice but of her Austrian successor, who since 1814 has been his neighbour and has this summer, by means of the new railway down to the Bocche di Cattaro, made it possible to throw masses of soldiers upon his frontier at that point. "Oh," exclaims Ivan Beg, "Oh that Bulgarians, Serbs, and Croats would give each other their hands in a brotherly embrace and esteem the wisdom of the Greek people! Then, indeed, would very different songs resound from Olympus to the Drave and the riven races

would proudly raise their brows, now bent in the dust beneath the cruel yoke;" in these words we can see a hint of that Balkan Confederation which has been the Utopian dream of many a statesman. When another Montenegrin plaintively says, "Not even from our victory can we derive advantage," it is in reality the Prince who is venting his anger upon Europe for handing over the Herzegovina, where the blood of his people was spilled in the last war against the Turks, to the Austro-Hungarian Occupation. Take this again, "The principalities of the Balkans are not great, but neither are they the petty money with which Princes can pay their debts to the Sultan or to other strangers;" this is, in fact, a protest against the diplomatic practice of treating the Balkan States as pawns or counters in the great game of high politics. In short, the *BALKANSKA CARICA*, which has often been performed in the theatre at Cetinje, may be described as the Prince's political creed no less than his dramatic masterpiece. Nor is the plot lacking in interest, with its strong patriotic motive—the refusal of a Montenegrin woman to share with a traitor, her over, the proffered prize of the Balkan crown. Unfortunately, in translations at least, the drama has not been very successful. At Florence once I bought a copy for a penny from an itinerant vendor who had a whole barrow-load of them. So even a royal author is not sure of readers even in his son-in-law's kingdom; *habent sua fata libelli*. A second drama, published in 1895, and entitled *PRINCE ARVANIT*, is also founded on the national history, while his Royal Highness, who had hitherto confined his literary labours to the drama and to poetry, has nearly finished a historical novel upon the foundation of Montenegro. Naturally

one who writes in so unfamiliar a language as Serb is at a great disadvantage outside the limits of the scattered Servian race; but in Dalmatia, in Belgrade, and in his own country the Prince is regarded as the first of living Servian poets. Nor does he disdain the humbler work of journalism. His hand may sometimes be traced in the Cetinje paper, THE VOICE OF THE BLACK MOUNTAIN, and he is supposed to have inspired the ill-starred NEVESINJE, which, after a series of strong attacks on the Austrian occupation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, collapsed some two years ago. Few sovereigns have been the objects of more frequent interviews,—I have myself more than once had the honour of an audience—and in his case they are never a mere tissue of diplomatic platitudes. For the Prince, though an excellent diplomatist, does not disdain that plain-speaking of which in an earlier age Lord Palmerston was a master; and his eldest son, who recently told an Italian journalist that Austria regarded Montenegro as a carpet over which she could walk into Albania, in this respect, at least, imitates the example of his sire.

That Montenegro has made great progress in the last fifty years is obvious; but it must be admitted that the principality has now reached a critical stage in its development. Prince Nicholas remarked, when he was at Belgrade in 1896, that his people would never consent to do finicking work such as he saw the subjects of King Alexander doing in the cigarette-factories of the Servian capital. It cannot fail to be difficult to accustom the warlike sons of Czrnagora to the regular routine of modern business. All their ideas and all their ideals are of the olden time, and a Montenegrin, away from his own country, is apt to grow homesick and to feel himself an exile, even

though he be the *kavass* of an Embassy at Constantinople or a policeman in Crete. So long as Prince Nicholas lives, his Montenegrins will cheerfully follow him into whatever channel he chooses to direct their activities; they would prefer fighting to a quiet life, but if a hard fate denies them the joys of Albanian raids or skirmishes with Austrian sentries on the frontier of the Herzegovina, then, to please their lord, or *gospodar*, they will live in peace with their neighbours. But Prince Nicholas will be sixty this autumn and has already been forty-one years upon the throne,—a record surpassed by the Austrian Emperor alone among European rulers and very rare in so volcanic a land as the Balkan Peninsula, where assassination or enforced abdication usually cuts short a sovereign's career.¹ Now the Montenegrin Crown-Prince, though a mighty hunter and a young man of agreeable manners and good education, is not likely to prove a second Nicholas; indeed, there is no doubt that the reigning Prince of Montenegro is a man of exceptional ability, who may well be compared with that able organiser, the King of Roumania, in his very different sphere. Like the late M. Stamboloff, he is, it is true, *un géant dans un entresol*, and has never had full room to stretch his limbs and use his faculties to the extent which would have been possible if he had been the Autocrat of all the Russias, instead of the Autocrat of little Montenegro, "the smallest among peoples" still, despite the Berlin Congress, the Dulcigno Demonstration, and the subsequent delimitations of its territory. Of

¹ The last Prince of Montenegro and Prince Michael of Servia were assassinated; the last King of Greece, the last King of Servia, the last Prince of Bulgaria, and the last Prince of Roumania, abdicated.

course the position of a Crown-Prince gives little scope for the display of talents, whether under an absolute or a constitutional government, and Prince Nicholas is not the man to resign any part of his prerogatives to his eldest son. But Prince Danilo is not considered, by those who know him well, to be of the stuff of which great rulers are made, and in the Balkans more than elsewhere princes must be accomplished diplomatists and strong characters, if they wish to hold their own in that maelstrom of intrigue and mutual rivalries which statesmen call the Eastern Question. Besides, success no less than failure might prove fatal to Montenegro. An enlarged Montenegro would cease to be the Montenegro that we know, and the virtues and qualities that have made and preserved it so far might disappear if it became a second Servia.

The whole position of affairs in that part of the Balkan Peninsula has been enormously modified since 1878, and not to the advantage of Montenegrin aspirations. From the moment when Austria was confirmed, as the successor of Venice, in her possession of Dalmatia, after the nine years' interlude of French rule in that beautiful province between 1805 and 1814, it was clear that, sooner or later, the *hinterland* of the rocky strip of coast would fall to the share of the Hapsburgs. When that event at last occurred, Prince Nicholas found to his infinite disgust that for a decaying Power in the shape of Turkey he had now as neighbour on that side, a civilising and strong Power, which, shut off from Northern Italy since 1866, had become conscious of its manifest destiny as an Eastern Empire. The patent success of Austro-Hungarian rule in the occupied provinces, despite occasional discontent among the orthodox Serbs

fomented by Russian or Russophil papers, has converted a temporary occupation into a practically permanent possession in all but the name. Side by side with this the expenditure of vast sums on the fortifications of the Bocche di Cattaro, which are fast taking the place of Pola as the Austrian Portsmouth, the military railway aforesaid, and the projected extension of the Bosnian railway from Sarajevo to the Austrian outposts in the Sandjak of Novi-Bazar, all tend to tighten the hold of the Austrian eagle on the Montenegrin frontier. If, therefore, the Prince expects further territorial expansion, he must seek it at the expense of the Turk in Albania. It has, indeed, been a maxim of diplomacy for the last two centuries that, whether he be conquered or be conqueror, the Turk pays, as we saw at the conclusion of the Greco-Turkish war of 1897. In fact we might parody the familiar Horatian line and write: "Whatever mistake the Greeks commit, the Sultan is punished." But when it comes to a partition of their country, the Albanians, as they showed Europe in 1880, will have something to say, and that warlike race is probably quite a match for even Prince Nicholas's new-model army with all its Russian rifles. Montenegro therefore would appear to have reached its greatest area, and it will be well for the Prince's successors if they take to heart the historic saying of Hadrian on his death-bed, not to extend the frontiers of the State. The existing arrangements of Montenegrin society, no less than the hostility of neighbouring Powers, would be strong arguments in favour of letting well alone.

Even in so unprogressive a society as that of the warriors of the Black Mountain the last half century has marked the invasion of some moder

ideas, which are slowly but surely affecting the minds of the people. The national costume, formerly universal all along the Dalmatian coast and in the mountains behind it, has almost entirely vanished from Cattaro, though it is still common at Cetinje. The Prince invariably wears it in his own country; yet I have a photograph of him in ordinary attire when on his way to visit England, and his daughters are said to prefer European dress, which is perhaps natural as the rather unbecoming garb of the Montenegrin women scarcely appeals to the eternal feminine. In the future it is probable, if we may judge by the analogy of most other Balkan States, that the hideous clothes of the Western male will become the fashion in those mountains also, especially as the Crown-Princess can, as a foreigner, scarcely hope to exercise the same influence as that very remarkable lady, the present Princess, who by both birth and ideas is a true daughter of Czrnagora.

As more Montenegrins go abroad to study, it is almost inevitable that, despite their intense love of home and innate conservatism, they should bring back with them some foreign notions which may prove scarcely compatible with paternal despotism. Since the Italian marriage intercourse with Italy has become much more frequent, and it is to be hoped that the sight of the Italian cities will not tend to make the sons of Montenegro discontented with their lot. That was the result of the marriage-connexion between the former princely family and Venice in the fifteenth and early part of the sixteenth centuries, and it ultimately led to the voluntary abdication of the last of the Black Princes and the substitution of the rule of elective Prince-Bishops in his stead. Prince Nicholas is a splendid example to the contrary;

for, though educated in Paris, he is a thorough Montenegrin, and holds strong views on the disadvantages of foreign education. But then he is a man of great force of character, who is not easily moulded by his surroundings. The discovery of mines, again, is apt to cause the introduction of some undesirable elements into a primitive society, and the future development of Montenegro, to which Lord Cranborne alluded in the House of Commons last July, when Mr. Sinclair foolishly proposed the abolition of our useful Minister Resident there, can scarcely be accomplished without brushing some of the bloom off the peach. Public education, however, is one of the boasts of the Montenegrin ruler; yet from what I have seen of its results in some other Balkan communities, I doubt whether it will tend to make the people happier. For, whatever may be the case in Western Europe, the effects of our culture upon the virgin soil of the Balkan Peninsula are not always satisfactory. The late King Milan, who had all the advantages of Western training, was a far less reputable ruler than his great predecessor, Milosh, who spent his youth in tending his father's flocks in the Servian valleys, nor can the Parisianised Turk in a black coat compare, in respect of sterling qualities, with the untutored peasant who is one of the best soldiers in the world. For in a Homeric society such as Montenegro it is primitive virtues and primitive qualities that are needed; and if such a State once enters on a period of transition, it is apt to lose in rugged strength more than it gains in polish. As it is, the Montenegrins are nature's gentlemen, and in stature and physique they are the worthy descendants of the men who held that spot alone in all the Balkans against the Turkish hosts. But warfare has changed much

in these latter days, and bravery and physical prowess are no longer, as in the time of the Prince's heroic father Mirko, the victor of Grahovo, the surest weapons in the fight. In internal administration, too, differentiation of functions is sure to go on. As we saw, since 1851 the Prince has no longer been a priest as well; although he is still head of the judicial system, the famous tree outside his palace, under which he used to sit to hear causes, has been lately blown down, and its fall may prove of ill omen for the personal exercise of judicial functions by the ruler. He will probably always continue to lead his people on the field of battle, as every Montenegrin ruler, priestly or lay, has done; but, as has been pointed out, in Montenegro as elsewhere there is a tendency towards the formation of a standing army on European lines.

For every reason, it is to be hoped that this most heroic people may preserve its independence and its form of government intact. In these democratic days, it is desirable to have a pattern of benevolent autocracy, where the sovereign governs as well as

reigns, and the name of Parliament is unknown. No autocrat has better illustrated the practical merits of such a system for a small and primitive State than has Prince Nicholas; and, while representative institutions have proved a farce in Bulgaria and Servia, and a doubtful blessing in Roumania and Greece, the two best governed Balkan States are precisely those which have been submitted to an enlightened autocracy. In this age of capitalism, small States, like small tradesmen, seem to have a gloomy future before them. But Montenegro's heroic history entitles her to the perpetuation of that honourable independence which she won by the valour of her own right arm, and the present jubilee of the princely office finds her better known and more highly considered in Europe than she has ever been in all the five centuries of her eventful existence. Let us hope that Prince Nicholas may live long, to give the world practical lessons in personal government, to enrich the literature of the Serb people, and to share with the King of Denmark the congenial part of father-in-law to all Europe.

W. MILLER.

DOWN THE DANUBE IN A CANADIAN CANOE.

I.

It was a brilliant day in early June when we launched our canoe on the waters of the Danube, not one hundred yards from its source in the Black Forest, and commenced our journey of four and twenty hundred miles to the Black Sea. Two weeks before we had sent her from London to Donaueschingen by freight, and when the railway-company telegraphed the word *arrived* we posted after her with tent, kit-bags, blankets, cameras, and cooking-apparatus.

Donaueschingen is an old-fashioned little town on the southern end of the Schwarzwald plateau, and the railway that runs through it brings it apparently no nearer to the world. It breathes a spirit of remoteness and tranquillity born of the forests that encircle it, and that fill the air with pleasant odours and gentle murmurings.

There, lying snugly on a shelf in the goods-shed, we found our slender craft, paddles and boat-hook tied securely to the thwarts,—and without a crack! “No duty to pay,” said the courteous official, after examining an enormous book, “and only seventeen marks for freight-charges the whole way from Oxford.” She was sixteen feet long (with a beam of thirty-four inches), and had the slim graceful lines and deep curved ribs of the true Rice Lake (Ontario) build. Two or three inches would float her, and yet she could ride safely at top speed over the waves of a rapid that would have capsized a boat twice her size. Splendid little craft, she bore us faithfully

and well, almost like a thing of life and intelligence, round many a ticklish corner and under more than one dangerous bridge, though this article will only outline some of our adventures in her over the first thousand miles as far as Budapest.

From the yard of the Schuetzen Inn, where she lay all night, we carried her on our shoulders below the picturesque stone bridge and launched her in a pool where the roach and dace fairly made the water dance. You could toss a stone over the river here without an effort, and when we had said farewell to the kindly villagers and steered out into mid-stream, there was so little water that the stroke of the paddle laid bare the shining pebbles upon the bottom and grated along the bed.

“Happy journey!” cried the town-folk standing on the bank in blue trousers and waving their straw hats. “And quick return,” added the hotel-keeper, who had overcharged us abominably in every possible item. We bore him little malice, however, for there were no inns or hotel-bills ahead of us; and uncommonly light-hearted were we as the canoe felt the stream move beneath her and slipped away at a good speed down the modest little river that must drop twenty-two hundred feet before it pours its immense volume through three arms into the Black Sea.

At first our progress was slow. Patches of white weeds everywhere choked the river and often brought us to a complete standstill, and in less than ten minutes we were aground in a shallow. We had to tuck up our

trousers and wade. This was a frequent occurrence during the day and we soon realised that the hundred and twenty-five miles to Ulm, before the tributaries commence to pour in their icy floods from the Alps, would be slow and difficult. But what of that? It was glorious summer weather; the mountain airs were intoxicating, and the scenery charming beyond words. Nowhere that day was the river more than forty yards across, or over three feet deep. The white weeds lay over the surface like thick cream, but the canoe glided smoothly over them, swishing as she passed. Her slim nose opened a pathway that her stern left gently hissing with bubbles as the leaves rose again to the surface; and behind us there was ever a little milk-white track in which the blossoms swam and danced in the sunshine as the current raced merrily along the new channel thus made for it.

Winding in and out among broad fields and acres of reeds we dropped gently down across the great plateau of the Black Forest mountains. The day was hot and clear, and overhead a few white clouds sailed with us, as it were for company's sake, down the blue reaches of the sky. Usually we coasted along the banks, the reeds touching the sides of the canoe and the wind playing over hosts of noddling flowers and fields level to our eyes with standing hay, while, in the distance, the mountain-slopes, speckled with blue shadows, were ever opening into new vistas and valleys. Here the peaceful Danube still dreams, lying in her beauty-sleep as it were, and with no hint of the racing torrent that comes later with full waking. Pretty villages appeared along the banks at intervals. Pforen was the first, snugly gathered into the nook of the hills; a church, a few red-roofed houses, a wooden bridge, and a castle with a fine stork staring down at us

from her nest in the ruined tower. The peasants were away in the fields and we drifted lazily by without so much as a greeting. Neidingen was the second, where a huge crucifix presided over the centre of the quaint bridge, and where we landed to buy butter, potatoes, and onions. Gutmadingen was the third; and here a miller and his men helped our portage over the weir while his wife stood in the hot sunshine and asked questions.

"Where are you going to?"

"The Black Sea." She had never heard of it, and evidently thought we were making fun of her. "Ulm, then," Ah! Ulm she knew. "But it's an enormous distance! And is the tent for rain?" she asked.

"No; for sleeping in at night."

"*Ach was!*" she exclaimed. "Well, I wouldn't sleep a night in that tent, or go a yard in that boat, for anything you could give me."

The miller was more appreciative. He gave us a delicious drink,—a sort of mead, which was most refreshing and which, he assured us, would not affect the head in the least—and told us there were twenty-four more weirs before we reached Ulm, the beginning of navigation. But none the less he, too, had his questions to ask.

"I thought all the Englishmen had gone to the war. The papers here say that England is quite empty."

The temptation was too great to resist. "No," we said gravely, "only the big ones went to the war. [We were both over six feet.] England is still full of men of the smaller sizes like ourselves." The expression on his face lightened our work considerably for the next mile.

Soon after the river left the plateau behind it and took a sudden leap into the Donauthal. We shot round a corner about six o'clock and came upon a little willow-island in mid-stream. Here we landed and pitched

our tent on the long grass, made a fire, peeled the onions, fried our strips of beef with the potatoes, and made excellent tea. On all sides the pines crept down close into the narrowing valley. In the evening sunlight, with long shadows slanting across the hills, we smoked our pipes after our meal. There were no flies and the air was cool and sweet. Presently the moon rose over the ridge of forest behind us and the lights of Immendingen, twinkling through the shadows, were just visible a mile below us. The night was cool and the river hurried almost silently past our tent-door. When at length we went to bed, on cork mattresses with india-rubber sheets under us and thick Austrian blankets over us, everything was sopping with dew.

The bells of Immendingen coming down the valley were the first sounds we heard as we went to bathe at seven o'clock next morning in the cold sparkling water; and later, when we scrambled over the great Immendingen weir no villagers came to look on and say "*Engländer, Engländer,*" for it was Sunday morning and they were all at mass.

The valley grew narrower and limestone cliffs shone white through the sombre forests. It was very lonely between the villages. The river, now sixty yards wide, swept in great semi-circular reaches under the very shadow of the hills; storks stood about fishing in the shallows; wild swans flew majestically in front of us,—we came across several nests with eggs—and duck were plentiful everywhere. Once, in an open space on the hills, we saw a fine red fox motionless in his observation of some duck,—and ourselves. Presently he trotted away into the cover of the woods and the ducks quacked their thanks to us. Then suddenly, above Möhringen, just when we were con-

gratulating ourselves that wading was over for good, the river dwindled away into a thin trickling line of water that showed the shape of every single pebble in its bed. We went aground continually. Half the Danube had escaped through fissures in the ground. It comes out again, on the other side of the mountains, as the river Ach, and flows into the Lake of Constance. The river was now less in volume than when we started, clear as crystal, dancing in the sunshine, weaving like a silver thread through the valley, and making delightful music over the stones. Yet most of our journey that day was wading. Trousers were always tucked up to the knees, and we had to be ready to jump out at a moment's notice. Before the numberless little rapids the question was: "Is there enough water to float us? Can we squeeze between those rocks? Is that wave a hidden stone, or merely the current?" The steersman stood up to get a better view of the channel and avoid the sun's glare on the water, and in this way we raced down many a bit of leaping, hissing water; and, incidentally, had many a sudden shock before the end, tumbling out headlong, banging against stones, and shipping water all the time. The canoe got sadly scratched, and we decided at length to risk no more of these baby-rapids. A torn canoe in the Black Forest, miles from a railway, spelt helplessness. Thereafter we waded the rapids. It was a hot and laborious process,—the feet icy cold, the head burning hot, and the back always bent double. Weirs, too, became frequent, and unloading and reloading was soon reduced to a science. In the afternoon the villagers poured out to stare and look on. They rarely offered to help, but stood round as close as possible while

we unloaded, examining articles, and asking questions all the time. They had no information to give. Few of them knew anything of the river ten miles below their particular village, and none had ever been to Ulm. Now and then there was a sceptical "*Dass ist unmöglich* (that's impossible)," when we mentioned Ulm as our goal. "*Ach je!* They're mad, — in *that* boat!"

From Donaueschingen to Ulm there is a weir in every five miles, and our progress was slow. Whenever the river grew deep we learned to know that a dam was near; and below a dam there was scarcely enough water to float an egg-shell. But there was no occasion to hurry; everything was done in leisurely fashion in this great garden of Württemberg, and most of the villages were sound asleep. At Möhringen, indeed, we got the impression that the village had slept for at least a hundred years and that our bustling arrival had suddenly awakened it. It lay in a clearing of the forest, in a charming mossy bed that no doubt made sleep a delightful necessity. The miller invited us to the inn, where we found a score of peasants in their peaked hats and black suits of broadcloth sitting each in front of a foaming tankard; but they drank so slowly that a hundred years did not seem too long to finish a tankard. There was very little conversation, and they stared unconscionably, bowing gravely when we ordered their stone mugs to be refilled and regarding us all the time with steady, expressionless interest. In due time, however, they digested us, and then the stream of inevitable questions burst forth.

"You bivouac? You go to the sea? *If* you ever get to Ulm! You have come the whole way from London in *that* shell?"

We gulped down the excellent cold beer and hurried away. The river dwindled to a width of a dozen yards and wading was incessant. We lightened the canoe as much as possible, but, our kit having been already reduced to what seemed only strictly necessary, there was little enough to throw away,—a tin plate, a tin cup, a fork, a spoon, a knife, and a red cushion. These we piled up in a little mound upon the bank with a branch stuck in the ground to draw attention. I wonder who is now using those costly articles.

Another series of picturesque villages glided past us: Tuttlingen, famous (as the dirty water proclaimed) for its tanneries, and where a couple of hundred folk in their Sunday clothes watched our every movement as we climbed round two high and difficult weirs; Nendingen, where a kind and silent miller gave us of his cool mead; Mülheim straggling half-way up the hills with its red-brown roofs and church and castle all mingled together in most picturesque confusion, as if it had slipped down from the summit and never got straight again; and Friedingen, where we laid in fresh supplies, and found two Germans who had spent years in California, and whose nasal voices sounded strangely out of place among their guttural neighbours. "Camp anywheres you please," they said, "and no one'll objec' to your fires so long as you put 'em out."

I forget how many more villages ending in *ingen* we passed; but now that the heat of the day, and the labour and toil of wading are forgotten, they come before me again with their still, peaceful loveliness like a string of quaint jewels strung along the silver thread of the river.

Soon the water increased and the canoe sped onwards among the little waves and rapids like a winged thing.

The mountains became higher, the valley narrower. Limestone cliffs, scooped and furrowed by the eddies of a far larger Danube thousands of years before, rose gleaming out of the pine-woods about their base. We plunged in among the Swabian Alps, and the river tumbled very fast and noisily along a rock-strewn bed. It darted across from side to side, almost as though the cliffs were tossing it across in play to each other. One moment we were in blazing sunlight, the next in deep shadow under the cliffs. There was no room for houses, and no need for bridges; boats we never saw; big, grey fish-hawks, circling buzzards, storks by the score had this part of the river all to themselves.

Suddenly we turned a sharp corner and shot at full speed into an immense cauldron. It was a perfect circle, half a mile in diameter, bound in by the limestone cliffs. The more ancient river had doubtless filled it with a terrifying whirlpool, for the rocks were strangely scooped and eaten into curves hundreds of feet above us. But now its bottom was a clean flat field, where the little stream, with its audacious song, whipped along at the very foot of the cliffs on one side of the circle.

It was a lonely secluded spot, the very place for a camp. Though only five o'clock on a June afternoon the cliffs kept out the sunshine. We sank the canoe, to soak up cracks and ease strained ribs, and soon had our tent up, and a fire burning. Then we climbed the cliffs. It was a puzzle to see how the river got in or got out. As we climbed we came across deep recesses and funnel-shaped holes, caves with spiral openings in the roof, and pillars shaped like an hour-glass. Across the gulf the ruined castle of Kallenberg stood on a point of rock that was apparently inaccess-

ible, and when the evening star shone over its broken battlements, it might well have been a ghostly light held aloft by the shades of the robber-barons who once lived in it. When we went to bed at ten o'clock the full moon shone upon the white cliffs with a dazzling brilliance that seemed to turn them into ice, while the deep shadows over the river made the scene strangely impressive. Only the tumbling of the water and the chirping of the crickets broke the silence. In the night we woke and thought we heard people moving round the tent, but, on going out to see, the canoe was still safe, and the white moonshine revealed no figures. It was doubtless the river talking in its sleep, or the wind wandering lost among the bushes.

At five o'clock next morning I looked out of the tent and found our cauldron full of seething mist through which the sunshine was just beginning to force a way. An hour later the tent was too hot for comfort.

All day we followed the gorge, with many a ruined castle of impregnable position looking down upon us from the cliffs. The valley widened about noon, and fields ablaze with poppies lay in the sun, while tall yellow flags fringed the widening river. In another great circle, similar in formation to that of Kallenberg, but five times as large, we found the monastery of Beuron with its eighty monks and fifty lay-brothers. We bathed and put on our celluloid collars (full dress in an outfit where weight is of supreme importance) and went up to the gates. A bearded monk, acting as door-keeper, thrust a smiling face through the wicket in answer to our summons and informed us with genuine courtesy that the monastery was not open to visitors at this time of year.

"There are many visitors in summer, I regret," he explained.

"Visitors! How do they get here?"

"By road; they come from long distances, driving and walking."

"But we may never be here again; we are on our way to the Black Sea."

"Ah, then you will see far more wonderful things than this in your journey." He remained firm; so, by way of consolation we went to the Gasthaus Zur Sonne and enjoyed a meal,—the first for a week that we had not cooked ourselves.

It was a quiet, out-of-the-world spot. Monks were everywhere working in the fields, ploughing and hay-making; and it was here I first saw sheep following a shepherd. A curious covered bridge, lined with crucifixes, crossed the river, and we took an interesting photograph of a monk in a black straw hat and gown going over it with a cloud of dust in the blazing sunshine followed by fifty sheep. There was contentment on all faces, but the place must be dreadfully lonely and desolate in winter. We bought immense loaves in the monks' bakery, and matches, cigars, sugar, and meat in a *devotionshandlung* (store for religious articles)!

Sigmaringen, with its old rock-perched castle and its hundred turrets gleaming in the sun, was reached just in time to find shelter from a thunderstorm that seemed to come out of a clear sky. There was a hurricane of wind, and the rain filled the quaint old streets with dashing spray. In an hour it cleared away, and we pushed on again; but the river had meanwhile risen nearly a foot. The muddy water rushed by with turbulent eddies, and the bridges were crowded with people to see us pass. They stood in silent dark rows without gesture or remark, and stared.

Suddenly the storm broke again with redoubled fury. Up went their umbrellas, and we heard their guttural laughter. In a few minutes we were soaked, and no doubt cut a sorry figure as we launched the canoe at the foot of the big weir and vanished into the gathering darkness. We swirled between the pillars of another bridge in sheets of rain and the outlook for a dry camp and a fire was decidedly poor. It was after nine o'clock when we landed in despair under a clump of trees on the left bank, and found to our delight that they concealed a solitary wedge of limestone cliff, and that in this cliff there was an arch, and under that arch a quantity of dry wood. A fire was soon blazing in the strip under the arch,—some three feet wide—and the tent stood beneath the dripping trees. Our waterproof sheets and cork mattresses kept us dry, though all night the rain poured down, while outside we could hear the swollen river rushing past with a seething roar.

Next day the rapids began in earnest. Rapids are to canoeers what fences are to fox-hunters. The first wave curls over in front of the canoe, there is a hiss and a bump, a slap of wet spray in the face, and then the canoe leaps under you and rushes headlong. At Riedlingen, while carrying the canoe across a slippery weir, we fell, boat and all, into the deep hole below the fall, luckily with no worse result than a wetting, for our kit was safely piled upon the bank. At Dietfurt we went into an apparently deserted village to buy milk, but the moment we entered the street it became alive. From every door poured men and women gaping, and the moment they spied the little yellow canoe upon the shore they rushed down in a flock shouting "*E' schiff! E' schiff!*" But, if

they ran fast, we ran faster, and were off before the terrible onslaught of questions had even begun. The milk was a mere detail.

At Gutenstein, where we camped in a hay-field, the mowers woke us at dawn, peering into the mouth of the tent. But they made no objections and merely said "*Gruss Gott*" and "*Gute Reise*;" and for an hour afterwards I heard their scythes musically in my dreams as they cut a pathway for us to the river.

At Obermarchsthal we left the mountains behind us, and with them, too, the memory of a pathetic figure. As we landed to go up to the little inn for eggs, an old man, leaning on a stick, hobbled down to meet us. His white hair escaped in disorder from beneath a peaked blue hat, and he wore a suit of a curious checked pattern that seemed wholly out of keeping with the dress of the country. At first, when he spoke, I could not understand him, and asked him in German to repeat his remarks.

"He's talking English," said my companion. "Can't you hear?" And English it was. He invited us up to the inn and told us his story over a mug of beer.

"This is my native village. I was born and raised here, and sixty years ago I ran away from Germany to escape military service. I went to the United States and settled finally in Alabama. I had a shop in Mobile, down South in a nigger town, and as soon as I was ready I wrote to the girl I left here to come out to me. She came and we were married. I've had two wives since out there. Now they're all buried in a little churchyard outside Mobile. And this is the first time I've been back in sixty years," he went on after a gulp of beer. "The village ain't changed one single bit. I feel as though I'd been sleepin' and sorter dreamin' all

the while. . . . The shop's sold and I'm takin' a last look round at the ole place. There's only one or two that remembers me, but I was born and raised here, and this is where I had my first love, and the place is full of memories, just chock full. No, I ain't a goin' to live here. I'm goin' back to the States nex' month, so as I can die there and lie beside the others in the cemetery at Mobile."

The country became flatter and the mountains were soon a blue line on the horizon behind us. At Opfingen we crossed our last weir, and among the clouds in front of us saw the spire of Ulm cathedral, the tallest in the world. A fierce current swept us past banks fringed with myrtle bushes, poppies, and yellow flags. Poplars rose in lines over the country, bending their heads in the wind, and we camped at eight o'clock in a wood about a mile above the town. While dinner was cooking a dog rushed barking up to us followed by three men with guns. They were evidently German Jäger. Two of them were dressed like pattern plates out of a tailor's guide to sportsmen,—in spotless gaiters, pointed hats with feathers (like stage Tyrolese), guns with the latest slings, and silver whistles slung on coloured cord round their necks. They examined the canoe first, and then came up and examined us. One of them, who was probably the proprietor of the land, a surly gruff fellow, had evidently made up his mind that we were poachers. And I must admit that at first sight there was ground for suspicion, for no poacher could possibly have found fault with our appearance.

"What are you doing here?" he asked.

"Preparing to camp for the night," we told him.

"When are you going on?"

"We intend to go into Ulm in the morning."

"Where do you come from; are you Englishmen?"

"Yes; we come from London."

"*Ach was!*" (they all say *Ach was* when they want to be witheringly scornful). "In *that* egg-shell?"

"Certainly."

"And where are you going to?"

"Odessa."

They exchanged glances. "Evidently madmen, and not poachers," said the face of the man with the biggest silver whistle plainer than any words could have spoken it. "Do you know these are private preserves?" was the next question.

"No." My friend, a keen sportsman, sheltered himself scowling behind his alleged ignorance of German, (somehow he always knew our conversation afterwards to a word); but the penny whistle and the immaculate costume of the hunters in a scrubby wood where not even a rabbit lived, excited him to explosions of laughter which he concealed by frequent journeys to the tent.

"What's in that tent?"

"Beds." The *chasseurs* and the keeper went to examine, while the dog sniffed about everywhere. Our beds were not then untied, and the sportsman untied them; but they found only blankets and cork mattresses.

"You have no guns, or dogs, or fishing-rods?" We shook our heads sulkily. "And you are only travelling peacefully for pleasure?"

"We are trying to," we said meekly.

"Then you may sleep here if you go on again to-morrow; but don't go into the woods after game." Then the men moved off. Doubtless they were right to ask questions, yet we were so obviously travellers. "Still, our weather-worn appearance and un-

shaved faces probably made us look more than a little doubtful," quoth my friend, who himself wore a slouch hat that did not add to the candour of his expression.

In the middle of dinner the men suddenly returned from another angle of the wood and examined everything afresh. We offered them some tea in a tin cup which they declined; and at last after watching us at our meal in silence for ten minutes they moved off, evidently still suspicious. Thereafter we always knew them as the *chasseurs*. They were not the only pests, however. Mosquitoes appeared later,—our first—and that night we slept behind the mosquito-netting we had so carefully fitted to the mouth of the tent when we first erected it weeks before in the garden of a London square. During the night someone prowled about the tent. We heard twigs snapping and the footsteps among the bushes; but neither of us troubled ourselves to get up. If they took the canoe, they'd be drowned; and our other only valuables (a celluloid collar apiece, a clean suit for the big towns, and a map,) were safely inside the tent.

In the morning we shaved and washed carefully, and put on our full dress for the benefit of Ulm. We intended to paddle down quietly and stop at the Rowing Club wharf of which we had read; according to the map it was a mile, and the current easy and pleasant. We wished our entrance to be sober and in good taste.

The best-laid plans, however, will sometimes go amiss when you're canoeing on the Danube. We were half way when we heard a roar like a train rushing over a hollow bridge. It grew louder every minute. In front of us the water danced and leaped, and before we knew what had happened we were plunging about among foaming waves and flying

past the banks at something more than ten miles an hour.

"It's the Iller," cried my friend as the paddle was nearly wrested from his grasp. "It's marked on the map just about here."

It was the Iller. It had come in at an acute angle after running almost parallel with us for a little distance. It tumbled in at headlong speed, with an icy, turbulent flood of muddy water, and it gave the sedate Danube an impetus that it did not lose for another hundred miles below Ulm. For a space the two rivers declined to mingle. The noisy, dirty Iller, fresh from the Alps, kept to the right bank, going twice as fast as its more dignified companion on the left. A distinct line (as though drawn by a rope) divided them, in colour, speed, and height,—the Iller remaining for a long time at least half an inch above the level of the Danube. At length they mingled more freely and swept us down upon Ulm in a torrent of rough, racing water. Our leisurely dignified entrance into Ulm was, like the suspicions of the *chasseurs*, a structure built on insufficient knowledge,

a mere dream. Ulm lies on a curve of the river. Big bridges with nasty thick pillars (and whirlpools, therefore, behind them) stand at both entrance and exit. How we raced under the first bridge I shall never forget. We were half way through the town, with the wet spray still on our cheeks, before the sound of the gurgling eddies below the bridge had ceased behind us. Where, oh, where was the friendly wharf of that Danube Rowing Club? The second bridge rose before us. There were crested waves under its arches. Already Ulm was almost a thing of the past; yet we had hoped to spend at least a week exploring its beauties.

"There it is," cried my friend in the bows, "on the left bank! That old board,—see it? That's the wharf."

We managed to turn in mid current and point the canoe up-stream. Then, by paddling as hard as we could, we dropped down past the wharf at a pace that just enabled us to grasp the rings in the boards and come to a standstill. You'll never forget Ulm if you arrive there, as we did, in a canoe, when the Iller is in flood.

(To be continued.)

THE LAND OF THE POPPY.

II.—ITS SUPERSTITIONS.

THREE hundred years ago in England the minds of men were as prone to superstitious beliefs as the minds of the masses are in India at the present day. The power of the evil eye, for instance, was a common article of belief among our ancestors in that far-off time. Brave men shuddered and crossed themselves at the hooting of an owl, and thought they had done a good deed when they had helped to burn some lonely old woman whose ill-favoured countenance and evil temper had given her the fatal reputation of a witch. Black cats were then considered suitable embodiments for familiar spirits, ravens were looked upon as birds of ill-omen, and the current superstition regarding toads has been crystallised in the well-known lines that describe them as "venomous" and as wearing "a precious jewel" in their heads. The innocent shrew-mouse was often pounded to death in the hollow stump of an old ash-tree to ease the twinges of rheumatism in my lord the Baron's withered legs: the grating noise made by the mandibles of the wood-boring beetle was listened to with awed attention in the sick man's chamber as indicating the near approach of the sufferer's death; and in many other instances miraculous powers were ascribed to creatures that have long been known to be entirely guiltless of these attributes.

These beliefs died hard; but they may now be looked upon as having passed out of the lives of English men and women of the twentieth century. Here and there, in some remote

country village, old-fashioned people may be found who still adhere religiously to some old belief, but even among the uneducated these landmarks of the past are getting fewer every year. As in the old time extreme credulity marched hand-in-hand with extreme ignorance, so in the enlightened days of this century want of belief is the brand of the typical man. The attitude of mind produced by the modern system of education is one of logical enquiry. Nothing is taken for granted, and belief seems only possible where conviction is nailed to the mast by scientific demonstration.

It is very different with the sensuous races that inhabit the East. The mantle of sheer illogical belief still hangs in dark folds over their minds. They are accordingly capable of gravely crediting the existence of witches and warlocks, of looking upon epidemic diseases as the incarnations of deities, and of attributing the ordinary mishaps of life to the malignity of sorcerers or evil spirits. This trait in the character of the inhabitants of India is one not to be lightly regarded in dealing with them. Satire will make them silent, but it does not convince them that they are wrong. They regard Europeans as outside the pale of the influences that regulate their life; and therefore the fact that Europeans seem to be able to disregard with impunity these omens and signs is not considered by them to in any way affect the truth of their notions.

As it happens that so large a por-

tion of the inhabitants of the British Empire is still under the thralldom of superstitious ideas, it may be found interesting to describe some of the beliefs current among the dwellers in the Land of the Poppy, regarding the supernatural attributes of man and beast.

Brahmans are, as is well known, held in great veneration by Hindus. They represent the highest stage of earthly development a Hindu can attain to, and there are numerous legends of the supernatural attributes of men of this caste.

Some months ago in the course of my official duties I happened to visit a village in the Ghazipur district of the North-West Provinces called Hetimpur. I heard that there was a ruined fort here of considerable antiquity and accordingly went to explore it. The fort had apparently consisted of a rectangular enclosure with towers at each corner, and a square tower over the gate-way. Inside this enclosure there had once been several buildings, but at the time of my visit only one was standing in fairly good preservation. The floor of the rooms in this building rang hollow to the footstep, showing that there were subterranean chambers below, but the entrance to these had been blocked up and further exploration was not possible.

Walking round the enclosure my attention was attracted by a well which had been constructed under one of the corner towers. Knowing that these wells are often very deep, I advanced to peer over the brink, when my progress was stopped by an exclamation of horror from a man who up to this moment had remained crouching on the ground near a curious buttress-like projection somewhat to my left. This man approached me with entreaties not to advance any further as I was standing on holy

ground. The spot before me, he declared, was a Brahm. As I had previously been told that the fort was a Mussulman structure I felt curious to know how this could be, and my inquiries elicited the following tale.

A long time ago, before the British power had been consolidated in these regions, a Mussulman adventurer, Hetim Khan, the Lodi, settled on the spot now known as Hetimpur, and built himself the fort in whose ruins I was now standing. For some mysterious reason, apparently not connected with inferior bricks and mortar, the walls kept continually cracking open and falling asunder. Like a true medieval baron the Afghan chief at once concluded that some supernatural agency must be at work to cause the subsidence of his castle-walls. There being no soothsayer among his wild retainers, he took the extreme step of consulting a holy sage, a Brahman, who dwelt not far from the fort, and was known as Matarudr. To him went the warrior, putting his Mussulman pride in his pocket, and poured forth the tale of his troubles. The sage apparently was sympathetic, and detaching his thoughts for a while from supermundane subjects gravely advised the khan to adopt the old expedient of the country, and bury seven victims, belonging to the seven Hindu castes, alive in the precincts of the fort. This sacrifice would appease the offended evil spirit, to whose indignation the khan owed the unsatisfactory state of his fortress.

Nothing loth to comply with advice that enabled him to send seven unbelievers to everlasting torment, and at the same time to secure an immediate temporal benefit, the khan returned and set to work. He managed to secure six men of the inferior castes, and built them up in six little brick ovens in various parts of the enclosure. He was not able to carry

out the sage's advice to the letter, as he found it difficult to kidnap a Brahman. Reckless as he was, Hetim the Lodi hesitated to seize and slay a Brahman in the midst of a country where men of this holy caste were looked upon as little inferior to deities.

Nevertheless the walls of his fort continued to crack and fall in till he grew weary of rebuilding them.

At length, having worked himself up into a state of righteous indignation, and arguing that if the sage had advised him to slay a Brahman he should also tell him how he was to procure one, the khan proceeded to pay a second visit to Matarudr. On this occasion he evidently reproached the holy man with having given advice which he knew to be impracticable. The sage, understanding the meaning of these reproaches and wishing to do his country a service, offered himself as a sacrifice. Hetim reflected for a moment. This cool proposal took him by surprise, and was indeed something more than he had expected. Yet being a man of an impetuous nature and his wild Afghan blood being up at the time, he closed with the offer, carried off the sage, and calmly buried him alive. The result was disastrous in the extreme. The cracks and holes in the walls became larger and more numerous, and finally almost all the buildings in the enclosure came down in hopeless ruin, as though an earthquake had shaken the place. Hatim Khan did not take so prominent a place in local history as he had hoped, and his family died out. His fort is now a place of sacred pilgrimage to the pious Hindus dwelling in the neighbourhood, and twice a week parties of them go to pray at Matarudr's grave. The walls of the fort are slowly crumbling away, and the bricks lie in heaps about the courtyard. No one will touch them, for

it is said that he who dares to carry any of them away will become a leper. The spirit of Matarudr the Brahman is supposed to dwell in the vicinity of the grave it chose as its earthly resting-place, and to resent any interference with its domains.

This legend, firmly believed by the inhabitants of the surrounding country-side, shows how deeply embedded in their minds is the idea that *bhûts*, or the spirits of men who have met with an untimely fate, haunt the spots where their earthly trials came to conclusion. In this case also, as the victim was a Brahman and a sage, the spot became a shrine.

On another occasion I was listening to a complaint made by a Koeri cultivator of the high-handed treatment he received from some Brahmans living in the same village. He owned a well, but the Brahmans were in the habit of drawing water from it whenever they pleased, not scrupling to drive him away and unyoke his cattle if they found him at work. He was a respectable well-to-do man, and I asked him why he endured this sort of tyranny. He replied that if ever he attempted to resist, the Brahmans threatened that they would make one of their number jump into the well and commit suicide. "What of it?" I said. "Why not let them carry out their threat?" He clasped his hands, and said he could not think of doing so, as the dead Brahman's spirit would become a *bhût*, and haunt the spot and bring untold misery upon himself and all his family. He preferred to endure the ills he knew to tempt the outpouring of vials of wraths of which he could only faintly conjecture the capacity.

The Brahmans fully appreciate the advantages of their reputation for holiness, and are careful, in their position as guardians of the religious belief of the masses, to foster these ideas.

While the sight of a Brahman is auspicious and his blessing is eagerly sought by those who meet him, it is considered very unlucky to meet an individual of the *tehi* caste on first leaving the house. Any enterprise undertaken after such an encounter would be very likely to fail, and it would be considered wiser for a traveller to return and make a fresh start under more favourable omens.

In many districts in Oudh the belief in the evil eye is still prevalent, and any sudden attack of illness is always attributed to this cause. In the opinion of the sufferer and his friends some enemy of his has, as they say put *tonda*, or cast the evil eye on him. In such cases the patient usually falls in a state of deep mental depression, and it is generally found to be a waste of time and words to attempt to convince him that he has caught a chill, and is suffering from fever or dysentery. He gazes at you with mournful lack-lustre eyes, and articulates the one word *tonda*. He clasps his hands, and begs to be allowed ten days' leave to visit a celebrated professor of *gharphunk*, or curative magic, and shows no signs of recovering until he is allowed to go. It must be admitted that a few days after he generally returns smiling and well, and declares that the *gharphunk-wallah* told him that had he waited a day longer it would not have been possible to counteract the spell.

This is one of the instances of mind acting on matter. It is impossible to say whether the benevolent necromancer practises hypnotism, or whether he first quiets his patient's fears by meaningless incantations, and then restores his physical health by simple remedies.

The belief in the existence of evil spirits and *bhúts*, or the disembodied ghosts of men, is quite common.

Evil spirits are supposed to haunt the neighbourhood of burning *gháts*, the places on the banks of rivers where dead bodies are cremated; such places are looked upon with horror by natives, and in ordinary circumstances they will not approach them after night-fall.

Bhúts, as I have said, are the ghosts of people who have come to an untimely end, and have not had the proper funeral ceremonies performed for them by their relatives or friends. The *bhút* is supposed to wander about the scene of the destruction of its body, and to either terrify and destroy the luckless wights it may meet, or, to take possession of them and drive them to commit insane or evil deeds. My own experience will furnish an instance of this belief. Being encamped at a village called Pipargaon in the Futtehghur district, my men complained that at night a *bhút* had wandered about the camp uttering mournful wails that made their flesh creep with terror. They said they had been informed by the village people that a *dhobin* (washer-woman) had committed suicide in a small tank close to the grove in which my camp was pitched, and begged me to move to some other place, as they feared evil would arise out of our intrusion into the ghost's domains. We spent another day and night at the place, and the next morning my horse, upon my approaching to mount it, suddenly became very restive, reared, and threw itself on its side, damaging the saddle in doing so. The *syce* (groom) immediately declared that the *bhút* had entered into the horse, and in this opinion the whole camp agreed, with the exception, needless to say, of myself. The horse continued to give trouble for some time, but finally yielded to exercise. I afterwards learned that the groom had had re-

course to magic, and had the ghost cast out, as he believed, by means of spells.

But it is not his fellow-men alone that the imaginative villager has endowed with supernatural or miraculous attributes. Animals, birds, reptiles, and insects are each credited with some power or quality which secures them a permanent place in the affections of their two-footed neighbours, or makes them the objects of his unreasoning abhorrence and persecution.

The cow stands forth pre-eminent as an object of veneration and respect, and miraculous curative powers, both for the soul and body, are ascribed to its various products. Strange as it may seem, the Hindu is often made, through his superstitious veneration of the cow, to treat it at times with positive inhumanity. This occurs in the case of sick animals that the owner is unable to cure. When a cow becomes very old, or is seized with some incurable sickness, the owner dare not, even if he wished, put it out of its misery at once. Believing that such an act would bring eternal damnation on himself, and disgrace on his family, he calmly abandons the wretched animal to its fate. The exhausted creature, unable to drag itself home, throws itself on the ground, and before life is extinct becomes the prey of crows and vultures. The jungle-crow is ever on the watch for such victims, and it is not uncommon to find these black-coated ruffians picking at the eyes of a dying cow that is too feeble to do more than shudder at the torture inflicted on it. A bull-calf is often let loose in the name of Shiva and becomes after that a sacred animal. No one attempts to catch it or harm it in any way. It roams at large feeding where it will, and often grows to be an animal of splendid size and

strength. The destruction it does among the ripening crops is enormous, yet no one complains of the depredations of the privileged *sarh*, as it is called, while a mouthful snatched by a stray pony or a wandering goat will make the owner of the crop burst forth into loud complaints that his field has been destroyed and himself completely ruined.

When a native gentleman wishes to buy a horse, he pays quite as much heed to the omens as to the points of the animal shown to him. Should the beast be faultlessly made he will reject it if it happens to have a wall eye. Should it, on the other hand, have a curl of hair on the side of its neck and one on its chest the animal is a lucky one, and the owner will be able to secure a higher price than he could have hoped for from a consideration of its soundness.

The jackal, so common on the outskirts of Indian villages, is, like the hare among the ancient Romans, capable of affording the traveller a peep into the future. If one be observed moving in front of him the omen is a good one, and the traveller goes on with a light heart; it would be otherwise if the animal crossed his path.

The owl is considered by all natives to be an unlucky bird, and its hooting is held in detestation by them. They are unwilling to call each other by their names when close to an owl, believing that if they do so, the bird will learn the name it hears, and continue repeating it until the death of the doomed man occurs. One of the names of the owl is *urhua*. This word has been derived from the sound made by the brown wood-owl, whose cry, when heard from a short distance, is not unlike the syllables *urhua* uttered in a loud and trembling tone. This strange cry can easily be twisted into the words Babua

or Rama, two very common native names, and this accidental resemblance may explain the origin of the superstition. The innocent owl is, according to natives, evil in mind and body. Even when dead its dreadful powers do not forsake it, for should anyone taste its flesh the results would be insanity for which no cure is known.

On the other hand the peacock, the blue pigeon, and the jay are welcome birds to the villagers' sight. The peacock is held in special veneration, and, except in very wild places, its destruction is looked upon as a sacrilegious act. It is accordingly allowed to dwell in the fields in large flocks, and to feed at will upon the growing crops, among which it lives in happy security with the sacred bulls and the sacred monkeys. The integuments of the quills of the peacock's train are considered a good remedy for that mysterious wasting away to which so many Indian children succumb. The integuments are reduced to powder and given to the little patient mixed with milk, and a small feather is hung round the child's neck by means of a black thread. The parents then consider they have taken energetic steps to promote the child's recovery.

Virtue is said to be its own reward, and this must emphatically be true in the case of the grey horn-bill or *danesh* of the natives. This quaint and interesting bird, that spends much of its time in the higher boughs of the *pipal*-tree feasting on its insipid figs, and uttering every now and then its curious harsh cry not unlike the scratching of a nail on a tin plate, is supposed to yield an oil of high medicinal value. This oil, prepared by boiling down the fat on the horn-bill's breast, is used as a cure for pains and aches, and is the virtue for which the restless *dhanesh* often pays the penalty of its life.

The black partridge, or francolin, is regarded by Mussulmans with feelings of sympathy, as it is supposed to say the following words when it utters its strident call: "*Subhan teri kudrat hai* (oh holy God, all things depend on thy power)."

Whatever kindly feeling is evoked towards the francolin by its pious utterances is, however, more than made up for by the cruel practice which Mussulman cooks are said to have of pulling out the tongues of turkeys by the roots before killing them for their master's dinner. I have not been able to trace the origin of this barbarous custom, but it is supposed to be done because the bird uses its voice in dispraise of the Prophet.

Among reptiles the first place must be given to the snake, and prominently to the cobra, whose dreadful presence always lurks, a standing menace to life, about our gardens and out-houses in India. It is a very sacred reptile among natives, and if they can avoid it they will never destroy one. A traveller meeting a cobra that looks at him and expands its hood rejoices and goes on his way, for he has seen a good omen. Once a year a great festival, known as the Nag Panchami, is held in honour of snakes, and on this occasion milk is offered to the brutes.

It is considered very unlucky to use the word *samp* (snake) at night; such an act would, it is thought, ensure a visit from one of these undesirable creatures. If it is necessary to refer to the subject at all it is considered preferable to use the word *kira* (worm), which apparently gives no offence, as it endues the snake with the harmless qualities of an insignificant creature. This superstition calls to mind the close connection between the Serpent and the Evil One, and the old proverb, "Speak of the Devil and he is sure to appear."

When a snake happens to be killed great care is taken to destroy the head. This is crushed into a shapeless mass, the idea being that without such a precaution the creature would come to life again.

Snakes are, moreover, looked upon as the guardians of hidden treasure, and are themselves supposed to retain a jewel of priceless value and lustre in their heads. This jewel they are believed to eject from their mouths, but of the purpose for which this is done I have never been able to find an explanation.

The *dhaman*, or whip-snake, which lives a great deal on rats and is therefore frequently to be seen in the rafters of houses, is also much dreaded by natives, though its bite is not poisonous. They assert that it can inflict incurable wounds with its tail, and it is consequently approached with as much caution as the deadly *nag*, or cobra, itself.

All natives believe in the powers of snake-charmers, and frequently hire one of these gentry to rid their precincts of an obnoxious visitor. Their powers may be doubted, but it is impossible to deny that many of these men are very skilful and bold in capturing snakes, and some of their exploits with healthy cobras would put the performances of Brusher Mills and the vipers of Epping Forest entirely in the shade.

The familiar wall-lizard, or *gecko*, that haunts the vicinity of every lamp at night and enjoys a riotous feast when the white-ants swarm in the beginning of the rains, has also its superstitions attached to it. Should one of these little creatures run on to a person's body from the ground it is considered a sign of good luck; but if it were to fall upon any one from the rafters or wall the omen is bad. Needless to say the bad omen occurs more frequently than the good one,

and so the *chipkuli*, as the quaint little creature is called, is not a general favourite with the natives.

The crested tree-lizards, the outdoor cousins of the *chipkuli*, are not so fortunate as their smaller relatives. They are looked upon by Mussulmans of the Shia sect with detestation, and are killed by them without compunction. They are supposed to be of the same race as the lizards which betrayed the hiding-place of Hassan, by breaking the web that the friendly spider had woven over the mouth of the well in which the fugitive prince had sought concealment from his pursuers.

After snakes one of the commonest pests in Indian houses are scorpions. Dreadful as the pain of their sting is, no native will willingly destroy one of them. They will take infinite pains to capture the creature and cut off its sting, which is used in a ceremony connected with the birth of a son, thereby, as is supposed, making the infant immune throughout its life to the effects of a scorpion's sting. As for the maimed insect, it is left to die a slow death by starvation, for the scorpion is a predatory creature, and the poison-sting is its assegai by means of which it transfixes its prey. Once deprived of this weapon it cannot provide itself with food. Natives see no cruelty in thus maiming a scorpion; but they regard with horror the sharp blow with which a European puts an end at once to the creature's loathsome existence.

The scorpion is also used medicinally. It is then boiled down with *ghî* (clarified butter), and the decoction is used as an embrocation for rheumatism.

When stung by one of these pests the sufferer does not rely upon medicines to afford him relief. Though the gift of some spirits of ammonia will be accepted gratefully, no time

will be lost in seeking the *jharphunk-wallah*, and applying the remedial powers of incantations. The patient sits before the magician, who makes passes over the wound and blows on it, muttering some unintelligible words and phrases as he does so. It may be, as I have already hinted, that the magician is gifted with hypnotic power, and thus be able to afford some relief; at all events, the sufferer generally professes himself to be much relieved when the operation is over.

Ants, of which there are numerous varieties in India, are looked upon with great reverence by natives, and it is considered a worthy act to feed them. During festivals men may often be seen walking along the roadside with a quantity of fine flour in one hand, while with the other they strew a small portion of their offering in front of every ant's nest they come to. This pleasing superstition is quite in accordance with the naturally humane tendency of the Indian mind. This leaning to live and let others live often degenerates into sentimental weakness which lead to acts such as the abandonment of sick cows and the maiming of scorpions. These acts are done not so much from a desire to be cruel as from a desire not to be cruel, and from a mistaken sense of what cruelty really is.

Even plants are not without their superstitions. The tamarind-tree, though furnishing a splendid shade, is not considered a safe tree for a sick man to sleep under. On the other hand, the shade of a *nim*-tree is considered to be peculiarly healthful. The *pipal*-tree is regarded with feelings of veneration, being looked upon as a safe refuge from lightning, which, it is declared, will never strike the

sacred plant. The idea is graceful, and even poetic, but it is to be feared that, in common with the superstitions of all races of men, it will not bear the test of careful observation.

Among the tangle of shrubs and herbs growing in out-of-the-way places may be found a little plant known to the cunning herbalists of the villages as the *mongoose wail*. It is by means of this plant, the natives declare, that the little mongoose is able to come off unscathed from his encounter with the deadly cobra. After the fight is over the mongoose runs into the brushwood and eats of the leaves of this plant, and thereafter suffers no ill effects from the bites he has received. This is, of course, a pure myth. The plant is of no efficacy in cases of snake-bite, and the little mongoose does not escape if he happens to get bitten by the cobra. Of this he is fully aware, and he trusts to his quickness and his rough wiry coat to save him from accidents. He always attempts to seize the snake as close up to the head as possible, and generally succeeding in this comes off triumphant in the conflict.

In this way the life of the simple countryman is linked with the existence of the animals and plants around him, and superstition adds a shade of complexity and mystery to his actions. Education is now steadily destroying many of the old beliefs, but it will take many generations still before the fetters of superstition are loosened, and a vast population set free from a bondage that, though interesting to others, is not ennobling to themselves.

G. A. LEVETT-YEATS.

PRIVATE PITCHER.

BY A SUBALTERN'S WIFE.

NEVER shall I look upon his like again. He was a jewel, rough-hewn, and thickly crusted with common clay, but a jewel, nevertheless. I must frankly confess, however, that we made this remarkable discovery by slow degrees, and that it needed a long string of stolidly incompetent successors to batter the conviction into our souls.

Of the ways of the private soldier on active service, of his valour, his endurance, his indomitable cheerfulness, the general public has, of late, gained some small degree of knowledge. But only to his officers and their wives is it given to know how he comports himself in the less heroic field of domestic service, a state of life for which he receives no hint of preliminary training, but which he accepts with ready cheerfulness and courage that have been drilled into him by the changes and chances of his strangely variegated life.

When first I threw in my lot with Jim and his regiment, they were stationed in India, a land where the soldier-servant is not. But on completion of our tour of foreign service, we duly dawdled across the ocean on a leisurely troopship, and thereafter proceeded to adjust ourselves, with true military promptitude, to the manners and necessities of garrison life at home; an achievement by no means so simple as it sounds to uninitiated ears.

India, if not a land of luxury, is at least a land of limitless room; and it is a little difficult to live grace-

fully, and smilingly, in a band-box, until habit has lent one a helping hand. But in the Army we learn to achieve the impossible cheerfully, and without an overweening conceit of ourselves. In place, then, of our spacious, if scantily furnished bungalow, behold a six-roomed doll's house; and in place of ten obsequious brown servants, behold 'Lizerann (she insisted on her own rendering of the double name,) and Private Pitcher, who undertook, between them, to fulfil the duties of housemaid, cook, scullery-wench, parlour-maid, and valet.

The two first were represented by 'Lizerann, a coarse-handed, blunt-featured maiden, whose zeal was only out-stripped by her incompetence; and the three last were united in the person of Private Pitcher, who thus became practically the backbone of our small establishment,—a solid one enough, to judge from the heavy build of his square shoulders, and moreover a willing one, if his smiling face and honest eyes did not give the lie to their owner's disposition. That they did not so do, we very speedily discovered. Never was prisoned in clumsy tenement of clay a truer, wholesomer, cheerier soul, so zealous to do the right thing, and so inevitably doomed to do the wrong one. His energy was unbounded, and for a beautiful good-humour he had no match. He whistled and sang so lustily at his work that Jim, by way of a gentle reproof, inquired, with a grave show of interest, whether he

cherished a secret ambition to exchange the Army for the parish-choir; whereat poor Pitcher, turning a rich brown-red, disowned the soft impeachment, and retreated, grinning broadly. For two whole days thereafter his exuberant spirit was held severely in check, doubly portcullised with his teeth and lips; though the latter waxed visibly rebellious at times, and finally gained a signal victory, in honour whereof our ears were assailed with a very torrent of jubilant sound. But this time a lurking sympathy with the sinner entirely overruled our sense of the fitness of things, and we suffered him thenceforth to whistle unchecked within a reasonable distance of our ears; though even so moderate a degree of self-repression was not achieved without Herculean efforts, ludicrously out of proportion to the offence.

Such, then, was the man, in so far as my halting pen can depict him, who was struck off duty by the company's captain, to the end that he might render us the threefold services of valet, parlour-maid, and scullery-wench; the which he did, with varying degrees of excellence, and an unvarying degree of zeal.

As scullery-wench he was triumphantly successful. In such initial matters as polishing pans, brushing boots, and scrubbing floors his strong right arm, backed by an abnormal sense of duty, accomplished wonders, to the lasting admiration of 'Lizerann, who, it must be owned, was careful never to overtax the strength of her own well-developed biceps.

"Lordy-lord, Pitcher, you *are* a one to scrub! Done with them boots 'ave you? I should *think* so indeed. Why missus might eas'ly see to do 'er 'air in 'em."

Of such were the unvarnished compliments which floated out to me through the chronically open kitchen-

door, as I sat at my desk in the drawing-room, not twelve yards away. Then would the two indulge in a spell of frankly bucolic love-making, which I could not choose but overhear, and which I lacked the moral courage to interrupt by a flying descent upon the unconscious delinquents. Where the soldier is, in what capacity soever, there love-making is; and the mistress who is wise will be discreetly blind to the fact that, upon her unexpected entrance into the kitchen, a masculine arm is hastily slipped from the region of a feminine waist. To the severely right-minded, this advice may savour of the Evil One. But we live in a world of compromise, and must needs take many things as we find them, the soldier-servant among the number. "Think what he's been, think what he's seen:" be generous in acknowledging his virtues, which are many; and leave his backslidings to the Judge of all men, whose eyes are over all his works.

But a truce to moralising, fit tonic though it be for our unregenerate souls. Pitcher is my theme, and to Pitcher let us revert without delay.

As a valet he did not reach the heights of his brilliant exploits in the scullery. In order to the achievement of good work in this branch of service, a strong arm should unfailingly be coupled with a light hand; and Pitcher's hand upon priceless tunics, speckless collars, and immaculate dress-suits was none of the lightest. Moreover, he had an awkward knack of doing the right thing in the wrong place; a trespass apt to produce disastrous results, as the following incident bears testimony.

It was the time of afternoon. Captain and Mrs. Russell had dropped in in friendly wise, and Jim had rung the bell, to signify our readiness for tea and crumpets, when a sturdy rap

at the door was followed by the entrance of Pitcher bearing, not the expected tea-tray, but the two halves of my most cherished milk-jug.

"Well?" demanded Jim, with stern brevity.

"If yer please sir, this 'ere come in two this morning," was the lucid rejoinder, as the poor fellow swayed from leg to leg in an agony of embarrassment.

"So I see. How did it happen, though?"

"If yer please, sir, I was abrushing of yer trousers—" here followed a nervous pause.

"But my good man, what on earth had the milk-jug to do with my trousers?" Whereat everyone smiled, save poor Pitcher, whose worst confession had yet to be made.

"Well, sir, ye see, sir, I 'appened to be abrushin' of 'em on the kitchen table, an'—an' my 'and come along a shade too quick, an' the brush it come smack agin the jug,—an' it split in two; an' I'm very sorry, sir."

During the delivery of this round, unvarnished tale, Jim's simulated wrath had given place to unconcealed mirth. "All right, Pitcher," he said, in soothing tones, "you've not ruined us this time. But I should advise you not to do your bedroom work in the kitchen as a general rule. It might come a bit expensive, you know, if you did it too often."

Thus mildly admonished, Pitcher disappeared; and we heard him retreating down the passage at the double. Need I say that it was 'Lizerann who brought in the tea-things five minutes later, and that her lips were rigidly pursed, lest the mirth should bubble out of her in spite of herself?

No; as a valet, Pitcher could not, with a clean conscience, be pronounced first-rate. But it was in his third capacity, that of parlour-maid, that

he fairly surpassed himself. For never, in all his five and twenty years of life, had he laid a table, or handed a dish, or ushered an afternoon visitor into a lady's drawing-room; and the manner of his initiation into these mysteries of service afforded us so rare a mingling of agony and amusement, that the memory of it will abide with us for the rest of our natural lives.

By good fortune we were so constituted that the humour of an awkward situation almost invariably out-weighed the embarrassment, ay, even upon the memorable occasion when our inimitable Pitcher flung open the drawing-room door, and planting himself four-square in the doorway, with nervous out-stretched fingers, and twitching thumbs, announced, in a stentorian whisper: "If ye please, mum, 'ere's some one to see ye." Behind him towered a lady of considerable social and physical magnitude, who would fain have entered, had it but occurred to Pitcher to make way for her. As it was she stood, for five awful seconds, gazing, with injured amazement, at his broad, blue serge back; at the end of which time he began to be dimly aware that movement, of some sort, was expected of him, and executing a smart right-about-face, he fled down the narrow hall, leaving me to smooth my visitor's ruffled dignity as best I might.

On Jim's return, Pitcher was summoned to the drawing-room, where he spent an excruciating half-hour ushering my husband repeatedly into my presence, each time under a new name, till my gravity could hold out no longer, and we dismissed him to digest his newly-found knowledge in the kitchen.

Alas, our labour had been in vain! When a second visitor presented herself the poor fellow, fearing a repetition of his former agonies, opened the

door to her, and fairly bolted. Being a woman of understanding, and not devoid of humour, she found her way into my presence unassisted, and we laughed heartily over the unique behaviour of my prince of parlour-maids.

But if the front door proved a stumbling-block, it was mere child's play when compared with the intricacies of the dinner-table. Our first difficulty in this respect was the uncleanness of his hands, which, scour them as he might, could not be freed from the indelible traces of his occupations in the scullery. To obviate this drawback Jim decreed that he should wear white cotton gloves, after the manner of bachelors' servants at mess. With some wonder, and no little pride, Pitcher obeyed. But our joy in this brilliant inspiration was short-lived. Poor Pitcher's hands, in their natural state, were none too skilful; judge, therefore, how they comported themselves when arrayed in ill-fitting gloves that extended a full half inch beyond his abnormally short fingers; how manfully they wrestled with rebellious knives, and spoons, and plates; and how valiantly their owner strove to obtain some small degree of mastery over these unruly members of his! The white gloves, however, were not discarded, and at last perseverance attained her perfect work.

Thus much for our soldier's hands. But his feet had also to be reckoned with, for the tread of the parade-ground upon one's dining-room floor is scarce conducive to a good digestion. Pitcher, moreover, was no half-hearted henchman. Whatsoever he was bidden to do he did with such concentrated earnestness and energy, that criticism seemed sheer barbarity. He marched heavily about our small dining-room to the tuneful accompaniment of creaking boots, stood at

attention behind Jim's chair, and at the end of each course bore the laden tray jauntily down the passage, whistling as he went, and shedding knives, forks, and spoons in his wake at every second step.

With paternal tenderness Jim pointed out to him that the ideal waiter, like the ideal good little boy, should, so far as possible, be seen and not heard. To this end he presented him with a pair of leather slippers, to be worn in place of the musical ammunition-boots which had so sorely tried our nerves. Whereafter Pitcher, who, as I have said, had no notion of doing things by halves, crept round the table with cat-like stealthiness of tread; his shoulders bowed forward, his broad, good-humoured face set in lines of grim determination, till our risible muscles were almost as sorely tried as our nerves had been, and we dared not look each other in the eyes, for fear of an undignified collapse of our hardly maintained gravity.

But once outside the dining-room door, Pitcher's repressed buoyancy asserted itself with renewed vigour; and, to judge by the accompanying clink of glasses and rattle of falling plate, he must have fairly danced down the passage to the kitchen-door,—for, by a blessed chance, our doll's house was devoid of a staircase, that most fertile source of domestic calamity.

Yet even so, we were not cheated of our due share of breakages; for though Pitcher never again, to my knowledge, brushed Jim's overalls on the kitchen table, he discovered a score of other ingenious devices whereby my crockery and glass might be reduced to fragments. Nor did he rest satisfied with such fragile spoils only; for there came an evening when he appeared before us,—or to be accurate, when half of him

appeared, from behind the kindly shelter of the partially open door—guilt written in every line of his face and figure; and we knew, from sad experience, that the shattered corpse of some household treasure lay at that moment on the kitchen-floor.

“Well, what is it now?” asked Jim, with the calmness of despair.

“If ye please sir, I’ve—I’ve just bin an’ knocked the ’andle out o’ one o’ the saucepans.” He succeeded in making this unique announcement with an unmoved face, though mirth lurked in his eyes and about the corners of his rigidly set lips.

Jim fairly leaped from his chair, with a shout of laughter.

“Good Lord, man,” he cried when some of the laughter was out of him, “how, in the name of all that’s wonderful, did you manage to do it?”

“Well sir, it was like this sir; I was acarryin’ in the tray, and I shoved a bit too near the range, so that the ’andle o’ the saucepan got caught in my pocket, without me knowin’, an’ I jerked it out on to the floor; and when it fell the ’andle came slap off.”

In partial justification of the saucepan’s unseemly behaviour let me confess that it was an hireling of inferior quality.

With solemn faces we proceeded to inspect the ruins, and were confronted by a flood. The kitchen-floor was drenched with the moist, miscellaneous contents of the slaughtered saucepan, which was one of no mean dimensions; and from the high and dry eminence of the deal table ’Lizerann surveyed the scene with unfeigned enjoyment.

In the face of so ludicrous a fiasco we were incapable of rising to the dignity of serious reproof. We contented ourselves, therefore, with making a few obvious suggestions, and felt justly proud of achieving even thus much without ignominious collapse.

On Sunday Pitcher rested from his manifold labours; for we took pains to make this day, so far as possible, one of comparative leisure for the pillars of our household; and, being struck off duty, he had no call to attend that bugbear of the average soldier, church-parade. I have it on the authority of Bubbles, my four-year-old son, that Pitcher spent the greater part of Sunday morning washing, brushing, and adorning his person with characteristic vigour, and in working diligently at a heart-shaped, bead-decked atrocity,—a love-token (again Bubbles is my authority) for “the girl what loves him, and what wants to marry him.” His afternoons were presumably devoted to the society of the said girl, and the house seemed strangely silent and empty during his absence.

I have said that Pitcher was a jewel, and if I have so far failed to justify my statement, I intend to justify it now.

In the long, hot days of August, when work of any sort was a burden and a weariness of the flesh, ’Lizerann’s demands for free afternoons became alarmingly frequent; and moreover she began to add such wide margins to her evenings out, that, on one or two nights, Jim was constrained to sit up for her till past eleven o’clock. On each occasion he spoke to her sternly, and reproachfully; on each occasion she wept, and made many promises,—and repeated the offence.

There came a night at last, when Jim, having vainly awaited her return till close on midnight, retired to bed firmly determined to dismiss her on the morrow. But the morrow brought no ’Lizerann, nor did the next day, nor the next, till our amazement gave place to suspicions, which were strengthened by certain pitiful facts confided to Jim by Pitcher. It

seemed that the girl's head had been fairly turned by the persuasive attentions of a handsome corporal, whose reputation was none of the whitest; and Pitcher was of opinion that, having probably been induced by him to spend a whole night out, she had lacked courage to return to us in the morning.

Such, in fact, proved to be the whole truth of the matter. We found on inquiry that our poor, misguided 'Lizerann had taken refuge with a married sister in the town; and thither, in the course of a few days, her one modest black trunk was trundled on a hand-cart by the ever-willing Pitcher, who now became, after a while, the sole prop and stay of our tiny establishment.

All that man might do, and more also, that sturdy soldier did. From morning to night, through those long, sultry days, he worked, ceaselessly and cheerfully, at every conceivable variety of household task. One thing only, for all his zeal and energy, he could not do; he could not cook. His attainments in that province were limited to frying bacon, and boiling potatoes; and you may be sure that he insisted on doing both, whenever opportunity offered. Indeed, I am convinced that he would fain have had us live, with true Hibernian simplicity, on these alone, that the entire honour and glory of serving us might rest upon his own willing shoulders. But despite our gratitude, and the Irish blood in our veins, we could scarce humour him thus far. We therefore gladly accepted the noble offer of the mess-cook to roast our joints, and boil our puddings for us, and to speed them, steaming hot, across the parade-ground by the hands of the devoted Pitcher.

I have failed to mention that Jim and I were at this time on detachment; and that our doll's house was, in truth, the rightful quarters of the medical officer in charge, who, being a bachelor, had generously consented to occupy two rooms in the subalterns' block, and to allow us the use of his house.

In this novel and curious fashion, then, we tided over the days that elapsed between the deposition of 'Lizerann the First and the installation of 'Lizerann the Second, a maiden of an altogether finer quality, to whom the smiles of handsome corporals were as dross, and who regarded all red-coats, Pitcher only excepted, as dust beneath her self-righteous little feet.

So passed the days, till summer faded into autumn, and the opening of the leave-season broke up our temporary home.

'Lizerann the Second departed, bearing her unsullied virtue with her; and Pitcher the zealous, Pitcher the absent-minded, Pitcher our prince of servitors, returned to his appointed niche in C company's ranks, and we beheld his smiling face no more.

Only, the other day, as my eye travelled down the now all too familiar list of casualties in South Africa, it was suddenly checked by the sight of Pitcher's name: *No. 1964 Pte. Pitcher, seriously, in the head.*

I read no further. I could not see to read. I could only sit still, and let the recollections and reflections I have set down sweep through my brain with painful vividness; till a desire was born within me to pay my own small tribute, inadequate though it be, to the worth, pluck, and loyalty, in peace as in war, of Private Pitcher, soldier of the King.

THE PARTY-SYSTEM.

AN inaccurate generalisation concisely expressed is often thought to be an epigram. Of such a nature was the famous remark of a great French jurist, when he said of the English Constitution, "Elle n'existe point." But though our Constitution undoubtedly does exist, it is nevertheless so heterogeneous a mass of survivals, conventions, and unwritten rules, that the student often finds it hard to mark it clearly off from co-ordinate studies such as the common law, antiquities, and political history. It was once my fortune to attend a meeting of a working men's debating-society at which the motion for discussion was, "That this House disapproves of the Crown and Constitution." Of course the arguments had in the main very little to do even with the wide subject in hand, being chiefly devoted to abusing or praising the House of Lords and the Civil List. Had those working men been told that the destruction or recasting of the House of Lords or the abdication of the Ruling House would probably have less effect on the Constitution than, let us say, the holding of office by a Prime Minister who belonged to no political party, he would certainly not have believed it. Such nevertheless would seem to be the case.

Without attempting to offer a treatise on the Constitution, and certainly without holding a brief for any system or party, it is our present purpose to set forth clearly a few facts which may serve to rescue the average man from some of the delusions to which he at present seems liable.

It is not infrequently stated or implied in conversation and in the daily papers that Party-Government dates from of old as an absolute essential of the English Constitution. Others tell us that it is of recent growth, and could consequently be swept away without altering the constitutional system to any serious extent. Both of these views contain some truth and a great deal of untruth. Again, men will ask why he who goes to Westminster as the representative of a certain portion of the community should write himself a follower of the programme of one set of statesmen and the enemy of that of another. Why, they say, cannot he come forward as Disraeli once did, "wearing the badge of no party, and the livery of no faction"? And the only answer too often is, because, like Disraeli on that occasion, he would have no chance of getting elected at all. Is Party-Government an immemorial institution, or is it a mere mushroom growth? Can we dispense with it as a nation, or disregard it as individuals? Such are the questions to which the specialist has of course a ready reply, but they are questions which worry and perplex the ordinary citizen.

Without going back to origins such as the Witagemot or the Commune Concilium, it is necessary to glance at the powers of Parliament before the Puritan Revolution.

Briefly it may be said that at the beginning of the seventeenth century it was a council of representatives of the nobility, the Church, and the wealthy commoners, summoned by

the Crown chiefly for the purposes of taxation, legislation, and deliberation. Though Edward the First had surrendered the power of arbitrary taxation by the King, his successors had not always felt themselves hindered by his action from reviving the practice; Royal Proclamations and Orders in Council usurped much of the legislative power; and a ruler of an independent temper could always dispense, if he chose, with the deliberations of the Representative Assembly. Thus, though the Government consisted then, as now, of the Crown and the two Houses of Parliament, still it was essentially different, in that the Crown was the predominant partner directly or indirectly in every particular of government. But in the seventeenth century there was abroad in England a spirit of democracy; and to accentuate this there was an autocratic and feeble Ruling House, alien in its civil and religious views from the mass of the nation. The spirit of democracy claimed and won for the Commons, as opposed to any other power in the country, the privilege, granted two centuries earlier but often infringed, of originating all money-bills, and the control of the purse is after all the chief instrument of power; the personality and religious views of the Ruling House divided the Commons into two distinct parties. It may fairly be said that this division of the representatives dates from the Long Parliament of 1641. At that time the division was religious; forty years later it became more distinctly constitutional, and from this date began the two great political parties.

On the one side were the Petitioners, so called because they petitioned the King to summon a new Parliament; on the other were those who, by expressing their abhorrence of such an attempt to force the King's

will, came to be styled Abhorrrers. To each of these was applied a nickname, designed originally to be abusive, but afterwards adopted as the Party-title. The Petitioners were called Whiggamores, or Whigs, to mark their supposed resemblance to the Scottish Covenanters, who, being drawn from the peasants of the Western Lowlands, were accustomed to urge on their horses with the cry of *whiggam*. The Abhorrrers in their turn were labelled Tories after some Irish brigands, the idea being that the High Church Party must be in sympathy with the Catholic, and at the same time lawless, Irishmen from whom the name was taken.

These were the first really political parties, but their significance is totally different from that which parties bear to-day. The preponderating party could by revolution, or in a slight degree by lawful means, obtain the realisation of their wishes; but the machinery of the Constitution was full of confusion. Whereas the Tories were struggling with varying success for the Stuarts' ideals of religion and rule, the Whigs were occupying themselves with the problem of making the Crown and the Houses of Parliament as a whole express the wishes of the majority of the nation. Thus it was rather over the machinery than over the nature and quality of its products that the first political parties were at issue.

Circumstances led the two parties, or the great majority of them, to unite in the pacific revolution which brought William the Third to the throne and laid the foundations of a genuine constitutional government. But in order to make clear how this came about and what it means, it would seem necessary to deal shortly with the subject of the growth of the Cabinet.

In any government it is necessary to harmonise the Legislature and the Executive. Let us suppose, to take a simple case, that the government of a country, be it Crown or Council, declares war with another country, and the head of the military forces refuses to enter on the campaign; or suppose again that the government of a country imposes a tax, and the head of the tax-collectors refuses to collect it. The result is a deadlock. In other words, the people whose business it is to make laws and those whose business it is to carry them out must either be identical, or so much in harmony as to prevent the possibility of friction. Originally in England the King was accustomed in general to select his chief executive officers from among the members of his Privy Council. So long as the King with his Council, or at any rate the King, was the predominant partner in legislation this would work smoothly enough. The King would appoint the tax-collector and order the tax; the King would appoint the head of the forces and declare the war; and friction would be unlikely to arise. But as the power of Parliament, and especially of the Commons, grew in England, this harmony of course ceased.

Now in order the more perfectly to harmonise the Legislature with the Executive various Kings had been accustomed to take as their special advisers in legislation such of the members of the Privy Council as were or had been executive officers or, as we say, ministers. This ring is the origin of the Cabinet. But the Cabinet after the Revolution was in a somewhat difficult position. The House of Commons had greatly increased in power, and political parties had begun to hold sway within it. The King no longer ruled by divine right; nor on the other hand was

he master by force of arms. It was not as Charles the First, nor as Cromwell that he sat on the throne, chose his ministers from among his Privy Councillors, and directed the councils of his Parliament. He was the nominee of the Houses of Parliament as the representatives of the nation, and that which can bestow power even over itself has always, apart from matters of mere personal popularity or adventitious strength, the ultimate constitutional authority. Of this authority the Houses of Parliament were particularly jealous. They reduced the regular army in order to prevent the possibility of the ascendancy of the Crown through military strength; they established the precedent of appropriating the supplies and of refusing to vote money for any object until the returns of expenditure and income had been brought in. Thus they retained in their own hands, among other things, the control of the purse and of the military power. Nor did William himself fail to see that he was not to be a ruler after the fashion of the Stuarts. He selected his first ministers without reference to personal or political enmities or friendships, choosing merely such of the leading members of either House as seemed capable of performing the duties of the various offices. But this method soon proved ineffectual. The King was not the predominant partner in legislation; he appointed *de jure* and *de facto* his Executive, and the Executive represented no united body of opinion in Parliament. Thus the King, with encouragement from some of his ministers, would pursue a war-like policy, and the Houses of Parliament and others of the ministers would refuse to grant supplies. Three things gradually became clear as results of the predominance of the Houses of Parliament in the Govern-

ment: that the will of the majority in Parliament must direct the general policy; that to secure harmony of action the ministers must be chosen from among that same majority; and that these must be accountable to the Houses of Parliament and not to the King for their actions. Thus between 1693 and 1698 William took his ministers from among the Whigs only, and during those years the machinery of government worked smoothly enough. On the loss, however, of their majority in Parliament, the ministers refused to resign and the King did not dismiss them. The Commons immediately became turbulent; they reduced the army, attacked the King, and threatened to impeach the Earls of Portland and Albemarle. Slowly, and by means of experiments, it came to be recognised that the Cabinet, or inner ring of Privy Councillors, must consist of the Executive and must be chosen from the party in power in the House of Commons. It was not till the end of the reign of Anne that the Sovereign withdrew from the meetings of the Cabinet, thus leaving the Cabinet responsible to Parliament and severing it from the Crown except in so far as its members were all Privy Councillors. Two consequences of this silent and pacific revolution occurred at later dates. It was found not only that the Cabinet ought to comprise the Executive, but that to ensure harmony it ought to comprise no others. This principle was practically established at the end of the eighteenth century by the abolition of the non-efficient members of the Cabinet, that is to say, of members who, when their party was in power, had been efficient. The other difficulty was of a more serious nature. Supposing that ministers should have been appointed from the party in the

ascendant, and supposing that they should tender advice to the Crown or pursue a policy of which that party, or at any rate the majority for the moment of the national representatives, disapproved, what was to be done? The House of Commons could impeach them; but it seemed unjust that a minister should lose his head for such a cause. It could also refuse to vote supplies, which would produce a deadlock; but much harm might be done before the time for voting supplies came round. It was not until 1830 that the members of the Cabinet came to be considered bound to resign their office as soon as an adverse vote on a vital issue had been passed. For the further assurance two other conventions, or customs, have come to be a part of our constitutional system. One is that the whole Cabinet is responsible for the individual action of each of its members; the other that there should be one First Minister, holding some office and recognised as the head of the Administration.

All these changes have rendered the Party-System essential to our Constitution. If national representatives are to be elected on individual instead of party programmes, whence are we to select our ministers? If Mr. Smith is made President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Jones will not work with him because his views on Disestablishment are not sound. The sections would be numberless, and harmony impossible. There would be a continuous deadlock, and revolution alone could accomplish reforms.

We may then summarise by saying that this was what the pacific revolution of 1688 and its consequences finally accomplished. It made the House of Commons predominant in the trinity of powers which go to make up the government, namely, the Crown, the Lords, and the Commons:

it made the Cabinet the head at once of the Legislature and of the Executive ; and it caused the Cabinet to be composed solely of members of that party which commanded a majority in the House of Commons. But as yet it could in no way be maintained that the Commons necessarily represented the views of the nation. So long as the suffrage was limited to a mere fraction of the population, so long as secret-service-money and bribery of all kinds were openly countenanced, so long as political morality was practically non-existent, the Commons were only representatives of the interests of the wealthier classes of the community. It has been the task of the nineteenth century to develop the policy inaugurated by the Reform Bill of 1832 of making the Commons to represent, so far as possible, the interests and views of the nation as a whole. That it has accomplished much in this direction no one can question ; it remains for the twentieth century to decide whether it is material interests or human entities that are to be the units of representation. Thus we have to-day not only the Executive in harmony with the Legislature, but the Legislature in almost exact harmony with the nation as a whole. And this tendency to democratise our Constitution still further accentuates the necessity of the Party-System. So long as the wealthier landed classes of the community could practically command a continual majority, they had at least one interest, if hardly a principle, in common. But when class after class came to be admitted to the full citizenship, as gradually the suffrage, and even the opportunity of sitting in the House of Commons, extended down to the labouring man, interests and principles became more numerous, more diverse, and more conflicting. And it is obvious that this

renders the division of the representatives into two main parties the more essential, if indeed harmony and continuity of policy are to be desired. And the converse of this seems also to be true. While the Party-System subsists, the further the suffrage extends the more complete is the harmony of the Constitution. Had Parliament really represented the nation, it is at least probable that Chartism, for instance, would not have existed, or at any rate would simply have formed part of the programme of a political party. This example is given solely as the result of my arguments, without of course urging anything for or against either the Chartists or their objects. By the legislation of the last century the Cabinet has been rendered responsible initially to the representatives and ultimately to the vast majority of the nation. If it is rendered ultimately responsible to the whole nation, the harmony must of necessity be more assured.

Thus then are the first two points settled. Parties may be said to date as in any way important factors of government from the first half of the seventeenth century, and as its main factors from the first half of the eighteenth. The system is not immemorial, but it is indissolubly bound up with the Constitution that dates from the reign of William the Third. That monarch himself tried to rule with a ministry of both parties ; the result was confusion, disunion, measures passed and at once repealed, and in general a great deal of labour for little or no result. Since his time coalitions have often held power, and, if we consider their effects broadly, we cannot pronounce them successful. The longest-lived was the famous Broad-bottomed Administration under Henry Pelham, which conducted affairs with moderate success from 1744 to 1754. But this instance is not one

from which the rule can be taken. The Administration was a purely negative one; the period was stagnant in legislation; wars alone occupied the attention of the country, and provided that the Cabinet was united in the determination to oppose Prince Charles Edward, nothing else was required of it. Yet even in a period such as this ministers were continually resigning, quarrels were always arising, and any serious political strain must inevitably have doomed the Administration. The coalition formed by Lord North and Charles Fox in 1783 endured, though possessed of an overwhelming majority in the Commons, for only eight months during which it accomplished nothing. In 1806 the Coalition Ministry known as All the Talents came into power, but fell next year. Most noticeable of all is the course of affairs from 1846 to 1855. The question of Free Trade had formed a new division of Parties in which Peel and some of the Conservatives were at one with Lord John Russell and the Whigs. On the repeal of the Corn Laws the real reason for the new division of parties was gone. The Whigs came in for five years, with the Peelites as their supporters on some points and as their opponents on others. There was no possible alternative Government. When the inevitable reaction came and the Whigs fell, Lord Derby only succeeded in retaining power for nine months. There was no real dividing line for parties; the Whigs had for the time fallen, the Conservatives were not strong enough to succeed. A Coalition Government was then formed under Lord Aberdeen. A quotation from a speech by Disraeli in 1852, when the coalition had blundered into the Crimean War, will serve to indicate some of the evils consequent on the

temporary desertion or failure of the Party-System. "Rival opinions," he said, "contrary politics, and discordant systems have produced such vacillation and perplexity, that at last you are going to war with an opponent who does not want to fight, and whom you are unwilling to encounter." Earlier in the year the same speaker had thus delivered his view: "I have to face a coalition. The combination may be successful. But coalitions, although successful, have always found this, that their triumph has been short. This too I know, that England does not love coalitions. I appeal from the coalition to that public opinion which governs this country."

All this, people will say, may be true enough. It may be that any desertion of the Party-System is prejudicial to the conduct of affairs. But what is the individual to do? Is it possible that every man is honestly either entirely in agreement with this party or with that? Is it not rather highly probable that he must agree with portions of the programme of either side? And if this be so, should he not rather refuse his entire allegiance to either?

There may be times at which this is so, and at such times it has always happened that a certain number have declared that, though in the main they adhere to the policy of their party, they are in disagreement with them on this or that point. But as a general rule the parties are not so much divided on small individual points as on wide general principles which give birth to the particular measures; or else it happens, as in the case of the Reform Bill or the Home Rule Bill, that there is some measure of such supreme importance that it really becomes the point on which the views of the nation are divided and that a declaration on that

point is the only way of harmonising the Legislature, the Executive, and the majority of the nation.

And at the present day what is the effect of our system? Apart from the questions of the hour the composition of parties would seem to be this: on the one side we have a party pledged to protect various interests at times mutually conflicting, pledged to uphold the national patriotic policy of Lord Beaconsfield, and at the same time to advance social aims to which his followers were uncompromising enemies and which are often incompatible with the result of that national policy; on the other we have a party which by its attacks unites the conflicting interests protected by its opponents, which is in disunion over foreign policy, and unable to adjust its own differences.

What is the result? Looking over the last decade, we must confess that the result is inconsistency in foreign policy and stoppage, if not reaction, in domestic reforms. And the reason of this is clear. For the time being parties are not divided on a main principle of government, nor on a measure of supreme importance. An incident of foreign policy has to take the place of a principle by which to govern. The result is that parties have no firm grip on the views of the nation beyond the incident of the moment, and that the harmony of the Legislature, the Executive, and the nation is not assured beyond that point of time.

One other thing is day by day looming as a greater danger on the political horizon. That is the possibility of the existence of an alien body within the House of Commons neither divided between the parties, nor giving its united allegiance to the one or the other. Such a body might temporarily at any rate wreck the Constitution; at all events it must be

considered. It is not improbable that when the national representatives are once more divided on a question of real principle, the difficulty of the alien party will disappear. A principle of government must have something definite to say as to the course to be pursued in Ireland, and this will again bring the definite division of all the representatives into two parties. There are many who see all this clearly enough, but who do not appreciate the logical issue. They take the parties labelled as they are, and endeavour to force some great principle of a past epoch, or some great scheme for the future, upon this or that party as a whole. This leads ultimately either to honourable disintegration or to more or less dishonourable unity. It is the principle which makes the party, not the party which can adopt the principle. Unless main principles form the divisions of the parties instead of isolated scraps of policy or legislation, it is impossible to obtain the advantages of our Constitution, the complete harmony of the Legislature and the Executive coupled with the due representation of the definite views of the majority of the nation.

The phase through which we are at present passing is almost precisely similar to that of half a century ago. Then Free Trade, now the principle of Nationalism, especially in its particular application to Ireland, is the point at which the party divides. Then a section of the party opposed to Free Trade joined its supporters and was successful; now a section of the Home Rulers has joined the party opposed to it and has been successful. As the Conservatives came into power in 1852, so the Liberals came into power in 1892 in a hopelessly weak state. As Lord Aberdeen's Coalition Government succeeded Lord Derby, so Lord Salisbury's Coalition Govern-

ment succeeded Lord Rosebery. But at this point comes the difference. In the case of the Derby-Disraeli Party the question of Free Trade was done with ; discussions upon it were merely academic, and they could advance to new principles and policies. In the case of the Liberal Party to-day Home Rule is not done with. It still exists and enforces a sometimes awkward alliance with the Irish Party. Whether or no the country has ever given its mandate as to Home Rule as a distinct and separate issue, is doubtful. Until that point is cleared up, or else a definite policy or principle takes its place, the parties will not be divided on a clear issue and the machinery of government cannot

work smoothly. But this is no new thing. Prophecies of the decay of the Party-System and the approach of Departmental Government are wild and absurd. To conduct our government without the Party-System would involve a revolution of so complete and radical a nature that it is inconceivable. The inherent weakness of the Party-System is its periods of transition from one dividing issue to another ; but this weakness is far more than counter-balanced by its strength as the one system which can harmonise the Legislature and the Executive in a Democratic Constitution.

B. N. LANGDON-DAVIES.

ADMIRAL BENBOW.

WHEN posterity is inclined to revise or reverse the verdict pronounced upon the public men of a bygone day by their own contemporaries, there are one or two considerations which may reasonably be urged in arrest of judgment. It is true that we have access to much documentary evidence which was unknown to the original judges; but, on the other hand, they had the advantage of knowing the man himself, and everyone who has attended a court of justice knows how great is the difference between evidence heard and evidence read. Those who knew the man, knew also the tendencies of the times in which he, and they, lived, and the influences, good or bad, which shaped his conduct; they knew something of the temptations to which he was exposed, the sacrifices which he was called upon to make. To us the record of his life is presented as a more or less accurate map; but the men of his own time saw the actual landscape with all its changing lights and shadows, its colour and atmosphere. They were persons not entirely devoid of judgment, and if they gave their confidence and their esteem to any man, we may take it for granted that there was reason for it.

Few naval officers have achieved a reputation more enduring or more popular than that of Admiral John Benbow. Yet in the notice of him which appears in *THE DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY* over the well-known initials J. K. L., his high reputation is said to be unjustified by any of his actions. In a sense that is perfectly true, because his

reputation was based upon what he was, rather than upon what he did; but as the new judgment seems to lean to the side of severity, it may be worth while to examine it more closely before accepting so unfavourable a verdict upon an old friend.

John Benbow was the son of William, a tanner in the parish of St. Mary's in Shrewsbury, who was admitted burgess in 1648. The registers of St. Mary's parish are very defective, but the date of John's birth is said to have been March 10th, 1652. Local tradition says that he was apprenticed to a butcher and ran away to sea. Be that as it may, he was entered in 1678 as master's mate on the *RUPERT*, under Captain Herbert (afterwards Earl of Torrington), and in her he saw some service against the Algerines. In 1679 he was master of the *NONSUCH*. Apparently he had distinguished himself, for Rooke, Shovel, and Herbert all pushed his fortunes; but when the *NONSUCH* was paid off in 1681, he returned for a time to the merchant-service. In 1686 he owned and commanded a ship, called the *BENBOW* frigate, in the Mediterranean trade, and there is a tremendous legend of his fighting a severe action with Sallee rovers, who boarded his ship; thirteen of them were left dead on his deck, and he is said to have cut off and pickled their heads; but this tale is told on very doubtful authority and we cannot place much dependence on it. In 1689 Benbow received his first commission as third lieutenant on the *ELIZABETH* (seventy guns) under Captain David Mitchell. Then he was appointed master-at-

tendant, first at Chatham and afterwards at Deptford Yard ; and in this service he remained for six years, during which time he was frequently employed on special service elsewhere. Thus in 1690 he was master of Torrington's flagship the SOVEREIGN and acted as master of the fleet in the battle of Beachy Head, and in the same capacity on Russell's flagship, the BRITANNIA, at Barfleur and La Hogue. In recognition of his services on these occasions, orders were issued on August 14th, 1691, for him to receive pay as master-attendant, in addition to his pay as master ; and at some date before September, 1693, he attained the rank of captain. For most of these details we are indebted to THE DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY, which gives a very complete list of his services.

While Benbow remained a subordinate officer, the fact that he had entered the service through the hawseholes, as the saying went, was no serious disadvantage to him. But when he rose to the rank of captain and hoisted his own pendant, it was another matter. A lieutenant might be what he pleased ; but there was much and bitter jealousy between the Gentlemen Commanders who owed their advancement to family interest, and the Tarpauling Captains who had worked their way up. Caste prejudice was no new thing in the Navy ; Drake, who was by way of being a Tarpauling himself, had been hampered by it a hundred years before, and settled the question after his own masterful fashion by going at once to the opposite extreme and ordaining that "the gentlemen should hale and draw with the mariners ;" he would not hear of any man, whatever his rank, refusing to set his hand to a rope ; but Francis Drake did as he pleased, while other men could only do as they were able. From the King

downwards, everyone who was interested in the Navy (as who was not?) took one side or the other. Charles the Second, James the Second, and William, all seem to have supported the seamen. Benbow himself is said to have owed his early promotion to flag-rank to the favour of King William ; and there is a story in Campbell's LIVES OF THE ADMIRALS, told "upon the authority of a multitude of political treatises published under that reign," that Benbow was consulted more than once by King William upon this very question, and always gave it as his opinion that it was best to employ both gentlemen and seamen ; "that a seaman should never lose preferment for want of recommendation, or a gentleman obtain it barely from that motive ;" which was an exceedingly politic reply. In the Diary of John Evelyn there is an account of a dinner given by Mr. Samuel Pepys, late Secretary to the Admiralty, on March 7th, 1690 ; at which that excellent shipwright and seaman, Sir Anthony Deane, discoursed on naval matters. He advocated the policy of building "small light frigates" rather than the "huge great ships, with such high decks, which were fit for nothing but to gratify Gentlemen Commanders who must have all their effeminate accommodations, and for pomp ; and that it would be the ruin of our fleets if such persons were continued in command, they having neither experience nor being capable of learning, because they would not submit to the fatigue and inconvenience which those who were bred seamen would undergo in those so otherwise useful swift frigates."

It so happened that much of Benbow's service as captain was in connection with a series of descents upon the French coast, undertaken by the Navy alone without the co-operation

of any military force. Such operations could never do more than harass and annoy the enemy. Ships could bombard a sea-port town and do very considerable damage: they could throw a whole coast into a state of wild alarm, and they could keep a large number of the enemy's troops busy in watching their operations; but they could neither capture towns nor hold positions. This incapacity was inherent in the very nature of such attacks; yet it has been made a reproach to Benbow that "in no one instance where he commanded was any success over the enemy obtained." It is true that he never exhibited any transcendent genius as a fleet-commander; in which respect his record was neither better nor worse than that of nine fighting admirals out of ten. But it should be remembered that he had few opportunities of showing how he could handle a fleet in action, while on the other hand, he was more successful in the irregular business that was given him to do, than some other officers whose reputation was greater than his own.

Take for example Benbow's operations at St. Malo, and compare them with Berkeley's descent on Camaret Bay. In 1693 Benbow was sent with twelve ships of war, four bomb-vessels, and some small craft, to bombard St. Malo, which was the nest of a swarm of privateers who preyed upon English merchantmen. For three days he bombarded the town at intervals, and on the fourth day, which was a Sunday, Captain Philips, who was the engineer in charge, sent in an immense explosion-vessel of three hundred tons, containing a hundred barrels of powder and an assorted cargo of other explosives. A sudden flaw of wind diverted this contrivance from its objective point, which would have laid it ashore close to the sea-wall; but though part of its energy was

wasted, it is said to have unroofed three hundred houses and created such a panic that Benbow could easily have taken the town if he could have landed even a small force. As he had no men available for such a purpose, he could only go home again, leaving a partially wrecked town behind him.

In the following year, Lord Berkeley, Admiral of the Blue, was sent to Camaret Bay with twenty-nine English and Dutch men-of-war, besides frigates, bomb-vessels, transports and small craft. Bishop Burnet says that the transports embarked six thousand troops under General Talmash (or Tolmach, to use his own spelling) and Lord Cutts, the object of the expedition being to erect and hold a fort on a certain promontory near Brest, in order to make that harbour untenable for the French fleets. The result (owing to some treachery in which Marlborough undoubtedly had a share) was the death of Talmash and the failure of the expedition, with a loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners, of seven hundred among the land forces and four hundred on board the ships. Dieppe and Havre were afterwards bombarded, and then Lord Berkeley returned to refit. He was succeeded by Sir Cloudesley Shovel, who arrived off Dunkirk on September 12th. Captain Benbow accompanied him, and in the evening went in and sounded the western channel under a heavy fire from the ships and the citadel. But the French, as usual, had received timely intelligence of Shovel's intended visit, and had secured the entrance of the harbour by driving piles and sinking ships. Shovel therefore sailed for Calais, threw a number of shells into the town and burnt part of it; and then a gale of wind sent him back into the Downs. Burnet says that "these

bombardings of the French towns spread a terror among all that lived near the coast. . . . The action seemed inhuman; but the French who had bombarded Genoa without a previous Declaration of War, had no reason to complain of this way of carrying on the war, which they themselves had first begun." Tourville, be it said, had burnt Teignmouth in 1690.

In June, 1695, Berkeley and Shovel visited St. Malo, with the Dutch Admiral Allemonde, and here too Benbow distinguished himself, as he did subsequently at Granville, Havre, Dunkirk, and Calais. In recognition of these services he was ordered to receive pay as rear-admiral during the time of the operations, and was confirmed in that rank in May, 1696. He had earned the character of a loyal seaman who did his duty to the best of his ability without sparing himself; who was a friend to the seamen under him, used them well, and was careful of their interests as well as his own.

His first command in his new rank was a small squadron of four ships which sailed in November, 1698, to protect our trade in the West Indies from Spanish interference. Campbell, (on the authority of Burchett's *NAVAL HISTORY*) says that the Spaniards had seized two English ships and taken them to Cartagena, with the intention of employing them in an expedition which they were then preparing against the Scotch settlement at Darien. Benbow stood over to the Spanish Main, and coming to an anchor before Bocca Chica Castle, requested permission to procure wood and water, which the Spanish Governor would scarcely grant him. Thereupon Benbow sent his flag-lieutenant with a message to the Governor that he not only wanted those necessaries, but that he came likewise for the two English ships

that were detained in the harbour; if they were not sent to him immediately he would come and take them. The Governor answered him very politely that, if he would shift his berth from his present station, in which he seemed to blockade the port, the ships in question should be sent out to them. Benbow at once complied, but no ships coming, he sent again to say that if the ships were not sent within twenty-four hours he would come and fetch them, and show the Spaniards what respect an English officer had to his word; and then the ships came out.

Benbow was sent again to the West Indies in 1701, on what proved to be his last commission; and Campbell tells an anecdote in connection with it (on the authority of "persons of reputation upon their own knowledge,") which is too characteristic to omit. He had been serving for some time, as Vice-Admiral of the Blue, under Rooke; and when it was determined to send a strong squadron to the West Indies to act against the French, it was thought necessary that it should be commanded by an officer whose courage and conduct might be relied on, one, moreover, who had experience of West Indian service. Benbow's name was proposed; but King William would not hear of it. He said that Benbow had only recently returned from thence, where he had met nothing but difficulties, and it was only fair that some other officer should take his turn. One or two other officers were offered the command but most earnestly desired to be excused; whereupon the King sent for Benbow and asked him if he were willing to go, assuring him that he would not take it amiss if the offer were declined. Benbow answered bluntly "that he did not understand such compliments; he considered that he had no right to choose his station;

and if His Majesty thought fit to send him to the East or West Indies, or anywhere else, he would cheerfully execute his orders, as became him."

It is impossible to appreciate the sentiment of affection with which Benbow was regarded, without taking into consideration the condition of the Navy at that time. After the Revolution of 1688 it was known to be unsatisfactory, and it was suspected of being a good deal worse. The sudden change in the government had left many officers disaffected and many more distrusted at Court. King James had been better known and better liked in the Fleet than anywhere else in his dominions; perhaps because he had always taken great interest in the Service of which he had once been Lord High Admiral. Many officers were known to be inclined to serve him, and there were few whose fidelity to William could be absolutely relied upon. The English people had given their allegiance, if not their hearts, to the Dutch king, and their principal defence against Stuart tyranny and French invasion was the Navy; but among all its officers whom could they trust to lead it? Torrington had been sent to the Tower after the battle of Beachy Head, and only escaped impeachment by the skin of his teeth. Russell had found it necessary to explain to James's agent, Lloyd, that however desirous he might be to serve him, professional pride would not allow him to submit to be beaten by the French. Carter was reported to have been bought outright by James for ten thousand pounds; he proved the falsehood of the slander when he lay dying on the deck of his ship off Cape Barfleur, and gave his last orders to his flag-captain, Wright, to "fight the ship as long as she could swim;" but the story had been widely current. Rooke was believed to be well-affected,

but his ill-fortune in convoy of the Turkey fleet of merchantmen at Lagos, had put him out of favour. Lord Caermarthen, cruising off Scilly for the protection of commerce, mistook a fleet of merchantmen for the French squadron from Brest, and without waiting to verify his suspicions, ran back to Milford Haven, whereby many of the Barbadoes fleet were lost, besides five ships from the East Indies. The committee of three officers, which succeeded Russell in the chief command after his quarrel with Lord Nottingham, inspired no confidence; for it was said that Killigrew and Delaval, who were Jacobites, could always out-vote Cloudesley Shovel, who was put in for the sake of appearances. Shovel, like Benbow, was a Tarpauling, and like him was implicitly trusted. Probably none of these officers was half so bad as he was painted; Bishop Burnet, who tells all these stories and a hundred more, is an unsafe authority as regards historical facts; but, as he seems to have repeated most of the gossip and scandal of the time, his report is valuable as a record of stories that were current, and were certainly credited by many people. In the circumstances can we wonder if Englishmen did honour to a man who, without being a genius, was loyal and honest, and was willing and able to fight for his country without a thought of Whig or Tory, Orangeman or Jacobite?

Seven ships sailed with Benbow to the West Indies. His flag was hoisted in the *BREDA* (of seventy guns) commanded by Captain Christopher Fog; and there went also the *DEFIANCE* (sixty-four), Captain Richard Kirby (sometimes described as Colonel Kirkby), the *GREENWICH* (fifty-four), Captain Cooper Wade, the *RUBY* (forty-eight), Captain George Walton (who afterwards distinguished himself

in Sir George Byng's action with Castaneta off Cape Passaro), the *PEN-DENNIS* (forty-eight), Captain Thomas Hudson, the *WINDSOR* (forty-eight), Captain John Constable, and the *FALMOUTH* (forty-eight), Captain Samuel Vincent. The squadron arrived at Jamaica at the close of the year 1701, and there seems to have been a considerable amount of disaffection from the very beginning. It is said that the Admiral, finding some of his captains inclined to neglect or disobey his orders, reprimanded them. Mr. Secretary Burchett says that "he treated Kirby and the rest of the gentlemen a little briskly at Jamaica;" and they deliberately conspired against him.

The usual class-prejudice against the Tarpauling Commander was intensified in the case of Benbow by professional jealousy. It was only natural that in those troubled times King William should show special favour to an officer who practised the rare virtue of patriotism, who belonged to no faction, owed allegiance to no party, and acted always on Blake's maxim, that the proper business of the Navy was not to meddle with politics, but "to keep foreigners from fooling us." Under the King's patronage Benbow's promotion had been extraordinarily rapid; lieutenant in 1689, he was a captain before 1693, and a rear-admiral in 1696. He must have passed over many highly connected heads, and made many influential enemies in doing so. Kirby, and the others, may possibly have owed him some personal grudge for his briskness, but it is more than likely that they were envious of the man of humble origin who had been promoted over their heads. Whatever the motive may have been, prejudice, envy, resentment, or all three combined, it was strong enough to induce the seven captains to enter

into a traitorous conspiracy against their admiral; and that conspiracy was too full of personal hatred to leave room for even the suspicion of political intrigue.

While they lay at Jamaica Kirby persuaded them to sign an agreement by which they pledged themselves not to fight against the French. Their object was to ruin Benbow; but as they must have known that he would bring them to a court-martial if he survived, they probably expected that he would be killed or taken prisoner; if the former, they could tell their own story; if the latter, his charges against them would be delayed until he was exchanged or released; and then they would be discredited as the last effort of an unsuccessful man to shift the disgrace of his failure on to other men's shoulders. The worst contingency which they had to fear was that which actually happened; that Benbow should beat off the French without them, and survive the action. In July, 1702, it was reported to Benbow that M. Du Casse with a squadron of French ships was in the neighbourhood of Hispaniola, for the purpose of destroying the trade in negroes and other commodities which was carried on by the English and Dutch; and on the evening of July 19th the two squadrons met. Du Casse had with him four ships carrying from sixty to seventy guns, and a large Dutch-built ship of thirty or forty guns. Benbow ran down to attack under easy sail, in order to allow his rear ships to close up; but before the *DEFIANCE*, which led the line, had got abreast of the leading French ship, a rather straggling action commenced between the rear ships, and soon became general. With so great a superiority of force Benbow had every prospect of capturing or destroying the entire

squadron; but after firing two or three broadsides, the *DEFIANCE* and *WINDSOR*, which were ahead of the *BREDA*, luffed up and went out of action, while the ships in the rear made no haste to get into it; and thus Benbow was left to fight alone. The firing ceased with the failing light, and all through the night the *BREDA* kept close to the enemy; at daybreak Benbow found himself within range of them, with only the *RUBY* to support him, the rest of his fleet being from three to five miles astern, and making little effort to close up. The *BREDA* and *RUBY* "plied the French with chase guns," and kept them company all the next night. On the 21st they recommenced the action, and handled one of the French ships so roughly that she was towed out of action; but the *RUBY* was so shattered that Benbow could not leave her to follow up his success; the *DEFIANCE* and *WINDSOR* were actually abreast of the rear ship of the enemy, but neither of them fired a shot. Benbow's signal for battle was flying night and day, but at daybreak on the 22nd the rest of his fleet was almost out of sight. Still he clung to the enemy, and on the 23rd he recaptured an English prize which Du Casse had taken off Lisbon. At two in the morning of the 24th the indefatigable Admiral got into action again, and three times attempted to board Du Casse's ship. Twice wounded, in the face and arm, he still remained on deck and fought on; till about three o'clock in the morning his right leg was shattered by a chain-shot and he was carried below; but only for a short time. So soon as the surgeons had done their best for him he had his cradle carried on to the quarter-deck and resumed command. This is no story of a hero of romance; it is the plain tale, as told at the court-martial, of

how John Benbow did what he conceived to be his duty.

As he lay on the quarter-deck one of his lieutenants took occasion to express his sorrow for the loss of his leg. "I am sorry for it too," said Benbow, "but I had rather have lost them both than seen this dishonour brought upon the English nation. But do you hear; if another shot should carry me off, behave like brave men and fight it out."

The dawn showed them a seventy-gun ship lying close alongside, partially dismasted and helpless, while the rest of Du Casse's squadron were coming fast to the rescue. The *WINDSOR*, *PENDENNIS*, and *GREENWICH* ran past the disabled Frenchman, fired a few guns into her, and then stood away out of gun-shot. Then came up the *DEFIANCE* and also fired into her: the Frenchmen returned about twenty guns; and then the *DEFIANCE* fairly ran out of action before the wind. Du Casse came up, and each French ship as she passed the *BREDA* gave her a broadside, while the English ships looked on, utterly disregarding Benbow's signals, though the flag-captain, Fog, fired shotted guns into them, "to remind them of their duty." While the French towed their disabled ship away, an officer was sent aboard the mutineers to bid them "keep the line, and behave like men." Kirby, with matchless impudence, came on board the *BREDA* and told Benbow "that he had better desist; the French were very strong [they had three ships and a cripple against six English ships], and from what was past he might guess he could make nothing of it." Benbow summoned the rest of the captains. They came on board, but "were mostly of Kirby's way of thinking," though the only ships which had received any damage were the *BREDA* and the *RUBY*, which had been ordered back

to Port Royal. They all agreed that "there was nothing to be done." The officers of the *BREDA*, who feared that the mutineers might actually join forces with the enemy, urged Benbow to give up and go back to Jamaica; and the broken-hearted Admiral consented.

It is said by J. K. L. that this was the most disgraceful event in our naval records. It was;—for the men who betrayed their officer, and broke their faith; but no shadow of that disgrace falls upon Benbow. No other English admiral was ever deserted by his captains and left to fight alone; but how many of them, had they been so betrayed, would have fought single-handed through five days and brought their flag-ship safe home at last? If Benbow had never been heard of before, this action alone was enough to give him a place in the hearts of his countrymen. That place he has held for two hundred years, and will continue to hold in spite of anything that modern critics can say.

As soon as possible after his return to Jamaica Benbow issued a commission to Rear-Admiral Whetstone and several captains to try the offenders by court-martial. Kirby was charged with cowardice, breach of orders, and neglect of duty; and was convicted upon the evidence of ten commissioned and eleven warrant officers. It was proved that after two or three broadsides he had kept out of gunshot; that his behaviour created so much apprehension that he intended to desert to the enemy, that the English were greatly discouraged in the engagement; that he repeatedly disregarded signals to keep in his station in the line; and that he had threatened to kill his boatswains for repeating the Admiral's command to fire. He had very little to say for himself, and was most deservedly

sentenced to be shot. Wade's own officers proved all the charges against him, and deposed moreover that he had been drunk during the whole of the engagement; he also received the death-sentence. Hudson, who was equally guilty, died a few days before his trial. Constable's officers disproved the charge of cowardice which was brought against him, but he was convicted on the other counts and was sentenced to be cashiered, and imprisoned during her Majesty's pleasure.

Vincent and Fog were then tried for signing, at Kirby's instigation, a paper by which they engaged themselves not to fight against the French. They pleaded that they were apprehensive that Kirby meant to desert to the enemy, and that they took this singular step in order to prevent it. Benbow got them off by declaring that they had behaved very gallantly during the action, and they were only suspended.

Though Kirby made little defence before the Court, he wrote long letters to the Secretary of the Admiralty, alleging that the defeat was due to the injudicious and ignorant conduct of the Admiral; and that the court-martial was only ordered because he dreaded inquiry into his own behaviour. This plea was contradicted by the evidence of the witnesses. The popular opinion may be gathered from a dogrel ballad published at the time.

Says Kirby unto Wade :

"I will run,

I value not disgrace,

Nor the losing of my place,

My enemies I'll not face

With a gun."

John Benbow died of his wounds at Port Royal on November 4th, 1702, in the fifty-first year of his age. He has been described as a rough

seaman, but there is little in his history to justify the description. *Rough* is the conventional adjective for a seaman, as *learned* for a judge, or *gallant* for an officer, and means as little. There is an excellent engraving in Owen and Blakeway's book, by J. Basire, after a portrait by Thomas Wageman, representing him as a man of about forty, handsome in face and figure. Long curling hair, which may be a wig, falls loosely on his shoulders; he wears a lace cravat and a plain cuirass; the right hand holds a drawn sword, with curved blade and cutlass-guard. The smooth shaven face shows plenty of determination, but the clean-cut features are singularly refined. He was very temperate, for it is recorded that none, even of his intimate associates, had ever seen him the worse for liquor; and he was uniformly considerate of the men whom he commanded.

Burchett's statement that "he was somewhat brisk with the gentlemen" when they showed signs of insubordination at Jamaica, has been held to imply "a good deal of coarse language." If, instead of this "rough seaman" of the seventeenth century, it had been an admiral of the present day who had found his officers slack in their obedience when the enemy's fleet was at sea, what then? It is, of course, terrible to contemplate the possibility of a British admiral venturing to treat gentlemen with briskness, or so far forgetting himself as to use language not to be found in any manual of polite conversation; but it is not unlikely that such offenders might hear some plain truths in very plain words. It would not be regarded as a serious offence, nor would the most delicately-minded officer be "goaded into the crimes" of mutiny and desertion in face of the enemy, by a few rough or even profane words

from a commander-in-chief. Yet this curious plea is urged, not to exonerate the captains, but to decry the admiral.

It is said that, only a few years later, our Army swore terribly in Flanders. No doubt they did their best; but it is generally allowed that the senior Service addressed a richer vocabulary to a larger audience. Borne by favouring gales, their polyglot profanity circumnavigated the globe, and gained something of variety and force from every port they visited. Everything that was unmentionable in four continents contributed its unholy piquancy to the mixture. It would be unjust to blame Benbow for a fault which was common to nearly the whole Service, even if he had been chief among the offenders, for his origin would excuse in him a coarseness which passed unreprieved among his betters. There is no evidence that his language to his mutinous captains was coarse; but a large number of people will be unregenerate enough to hope that his early training stood him in good stead, and that he said what was given to him in that hour.

Mr. Secretary Burchett, whose *NAVAL HISTORY* was published in 1720, asserts that it was Benbow's obvious duty to put the mutinous captains under arrest, and give the command of their ships to the first-lieutenants, who would have been certain to fight for the sake of earning promotion. It is beautiful and instructive to see how the trained official mind leaps to its unerring conclusion, and cuts the knot which caused poor Benbow so much trouble and anxiety. But Mr. Secretary Burchett furnishes a curious commentary on the incident in his own *History*. He takes the singular step of suppressing the names of these "unhappy gentlemen" for the sake of their relations. Probably he

thought, like Samuel Pepys, that "to have a nobleman's mouth open against a man, may do a man hurt," and was therefore unwilling to cause pain or annoyance to families of political importance. It is possible that the considerations which were strong enough to influence Mr. Burchett eighteen years after the event may have had some contemporary weight with Benbow, who was not absolutely ignorant of affairs at Court. What he said to his captains was a matter entirely between themselves; but if he superseded them he would be called upon to justify his action before a court-martial when he came home, and then political and family influence would have full play. We can form some idea of what the weight of that influence was from the pains which were taken to defeat it. Campbell says that Queen Anne "would not suffer herself to be teased into an ill-timed act of mercy," so, when the sentence of the court-martial was referred home for confirmation, death-warrants were sent to all the Western ports to await the arrival of the BRISTOL, which was bringing the condemned men home; in order that the executions might take place at once on board the ship, at the first English port she reached. They were not to be allowed to set foot ashore; and Kirby and Wade were accordingly shot on board the BRISTOL in Plymouth Sound on April 18th, 1704.

Taking into consideration all the conditions of his career as well as its incidents, is there any cause for wonder that Benbow's popularity should have survived him? At a time when coarseness and cruelty were unfortunately common in the Navy, and seamen were often treated like dogs, he earned a reputation for kindness and consideration. When most men were seeking their own advantage he trod the plain road of duty, turning neither to his right hand nor his left. When the Service was notoriously divided in its allegiance between the King who was plotting at St. Germain and the King who was generally fighting in Flanders, Englishmen were not looking for a heaven-born admiral; what they wanted was a man who would be unflinchingly faithful to the government of the country as established by law, who could be relied on to do his duty to the best of his ability, and hit as hard as he was able. This was John Benbow's conception of a sailor's duty, and he died in the fulfilment of it.

There is a good deal of justice in Campbell's criticism of Burchett: "To be so tender of the Captains, and in the very same breath to attack obliquely the character of so worthy a man as Admiral Benbow does no great honour to his history."

W. J. FLETCHER.

OUR TITLE-DEEDS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

UPON a recent occasion Lord Milner alluded to the "campaign of calumny" that, apart from the shock of war, had been most persistently carried on against British government and British officials in South Africa. The particular methods of the campaign, founded on race-hatred and fostered by every conceivable kind of mendacity, whether flagrant or only half-expressed, will readily occur to us. Long since we have reduced them to their due proportions, but upon the Continent it has of course been far more difficult for readers and thinkers to know the truth. There Republicanism and the crude prepossessions of European revolutionaries have helped to swell the turbid stream of falsehood. Nothing has been spared, and even the title-deeds of Great Britain in South Africa have been assailed with the utmost acrimony and, it may be added, with the utmost unfairness.

It is a pity that, for the information not only of the British public everywhere, whether at home or across the seas, but also for European students of South African history, no really good and exhaustive work has yet been produced. Such little works as Hofstede's *HISTORY OF THE FREE STATE*, written in the time of President Brand under the auspices of the Volksraad of the Free State, have a virtue of their own, being published in Holland and in the Dutch language. But the account contained in this and similar works is necessarily fragmentary, while the history of South Africa in its early stages must be studied

as a whole or not at all. The writings of Noble and Wilmot, among Cape historians, throw much light upon the growth of representative institutions and of responsible government in the Cape Colony; but apparently, for the larger view and for the more remote documentary evidence of the beginnings of South African history we have to look to Dr. George Theal. Here, at first sight, we seem to have a historian imbued with the proper spirit of antiquarian research. The cry in these days is for original documents, and Dr. Theal comes before us as a delver among the archives of the Cape and the literary treasures of the Hague. Granted, however, this zeal in research, have we got after all even the simulacrum of a Freeman or a Stubbs? It may at once be said that, among those who have lived in South Africa and have narrowly watched the trend of events, there are many who have very seriously called in question Dr. Theal's judgments. These have lately been reinforced by a Canadian Professor at the Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, and, therefore, very far removed from the perplexing field of South African politics. From a detached position Professor Cappon has turned a somewhat microscopic eye upon the early history of Cape Colony up to the days of the great Boer Trek in 1837. He has given us the results of his study in a most useful and informing work, *BRITAIN'S TITLE IN SOUTH AFRICA*, which should be read by everyone who desires to sift the truth about the beginnings of Cape history and the relative claims of Boer and

Briton. Just now, when the new era of political reconstruction is about to set in, it is absolutely necessary to realise the antecedents of this distressed land of South Africa. The problem of how to educate the Boers, how to tax them, whether by direct or indirect means, how to re-settle them upon the land, and by what tenure it shall be held,—these and all other problems can only be solved satisfactorily by a knowledge of past habits and of past influences. We must realise the hereditary and ingrained disposition of these new citizens of the Empire.

Within the limits of a brief article it would be impossible to touch upon more than one or two phases of the whole historical controversy that meets us on the very threshold of South African politics. In the first place let us take the point emphasised so strongly by Professor Cappon, the credibility of Dr. Theal as an exponent of certain broad features of South African history. Professor Cappon is plain-spoken and goes straight to the point with a colonial vigour which is most refreshing.

I am convinced [he says in his Preface] that Dr. Theal is by no means the safest of guides in this part of the Empire's history; it even seems to me that he has laboured to darken the British side of it; he has passed lightly or in silence over the characteristic merits of British rule, especially when tried by the standards of the times of which he is speaking; he has misunderstood or misrepresented its highest traditions, he has unfairly emphasised its defects and made as little as possible even of the economic and industrial advantages which it undoubtedly conferred on South Africa. And he has done this for the sake of setting the history of a special class of Boers in the best light, and of building up traditions of Boer history, which are certainly at variance both with these records and a common-sense analysis of facts.

In Appendix B. Professor Cappon hits yet more strongly from the

shoulder, and in his criticism of Dr. Theal's introduction to the fifth volume of the Records sums up his opinion thus: "It may be prejudice on my part, but it seems to me there is a kind of daring duplicity in Dr. Theal's way of stating things, which reminds one strongly of the worst side of the Boer character." His suspicion of the spirit that inspired Dr. Theal's histories was not lessened, he remarks, by the fact that his collaborator in these historical researches was F. W. Reitz, the present "Secretary" of the Transvaal and once President of the Orange Free State.

Professor Cappon has certainly made out a very strong case against Dr. Theal, and, point by point, he pitilessly exposes him. The task, he admits, would not have been so easy had not Dr. Theal himself supplied the axe for his own execution by sending to the Queen's University in Canada a set of the Records of Cape Colony consisting of a mass of original documents, including private and official letters, reports, investigations, and so forth. Professor Cappon has supplemented these by numerous quotations from Wilberforce Bird, Sir John Barrow, Sparrman, Thomas Pringle, and the proceedings of the various Missionary Societies in the land. It is clear that Dr. Theal writes with a great bias against the missionaries, and this is one of the points which Professor Cappon proves against him. But this controversy would need a whole chapter for itself and cannot be adequately examined here.

It may interest Professor Cappon to know that, in addition to the weapons of destructive criticism thus placed in his hands, there are numerous writings of Dr. Theal which are worth studying, dated many years ago, before the Boer Wars and before the existence of the Afrikander Bond,

but which may still be read in old numbers of *THE CAPE MONTHLY MAGAZINE* and *THE CAPE QUARTERLY REVIEW*. In his "Chronicles of Cape Commanders" contributed to both those journals Dr. Theal was feeling his way to his larger histories of South Africa. He is also the author of *A COMPENDIUM OF SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY*, the third edition of which was printed in 1877 at Lovedale, the well-known Wesleyan Missionary-centre. Such casual contributions, also, as "A glance at the old Records of Swellendam" in *THE CAPE MONTHLY MAGAZINE* for March, 1879, and "A Hundred Years Ago," in *THE CAPE QUARTERLY REVIEW* (1881-2) are highly instructive, and, we were almost tempted to say, highly diverting, were not the subject too serious to be trifled with. At any rate, "A glance at the Records of Swellendam" would make Professor Cappon rub his eyes with astonishment. Is there one Dr. Theal, or are there two luminaries of that name in the world of South African history? A puzzled student of this gentleman's works once addressed a letter in 1893 to the office of the Agent-General for the Cape of Good Hope asking, in all innocence, whether the Dr. Theal who wrote the *COMPENDIUM* was the same Dr. Theal who wrote the later South African histories. The answer came back that there was but one George McCall Theal who was the author of all the books mentioned, and that he held the first clerkship in the Department of Native Affairs at Cape Town. The innocent enquirer after historical truth was more puzzled than ever.

We will now give one or two examples to show how Dr. Theal has changed his stand-point. In his account of the Schlacters Nek affair, written in the third volume of his larger and more recent work, Professor Cappon has pointed out

that Dr. Theal has enlarged in a very sensational way upon the incidents of that well-known affair out of which the enemies of British rule have made so much capital. It happened in 1815 on the eastern border of the colony where law was difficult to enforce, and, for all the importance it subsequently assumed, was no more than an ordinary police-court case, springing out of the illegal detention of a Hottentot servant by a Boer farmer called Frederick Bezuidenhout, a man who, in Professor Cappon's judgment, was "a wild cateran, with notions that would have made all decent government impossible." He resisted the officers of the law, took up arms against British rule and encouraged others to do the same. "They could die," wrote Dr. Theal, "but they would not submit to the shame of surrendering to the Hottentots. Such was their law of honour." In his later version of this unfortunate affair there is no mention of the fact that the police party was a combined body of troops and loyal Dutch burghers. Moreover, at the Cape, in times past, everyone knows that the Hottentots were long used as police serving under Dutch and British officers, and in carrying out the law as directed by a higher authority the notion of caste should not be allowed to intrude. To-day in the streets of Durban there are Kaffir constables with their knob-kerries, and at any circuit-court in Cape Colony coloured policemen can be seen as assessors, in their way, of the law and of the majesty of the law. The Boer's code of honour in the Bezuidenhout case was to pull the trigger at once upon the Hottentot police. Here, as it were by a flash, we have the whole historic attitude of the Boer towards the subject-races. Much of the stubbornness with which he fights now can be attributed to his dislike

of admitting, according to the British code, the coloured man to any social or political equality.

In addition to his English works Dr. Theal has written a Dutch history for the use and instruction of the Afrikander youth, which differs somewhat from his history written for the *STORY OF THE NATIONS* series. How, then, does he use the Schlacters Nek incidents in this Dutch book? Commenting on the act of lawlessness he writes: "The spirit which impelled these two men, Frederick and Jan Bezuidenhout, to their way of acting, whatever name you give it, was the spirit which enabled the South African Boers to preserve their special civilisation in the remote lands of the Interior, and kept them from the degradation into which the Portuguese sank through recognising the coloured races as their equal." Dangerous claptrap, we say, considering the seed-bed upon which such sentiments would fall. The spirit that lived in the Bezuidenhouts lives now in those roving ruffians who are shooting down our native guides and scouts in cold blood for the sole reason that they are natives. But let us test Dr. Theal by some of his earlier sentiments and we shall detect two voices and two ideas in this champion of historical accuracy.

In his *COMPENDIUM* of 1877, which we suppose Professor Cappon has not seen, there are no heroics at all. The incident of Schlacters Nek is described in a prosaic way.

Communications with the insurgents were entered into with a view of preventing bloodshed. A loyal burgher, Field Commandant William Nel (a Dutchman), visited their camp and endeavoured to open their eyes to the perilous position in which they had placed themselves, and tried to induce them to throw themselves upon the mercy of the Government. To counteract any impression this worthy burgher might make, the

rebel leader, calling all his followers together at Schlacters Nek, caused them to form a circle and then exacted from them an oath that they would remain faithful to one another and never lay down their arms till the British were expelled from the frontier districts. As soon as this became known, further attempts at pacification were considered useless, and a movement was made by a combined body of troops and loyal burghers which resulted in the surrender of about thirty of the rebels. . . . A few of the more desperate contrived to keep together and fled towards Kafirland. These were surrounded in a deep kloof in the Winterberg by a detachment of the Cape Corps where, as they refused to surrender, it became necessary to fire upon them. Their leader, John Bezuidenhout, was shot dead and several of the party were severely wounded, but they were not seized till one soldier was killed and another disabled. Eight prisoners were then made, one of them a woman and another a boy fourteen years of age, both of whom were arrested with guns in their hands. With their capture ended *one of the most insane attempts at rebellion ever recorded.*

The italics, it should be said, are our own. Dr. Theal then proceeds to describe the place and method of execution, and notices the fact that a great number of people from all parts of the frontier begged for mercy. "But," he adds, "the Government felt it was necessary to show these people so long accustomed to anarchy that they *must* [the italics here are Dr. Theal's] be obedient to the laws and that mercy in such cases as this could not be granted." This view, we hold, was the sound one, and it is very much the same as that taken by Judge Cloete in his lectures. But why has Dr. Theal given us two different pictures? Why, in his later account and in his Dutch History meant for the Afrikander youth, is there that particular colouring and interpretation? Is there any especial reason why this South African historian who when writing for the *STORY OF THE NATIONS* has professed

to be "guided by the principle that truth should be told regardless of nationalities or parties," should leave out certain essential facts such as the presence of loyal Dutch burghers at the capture, the participation of a Dutch judge, a Dutch landdrost, and a Dutch clerk? Again, why does Dr. Theal depart from the simplicity of his early account and in his later history enlarge upon the heroism of the woman who was present as follows: "His wife, Martha Faber, a true South African country-woman, in this extremity showed that the Batavian blood had not degenerated by change of clime. She stepped to the side of her husband, saying, 'Let us die together,' and as he discharged one gun, loaded another for his use. What more could even Kenau Hasselaer have done?" How strange it seems that the heroism of this woman, in what Dr. Theal first described as "one of the most insane attempts at rebellion ever recorded," should only have been revealed to him as an after-thought and when many years had elapsed! No doubt the heroics were well enough for the newly found purpose in hand which, according to Dr. Cappon, was to build up legends. But what confidence can we give to an author who, so far as we know, without a word of public recantation, gives us such opposite impressions?

To turn to another broad feature of South African history, and the question of the advantages or otherwise that accrued to the Cape from the change to British occupation in 1795. We shall find that Dr. Theal speaks here too with a double voice and with a double intention. Sophocles tells us in a well-known line that the after-thought belies the first judgment. In the case of Dr. Theal we think the after-thought is bad and the first judgment the best.

In March, 1897, Dr. Theal con-

tributed a paper to *THE CAPE MONTHLY MAGAZINE* entitled "A Glance at the old Records of Swellendam." Swellendam was the name of a large outlying Dutch district in the early days, so named and defined in October, 1747, by the old Dutch Government. It included the whole country bordering on the sea from the Breede River eastward as far as there were European settlements. Dr. Theal dated his paper from Swellendam, January 8th, 1879, and was evidently on a tour of research; for we cordially concede to him a long-standing love of examining archives and old papers. It is interesting to notice his impressions after a study of the Swellendam papers which carried him on to 1795 and the date of the first British occupation. We feel sure that Professor Cappon would like to know the first mind of Dr. Theal in this sphere of research.

In this enormous expanse of territory [the Swellendam district] the farmers were thinly scattered about and were almost entirely cut off from a knowledge of what was going on in the outside world. They were living under a government which prohibited, under the most terrible penalties, anything like commercial intercourse with each other or with strangers. The price of everything was fixed by law, even to putting a spoke into a broken wagon-wheel. These are not mere assertions, for the documentary evidence upon which they rest is beyond all contradiction. Some of the sentences recorded and carried out in those days were so brutal, so horribly ferocious, that even after the lapse of a century and a quarter one cannot read them without shuddering.

It was suspected at this time that the burghers sold ivory stealthily to the captains and crews of the vessels which from time to time put into Table Bay, and the following stringent regulations were accordingly passed. Anyone detected selling or disposing of ivory in any manner or to any person whatever, was condemned to pay a fine of £66 13s. 4d., in

addition to £6 13s. 4d. for every tusk so sold, and to be sent immediately from South Africa to Europe. The purchaser was to be punished in the same way. Any sergeant, corporal, or soldier of the patrol who should, through want of proper diligence, allow so much as a single tusk to pass the barrier by day or by night, except to the Company's magazine, should be severely whipped on the bare back, branded, and serve ten years in chains. These barbarous laws were passed by Governor Ryk Tulbagh.

Then came the era of the first British occupation and the following notice was promulgated by General Craig, which Dr. Theal quotes admiringly (in 1877).

The monopoly and the oppression hitherto practised for the profit of the East India Company is at an end. From this day forward there is free trade and a free market. Everyone may buy from whom he will, sell to whom he will, employ whom he will, and come and go whenever and wherever he chooses, by land or by water.

The inhabitants are invited to send their cattle, etc., to Capetown, where they are at liberty to sell the same in such a manner as they may find best and most profitable for themselves.

No new taxes will be levied; such as are at present in existence will be taken under consideration, and those which are found to be oppressive to the people will be done away with.

The paper money shall continue to hold its value, but the English make their payments in hard coin.

Lastly, the inhabitants of the different districts are invited by the English Commander, if there is any subject which has not been explained to them, to choose fit persons and send them to Capetown for the purpose of conferring with him upon such subject.

J. H. Craig, *Major-General and Commander.*

In the Castle of Good Hope,

This 18th of September, 1795.

Dr. Theal (of 1877) notes in his COMPENDIUM that as a consequence

of the first British occupation the revenue increased so rapidly that it was found more than adequate to meet the expenditure: in 1798 it was £64,000; in 1801 it had risen to £90,000.

Yet no new tax was laid upon the people during the whole of this period and many of the old ones were considerably modified, so that this great increase, which made the revenue more than three times as much as it had been during the last years of the Netherlands East India Company, was entirely owing to the general prosperity which had been occasioned by the change from an arbitrary and decrepit government to a benevolent and strong one.

This is a very strong indictment against Dutch rule, and so late as October, 1882, when Dr. Theal's conversion does not seem to have been quite completed, we read in an article contributed to THE CAPE QUARTERLY REVIEW under the title of "A Hundred Years Ago," that the Dutch officials, from the Governor Joachim van Plettenberg down to the humblest clerk, were acting as if personal emolument was their sole object. Many of them were shamelessly corrupt. The farmer who brought his produce to the Company's magazines for sale was compelled to pay a bribe before he could discharge his waggon and another before he received his purchase money. The people were compelled to submit to the rule of men who required the door to favour, and even to justice, to be opened with a golden key, while, in the outlying districts, beyond the reach of the fiscal's arm, the colonists were in a state little better than anarchy.

Exactly so, and this was the atmosphere in which such wild lawless spirits as John Bezuidenhout were reared, men who never would own any law but their own. The moral blame for such ineffective citizenship must

lie at the door of the effete Dutch Government at Cape Town which, in its shameless spirit of bribery and corruption, reminds us of the late governing clique at Pretoria.

How could such colonists develop any kind of civic or corporate feeling? Dr. Theal (of 1877) supplies us with a very good instance of their absolute incapacity to help one another or meet even the rude wants of their nascent society.

One of the prominent grievances of the time [1790-95] was a tax for the maintenance of a pontoon on the Breede River. Every holder of a farm in the district [of Swellendam] was required to pay ten shillings and eightpence yearly for that purpose, whether he used the pontoon or not. To many of them this seemed a gross injustice, and they used very strong language about it. Their petitions on this subject were strange mixtures of requests, demands, and biblical arguments. At length, in 1792, one of these petitions proved so offensive that the complainants were informed by the [Dutch] Governor and the [Dutch] Council of Policy that if they did not pay the tax their farms would be forfeited and given to those who would pay it, and furthermore, the Landdrost and Heemraad were instructed to prosecute the authors of the seditious paper before the High Court of Justice.

Judge Watermeyer informs us that at this time there were no roads at all in the colony. Bridges were unknown with the exception of a bridge over the Laurens River, in Stellenbosch, built by a patriotic individual named Grimpen, who, together with his descendants, were exempted by the Dutch Government from the performance of burgher service. A bridge over the same river, erected by Governor van der Stell for the purposes of his farms at Hottentots Holland, was suffered to fall into decay. This was almost within view of Cape Town and the Castle!

Dr. Theal has provided us in his Swellendam paragraphs with a most

apt and typical illustration of Boer life. Wherever the Boers have gone they have disliked anything in the shape of direct taxation, even in the smallest thing. They are absolutely deficient in the corporate or civic spirit, and indeed we cannot wonder at this, taking into consideration their roving life. What the Boers of Swellendam were at the close of the eighteenth century such were the Boers of the Transvaal at the close of the nineteenth, and such they are now. As a practical maxim it will be well for the South African administrators of the immediate future to remember that the Boers have a most inveterate dislike of the tax-gatherer in a concrete form. Indirect taxation is a different matter. Let them direct their fiscal police accordingly.

After Dr. Theal's survey of the state of Swellendam and the corrupt regime of the Dutch East Indian Company, published in 1877, the following extract from the Records (1883-6, p. 101) dealing with the effects of the first British occupation, is, to say the least of it, remarkable:

To produce an effect there must be a cause. Setting aside the few individuals within the official circle, what cause had the South African Colonists in 1803 for attachment to Great Britain? . . . They had a larger market for their produce, but it unfortunately happened that during a considerable portion of the first English period the seasons were so bad that there was little or nothing to sell. A so-called Senate, composed entirely of mixed burghers and officials, was a gain, but its power was extremely limited. That the reform in the method of paying Civil Servants, relief from the irritating auction-tax on petty accounts, the abolition of a few monopolies such as the sale of meat, combined with a better market, surely did not form sufficient cause to turn the affections of the people from their own mother-country to another land where sympathy with them was entirely wanting.

In answer to this, we refer Dr. Theal to his description of "the general prosperity which had been occasioned by the change from the arbitrary and decrepit [Dutch] government to a benevolent and strong [British] one." Well may Professor Cappon write: "After having covered up and disguised the fact [the benefits of British administration] as much as possible for many years in his histories, Dr. Theal permits himself at length to express himself in the following ungracious manner." And then he quotes the aforesaid passage in the Records.

It is a long task to follow Dr. Theal through his chequered historical career, and to note anything like all his inconsistencies. On many points he doubles back on himself like a hare, till it were as easy to pursue the cunning Boer up one of his native kloofs. There is one character in the history of the Dutch occupation, Governor Ryk Tulbagh, whom he blames by implication in THE CAPE MONTHLY MAGAZINE when describing the slave-code of 1754, and the evil system of laws under which the colonists then lived. Upon other occasions he lauds the same official to the skies, as the "good old Dutch Governor," the ruler of a kind of Golden Age at the Cape. Let us turn to original documents and see what we find. Judging of Tulbagh by his domestic legislation, a more pompous Pharisee and more ridiculous Jack-in-office never lived; weighed by his native policy, and especially the aforesaid slave-code, a more bloodthirsty bigot never abused the trust given him.

Let us take his petty and vexatious domestic policy first. This has been abundantly illustrated and exposed by Judge Watermeyer in his admirable essays, too little known and seldom quoted.

Father Tulbagh was a great stickler for what he considered to be the proprieties. In his days every man was supposed to uncover his head as he passed Government House whether his Excellency was at home or not, and it was the special occupation of certain dames, wives of men high in office, to sit invisible behind the window-blinds to take note of passers-by who neglected the obsequious bow to the unseen magnate. No one below the rank of a junior merchant, and the wives and daughters of those only who are or who have been members of any Council, shall venture to use umbrellas. Another law restricted the use of embroidered silk dresses to the wives of junior merchants, while no woman, married or single, without distinction, was allowed, whether in mourning or out of mourning, to wear dresses with a train, under a penalty of twenty-five rix-dollars. These are rather surprising sumptuary laws for the latter half of the eighteenth century. But perhaps the climax of official arrogance was reached when it was required that "every person, without exception, should stop his carriage and get out of it, when he saw the Governor approach, and should likewise get out of the way so as to allow a convenient passage to the carriage of any of the Court of Policy." These extravagances let in a flood of light upon the spirit of the Dutch Company and of the state of society prevalent there before the British occupation. There is nothing in the world more vulgar and offensive than the pride of the *koopman* elevated into a responsible position. This Dutch society at the Cape, surrounded by inferior races, had little or no self-respect. The lines which divided it were arbitrary and superficial, and laid down with regard to a purely mercantile and material consideration only. The

test was the *koopman's* test, and even the Dutch Reformed clergyman took his place at the board according to this vulgar law of precedence.

Yet his Excellency might have been heartily welcome to his ridiculous etiquette had he left the wretched natives of South Africa alone. But against them he fulminated the most terrible edicts. Not content with the ban of excommunication against the living, he persecuted the dead and carried distinctions of race and caste beyond the grave.

Let us take some specimens of the slave-code drawn up by "good old Father Tulbagh," in 1752. Any male or female slave who should raise his or her hand, though without weapons, against master or mistress, was condemned to death without mercy. Every slave found at the entrance of a church, when the congregation was leaving, was to be severely flogged by the ministers of justice. Any slave, big or little, found within a churchyard at the time of a funeral was to be severely flogged. Not more than ten pair of slaves at the most should follow the corpse of a dead slave to its burial, the number to be regulated by the rank of the owner of the deceased in the Honourable Company, by whom a fine equal to £5 was to be paid if the rule was transgressed. In many cases slaves were to be flogged at once by the officers of justice without any trial. What does Dr. Theal think of all this? In one passage of his history, he writes: "Never since the days of Father Tulbagh had a South African Governor been as popular as Sir Benjamin d'Urban." Poor Sir Benjamin! There has been enough bitterness over his frontier policy and enough misconception also in the past; he might have been spared this insult at the hand of the historian of South Africa. The spirit of Father Tulbagh lives in the land

still, but it must be the desire of everyone who loves freedom and fair play to see it exorcised. It was enshrined in the *Grond Wet* of the Constitutions of the late Republics which denied equality in Church and State to the coloured people of South Africa. These Republics have gone, and those who have built up legends for them deserve to go too, dishonoured and forgotten.

If there is any doubt as to the relative value of Boer and British rule in South Africa, we would refer our readers to the weighty words of Judge Watermeyer (not an Englishman by extraction) who thus sums up the advantages which accrued to the Cape Colony, his own country, by British occupation.

At the end of the last century, after one hundred and forty-three years of existence, the domination of the East India Company fell at the Cape of Good Hope. . . . For the last fifty years of their rule here there is little to which the examiner of our records can point with satisfaction. The effect of this pseudo-colonisation was that the Dutch, as a commercial nation, destroyed commerce. The most industrious race of Europe, they repressed industry. One of the freest States in the world, they encouraged a despotic misrule, in which falsely called free citizens were enslaved. These men, in their turn, became tyrants. Utter anarchy was the result. Some national feeling may have lingered; but, substantially, every man in the country, of every hue, was benefited when the incubus of the tyranny of the Dutch East India Company was removed.

Since then the advancement of the colony has been so marvellous, says the same authority, that we read of those dark ages almost with incredulity. There was a certain gleam of penitence in the three years' government of de Mist and Janssens, after the British example during the first occupation; but this spasmodic fit throws into greater relief the de-

pressing gloom of the reigns of such incapable governors as von Plettenberg and, we must add, such inhuman tyrants as "good old Father Tulbagh."

One word more on Great Britain's title to South Africa, and this arising from a money consideration, not the highest we grant, but one that may appeal to the *koopman's* mind. After the Treaty of Paris Great Britain gave the Dutch £6,000,000 of money for the Cape, returning to them Java and the Spice Islands. This was the first outlay. Then came the Kaffir and frontier wars, during which Sir William Molesworth stated before a Parliamentary Committee (July 31st, 1855,) that our military expenditure at the Cape reached nearly £500,000 a year. In March, 1883, Mr. Gladstone, speaking on the subject of the proposed expedition into Bechuana-land under Sir Charles Warren, calculated that the Kaffir wars had cost England twelve millions of money. And what are Sekukuni expeditions, Kaffir bush-fights, and even Zulu campaigns, in comparison with Boer Wars?

In addition to war-expenses, there has been the initial cost of settling emigrants of British extraction on South African soil. In 1819, on the motion of Mr. Vansittart, a sum of £90,000 of public money was voted for the Albany settlers, those stalwart men who laid the foundations of Port Elizabeth and the Eastern Province. Later on, after the Crimean War, three and twenty hundred men of the German Legion were settled at King

William's Town and the neighbourhood at an average cost to the State of £100 per head, men, women and children. Of the charges for the defence of the Low Countries in the Napoleonic Wars which formed the basis of the transfer of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, Demerara, Berbice, and Essequibo to Great Britain, it is not necessary to speak. They alone from an international point of view made England's title absolutely incontestable. Nor need we refer to that odd million or so given by the British public as compensation for the slaves. We repeat that this pecuniary consideration is not everything, for in the examination of our title-deeds to Empire we look for some loftier credentials than this; but the fact remains that far too little has been made of it. Where, for instance, in the works of Dr. Theal do we find England's case put in this light? Enough and more than enough has been made of England's delinquencies and of England's official backslidings, but little notice has been taken of the unfortunate British tax-payer who, from time to time, has had to pay the bill. The Cape colonists and, indeed, the Boers generally, have been the most lightly taxed people in the world, and practically have spent little or nothing in the conquest and settlement of their own lands. Do the champions of the Boer realise, or indeed wish to realise, this injustice of a century? Is the British tax-payer always to pay, the Boer always to reap the harvest?

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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PRINCESS PUCK.

CHAPTER XIX.

BELLA was not proud, neither was she exacting in any particular; but there are times when even the least proud is tried by his family. Bella was so tried on the day that she went with Polly and Bill to Bymouth.

Bymouth was the place selected by the three for the change which Polly said they needed after all their trouble. They could not afford a change, it is true; but, as Polly also said: "It is no good waiting till you can afford a thing; by that time you will probably not want it." Bella agreed with Polly; Bill's cautious vote on the opposite side was overruled, and to Bymouth they went. Bymouth, being four miles from a railway-station, had the merit of being a cheap place; a railway-line was indeed on its way there, but had not yet got very far. Visitors who wished to go to Bymouth drove from Bybridge, or walked, sending their luggage by the carrier's cart. The cousins walked, and as the carrier charged threepence for each package Polly said, "We must not take too much."

Bella agreed: it was easy to agree, for they had not much to take, and they were only going for a week; but Polly's notion of luggage and Bella's were not identical. This was the first of Bella's trials; the matter of provisions was another question

which needed settlement. Polly said they had better take all they could with them, for Bymouth (she had never been there) was a very out-of-the-way place where everything would be difficult to get; also (she added as an afterthought) what they took with them they would have free, while what they bought there they would have to pay for. Bella did not see the necessity of provisioning themselves as if they were going to a desert-island; however, she gave way to a certain extent, and Polly put a cold fowl in her hat-box (Bella would not have it in hers), three large lettuces rolled up in Bill's bathing-dress, and a neat packet of fat ham in slices securely wedged among the same obliging cousin's underwear.

"You can take the tea," Polly said, handing Bella a large paper bag.

Bella took it in so pleasant a manner that Polly was induced to try her with some plum turnovers which she was anxious not to leave behind, because she said, "they would be so nice to eat in the train."

"You can't eat things in the train," Bella exclaimed scandalised, "least of all plum turnovers. Besides, do you think I am going to open my luggage in the train to get them out? Why, it will be in the van!"

"So it will," Polly agreed; "I forgot that. Still, they will be nice

to eat when we get there; we shall be hungry then, for we must dine very early to leave in time."

But Bella was obdurate; she would not take the turnovers, which she was sure would not be wanted.

"Oh, well, please yourself," Polly said good-humouredly, and packed them in the crown of Bill's hat. "She will have to wear her best one," she said; "this is much easier to pack." And she crammed in hat and turnovers together.

Bella, not seeing what she was doing, raised no objections, but on the subject of apples she was firm. There were a certain number of wind-fall apples Polly wanted to bring, because, she said, fruit was always dear at the sea-side; but she could not get them in among her things or Bill's, and Bella absolutely declined to have them. Polly was annoyed, but at last gave it up, leaving the apples scattered over the dressing-table, while she turned her attention to strapping up waterproofs. Bill had begun to do this, putting in with them an extra petticoat; Polly added the subscription of a dressing-jacket, but she was called down-stairs just then and Bella took the straps from Bill and persuaded her to give up the idea of taking the additions. "You don't want them," she said, "and we can't go about looking as if we were bringing home the family washing in a mackintosh."

"Why does Bella want to look so respectable?" Bill asked Polly, when they were alone later on.

"Because," Polly answered severely, "she is a lady."

Bill, not at all impressed, smiled her derision, and proceeded: "Why was she so cross when she found out too late that my best boots were packed?"

"Because Jack Dawson will be at the station. Just as if"—Polly was

contemptuous—"he would look at your boots! It is market-day so he is going to Wrugglesby; he is going to drive Bella—you and I and the luggage will go in the chaise with Sam."

"I see," said Bill, and began to make various odds and ends, refused accommodation elsewhere, into a parcel. She had no idea of annoying Bella, but she had two different pieces of brown paper, both too small, and no genius for making parcels.

Polly glanced round to see if there was anything forgotten; her eye fell on the apples. "It does seem a pity to leave them," she sighed. Then an idea occurred to her and her face brightened. "I know what I will do," she said.

She turned to an open drawer and stirred it over till she found a small calico bag. She had many such,—Bill called them nosebags—which she used to hold all manner of odds and ends collected from various people. The one she brought out now contained scraps of ribbon, the accumulation of many years. She emptied it, finding a home for most of its contents in a smaller bag already used to hold some fifteen pieces of pencil. Then she put the best of the apples into the empty bag and forced it some way up the centre of Bella's neat roll of waterproofs. "It is a pity to unfasten them," she said; "they are so nicely done up. I am sure the bag won't fall out, and it hardly shows at all."

That may have been, but the first thing Bella saw when she came on the platform at Wrugglesby was the bag, mouth-end foremost, sticking out of the roll which Bill held under her arm.

"Are they here?" Jack asked as he came out of the booking-office with her ticket. They were here, very much here; poor Bella almost wished they were not.

"I don't see them," Jack went on, looking down the crowded platform; the train stopped everywhere and was always full. "Oh yes," he said at last, "there's Miss Hains, but I don't see the luggage."

Bella could hardly see anything else, she was so painfully conscious of it all: Polly's round tin hat-box, packed to bursting, with the white string of some garment shut in the hinge; the little hair-trunk with a broken handle (the property of the late Mr. Hains), Bill's paper parcel resting on the top; Bill herself, with her old boots very much in evidence, standing beside.

Polly caught sight of Bella and smiled pleasantly as they approached; Jack took charge of the luggage and the train came in.

"Jump in, and I'll hand the things to you," he said. "Are you going to have this in the carriage?" and he lifted the tin hat-box which would neither go under a seat nor in a rack.

"Yes, yes, please!" Polly cried, and took it from him.

He picked up Bill's parcel; the two ends drooped in a dangerous manner, but he handed it to its owner without mishap, while Polly tried to force the unwieldy hat-box under a seat. It would not be forced, and after disturbing efforts Polly left it among the legs of the other passengers, straightening herself just in time to see Bill drop her parcel in Bella's lap and take the roll which Jack handed to her, the bag of apples falling out with a thud as he did so.

"Hullo!" said Jack; "what have I dropped?"

Bella grew scarlet, and prayed that the bag might have fallen down on the line. No such thing,—it lay on the platform, one of the apples shaken out by the fall beside it. Jack picked it up and gave it to Bill. "Here you are, Miss Bill," he said;

"wait a moment, here's another one,—you nearly lost your refreshment that time."

Fortunately the train started almost immediately and so prevented Bill from explaining that the apples were Polly's and not hers. Bella leaned back in the carriage overcome with shame, while Bill serenely restored the apple to the bag, and then tried in vain to get it back into its original hiding-place. "It won't go," she said at last; "we shall either have to undo the straps or carry it separately: which would you rather, Bella?"

"I don't care; it does not matter." Bella felt that to be asked which she preferred now was adding insult to injury.

"Let us undo the straps," Polly said; "then we can put your parcel in too; it does not look very strong."

Bill unfastened the straps, and finding the parcel too broad to go inside comfortably, she unfastened that too and rearranged its miscellaneous contents. Then she packed it and the apples into a water-proof; one of the apples rolled on to the floor and was pounced upon by a small fellow-traveller.

"Mustn't, mustn't," the mother said; "it belongs to the ladies; give it to the ladies."

But the ladies, as represented by Polly, were benign and made a present of the apple, afterwards entering into conversation with the mother on the subject of the age and habits of the child. Bella took no part, and Bill applied herself to the refastening of the straps. When that was done she listened to what was being said, for the talk by this time had worked round to Bymouth, which, it seemed, the mother knew well.

Now Bymouth had been Bill's own choice; she did not know much about it, nor did the others, except that the

journey there was a cheap one and that, after all, was an important piece of knowledge. The thing, however, which attracted Bill was the fact that the recognised heir to Wood Hall had been spoken of in her presence as Harborough of Bybridge. She did not exactly expect to come across him while passing through the small town on her way to Bymouth, but she had a vague idea that she might see him, and she was anxious to know what he was like. Yet another reason for her interest in the place was that her history of the county had told her that it was the home of the Corby family, they who had also owned the small manor of Corbycroft whence the old Squire's body had been carried to the chapel at Wood Hall. Somewhere between Bybridge and Sandover, a place somewhat higher up the coast than Bymouth, had been their ancestral home. It had been pulled down long ago, and the family had died out, probably in great poverty from the story of the old Squire's body being in danger of arrest for debt. But in their day the Corbys had been rich: all the ground on which the now fashionable watering-place of Sandover stood had been theirs; and though as agricultural land it had not been worth much, its annual rental now was more than enough to reinstate the family fortunes twice over.

Bill asked many questions of their talkative travelling-companion when she found that, besides being born at Bymouth, she had lived since her marriage at Sandover. However, she could tell little of what Bill wanted to know; she could speak of the extravagant price of lodgings at Sandover, the beauty of the pier, the number of the grocers' shops,—her husband owned one, the very best in the town. There were tombs, she said, lots of old tombs in St. Clement's

churchyard; people often came to see them. "Old gentlemen come with spades and things," she went on, becoming somewhat mixed in her ideas, "and poke about and read inscriptions and find no end—why, the cliffs are full of queer things, fossils as big as your hand and little tiny shells. Sandover is a very interesting place."

"I dare say," Polly said with vacant affability; "we must try to go there one day."

She had not the least intention of going, but Bill, who did not say so, had, and she brought their loquacious informant back to St. Clement's and the tombs. After some time she learned that the interesting churchyard was situated on the outskirts of Sandover, on the landward side. The particular attraction of the tombs she could not learn, her informant having only been there once: "When my Joey was nine months old, and it was a hot day too, I carried him all the way; my sister, she did offer to help me but—"

Here she addressed herself to Polly, who sympathised on the subject of heat and the weight of nine months' old babies until the tombs seemed forgotten. But Bill, patient and persistent, was at last rewarded by hearing that the charm of one lay in the fact that it commemorated a man who shot himself nearly a hundred years ago.

"They say," continued Joey's mother, taking the core of the apple from the disappointed Joey, to the great relief of a maiden lady in a light gown, "they do say he didn't ought to've been buried there at all, for they were very particular in those days about burying suicides at the cross-roads. However, some thought he hadn't really shot himself, but that his friend, who he'd been gambling with, murdered him or something. They didn't rightly know, so they

put him in the churchyard on the chance, as the nearest cross-roads had already been took up for a farmer who cut his throat with a sickle."

Bill, who had handled one, wondered how he did it, but contented herself with asking the name of the other suicide.

"I can't call to my mind," was the answer she received, "but he was one of the gentlefolks. I've heard my good man say he was squire, but of course it was long before his time; there's none of the name about now; but my husband, he's a great one for finding out things, he's—"

And there followed a detailed account of his peculiarities and accomplishments, at the conclusion of which Bill suggested that the forgotten name might be Corby.

"That's it!" the voluble lady exclaimed with delight. "Fancy you remembering it and me not! I have got a head! Corby, that's it—or is it Harborough? There are both there, but I think it's Corby; they were the great people hereabouts; my man says they used to own all the land, but they are dead and gone now, every one of them."

"Who owns the land now?" asked Bill.

"A Mr. Briant, a rich man living in London; he comes to Bymouth for shooting, but he don't trouble Sandover much. He's made a good thing of it, a fine man of business he's called, though I should call him precious close myself."

A list of Mr. Briant's delinquencies followed, with an account of the way in which he was bringing other seaside places into fashion, a form of speculation to which he seemed addicted. Bill did not listen very much, her thoughts turning to the long dead Corbys and Harboroughs. She thought of them a good deal both then and later, determining to pay

their graves a visit at the first opportunity.

CHAPTER XX.

BILL did not put this determination into practice at once, for she forgot all about it during the first two days at Bymouth. The cousins arrived there on a Thursday evening; Friday and Saturday were two golden, never-to-be-forgotten days to Bill, in which she cannot be said to have thought of anyone or anything. She did precisely what she pleased, and undid, according to Polly, all the little good she had gained during the past months. "She is five years younger and ten times worse than she ever was," said that remorseless critic, and debated how best she could speak to the offender about Gilchrist and her behaviour to him. Bill did not trouble herself much about Gilchrist at this time: Polly told her that she ought to write to him every day as Bella did to Jack, but this she entirely declined to do, and only under great pressure could she be induced to write every other day, considering even that a great waste of time and stamps as she had nothing to say to him.

While Polly was still pondering on the subject of Gilchrist Harborough, Bill's thoughts returned to the other and older members of the family. On Sunday she recalled her intention of visiting their graves, and went to St. Clement's, Sandover, for the afternoon service. She walked in the heat of the day (thereby losing her dinner), reached the church in time for the *Magnificat*, and heard the dreariest music and the most unedifying sermon in the world. But it did not matter; she was seventeen, sound in wind and limb, body and soul, and consequently quite unconscious of herself mentally, morally, and physically. The womanhood, which had timidly

tried to assert itself during the early summer, had slipped away; the thoughts and cares, the hopes and fancies which had begun to grow in the past months were lulled to sleep now by the sea and the sunshine, playmates which had called her irresistibly during these last days. She was a child still though she was not conscious of it; afterwards, in looking back, she knew those three perfect days were the last of her childhood.

When the service was over she went out into the churchyard to examine the gravestones, which did not prove so numerous or so interesting as she had expected. A fair proportion of the older ones were in memory of the Corbys, who also, as she had seen during the service, had two tablets within the church inscribed to them. One she could not read; the other was to the honour and glory of a lady named Jane, wife of one Richard Corby, and evidently the pattern and model of what a wife should be; she possessed so many virtues that Bill felt, when she saw how young she had died, that, though sad, it was but natural.

"She must have been the mother of the granddaughter who managed the old Squire's burial," she thought as she craned her neck to see the date. "I expect Jane would have objected to that business. I wonder what became of the granddaughter; perhaps she is buried outside."

But she was not; there were no more recent tombs to the family outside. Jane's husband had died and been buried abroad some years after his wife, the event being announced briefly at the foot of the encomium of that lady's virtues. The old Squire, who must have died later still, was not buried in this part of the country; the few graves in St. Clement's churchyard which bore the Corby name were all of older date, the inscriptions of

some half effaced, none in their briefness telling a story, romantic or tragic, of that forgotten past. The stone slab in memory of the suicide was hardly an exception to this rule, and the man whose brief record it bore was not a Corby at all. *Peter Harborough, died at Corby Dean in this parish. March 12th, 1799. Shot.* That was all; of the history of his life and the tragedy of his death there had been found nothing to say but the one word, *shot*. To Bill it seemed almost terrible in its uncompromising briefness. As she stood looking at the stone, a brown-winged butterfly rested for a moment on the moss-grown lettering. "Who did it?" She asked herself. "Who and why?" But there was no answer; she did not know who, nor yet why some unknown hand had left this single record of the tragedy.

She turned away at last, and unfolding the cheap little map of the district she had borrowed to help her on the way to St. Clement's, she spread it on a flat tomb-stone and searched for Corby Dean. It used to be the seat of the Corby family, she knew; now that the house was pulled down the name seemed to have passed to a small farm and a handful of cottages built, apparently, on the spot where the house once stood.

"Corby Dean meant the house where Peter Harborough was shot," Bill said with her finger on the map. "He was with the Corbys then. What happened? What were they doing?"

She clasped her hands round her knee and gave herself up to dreams. All round her was the peace of earliest September, rich in its haze of tender warmth, summer still save for the opalescence of its lights, the coolness of its lengthening shadows. But Bill did not see it; she was building in her mind a history of the past, recon-

structing the life which had been, groping in her memory, feeling that there, if she could but find it, was a picture of this old tragedy; a tale, nay, more than a tale, an actual experience if she could but recall it. A robin chirped shrilly in the churchyard yew; she started at the sound and the half-awakened memory was gone from her, the ghosts crept back to their graves, the past was merged in shadows again. Here was nothing but the stillness of Sunday afternoon, the peace of the earth's sabbaths of September. Such golden restful days had been before these men lived, and still were though they were gone.

She rose, and folding her map, went out of the churchyard shutting the gate behind her. Dead; that generation was dead, gone, forgotten, that generation—and the next? That too was lost in mist—and the next? The Corbys were ended, exhausted, but the Harboroughs? This brought her to the present day and to Harborough of Bybridge. She remembered that as yet she had heard nothing of him, and so remembering, she determined if possible to find out what manner of man he was—a determination she need hardly have troubled to make, for the next day, without effort on her own part, she knew.

Monday did not seem a propitious day for discoveries; the weather was unsettled in the morning and the afternoon was one of ceaseless rain. Polly, seeing the state of affairs, prepared to spend three pleasant hours over her wardrobe; she pulled the table to the window, brought out her Sunday hat, took off the trimming, and proceeded to rearrange it with the bows behind instead of before. Bella retired to the bedroom (they only had one between the three) to write a letter, and Bill found a delightful occupation down-stairs. Their rooms were over the village shop

which was also the post-office for a wide district. The rain seemed to make very little difference to the business done there; in fact it appeared to rather increase the number of customers, those who were not obliged to come finding some excuse to spend ten minutes or so in this cheerful little centre of gossip.

Mrs. Rose, the landlady and post-mistress, was short-handed just at present, her assistant having gone home to nurse a sick mother. The girl who helped with the house-work came in to lend a hand, but she was not clever, and the drawing-room lodgers had an elaborate tea at five o'clock which seemed to require much preparation in the afternoon. Thus it was without much trouble that Bill persuaded Mrs. Rose to let her help in the shop that day. The permission once given she set to work with great satisfaction, and soon found out something of the whereabouts of the articles most in demand. The stock was a very miscellaneous one, ranging from boots and twine through strange specimens of crockery and many-coloured cottons to Gregory's Powder and treacle. Occasionally it took some little while to find the thing required, but the customers were in no hurry; indeed, most of them seemed more inclined to talk than to buy, Mrs. Rose seconding them when she was not despatching a telegram or otherwise conducting State-affairs through the medium of her post-office. Bill talked a good deal and listened even more; her parcels, it is to be feared, were not of the neatest, but her conversation was admirable and the customers seemed satisfied.

These customers were a representative lot. Some were visitors who found the afternoon tedious and came to while away the time by buying sweetmeats or papers or strange little penny dolls, according to their age

and tastes; some were neighbours from near by come for a pound of marmalade and a gossip; others were from the next village, genuine customers really anxious to transact business. The landlady from the house next door came once, being in trouble because her lodgers would have curry that night, and "she without a mite of curry-powder in the house." A man from the coastguard station came asking for a species of tobacco that Bill took ten minutes to find, during which time he gave limitless information about the prospects of the weather. One of the customers was an anxious mother who wanted to buy castor-oil, but Bill, discovering that there was none, induced her to have Gregory's Powder instead. "It will do just as well if he is five years old," she said putting up a small dose. "Now, my dear, what for you?" This was said to a little girl with eyes just level with the top of the high counter.

"Treacle, half cup," was the answer, and the cup, with the coppers wrapped in paper reposing inside it, was handed up.

Bill turned to the green barrel-shaped tin canister with the label *golden syrup* and the spigot-tap she had been itching to turn all the afternoon. As the purchaser of Gregory's Powder left the shop, another customer came in, a young fellow in splashed gaiters and streaming mackintosh. Bill did not notice him much, being engaged in a struggle with the tap grown stiff by reason of age and treacle. He held a paper in his hand, perhaps a telegram, but he waited patiently enough while an animated conversation went on between Mrs. Rose and an elderly lady whom she had just served. The tap moved a little, and the treacle began to run, slowly, it must be admitted, but still it ran, in the course of time doubtless the cup would

be half filled. Bill glanced at the last comer; "a member of the surrounding aristocracy" she thought, noticing an indefinable something about his clothes and bearing and clear-cut profile. When he turned the accuracy of the profile was lost, but the eyes, very grave young eyes, met hers and—

Her heart began to beat very fast, though she could not in the least tell why. She ought to have lowered her eyes but she did not; they were fixed; she could not look away, and he did not look away either. She could hear the beating of her heart plainly, almost as if some giant hand were clutching it. She was afraid, she knew not of what, afraid to look, afraid to look away, most terribly afraid of herself, ashamed, yet foolishly, triumphantly glad. Her hands grew very cold and moist, her breath came short, she lost consciousness of what was going on around her; the little dim shop vanished, the pile of boots and pans and seaside pails, the child who peered at her over the counter, the women who talked by the desk. They two were alone, he and she, alone in all the world.

"Cup's runnin' ower."

Bill started like one waking from a deep sleep; the dark, greenish fluid was slowly running over the sides of the cup. She forced the tap back; her hands seemed so weak it was difficult to move it, and they trembled till she could hardly hold the cup. She gave it to the child,—one cannot put surplus treacle back into a tightly closed canister—she gave it, full as it was, and the child took it, carefully licking the edges to prevent any running to waste, and walked sedately out of the shop. Bill sat down on a little high stool behind the counter; her face was very pale and she was shaking all over. Mrs. Rose, who had disposed of her last customer, saw her. "Why, Missie,"

she said, "you're tired out. I oughtn't of kep' you here all this blessed afternoon."

"I am not tired, thank you," Bill protested mechanically.

But Mrs. Rose was unconvinced. "That I'm sure you are; I never saw such a lot of folks as we had this afternoon, a gossipin' lot too. As for that Mrs. Randal, I thought she'd never go, taking up the room like that! I'm sure that gentleman was going to send a telegram and he never did; he walked out of the shop without sayin' a word, a loss of sixpence to the Government."

"Who is he, do you know?" Bill's voice sounded curiously stifled in her own ears; she looked down as she spoke, but she could feel the colour rising to her forehead.

"Who? Why, young Mr. Harborough of Bybridge."

CHAPTER XXI.

KIT HARBOROUGH paced the lane restlessly. The rain had ceased but he still wore his long mackintosh, and in one pocket the unsent telegram was crushed forgotten. For a moment he stood, then walked his five yard beat of wet road again. A church-bell sounded on the moist air,—curfew, they still tolled curfew at Bymouth; it was eight o'clock and nearly dark in the deep lane. On either hand rose high banks luxuriant with unclipped nuts and dogwood and sharp-thorned sloes, the late rain still dripping from every spray; the pleasant scent of wet ferns filled the air, the pungent flavour of the fungus on some tree-stump in the hedge mingling with the smell of the drenched grass growing tall and rank beside the road. The fragrance of the refreshed earth reached Kit but he hardly knew it, hardly heard the creak of the hidden grasshoppers in

the moist darkness of the banks, hardly saw the wild flowers glimmering in the roadside grass.

He leaned against a gate and looked across the darkening land, across the stubble-field whence the corn had been carried, over the slope of the hill to the village in the hollow, a huddle of roofs in the gathering gloom, the chimneys sharp against the sky and the smoke-wreaths hanging low in the wet air. Lights were beginning to twinkle here and there, one in the house at the corner, the little shop where he had seen her.

He settled himself against the gate-post and watched. He was two-and-twenty and had never looked consciously at a woman before. Two and twenty, and now he had found, among the mouse-traps and string-balls and miscellaneous gear of a village-shop, a little brown witch with the spell of a dead man's charm in her eyes, the passion of a dead woman's love in her blood!

A partridge rose suddenly on the further side of the stubble-field; there was a whirr of wings, and then silence again and the soft drip of the wet trees. Then he heard a swift, light footfall, and saw a little figure speeding up the lane, perhaps to reach the high ground near the gate whence to look at the surrounding country in the beauty of this tearful twilight.

Kit Harborough stepped out of the shadow by the gate to the centre of the road: the girl stopped abruptly with a little cry.

"I knew you would come," he said.

He did not know how he knew, or if he really knew; he did not stop to consider and she did not ask him. "You!" was all she said, "You!"

"Yes," he answered.

"Oh," and it seemed almost as if she were distressed. "I—I wanted to speak to you; I have something I must tell you."

"Me? I am very glad."

He was astonished at himself, being a curiously diffident lad in some respects; so inexperienced, too, that had he stopped to think he would never have known what to say. But he did not think, he spoke on impulse, and the words came natural enough; his only fear was lest she should escape and he should lose her in the gloom, but even that was not a real fear; he felt as if he could prevent her.

She was standing in the middle of the road now. "You are glad?" she said. "That is because you do not know."

She looked up at him as she spoke and he, because he could not help it, or because he willed it, or for some other reason, or the want of one, looked down at her.

Oh the smell of the rain-washed earth and the wood-smoke from the cottage below the hill, the chirp of hidden grasshoppers, the pattering shower from the nut-boughs near the gate! Oh youth and ignorance and the first sweet taste of love and life!

The partridge, disturbed by the girl's coming, returned to rest chuckling softly. Kit looked round but did not move; he was not very close to her; it seemed almost as if he thought the place whereon she stood was holy ground.

"Bill!"—Polly's voice rang shrilly—"Bill! Are you up the lane? Come in at once!" For an instant even the grasshoppers ceased, then—"Bill! Bill!" came again, but no nearer, Polly did not wish to brave the mud of the lane needlessly.

"I must go," Bill said; "and oh,"—with sudden remorse for the lost moments—"I have not told you!"

"Tell me to-morrow." He was surprised at his own boldness. "I am staying here, at the River House, and you—"

"We are staying at the shop—you know." Bill grew rosy in the darkness.

"Yes, I know," he answered very softly.

"We go away on Thursday, and I must tell you."

"Thursday!"

"Bill!" Polly could not make up her mind whether Bill was in the lane or not.

But the culprit, who was thinking solely of the news she had to tell Kit Harborough, did not heed Polly. "I must tell you," she said, "you must hear, it is so unfair! But when? How?—oh, it is hard!"

"Hard?"

"Bi-ill!"

"I must go!"

"Yes, but first, when shall I see you? When will you tell me?"

"To-morrow early." Bill instinctively fixed her clandestine affairs for the time when the less energetic cousins were not awake to their responsibilities or her proceedings. "Early,—I'll bathe before breakfast."

"So will I; I often go for a swim first thing, and afterwards—"

"I will meet you,"—she finished for him—"about seven; I will tell you then."

"Bill! I can hear you talking! You are in the lane!"

"Yes, Polly, and I am going back across the field so I shall be home before you." And she was over the gate and down the field almost before Kit realised she was gone.

Polly turned round and went home; she had never ventured further than the mouth of the lane, neither was she certain that she heard Bill's voice in conversation, but she was exceedingly annoyed with Bill for having kept her standing there so long in the damp. She was also slightly annoyed with herself for being kept. "As if it mattered what Bill did!"

Only, as she was out (Bella had a romantic idea that she wanted to look at the sea by night) she thought she might as well see what Bill was doing. She had an instinctive feeling, based on her general distrust of humanity, that Bill was sure to be doing something wrong.

For the sake of her own satisfaction—Polly not possessing the disposition which “rejoiceth not in iniquity”—it is a pity she did not penetrate a little way up the lane, for she certainly would have seen Kit Harborough had she done so. He stood where he was for a full minute after Bill had left him, absolutely still in the middle of the road. It did not matter; he was already so hopelessly late for dinner at the River House that a minute either way could make no difference. If he changed very quickly there was a chance that he would be in time for the cheese; earlier than that he could not expect to appear. Dinner and such mundane matters did not occur to him till after Bill had gone, and when they did he wondered what excuse he was to give to his host. On this subject he need not have troubled himself, for his elaborate explanations were thrown away, Mr. Briant not being deceived by them for a moment.

“Petticoat,” he observed briefly in answer to all Kit had to say. He was a man of some experience, and there was something in the boy’s manner, in his very indifference to dinner, which betrayed him to his elders.

He flushed hotly; it was desecration even to think of Bill and the meeting in the lane here.

“Hullo! It seems a serious case,” some one observed, and a man at Kit’s elbow inquired: “First, isn’t it, Harborough? Lucky young dog, he’s never met a divinity before; he has got it all to come.”

Kit’s eyes flashed. “You are entirely mistaken,” he said coldly.

“All right,” his host said with great good-humour. “Did you send my telegram?”

Until that moment he had not thought of it: “I—I forgot it,” he was obliged to answer confusedly.

“What a deuce of a time she kept you!”

“She did not! She did no such thing!”

There was a roar of laughter, and Kit, realising his blunder, had the good sense to leave it and apologise for the neglect of the telegram. This being of but slight importance was forgotten by the party far more quickly than his unfortunate admission.

In the meantime Bill was also taking the consequences of her wanderings in the lane. Polly was severely reprimanding her for going out after dark, for keeping other people waiting about in the damp, and for gossiping with farm-labourers and other persons. To all of which Bill listened with the tolerant indifference with which she often treated Polly’s harangues. “Let’s have supper,” she said at last. “I have told you I went out because I felt as if—as if I should burst if I stopped in any longer. I had to go out, to get away; it was a pure accident that I met any one.”

“Oh, I dare say,” was Polly’s comment, after which she repeated several of her previous remarks with variations.

Never before in her life had Bill so longed to be alone—to be absolutely by herself, if it were only for half an hour. But it was out of the question; even when they went to bed the only solitude possible was the compromise of companionship offered when the cousins were asleep. She thought once of stealing softly down to the darkened sitting-room to spend an

hour there in the starlight, but the bed-room door rattled so terribly that she was certain in opening it to awaken Bella if not Polly. She was afraid of facing their curious inquiries, she who so seldom had been afraid before, who never knew when her conduct was strange or worthy to invite inquiry until the fact was plainly shown her; there was some subtle change in her.

She lay still on the outer edge of the wide low bed she shared with Polly, and tried to think. The room was very dark and quiet, yet she could not think. There was neither Kit nor Gilchrist in her mind, neither past, present, nor future; it was all a whirl, with for paramount feeling the thought of that unmade claim to the Harborough estates.

"It is not fair," she thought. "He shall know; they shall fight fairly; I will tell, whether it makes a difference or not." Then the picture of Wood Hall came into her mind, the stately house in the autumn of its days, the great hall, the solemn rooms, "Theo's, all Theo's! Theo there, Theo and the boarders!" She laughed softly, half hysterically, at the idea. "He thought I meant it," she said.

Polly muttered indistinctly in her sleep. Wood Hall and the gardens, the tangled rose-walk and the lawns, how green the grass would be now! The wood on the slope of the hill—there would be yellow leaves here and there, and the bracken would be golden—how very beautiful it all would be! September suited the place, but October would suit it even better, the long west front in the afternoon glow, the great arched doorway, all of it. And so on and on, a hundred vague ideas, a tangle of emotions, but never Kit; she never once faced the thought of him. At last she slept and dreamed; our dreams are our own; we are not accountable for them.

CHAPTER XXII.

In the morning things looked clearer and emotions fainter. Sleep blots out some of the fancies and brings facts into a better working perspective. When in the morning Bill rose early to keep her appointment she had a distinct notion of what she was going to do. She got up and dressed quietly: for the first time in her life she was troubled because her gown was shabby; but she did not know why, for she had not consciously considered the question of Kit Harborough at all. She was going to meet him, it is true, but that was solely to warn him of the danger which threatened him. Still she was sorry her frock was shabby, and her old straw hat a little the worse for the plum turnovers and a good deal the worse for wear.

But she did not trouble herself much. By the time she had finished her bath she had forgotten about appearances; also to a certain extent she had forgotten her troubles, washed them away in the kindly sea or evaporated them in the sunny air: there was not, up to the present, anything so very much amiss in her world that still September morning. She was whistling softly when Kit found her, wringing her wet bathing-dress the while.

"Let me do that for you," he said.

She held the dress a moment. "You had better not," she said, "it will make your hands blue; the dye comes out like anything. The first time it got wet I was like an ancient Briton; it is not so bad now, but it still makes one a bit stripy."

Kit protested that he did not mind the dye and took the dress while she gathered up her towels and hung them in festoons about the tent, whistling when she was on the far side.

"Is that you?" he asked.

"Yes," she admitted, wondering if he thought it unladylike.

He did not; he seemed to think it clever. "What a mimic you are!" he said. "It was just like a chaffinch."

"I can imitate some things,—birds." Bill forgot her mockery of her fellow-men; she forgot all those things for there was a curious holy feeling about her just then.

Kit had finished wringing the dress and was carrying it now as they walked slowly along the shore. "Not all birds?" he was saying; "not a lark?"

"No, not a lark, I have never tried to do that; I don't think I could. I don't think there is anything quite like a lark's song; it is so completely, absolutely happy; I don't believe anyone could imitate that."

He agreed with her and then asked if she knew Shelley's Ode to the Skylark. They were not approaching the business of their interview very rapidly.

Bill shook her head. "I don't know any of his poetry," she said, "except a piece about the moon which we had to analyse in our grammar-class last Christmas. It was beautiful poetry, though I never could find the principal sentence."

"What a shame to give you Shelley for that!"

Bill thought it was too, and then Kit told her he believed she would like the Ode to the Skylark.

"Tell me some," she said.

He obeyed and repeated the greater part. Business was receding even further into the distance.

His was somewhat of a studious nature, and he had, moreover, the musician's ear for harmonious sound and the unspoiled heart to delight in beautiful thought. She was a greedy listener, her mind an empty well in its ignorance, in its insatiable desire

to be filled; she, too, had the love of melody, though never till that moment had she felt the need of the universe and of her own soul to be expressed in rhythm. But now the whole world somehow became one pulsing harmony, and they two wandered along the lonely shore in that dream which comes twice to no man. The air around them was delicate and crisp, fresh yet tenderly soft, the sunlight chastened and mild, threading with sloping bars the mist on the land, gleaming bright and pale on the wet sand and the incoming tide and the great white gulls that played in the creeping waves.

Business and the purpose of their meeting receded farther and farther; indeed, it might almost have been forgotten entirely had it not been reached by a most circuitous route through Byron and Heine. They had been speaking of the sea's place in poetry and concluded with the opinion that none of the poets had quite expressed their sentiments on the subject.

"They don't seem to get at the sort of mother-feeling," Bill said at last; "at least none of those we know do. I mean the kind of feeling of going home that you get when you come near the sea—you know what I mean? It seems sometimes as if it stretched out its arms to you and called you,—don't you hear?"

She listened and he listened too, for of course he understood what she was trying to say for both. He had felt it as she had, and neither had said it before, and both were certain of an understanding now, wherein lay the delight and the danger.

"Once," Bill said, "I saw four lines which were a little about the feeling I mean; do you know them?"

'Hail to thee, oh thou Ocean eterne!
Like voices of home thy waters are
rushing,

Like visions of childhood saw I a glimmering
Over thy heaving billowy realm.' ”

Kit said he did not know the lines and asked whose they were; but she could only tell him that she had found them quoted in a book of Mr. Dane's. “I'll ask him,” she said; “I dare say he will know, and he is sure to tell me. He is my great friend, you know, the rector of Ashelton.”

“Ashelton!” Kit exclaimed. “Do you know Ashelton?”

“Yes,” and then Bill remembered, and the mutual acquaintance with Ashelton and the surrounding district, which seemed so very delightful to her companion, wore quite another aspect to her. “I had almost forgotten,” she went on; “I mean, forgotten what I had come to say; but I must tell you, I will tell you about it.”

And forgetting the poets and the seductive calling of the sea she told him all,—of the Australian and his claim, of its strength, and of his decision to be silent until after old Mr. Harborough's death; she told him exactly how it stood, and how she thought it unfair he should not know what threatened him. He listened quietly as she talked, coldly, unconsciously demonstrating to her one good gift that an old family bestows upon its children,—the power to receive a blow unmoved, to hear with the silence of pride and to speak with the indifference of studied self-control. Kit Harborough had not much for which to thank his ancestors; the dead hand of the past was heavy upon him and the weight of tradition but little in his favour; nevertheless his birth and breeding helped him to receive Bill's blow with a proud composure, almost an indifference which roused her deepest admiration, though at the same time it touched her curiously.

She talked on fast to hide her own

feelings. “They seem to think,” she said, though she had said it before and the whole case was painfully clear now, “they seem to think that if Mr. Harborough is left to himself he will not make a will; I don't know why.”

“Because he does not like me,” Kit told her. “He wishes me to have the property simply on account of the name. I am called Harborough because of the property, and I am,—was to have had it because of the name; but he wishes it so little that since he is sure I should have it, he would not set it down.”

“But if he knew of Theo—of the other one?”

“He still would not make a will, or if he did it would not be in my favour; the other man is a Harborough and so fulfils his only condition. I have told you he dislikes me.”

“He would dislike Theo a good deal more if he knew him,” Bill said warmly; “he is going to cut down the wood if he gets the estate, and plough the land, and grow turnips in the park.”

“I don't think you could make my uncle believe that.” Kit's composure belied his feelings. “And if one could, if one could induce him to make a will, I don't believe I should care to do it, and besides, you know, it might not make much difference after all. Thank you, thank you very much for telling me,”—the composure was not nearly so marked; stoicism is not perfect at two-and-twenty; “it was very good of you to do it. I'm glad to know; it's much easier when one knows what's coming, but I can't exactly take advantage of it; you didn't really mean me to, you know.”

“But the house,” Bill pleaded, “the beautiful, beautiful house! Think of it, the long west front

with the sunset on it,—the great hall with the dragons on the mantelpiece—the rooms where all your people were born and died!”

“I know.”

They were sitting on a pebbly ridge now; Kit ground his stick into the shingles and answered in a muffled voice, not looking at her. “But the thing is not settled yet,” he went on after a pause. “He will have to fight for it whether there is a will or not; he may not win and,—and if he does, they are his people too; he is more really Harborough than I am.”

“He does not care for them,” Bill said; “he despises old families and he does not care for tradition; he would like the position but he does not really care for anything else; he would not love nor understand the place a little bit. He would save money, I dare say, perhaps make it, and in time build up a new family on the old foundation. He is just fitted to found a new family; he would do it splendidly, he has the right kind of brains and opinions; but he is not in the least fitted to carry on an old name,—he has not been bred up to it or educated for it. You don’t know him or else you would understand.”

“I understand very well indeed. But what is the use? Why do you talk about it?”

“Because,” Bill answered vehemently, “the place is what it is; because of the house and the wood—think of cutting down the wood! Because it seems so likely he will get it, and if it were mine I would never let it go. If it had belonged to my people, as it has to yours, I would do anything—I should not care what—to get it and keep it.”

The shingles rattled sharply against one another as Kit moved. “Do you think I don’t care?” he asked almost

savagely. “But if it is that business of the will you mean, I can’t do it. I don’t suppose it would make a difference, and anyhow I can’t do it; you know I can’t.”

“Then I will,” Bill said. “I will see Mr. Harborough and explain. I will get him to make a will; I believe I could.”

“No,” Kit exclaimed, “no, you must not do that. It would be no better than if I did; it would be taking an unfair advantage of the other man,—promise me you will not do it.”

Bill hesitated. “I have taken an advantage of him already in telling you,” she said.

“That is different; it was only warning, preparing me for what is to come; you were not using your knowledge against the other man; you would not do that.”

Bill was not so sure; though, true to her reflective nature, she felt at the moment that perhaps he was right. “Then you will give it up,” she said at last, “you will let a man who does not understand have the house and everything?”

“Not unless I am compelled.”

“And will you be compelled? What do you think?”

“I don’t know; it sounds pretty bad as you have told it, of course. It may not be; I can’t tell.”

Bill looked hopelessly out to sea. “It is my fault,” she said, more to herself than to him, “all my fault.”

“Your fault?” he asked. “How? What have you to do with it?”

“It was through me that Theo knew of his claim, through the mass in the Harborough chapel, and it was I who got the mass to be read. Yes, you have heard about it, of course, but you did not know it was my doing; nobody does except one person, but it was, all the same. Mr. Harborough had it said to please me,

or at least because I suggested it; it was my idea, and it was all through that service that Theo heard of his claim to Wood Hall. A man, an antiquary, one of those interfering people who are always digging in ancestral dust-heaps and finding things which had much better not be found, heard about the service and came to inquire into it. He came and he inquired, and poked about, and found out a lot about the chapel and the Harboroughs; then he met Theo, and talked to him, and found out all about him too. Before that nobody knew anything of Theo, and he did not know anything of the claim; he never troubled about his relationship to you other Harboroughs; but between them he and Mr. Wagnall pieced it all out, and there you are; that is how he found out he had a claim. If it had not been for that mass bringing Mr. Wagnall to Wruglesby it would never have been discovered; it is all my fault."

Kit did not share this opinion. "It is not your fault," he said decidedly, "not a bit in the world; you never knew what would come of it."

"I did it, all the same."

"But you are not to blame; you are not responsible because the truth, if it is the truth, has been found out, and no one would blame you for it if you were. I don't think you to blame, and I am the person most concerned, after this Theo."

"Oh, he doesn't think I have had anything to do with it," Bill said, smiling a little at the idea.

"Very well then, that is settled," Kit said more lightly; "you are not to blame; nobody thinks so, neither you, nor I, nor Theo. By the way, you seem to be very intimate with Theo,—great friends or great enemies, which is it?"

"Both," said Bill smiling; "I am going to marry him."

Suddenly the smile died out of her eyes, out of her heart, out of sea and sky and world, and for the first time in her life she was afraid to think.

Kit turned and looked at her full, his well-bred, stoical face expressing nothing, only his grave eyes were very grave as he said slowly: "You are going to marry him?"

She nodded, meeting his eyes for a minute; and then she looked out to sea, driving her palms deep among the small pebbles as she sat, one hand on either side, staring rigidly before her.

The gulls dipped down to the breaking waves and circled above in the pale-toned sky; sea and sky alike were as tinted silver, the whole day delicate, tender-hued, like the colours found in a pearl. A great peace, a great silence lay everywhere; there was no sound but the ripple of the waves as they crept up the sand, till they reached the shingle where the girl sat and broke with tiny spray almost at her feet.

"We had better move; the tide is coming up."

The voice of the man beside her aroused her. He suddenly seemed a man to her, a boy no longer; it seemed too as though there was a great gulf between them. She rose automatically and they walked along the shore in the direction of the village. He was very kind and polite; there was an indefinable difference between his manners and those of the people she usually met, but it only made her the more conscious of the difference between herself and him. He talked as they went, easily and well, on indifferent topics, the cliffs, the shore, the places of interest about, the peculiarity of the stones on the beach. Once he picked one up, dark grey and heavy, a flint sea-urchin, he told her it was, rather an uncommon fossil, he said, as he gave

it to her. She took it, and talked about it and a dozen other things, in spite of her consciousness of the gulf, as easy and as self-possessed as he. Why not? Was she not Bill, the mimic, the player's child? She was sure just then that he had been a player, a strolling mummer, a singer ever on tour, perhaps even the circus-clown Polly called him. And she,—she was a clown too, a buffoon, a fool, for all that she wore no motley, to make old men laugh with her songs and quips, to charm young men for a moment with her hundred changes,—“all things by turn and nothing long”—nothing except the little gipsy creature that was under all and that was miles and miles away from Kit Harborough of Bybridge, from him and the women of his class. She knew those women, tall, fair, white-skinned, serenely unconscious. She was a long way from them, from everyone in the universe, farthest of all from this boy with his considerate

courtesy, his polite speech, his accurate clothes. She was painfully conscious of his clothes and even more so of her own, of her work-stained hands, her too rapid movements. She was conscious of it all, but more than all of a passionate desire to run away and hide with the wild things which were her kin, to run away not from him alone but from all her world, to run right away into the woods and hide even from herself, if it could be.

But she did not run away, as she would have done some months earlier; pride held her back and crushed the wild nature down, helping her to politeness and teaching her to give her little brown hand at parting much as Kit Harborough did. So with some formality they said good-bye, and parted at the top of the cliff-path, he to the left to the River House, she to the right to the little shop where Bella was waiting breakfast and Polly finishing a belated toilet.

(To be continued.)

DOWN THE DANUBE IN A CANADIAN CANOE.

II.

We spent a week in the quaint old town of Ulm, but our adventures there have properly no part in our journey down the river. Only, in passing, I must mention the courtesy of the Danube Rowing Club. Fritz Miller (who rowed at Henley in 1900 for the Diamond Sculls) is the leading spirit in a list of members who showed us all possible kindness. They housed and mended our canoe, varnished it afresh, and gave us better maps. The secret charms of picturesque Ulm unknown to the tourist were shown to us; and in the evenings we used to meet for music and supper in a quaint little club-room that hangs half of its Roman masonry over the rushing river.

Here the navigation of the Danube (such as it is) is said to begin. The fierce current allows no boats or steamers, but immense barges (called *Ulmer schachtel*) laden with merchandise, are floated down the current to the Bavarian towns below. On arrival they are sold for lumber, the return journey being impossible.

The Rowing Club takes out eights and fours. Rowing with all their might they move two miles an hour against the current; and it may well be imagined that, with this training, they are well nigh the first rowing club in Germany.

There was a great deal of rain while we were in Ulm and we started again on a rapidly rising river, full of floating rubbish, and rushing at a pace that made it a pleasure merely to stand and watch it from the bank.

The Bavarian bank (Ulm is on the frontier line of Bavaria and Würtemberg) displayed black sign-boards with the kilometers marked in white. We timed our speed by one of Benson's chronometers and found it to be over twelve miles an hour. It was like travelling over a smooth road behind fast horses. My note-book gives an average day, the day, for instance, we left Ulm.

June 19th. The members of the Rowing Club came down in force to see us off at eleven o'clock. Flags were flying in our honour and we heard the men shouting *glückliche Reise* as we shot the middle arch of the bridge on the waves of a rather nasty rapid. The bridge was lined with people, but we only faintly heard their cries for the thunder of the waves. This exceedingly rapid water makes awkward currents as it swirls round the pillars of the big bridges. Behind the arches are always whirlpools, which twist you sideways and toss you from them with ridiculous ease. A wrong turn of the steering paddle and the canoe would be sucked in instead of thrown out, and then—! At a little distance below the bridge the eddies of the whirlpool from adjacent pillars meet in a series of crested waves. The only safe channel lies exactly in the middle. The canoe rises, slaps down again, all its length a-quiver; the first wave breaks under the bows and some of the water comes in, but before enough is shipped to be dangerous the frail craft rises again with a leap to the next wave. Then the race begins. The least wrong twist to left or right and the waves break sideways into the canoe and down she goes. It takes so little water to sink a laden canoe.

To-day, for the first time, we heard the famous song of the Danube,—famous at least to us who had read of it in so many different accounts. It is a hissing, seething sound which rises everywhere from the river. You think steam must be es-

caping somewhere, or soda-water fizzing out from an immense syphon among the woods on the banks. It is said to be the friction of the pebbles along the bed of the river, caused by the terrific speed of so great a body of water. Under the canoe it made a peculiar buzzing sound accompanied by a distinct vibration of the thin bass-wood on which we knelt.

We swept through Bavaria much faster than we wished, but it was impossible to go slowly. The river communicated something of its hurry to ourselves, and in my mind the journey now presents itself something in the form of a series of brilliant cinematographs. Delightful were our lunches at the quaint inns of remote villages—black bread, sausage, and such beer!—Lauingen, a town of the sixteenth century, where the spokesman of the crowd said, "I suppose you're both single;" Donauwörth, in a paradise of wild flowers, where the Lech tears in on the right with leaping waves; Neuberg, with a dangerous stone bridge and the worst rapids we had yet encountered. Then a long stretch where the swamps ceased and the woods began to change. Instead of endless willows we had pine, oak, sycamore, birch, and poplar. The river was a mile wide with outlets into lagoons, like Norfolk Broads, that ran parallel with us for miles and were probably empty mud flats at low water. Fishing-nets were hanging up to dry along the shore, and hay lay sunning itself on the narrow strips of the banks. We passed Ingolstadt, a military post, and then the river dipped down before us into blue hills and we came to Vohburg,—destroyed by the Swiss in 1641, and now, apparently, nothing but a collection of quaint chimneys and storks' nests—and, soon after it, Einzing, near Abusina, a Roman frontier station established fifteen years before our era. Trajan's wall crossed the

river near here and extended north as far as Wiesbaden.

Then the river narrowed between precipitous limestone cliffs and we entered the gorge of Kehlheim. At its very mouth, between impregnable rocks, lay the monastery of Weltenburg, the oldest in Bavaria. The river sweeping round a bend into the rocky jaws made landing difficult; but we accomplished it, and entered the old courtyard through an iron gate with graceful stone pillars. There were everywhere signs of neglect and decay. The monks' quarters formed one side of the square and the church another; a third side was a wall of rock; the fourth was the river. It was secluded, peaceful beyond description, absolutely out of the world. The air was cool, the shadows deep. Fruit-trees grew in the court-yard, and monks (there were only thirteen in all) in black gowns were piling up wood for the winter. A priest was intoning vespers in the church, which boasted a beautiful organ, marble altars, and elaborate carving of the usual gilded sort. The sunshine filled the painted air. Outside over the neglected walls crept vines, and at the far end of the courtyard a wild rose-tree, covered with sweet-smelling blossoms, grew at the foot of crumbling stone steps that led under shady trees to a chapel perched on the cliffs. We toiled up in the heat and were rewarded by a glorious view; from above the monastery was shut in like a nest between river and cliffs.

Later in the day we were driven by a violent thunderstorm to the first landing-place we could find. It was a few miles below Weltenburg in the very heart of the gorge. With surprising good fortune we found a cave leading deep into the mountain, and in less than ten minutes we were dry and snug before a fire burning cheer-

fully for dinner. It was a strange camp, — the storm howling outside and the firelight dancing down behind us into the interior of the cave, which was unnecessarily full of bats.

At Ratisbon, the *Castra Regina* of the Romans, we were solemnly warned not to attempt to pass under the bridge. "The whirlpools are savage," they told us. "Of the seven arches of this six-hundred-year-old bridge, all but one are forbidden by the police." Leaving the canoe half a mile above we landed and walked down the shore to examine. "Boats *have* gone through," said a pompous man on the bridge as he pointed out the worst places to us, "but even if they got under the arch they have always been sucked in *there*!" He pointed to a white seething circle of water. "You'll never get through that in your cockle-shell, and you'll be arrested even if you do."

"Arrested,—how?" we asked. By way of answer he raised his eyebrows and held up a fat hand in eloquent warning. However, we carefully selected our channel from the bridge, and twenty minutes later were coming down stream towards the arches as cautiously as our speed would permit. People ran along the shore waving their hats and shouting to us to stop. The bridge in front was black with the crowd waiting to see the *verrückte Engländer* upset. We reached the arch and recognised our channel. The water dropped suddenly in front of us and the canoe dipped her nose with it. We were off. The bank and the shouting people flew past us in a black streak. I was just able to recognise one man, our pompous friend, standing below the bridge shading his eyes with his hand, evidently determined to get the best view possible. The roar of voices dwindled behind us into a murmur and a minute later we were out of sight; Ratisbon, bridge, whirlpools,

and townfolk were things of the past. We were not arrested, but perhaps the police are still trying to catch us.

After this came a dull spell as we crossed the great wheat-plain of Bavaria, winding for two days with many curves and little current. Every morning here the workers in the fields woke us early, and praised the boat, and asked us the usual questions, and told us the usual falsehoods about the depth of the river, the distances of the towns, the floods of past years, and all the rest of it. We made no halt at Straubing (*Servio Durum* of the Romans), or at Deggendorf where the Isar adds its quota of mountain-gathered waters.

Another day was very dismal,—cold showers and storms of wind following one upon another. We crouched under bridges, trees, and anything else that gave cover, paddling fast between the squalls to keep ourselves warm. The plain of Straubing affords little shelter. Towards evening, however, the river made a welcome turn towards the mountains, and we camped on a high bank among clumps of willows with thick woods behind them. New potatoes, dried prunes, and onions in the stew-pot were points of light in a gusty and otherwise dismal meal. We pegged the tent inside and out. All night the wind tore at it, howling; but a gipsy-tent never comes down. The wind sweeps over it, and finding an ever lessening angle of resistance, only drives it more firmly into the ground.

Gradually, now, we were passing out of the lonely portions of the upper river. The country was becoming more populated; larger towns were near; railway-bridges spanned the river; steamers and tugs raced down, and toiled up it.

A few miles above Passau we camped on an island, and were visited by an inquisitive peasant, who saw

our fire and came over from the mainland in a punt. "Are we trespassing?" I asked. "No; the island's usually under water." This was all he ever said in our hearing, though he stayed with us, it seemed, for hours. He was a surly-looking fellow in the roughest clothes, with trousers turned up to his knees, and bare feet. His curiosity was immense; with arms crossed and legs wide apart, he stood and stared in silence with expressionless features. We had some villainous Black Forest cigars, bearing on the label the words *la noblesse*, which we sometimes used to get rid of obnoxious people. We gave him two. Knowing nothing about the Greeks and those bearing gifts he nodded his thanks,—and smoked both to the very end! Yet he never stirred, his eyes never left us. It was impossible to prepare our frugal dinner under this merciless scrutiny. At length I prevailed upon him to go over for some eggs, and to bring them to us in the morning for breakfast. He left without a word in his punt, and a sense of oppression seemed to go with him. But, just as dinner was over and we were settling round the fire to our tobacco, he suddenly reappeared. He had brought the eggs in his hat, and he was dressed this time in his Sunday clothes! For an hour he stood beside the fire, answering no questions, volunteering no remarks, till at length my friend went up, shook hands, wished him good-night, and straightway disappeared into the tent. I did likewise, and then the fellow took the hint, and went.

This happened at a place called Pleinling. Another thing also happened there. On the smaller of the arms into which our island divided the river was a weir. With empty canoe, and dressed in shirt and trousers, we practised shooting this weir next morning. The day was hot, and

our other things were meanwhile drying on the bank. The silent peasant came over to watch the proceedings, and with him came a picturesque old fellow, most talkative and entertaining, with white hair and a face like Liszt's. When he saw us preparing to shoot the fall he was much excited. "Have you wives and children?" he asked shaking his head warningly. I went over first while my friend took the camera, and got his picture a second before the canoe plunged into the foam and upset. The old fellow, whose name was Jacob Meyer, was not in the least put out. He leaned on his scythe and watched me struggling in the water with the overturned canoe without making any effort to help. Afterwards, when we gave him a *noblesse* he took a lean, dirty little purse out of his pocket, and said, "How much am I to pay for it?" And when we promised to send him the photographs he asked the same question again.

Some hours later we reached Passau, a few miles from the Austrian frontier, and this last glimpse of Bavaria, after traversing its entire breadth, was the sweetest of all. But only from the river itself can you see the quaint old houses leaning over at all imaginable angles; the towers and crooked wooden balconies; gardens hanging from the second storeys; walls with ancient paintings dimmed by wind and weather; and decayed archways showing vistas of tumbling roofs, broken chimneys, and peeps of vivid blue sky at the far ends. The picture it made in my mind as we paddled through it in the late afternoon is uncommonly picturesque,—a jumble of gables, towers, bridges, and the swift muddy Danube rushing past it all in such tremendous hurry.

Half a mile below, the Inn poured in from the Tyrolese Alps and carried us into the finest gorge we had so far

seen. The new comer brought cold air with it, and we swept into the gloomy ravine between high mountains with something like a genuine shudder. More and more swiftly ran the river as it compressed itself with an angry roar into a few hundred yards' width and swirled into the hills raging at the indignity thus heaped upon it. It became very difficult now to choose camping-places, as the stream fills the entire gorge, leaving only narrow ledges at the foot of the heights where a tent can stand. Upon one of these ledges, broader than the rest, we managed at length to land. A projecting point of rock sent the water flying out at a tangent into mid-stream and formed a strong backwater below it. Into this we contrived to twist the canoe's nose and on a little promontory, covered with yellow ragwort, we pitched our tent. It commanded a view for two miles up the ravine with the sinking sun at the far end. A boy was tending half a dozen cows among the scanty bushes; a queer little imp with wide-open blue eyes, who watched us land and prepare our camp with no signs of fear or surprise. We gave him cherries and chocolate, and he stuffed his mouth with one and his pockets with the other; then he came and stood over our fire and warmed himself without invitation, as if it had been made for his special benefit. A quaint little figure he cut with his pointed, feathered hat and big eyes. He told us that his name was Josef, that he lived two miles further on, went to bed every night at nine o'clock and got up every morning at four. Then he took off his hat, said good-night, and vanished into the bushes after his cows.

The sun set in a blaze of golden light that filled the whole gorge with fire; but when the glory faded, the strange grandeur of the place began

to make itself felt. The ravine was filled with strange noises, the wooded heights looked forbidding, and the great river rolled in a sullen black flood into the night.

Next morning we passed a big rock in midstream with a shrine perched on its summit; and just beyond it we entered Austria and visited the customs at Engelhartzell, a village on the right bank with an old Cistercian monastery behind it. There was no duty to pay, and we raced on past the mountain village of Obermühl, and out of the gorge into a fertile and undulating country basking in the fierce sunshine.

Neuhaus, with a fine castle on a wooded height, and Ashach, with a view of the Styrian Alps, flashed by. The river from here to Linz is full of history, and its muddy waters have more than once borne crimson foam. There were bloody fights here during the revolt of the peasantry of Upper Austria. Ashach, in 1626, was the insurgents' headquarters where (as also at Neuhaus) they barricaded the Danube with immense chains to prevent the Bavarians from assisting Count Herberstein, the Austrian governor, who was shut up in Linz. When in flood the Danube escapes from this narrow prison with untold violence. Everywhere the villages bear witness of its path, though most of them lie far away from the banks. High upon the walls lines show the high-water marks of previous years with the dates. "A single night will often send us into the upper storeys," said a woman who sold us milk and eggs; "but the water falls as quickly as it rises, and then we come down again." She took it as a matter of course.

The shores became lonely again and our camps were rarely disturbed. One morning, however, about six o'clock we heard someone rummaging

among our pans. Then something stumbled heavily against the tent, and there was a sound of many feet and an old familiar smell. We rushed out, to find ourselves in the centre of a herd of about fifty cows. One had its nose in the provision-basket; another was drinking the milk standing in the pail of water; a third was scratching its head against the iron prop of the kettle. Their curiosity was insatiable; every time we drove them off they returned. While my friend was frying the bacon and I was performing ablutions lower down on the river bank, a squadron swept down upon us unexpectedly by a clever flank movement, and one of them whipped up my pyjamas near the tent and ran down the shore with them on her horns. My friend dared not leave the bacon—and I was *in nudis!* It was exciting for the next few minutes.

In blazing heat that day we came to Linz, the capital of Upper Austria. Below it the Traun and the Enns flowed in, and the Danube became a magnificent river rolling through broad banks alternately wooded and covered with crops and orchards; and now, too, we begin again to see vineyards, of which Bavaria had seemed bare.

For a long time, strange as it may sound, we had been enforced vegetarians and drinkers of condensed milk. We could rarely get fresh milk, though we trudged many a mile to farmhouses and inns for it; either it was all used for butter, or had already been sent to the towns. Of course it would not keep sweet in our canoe under the blazing heat, and we could only trust to the chance of getting it an hour or so before we needed it. But, when we were lucky enough to get it, how delicious were those messes of boiled bread and milk! Meat, too, was hard to come at, except

at certain hours. The butchers in the small towns open their shops at certain times only. Not one of them would ever trouble himself to supply us with merely a pound of meat, and more would not, of course, keep fresh.

We were drawing near Vienna now, but first we passed through another fine gorge. It began at Grein (where the Duke of Coburg's castle, Greinburg, looks down from the heights) and before we emerged breathless at the other end we had come through the famous whirlpools known as the Wirbel and Strudel. The river, narrowed by half its width, plunged with many contortions round sharp corners between high cliffs and past the island-rock of Wörth. Rising in long, heaving undulations the water was alive with whirlpools, twisting and sucking, and throwing us here and there, gushing up underneath us with ugly noises and seething on every side. There was no foam, no crests, no waves or spray; it was like a monstrous snake trying to writhe through a hole too small for it. The shore raced by at top speed, and steering was uncomfortable for a time. In former years these whirlpools were a source of great danger to the navigation; but in 1866 the Emperor had certain rocks blown up and now an inscription on the face of the cliff testifies to the thanks of a grateful people. The traveller in a big steamer might think this description exaggerated. He would not think so in a canoe.

It is impossible to mention, as one would like, all the abbeys, churches, monasteries, ruins, islands, and other points of historic interest that throng the banks. The scenery is enchanting as well as enchanted. There were some interesting castles in these mountains, and grim they still look even in their ruins. Aggstein rose in solitary grandeur on a peak that

commanded miles of the Danube in both directions. It was built in the twelfth century by the Kuenings, a robber-race which stretched chains across the river, plundered the traffic, and drowned the owners. We could still see the Blashaus Tower from which the sentinel announced the approach of boats. Its was a plundering, murdering family, and was finally destroyed by the great Ulrich von Grafeneck.

Before Ybbs (the Roman Pons Isidis) we saw the wonderful ruins of Dürrenstein where Richard Cœur de Lion was imprisoned. Here, on the very spot, it was interesting to recall how he was recognised when walking through the fields at Erdberg (since merged in Vienna), captured, and handed over to his enemy, Duke Leopold of Austria, who entrusted him in turn to the keeping of the Kuenings. They kept him for fifteen months (1193) in the great castle of Dürrenstein beneath whose grim walls we passed in our canoe. In Austria the story is implicitly believed, whatever we may think of it in England.

The following day we saw the blue hills of the Wiener Wald rising behind Vienna, and before long we were obliged to don our best clothes, and send a porter down from our hotel to fetch the luggage from the bathing-house where the canoe lay below the Reichsbrücke.

We did not stay long in Vienna. Rooms in July seem stuffy after a tent, and a fly-spotted ceiling is a poor substitute for the stars.

The canoe was packed full of provisions ready to start when our first accident occurred. The river had risen a couple of feet and was very swift. My friend had just taken off his shoes and placed them on the top of the other luggage. Several of the crowd, in their misguided fashion, were trying to help us, when I

stepped into the little space vacant for me in the stern. How it happened no one knew; someone let go too soon, and she was instantly swept out sideways into the current. The next second I was dropped out neatly into five feet of water, and the canoe, settling till only the tops of the luggage remained in sight, went full tilt down stream. There were fifty yards of clear water, and then came a row of barges tied ten feet from the shore and leaving an inner channel. Into this the canoe luckily was swept; had she careered off into midstream probably we should never have seen her again. With boat-hooks and poles we ran along the banks to catch her before she banged into the barges. My friend ran in his socks. The hotel-porter, the bath-house man, and a dozen idlers all followed shouting different things at once. But the canoe and the mad current had the start of us. Crash! with a sound of rending, splintering wood she banged into the nearest barge and turned completely over. A few seconds later the various articles appeared on the surface again, and there began a sort of obstacle-race that might have been highly comical had it not been so serious. Our beds with the cork mattresses floated high out of the water. Jumbo (a huge kit-bag holding our wardrobe) came next, up to his neck. A smaller waterproof bag, tied at the neck and holding bread and cameras, followed, spinning merrily. The provision-basket (filled with the morning's careful shopping and some tea just arrived from England) showed only its nose above the surface. Coats, hats, socks, maps, tent-poles and tent followed in motley array at the end of an idiotic looking procession. Every time an article banged into a barge it went under for a few seconds, and mean-

while the canoe was crashing on among ropes and poles in the van. The heavy articles defied our efforts, and Jumbo pulled one man bodily into the water when he tried to drag it ashore.

In the end, however, most of the things were saved. The men caught the canoe as she spun past a barge, and held her till help came. All the articles, too, were fished out except those that would not float. Thus, we lost our lantern, the prop of the kettle, a pair of my friend's shoes, an odd one of mine, the ridge-pole of the tent, and my town hat and coat. It was wonderfully little. The bows of the canoe, however, were completely smashed in; and to make it worse, the rain suddenly came down in torrents and a cold wind blew from the north.

Then a carpenter appeared on the scene and said he could mend the canoe and make a new tent-pole. The people of the bath-house took our things in to dry, while we jumped into a closed carriage and drove back into Vienna, my friend with no shoes on his feet, and I without a hat on my head. Yet, such was our good luck, that three hours later we were spinning down the river in the mended canoe; the sun was shining brightly, our things were dried, we had a new tent-pole, Vienna was out of sight below the horizon,—and when we landed for camp the place was so lonely that, on climbing the bank, I looked straight into the eyes of a great stag with branching antlers.

For two days at racing speed we journeyed through wild and lonely country towards the frontiers of Hungary. The river was like a wide lake,—no houses, no boats, no token of man except the daily steamer between Vienna and Budapest. We passed signs of Roman days and Turkish occupancy strangely mingled :

Carnuntum, where Marcus Aurelius is said to have written much of his philosophy; Theben on a spur of the little Carpathians, with its rock-perched fortress destroyed by the Turks in 1683 when they swept on to besiege Vienna, and again by the French in 1809. At its very feet the March (the boundary between Austria and Hungary) comes sedately in, and the Danube received a new impetus as we passed below its shadow and into Hungary at last.

The Germans had been kind in a negative fashion, the Bavarians courteous, the Austrians obliging; but the hospitality of the Hungarians was positively aggressive. "Nothing is too much," they used to declare when we expostulated with them on the overwhelming nature of their attentions, "nothing is too good for Englishmen. Everybody will tell you the same in Hungary." Kossuth was the magical word, and hatred of the Austrians the key-note of their emotions. We blessed the generation that had welcomed him in exile and went on our way rejoicing. The crowds no longer stood gaping; they helped without being asked. When we landed for provisions they ran down to hold the canoe, while others went into the village to make our purchases more cheaply for us. Even their questions were intelligent. German is of uncertain value here, and we had carefully learned the Magyar words for the articles we most needed. "Now you begin to learn Magyar when it is too late," laughed the woman in a Pressburg shop where we bought milk and eggs and bacon; "but it's no matter; you can't starve in Hungary." The Hungarian name of the town is Pozsony. It was formerly the capital, where the kings of the Hapsburg race were crowned. Below it the Danube branches into three arms, one of which makes a

circuit of fifty miles and comes in again at Komorn. The main river is a couple of miles wide and full of islands, separated by rapids and falls. An officer assured us that we should get lost for days together unless we carefully kept to the main channel. The country is utterly deserted, save for the little black landing-stages of the steamers that appear every twenty miles or so, the villages lying far back and protected by high earthen banks. The loneliness and desolation of these vast reaches of turbulent river and low willow-clad islands were impressive; in flood-time it must be grand.

The water escaped into so many side channels and lagoons that the depth of the river was most variable. Grey shingle-beds appeared often in midstream, and over and over again we were swept into them before we could cross to deeper water. It was difficult to distinguish them in time from the muddy, foam-streaked river, until we learned that the cormorants invariably used them for fishing-grounds; and then we took the black bodies in the distance as warning signals that saved us much dangerous wading. The velocity of the stream is so great that one almost expects to see the islands swept bodily away. Big grey hawks circled ever over head and grey crows by the thousand lined the shores. That evening, after crossing and re-crossing the river, we found a sheltered camp on a sandy island where pollards and willows roared in the wind. As if to show the loneliness of the spot an otter, rolling over and over among the eddies, swam past us as we landed. About sunset the clouds broke up momentarily and let out a flood of crimson light all over the wild country. Against the gorgeous red sky a stream of dark clouds, in all shapes and kinds, hurried over the Carpathian mountains, and when we went to bed a

full moon cast the queerest shadows through the tossing branches. We dined,—prosaic detail!—off tongue, onions, potatoes, tea, and dried prunes which we stewed and ate with quantities of beetroot sugar.

Next day the river grew wider, swifter, and even more deserted. At Korteljes we landed to buy provisions, though only the watchman's hut was in sight. As we stepped on shore my hat blew off and floated down stream. At once the man (who spoke a little German) went into his hut and produced one of his own which he begged me to wear; it was a greasy wide-brimmed felt, but I could not refuse it, and he seemed delighted. He directed us to a farm a mile inland for milk and eggs, and gave us the correct pronunciation of the necessary words. The farm stood on the broad plain in a grove of acacia trees, with snow-white walls and overhanging thatched roofs, forming a square, within which were oxen, buffaloes, pigs, geese, and romping children in brilliant skirts. The older girls had yellow kerchiefs on their heads; one little girl, in flaming colours, was chasing a chicken in and out among the trees and oxen; all stopped to stare as we approached, swinging an empty milk-can. Through the farmhouse door I got a glimpse into a spotless kitchen, and a most courteous woman with brilliant dark eyes sold us what we required very cheaply. I took off my new greasy hat to them when we left, and the children followed us to the river, a motley escort.

On we went down the great rushing stream, ever flanked by a sea of silvery willows swaying and bending in the wind, reed beds, ten feet high, alternating with stretches of grey shingle. Between the wooded islands vistas opened in all directions; narrow glades where the river sent out new

arms in patches of sunshine with the faint sound of water tumbling over distant shallows; while down some far blue reach, filled with the afternoon shadows, we could see immense herds of cattle, swine, and flocks of geese, feeding in meadows lined with poplars and birch trees. Horses in vast quantities roamed along the banks, watched by herdsmen who wore cool white skirts instead of trousers. Often, in the backwaters, oxen, horses, buffalo, pigs, and geese were all crowded together trying to keep cool in the great heat.

At Komorn, rising with its fortress just above the dead level of the plain, we laid in provisions. The grocer was inquisitive: "Where have you come from? Where are you going to? How do you cook? Where do you sleep? Are you not afraid of grasshoppers and snakes? What an awful distance you have come—the source of the Danube, where is it? You are both quite young, aren't you? But you are so enormous,"—and so on, and so on.

From here we saw the blue mountains that encircle Budapest,—not more than forty miles away as a crow would fly it, but a splendid loop of sixty-five miles by the river. Budapest draws one like a magnet. There is a suggestion of delicious wildness about it born of I know not what. The very name seems set to some flying fragment of the wild national music,—a bar of the *csardás*, or of the wailing Hungarian songs that thrill with such intense virility. The West, too, sinks lower on the horizon when Budapest is reached, and the Danube sweeps you on through the Iron Gates to Turkey and the Fekete Tengerig (Black Sea).

Willows, reeds, and islands have all vanished now, and there were no sudden whirlpools in mid-stream. With majestic dignity that disguised

the real speed, the mass of water, a mile to a mile and a half wide, swept steadily down under that fierce heat towards the mountains. We kept to mid-stream and were never tired of watching the banks slip by with their ever changing pictures: open shore; fields with barley standing in sheaves; vineyards coming down to the water's edge; cottages with thick thatch and white walls; villages full of wild, over-grown gardens, and groves of acacia trees of brilliant washed green. We landed for milk at a farmhouse on the right bank and found that the proprietor spoke English and had travelled in England and Norway and studied in Vienna. "It's only twenty-six kilometers to Budapest," he told us. Later on we overtook some peasants in a boat full of vegetables, and kept pace with them for a little, while we chatted in German. "It's a little over forty kilometers to Pest," they said. Boats became frequent after this, broad, flat-bottomed, laden with farm-produce, and rowed by men and women who took their hats off to us and asked many questions in bad German. All agreed on one thing,—that the Austrians were a poor lot of people compared with the Hungarians; and all differed on another thing,—the distance to Budapest. It varied with every boat, and at length we became so confused with the arguments of the spokesman in German and the mocking chorus of the rest in Hungarian, that we almost expected to hear that we had already passed it, or were perhaps on the wrong river altogether.

To avoid calamities we increased our speed and left the string of boats behind. In the afternoon we came to Gran. The dome of its huge Italian basilica dominates for miles the plain we had just traversed, but looks like a round gleaming pebble

beside the mountains that rise behind it. The charms of this quaint little town made us realise that time is after all but a form of thought; in other words, we stayed too long. At half-past six we entered the wide deep valley of these magical mountains hoping to find a camping-place so soon as we were beyond the town. The sun was hidden; the mountains stood outlined in purple against a wonderful sky, with long thin clouds just touching some of the higher peaks; the water glowed as though fires burned beneath the waves. Mile after mile we followed the windings of the valley, the hills folding up behind us, but opening ever in front again into new and darker distances. But no camping-place appeared; one side was too steep, the other treeless. The shadows lengthened and grew deeper; the hills changed from purple to black; the lights of villages twinkled across the river as across a wide lake. They fairly lined the base of the hills, and secluded camping-spots were evidently things of the past; there was not even an island.

Eight, nine o'clock passed; it became too dark to cross or recross with safety. We hugged the left bank, eagerly scanning the shore under the steep hills and waiting for the moon to rise. It was ten o'clock when the moon topped the mountains of the other shore and filled the valley with silver. We found a level yard or two below some vineyards, unpleasantly close to the abode of the proprietor, and there made a small fire and dined late off eggs and cocoa. The scenery was more thrilling than the meal: the dim hills rising through the moonlight; the white river filling the space between as if the whole valley were sliding noiselessly past, the fragrant air, warm and still, shot here and there with fireflies,—and Hungary,—wild, musical, enchanted

Hungary! The fire had died down and we were smoking at the mouth of the tent when sounds of music floated to our ears, and presently a barge of peasants towed by three men along the shore came slowly up the stream. Cymbals and violins were playing a national air and a few low voices were singing. The barge floated past as if no one had seen us, and the music died away in the distance.

And on the mere the wailing died away.

Several hours later the returning voices and violins woke us in the tent as the party went down again too far from shore to be visible to the eye.

A man fishing woke us early and asked if the *weinhüter* (watchman of vineyards) had not disturbed us. Luckily he had not. "That's because it's Sunday and he's overslept himself." In spite of this warning we breakfasted leisurely, and then paddling down stream in blazing sunshine landed a mile below at Visegrad on the opposite bank. This little town, with its ruined castle, and fortress destroyed by the Austrians, nestles among the mountains, and here the good folk of Budapest come in summer to their villas among the acacia trees. Everybody spoke to us, helped to pull up the canoe, told us what to see, where to get good coffee or cooling drinks, described (with painful detail) the remaining twenty miles to Budapest, and showed themselves in all ways most courteous and obliging. Gipsy-music sounded everywhere among the trees, and the peasants in bright Sunday costumes lent colour to the scene.

Below Visegrad, which we left with much reluctance, begins an island which stretches the whole twenty miles to Budapest. Taking the inner channel we paddled peacefully all day under blue mountains in a haze of delicious heat, past vil-

lages, ferries, churches, castles, private villas, acres of vineyards over the slopes of the hills, and vast herds of horses and oxen standing in the water, till we camped at sunset on a treeless bit of plain at the extreme point of the island, only a mile from Budapest. It was like camping on the Brighton downs. With difficulty we collected scraps of wood enough to make a fire that would boil water. It was a windless night, and our candle stood tied to a stick in the open air with a motionless flame. The moon, rising late, showed rounded curves of bare hills behind us,—and then, two figures approached us cautiously from the river. They came to the outside of the fire-light circle and stopped; but at our invitation they came within and smoked the last of our *noblesse* cigars—poor fellows! Night-fishermen they were, short, thick-set, dark-faced Huns. They drank our cocoa and explained their strange-looking nets to us while waiting for the moon to rise higher. All night long they fished, and on their way home to bed at five next morning they looked in to give us a hearty good morning and the information that the cows were coming.

The thunder of hoofs confirmed this, and we got up in time to protect the tent from a herd of several hundred cattle. A herder followed them, a dwarf-like creature with a pole-axe as big as himself, and a badge which proclaimed him Government keeper of the plain (Crown-land) where all men's cattle might feed on certain conditions. He spoke no German, but he understood the meaning of a plate of veal, and he finished our meat (two pounds) in about ten minutes. Then he drank some cocoa, asking, with a wry face, if it were *paprika* (Hungarian pepper).

It was piping hot on the treeless plain, and Budapest lay waiting for us. We shaved and donned our town suits. The herder, grateful for his meal, helped to carry our things to the canoe, and, long after we were off, stood shading his eyes with his hand and staring after us. We drifted lazily down another mile of steaming hot river and landed at the wharf of the Hunnia Rowing Club on the right bank,—nearly a thousand miles from the sleepy little village in the Black Forest where we had embarked six weeks before.

ALGERNON BLACKWOOD.

ENGLISH HEXAMETERS AND ELEGIACS.

A CRITIC in one of our literary journals, reviewing Sir Lewis Morris's *HARVEST-TIDE*, gave Mr. William Watson the honour of setting a precedent in the employment of a classical metre in English verse. He found that Sir Lewis had used elegiacs in his lyric "The March of Man,"—one of the poems included in *HARVEST-TIDE*—and his discovery prompted this critical declaration :

He has seemingly been reading Mr. Watson's "Hymn to the Sea," for he adopts its English pentameters. The metre, of course, is classical ; but (save for a couplet of Coleridge) we are not aware that any poet before Mr. Watson had attempted to naturalise the metre. Consequently it is of Mr. Watson we think when we read such verse as this :

"Man that is born of a Woman, the
pride and the shame of Creation :
Man that soars upwards to Heaven,
and sinks to the nethermost Hell."

It is unfortunate for his journal, and also for Sir Lewis Morris, that the critic should be unaware of the difference between pentameters and elegiacs. We do not all read new volumes of poetry immediately after publication ; many of us are prone to accept the estimates given in accredited organs of literary opinion, and the majority are contented with a perusal (more or less superficial) of the reviews, and never see the works themselves on which the critics have based their commentaries and judgments. If, then, those who, by virtue of the knowledge and experience with which they are accredited, are placed in a position of serious responsibility,

show themselves but ill-equipped for their duty, there is surely cause for protest. A writer who plainly declares his ignorance of the difference between pentameters and elegiacs cannot be accepted as an authority on a poem in either of these forms. For aught we know to the contrary, Mr. Watson's "Hymn to the Sea" may be written in pentameters, but, if it is, it is certainly different in form from "The March of Man" by Sir Lewis Morris. The critic's reference to Coleridge complicates instead of elucidating the difficulty. Coleridge was fond of experimenting in classical metres. One remembers the hexameters penned to Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy during the sojourn in Germany.

William, my teacher, my friend ! dear
William and dear Dorothea !
Smooth out the folds of my letter, and
place it on desk or on table.

But then there is much more than a couplet in this metrical exercise, which on the contrary runs forward well on towards forty lines. Coleridge's hexameters in his "Ad Vilmum Axiologum," his "Hymn to the Earth," and his "Mahomet" may also be dismissed as not to the immediate purpose. So, probably, may the pentameters after the manner of Catullus, and then we are left with two sets of couplets exemplifying classical metres. But in the one case the title used by the poet himself is the Homeric Hexameter, while in the other it is the Ovidian Elegiac Metre. In which of all these forms Mr.

Watson cast his "Hymn to the Sea" it is not possible for one unfamiliar with that poetic achievement to decide; but there need be no hesitation in saying that if he used any of them the result could not be what we call pentameters. On the other hand, Sir Lewis Morris in "The March of Man" writes what Coleridge calls the Ovidian Elegiac Metre and illustrates thus :

In the hexameter rises the fountain's
silvery column ;
In the pentameter aye falling in melody
back.

The critic of HARVEST-TIDE, then, being apparently unfamiliar with the subject he has undertaken to discuss, has employed a misleading terminology, and by his attempt at furnishing illustrative examples has only made confusion worse confounded. In the second place, he shows for a reviewer a very slender grasp of literary history. According to his view of the subject Mr. Watson's "Hymn to the Sea," written a few years ago, was the first attempt to introduce the ancient pentameters into the English metrical system. We may now assume that he means elegiacs, especially as that is the metre of the poem which he assails. Mr. Andrew Lang contributes something to the complex character of the situation, and not a little to the perplexity of the plain man, by writing to the journal in question that he and Lord Tennyson had composed "rhymed elegiacs" before Mr. Watson was born. That directs the attention to an earlier, if still not very remote, stage of poetic accomplishment, and it also introduces a new feature into the discussion. Rhyming is not characteristic of the elegiacs produced by Coleridge and Sir Lewis Morris, and one is hardly surprised to find Mr. Watson replying to Mr. Lang with a declaration that he never com-

posed any rhymed elegiacs. That would appear to eliminate Mr. Lang from the arena into which he so arbitrarily dragged Lord Tennyson, and to leave the matter where it was before his hapless intervention. The point then is this. The critic of HARVEST-TIDE, speaking with the anonymous and oracular authority of the organ that he represents, asserts that the metre used by Sir Lewis Morris in "The March of Man,"—the classical metre known as elegiacs—was introduced for the purposes of an English poem by Mr. Watson. That is to say, in round numbers, that the fashion thus set by Mr. Watson is one that has existed for less than a decade. This is a very fresh view, and one envies the critical historian that has trod only so far on the fascinating path that leads towards poetical origins. Let us see how the matter actually stands.

In one of his imitations of Horace Pope writes :

Spenser himself affects the obsolete,
And Sidney's verse halts ill on Roman
feet.

The poet is arguing that inevitable inequalities exist in the writings of even the greatest literary artists, and this couplet is part of his illustration. Spenser's language and some of his forms and methods are mainly those of an age antecedent to himself, and Sidney, who was himself a poet, as well as a "very perfect gentle knight," lent his great influence to a passing fashion of classical metres. The friend of Spenser and Sidney, and perhaps the University tutor of the former, was Gabriel Harvey, one of the most scholarly and, in some respects, wrong-headed men of his day, and an enthusiast for what he considered the dignity of form indispensable to properly constructed English verse. The couplets and octave

stanzas ennobled by Chaucer would not suit his cultured tastes, and the new sonneteering of Wyatt and Surrey, after a fashion introduced from Italy, was unscholarly and effeminate. Harvey, in his own fashion, had a hold of that large and probably endless question as to the comparative value of ancient and modern methods, which has so often been, and probably will continue to be, discussed from so many points of view. It is an old and incontrovertible saying that a man must act according to his lights. A farthing candle serves its purpose when no more brilliant illuminating force is possible, and an argumentative spirit, destitute of scientific training, may be held excusable in defending the creed that the sun goes round the earth. All knowledge is relative, and Gabriel Harvey's accomplishments and reflections induced him to consider that his view of poetical form was final. He was one of the most learned men of his time, an unsuccessful candidate for the post of Public Orator of his University, a Doctor of Laws of Oxford, and advocate to the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. His Latin works display not only scholarship but resource, feeling, and dignity. Unfortunately for the serenity of his experience, and for the excellence of his reputation, he fell into controversy with the wits of his day, especially with Robert Greene and Thomas Nash. This feature of his career does not specially concern us now, and the curious will find it duly discussed and illustrated in the works of the respective authors as edited by Dr. Grosart, and in the chapter entitled "Literary Ridicule" in D'Israeli's *CALAMITIES OF AUTHORS*. What really immortalises Harvey is his connection with Sidney and Spenser. It was under his influence that Sidney wrote his curiously exotic eclogues in *THE*

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE'S *ARCADIA*, and it was he that brought the two young men to a knowledge of each other, thereby serving to promote the career of one of the chief glories of English poetry. Yet it is almost certain that for a moment Harvey's influence was likely to have a deteriorating effect. Spenser seemed enamoured of hexameters and elegiacs, and anxious to satisfy his tutor and friend with evidence of his skill in their production. In a letter addressed to Harvey by Spenser about the time at which he finished the *SHEPHERDS' CALENDAR* we find him asking his opinion as to this *tetrasticon* :

See ye the blindfolded pretty God, that
feathered Archer
Of Lovers' Miseries which maketh
his bloody game?
Wot ye why, his Mother with a Veil
hath covered his Face?
Trust me, lest he my Love haply
chance to behold.

It would have been a serious matter for English poetry had Spenser gone off on this tack, instead of keeping to the course that led to his discovery and delineation of the enchanted land of *THE FAERIE QUEENE*. That he was nearly devoting himself to the classical metres advocated by Harvey is shown by a statement towards the close of the same letter: "I mind shortly at convenient leisure, to set forth a book in this kind, which I entitle *Epithalamion Thamesis*." Fortunately this book never came, and when Spenser's spontaneous *EPITHALAMION* was produced it proved one of the triumphs of lyrical beauty and music. Meanwhile, the poet did not fail in his regard for Harvey, who is the Hobbinal of his allegories, and the scholar who sits apart and discriminates among men of the world,

Like a great Lord of peerless liberty;
Lifting the Good up to high Honour's
seat,
And the Evil damning evermore to die.

Harvey had his little day, and he had his influence, important on the one hand and trivial and nearly retrogressive on the other. He was a scholar who loved and fostered scholarship for its own sake, and he was an ardent pioneer on a way that could lead to no important and satisfactory issue. Like men both greater and smaller, he believed the little quest of his scholarly fancy was the true glory of his career. "If," he warmly exclaims in one place, "I never deserve any better remembrance, let me be epitaphed the Inventor of the English hexameter!" Pathetic, no doubt, this is in what cannot but seem to the calm judgment its erroneous enthusiasm, its devotion to a forlorn hope. It is typical of the quaint short-sightedness associated with human endeavour. The attitude implied in the exclamation of the classical metrist is not that of the humble and modest spirit which whispers "An ill-favoured thing, sir, but mine own;" it is rather that of the genius who knows that he has achieved, and that posterity will avenge him for the neglect and the abuse of his contemporaries. There was pride, then, in Harvey, but he must have been winning as well as proud, for he retained through life the friendship and the respect of Spenser. Modern literature owes him something too, for his advocacy of English hexameters and elegiacs. His successors have done by them infinitely more than himself and his friends accomplished. The nineteenth century produced great poems in both forms. Lord Tennyson, as Mr. Lang reminds his readers, amused his occasional leisure with metrical exercises in Harvey's vein, but it may be added that such things count for almost nothing in his work. Both the strength and the weakness of the English hexameter have been amply proved

in the *EVANGELINE* of Longfellow, and in Clough's *BOTHIE OF TOBER-NA-VUOLICH* and *AMOURS DE VOYAGE*; but the most brilliant and decisive example of it will be found in Kingsley's *ANDROMEDA*, where classical metre and theme meet and mingle in apposite and graceful adjustment. Take, for instance, this glorious description of a garment from the Olympian loom:

Then on the brows of the maiden a veil
bound Pallas Athené;
Ample it fell to her feet, deep-fringed,
a wonder of weaving.
Ages and ages agone it was wrought on
the heights of Olympus,
Wrought in the gold-strung loom by
the finger of cunning Athené.
In it she wove all creatures that teem
in the womb of the ocean;
Nereid, siren, and triton, and dolphin,
and arrowy fishes
Glittering round, many-hued, on the
flame-red folds of the mantle.
In it she wove, too, a town where gray-
haired kings sat in judgment;
Sceptre in hand in the market they sat,
doing right by the people,
Wise: while above watched Justice,
and near, far-seeing Apollo.
Round it she wove for a fringe all herbs
of the earth and the water,
Violet, asphodel, ivy, and vine-leaves,
roses and lilies,
Coral and sea-fan and tangle, the blooms
and the palms of the ocean:
Now from Olympus she bore it, a dower
to the bride of a hero.

Between hexameters and elegiacs no very wide gulf is fixed, and it seems likely that a master of the one might very well achieve distinction in the other. One of the most charming elegiac poems in the English tongue is Mr. Arthur Munby's *DOROTHY*, though its heroine was nothing more than a maid-of-all-work. In this poem, which appeared in 1880, the writer performed a notable service, for not only did he show how nimbly and effectively elegiacs could be utilised, but he reminded us that Eng-

lish girls could once hold the plough. Perhaps in some remote parts they may do so still, and the occupation will befit them fully as well as that which some of their sisters elsewhere find on pit-heads and in other unattractive spheres. May it not also be better for the girls themselves, and better in the long run for the peasantry, that, instead of converging into the crowded cities, they should abide to some extent by the old ways, minding the dairy or even carting and driving the plough when occasion requires? The country begins to miss the influence of such a powerful individuality as that presented in the character of Mrs. Poyser. The shrewd and able farmer's wife was at one time an educative force: "She opened her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue was the law of kindness." Her maids, even the maid-of-all-work, had a profitable experience in her service. They learned the meaning of duty, and their experience was valuable for the generations that followed them. Only substantial national benefits could arise from a character depicted thus:

Oh, I have yet to complete the list of
her many employments:

First, she can read, as I said; read
in the Bible, I mean,—

Oft on a Sunday night, when the house-
hold meet in the evening,

Reading aloud by the hearth, taking
her turn with the rest:

And, as I said, she can write; she can
fashion her name in a round hand

Fit for a ploughman to see under his
own in the book:

Then, she can sew, right well: for
stitching and hemming and darning,

Whether to make or to mend, none
are more clever than she;

Hard as her fingers are, fine needlework
only excepted,

None in the parish can show stitch-
ing more subtle than hers:

Samplers, too; long ago she wrought
a most beautiful sampler,

Gay with a criss-cross row, splendid
with Adam and Eve;

Framed in her attic it is, a joy for them
that come after;

Such as her mother made,—such as
they never make now.

These are but a few of Dorothy's accomplishments, for she understood all about the dairy, and could tell how to rear "cade-lambs"; she could tend the cattle, harness a cart-horse, successfully feed a pig, and show how it should be killed and cured; she knew the habits of birds and four-footed beasts, and she dealt by them skilfully and tenderly, even as was her habit when the sickness of a neighbour needed delicate attention at her rough but honest and kindly hands. In the fields, at all seasons, she was competent to take her place, able to rival the men, and easily leaving laggards behind.

Ah, what a joy for her, at early morn,
in the springtime,

Driving from hedge to hedge furrows
as straight as a line!

Seeing the crisp brown earth, like waves
at the prow of a vessel,

Rise, curl over, and fall, under the
thrust of the share;

Orderly falling and still, its edges all
creamy and crumbling,

But, on the sloping side, polish'd and
purple as steel;

Till all the field, she thought, looked
bright as the bars of that gridiron

In the great window at church, over
the gentlefolks' pew:

And evermore, as she strode, she had
cheerful companions behind her;

Rooks and the smaller birds, follow-
ing after her plough;

And, ere the ridges were done, there
was gossamer woven above them,

Gossamer dewy and white, shining
like foam on the sea.

The elegiacs seem somehow specially adapted to the delineation of these idyllic scenes and interests, and one may at once congratulate the poet on his success, and his readers,—inclusive of those whose familiarity with classical experiments in English terminates with the work of Mr. Watson—on

the enjoyment that awaits them in the perusal of his charming romance.

If elegiacs are suitable to the description of the personality and the activities of an English maid-of-all-work at the end of the nineteenth century, they should also lend themselves helpfully to the due elaboration of a classical theme in English verse. Whether he was influenced or not by the example set by the author of *DOROTHY*, Mr. Browning followed him with his "Ixion" in the same metre, which he included in his volume *JOCOSERIA*, published in 1883. This might have been expected to appeal to the historical critic of verse, even if the anonymous *DOROTHY* had not come under his notice. Alike for the subject, the eminence of the poet, and his success under the conditions with which he bound himself to treat his theme, "Ixion" eminently deserves attention. The myth, which is one of the most palpable and impressive of those summaries due to the spiritual wrestling of the ancients, has been variously treated, but, of course, never just in the same way as it has been by Browning. It gives the poet the opportunity of advocating his favourite doctrine of serious, persevering endeavour, and of emphasising the creed of development through consistent strength of individuality. Ixion may have suffered an awful doom because of spiritual pride, but his personality sustains him as he reaches, in his dizzy whirl, even beyond Zeus towards the fascinating object of his quest. The following quotation will show that the construction of this poem displays features very different from the precise arrangement, dexterously woven diction, and easy effectiveness of movement presented in *DOROTHY*. At the same time its unhewn sternness of aspect, its rugged massiveness, and the towering strength

and majesty of its advance give it a measure of irresistible attraction.

Baffled for ever—yet never so baffled
but, e'en in the baffling,
When Man's strength proves weak,
checked in the body or soul—
Whatsoever the medium, flesh or
essence,—Ixion's,
Made for a purpose of hate,—clothing
the entity Thou,
—Medium whence that entity strives
for the Not-Thou beyond it,
Fire elemental, free, frame unen-
cumbered, the All,—
Never so baffled but—when, on the
verge of an alien existence,
Heartened to press, by pangs burst
to the infinite Pure,
Nothing is reached but the ancient
weakness still that arrests strength,
Circumambient still, still the poor
human array,
Pride and revenge and hate and cruelty
—all it has burst through,
Thought to escape,—fresh formed,
found in the fashion it fled,—
Never so baffled but—when Man pays
the price of endeavour,
Thunderstruck, downthrust, Tartaros-
doomed to the wheel,—
Then, ay, then, from the tears and
sweat and blood of his torment,
E'en from the triumph of Hell, up
let him look and rejoice.

As an expanded statement of a great mystery this is eminently characteristic. The onward movement has the inevitable embellishments of parenthesis, side-thought, labouring phrase, picturesque and suggestive image, and seems ready to disappear under the weight of it all, but at length is happily accomplished. The elegiacs are Browning's, and are therefore not as those of other men or poets are; but they are correct in form and readily stand the test when examined for themselves and apart from the purpose they serve in building the sentences that set forth the argument. In reading them one straightway recalls the vehement decision given by an eminent scholar of other days as to Wordsworth's

poetical rank. Fundamentally, that distinguished critic asserted, poetry must be melodious: "It must have music in it," he cried, "to make it attractive;" and therefore, as he failed to detect the indispensable first principles in Wordsworth, he stoutly proclaimed himself "no Wordsworthian." It is common to find the same objection, in some cases in a greatly intensified form, to Browning's verse. In these particular lines the reader may be pardoned for failing at first to detect any pervading melody. Words seem to be placed together more for the purpose of producing confusion and contradiction than in order to give information and pleasure. It takes some time to unravel the apparent entanglement, to detect the drift of the author's purpose, and when that has been done the ethereal melodious essence has probably ceased to impress. One has, therefore, to begin afresh and study the lines from a purely metrical point of view; and then the discovery is made that the poet, despite his argumentative throes and his philosophic rapture, did not disregard the quality of his versification. Not only will this become clear, but it will also appear that he had time to think of occasional dainty tricks of art,—such, for example, as one sees in the effect here and there of a tripping and successful alliterative line; and then the reasons for objecting to his methods may gradually seem less relevant and strong than they were on the first blush. Browning furnishes the best of all possible texts for the discussion of the question as to whether poetry should not be its own instantaneous interpreter. This elegiac presentation of Ixion's spiritual wrestlings may be recommended as an exceptionally good subject for the student's purpose, as the full consideration of all it offers will imply an examination of its philo-

sophy, its argument, illustrations, and imagery, besides a careful estimate of its metrical system. It will probably be found that the man with eyes to see and ears to hear will discover the purpose and the poetical merits of this as of other problematical essays in verse. *SORDELLO* was long a standard example of difficulty, and Mr. Lowell undoubtedly stated the case for a very large number of baffled readers, when he asserted that he understood perfectly the first line of the poem and the last, but was hopelessly at a loss to grasp the significance of all that lay between. It is here as with other things: the reader has to be considered as well as the poet, and the interpretation of difficulties will largely depend upon the equipment of the interpreter. Thus we come back to the demand for absolutely transparent poetry, and find that the question is one that has to be settled on considerations that are entirely relative. Meanwhile, it may be concluded that Browning's eminence as a poet is due not only to what he says but also to the manner of his saying it, and that both will impress his readers the more deeply as they become (in words he once used himself) fully "qualified to judge." The "Ixion," may be taken as an experiment in elegiacs, just as the versification of other poems may be regarded as more or less experimental, but at any rate it is an experiment of a distinguished order, justifying itself by its striking success.

In 1887 Sir Lewis Morris published his *SONGS OF BRITAIN*, one of the poems of the collection being the "Physicians of Myddfai," written in elegiacs. The theme is a myth of old Wales, preceded by a graceful descriptive prologue and closed with a passage of characteristic reflection. A widow's son, tending his herds among the lonely hills, wooed and won a

beautiful lady of the lake, whom through inadvertence he lost in advancing years in accordance with the conditions of an irrevocable spell. She retired to her native waters, where her sons continued to seek her and failed not to profit by her benign influence.

Often at evening, the youths would climb to the mystical lake side,

Culling the simples that grew on the slopes of the desolate hills—

“Pant y Meddygon,” men called it,
“The dingle of the Physicians”—

And with them, wherever they went,
their mother invisible came,

Teaching them all that 'tis lawful to know of the secrets of Nature,

And the powers of healing that seem to be God's own prerogative gift.

Such was the knowledge they took from their loving, mystical mother,

In all our wide Britain was found
no leech so skilful as they.

The author of the “Physicians of Myddfai” has justified his claims as

a composer in classical metre. When, therefore, in his *HARVEST-TIDE* he includes the elegiac “March of Man,” he makes an offering of interest to the serious student of verse, who reads for the sake of the best that is provided and does not merely float on the gauze of critical flippancy. Sir Lewis Morris here sets himself to grapple with a knotty problem, and it were vain to expect a dainty nimbleness of movement with the diction suitable to such a theme. It makes no difference who wrote elegiacs before him,—just as it is of no consequence, in a final estimate of achievement, who were sonneteers before Mrs. Browning and Rossetti; but if the question is to be raised at all, and especially if there be an inclination to depreciate because others have been in the field before, then, we submit, perfect accuracy and absolute sincerity are indispensable elements in its discussion.

PRO-BOER IDEALISM.

ONE characteristic of any grave public crisis is that it brings out, as a great wave of heat brings out on grass the ground-plan of long-buried buildings, the diverse cleavages of temperament that divide a nation.

The accentuation of a fact unnoticed before, reminds us how much there is,—of instinctive impulse and feeling if not of reasoned opinion—to which we are only not hostile at other seasons because we are indifferent. But at such moments of trial a craving sets in for the real national unanimity on which alone action of desperate vigour can be based. The smooth dogmas of tolerance (a negative and limited creed at best), the pseudo-Radical convention that all opinion is entitled to an equal hearing and everything that can be represented equally worthy of representation, fall to a discount; and a process of elimination, a sort of moral or physical Pride's Purge, begins, which ends by leaving only the characteristic genius of the nation free, with girt-up loins, to pursue its destiny.

What that genius, that destiny may be is doubtless, in the long run, the affair and responsibility of all of us; yet the process sketched above, is, we believe, on one scale or another, a familiar and chronic episode in history, and it is one now present.

After all, it is a fact, familiar enough to all who have to do with public or administrative business, that a large number of excellent and immaculate people are, by a mute conspiracy of the rest of us, elbowed or cajoled out of power on the real, but unstated, plea that they are too

good for this imperfect world. Nor do we think that injustice can be done to the politicians known as Pro-Boers, for want of a better name to express the popular feeling against them, if we dignify them as Idealists of this species. Conscious of the purity of their motives (for we do not here speak of a few frantic partisans whose business in life is to foul their own nest) they indignantly complain of the intolerance of the majority of their fellow-citizens. But do they realise (a conviction to many of us unpalatable and late acquired) that the direct pursuit of the absolutely good in politics is, more often than not, harmful in proportion to its directness?

The Pro-Boer party,—though of course no political party has stood up to call itself by that name—consists, we believe, mainly of what we may call tired Englishmen, of the remnant of those who, in the old days of the flowing tide that so suddenly ebbed, by their academic view of the weary burden of empire in Egypt, India, and elsewhere made Radicalism a thing impossible. It includes doubtless all those who, committed to the obese and unhistoric doctrine that war is the worst of evils, are bound to deny that it has ever produced an enduring settlement or a solid mutual understanding between friend and foe. And it embraces more emphatically, we think, a number of cultured persons living at home at ease, intellectual and moral, to whom the mere spectacle of the initial stages of the development, for example, of a great mining colony is

in itself *anathema maranatha*, a thing that should have been relegated to the obscurity of an Elizabethan age. In the few organs which have advocated their views (while commercial exigencies rendered this possible) in the speeches of its professed representatives,—especially in a collection of such orations, breathing nothing but the purest piety, by Mr. J. E. Ellis, a prominent critic of the national conduct—we seem to scent this irreproachable but dangerous Idealism, an Idealism amounting in fine to something very like Robespierre's "Perish the colonies rather than one principle!" We had the pleasure of listening to a certain eloquent, if not famous, speech of Professor Bryce in the House of Commons,—the best exposition perhaps of what we may call the Pro-Boer attitude; and the general impression it conveyed, to at least one of his hearers, was certainly that we have tried to convey. There, in South Africa, were the Empire-makers, rude, toil-stained, (self-interested, if you please,) at work. Here, at home, was the Idealist cultured, comfortable (in the sense, that is, of not finding his daily conduct wrested, as it were, by tyrannous circumstance and facts of nature in the direction of what we may call Elizabethan irregularities), enjoying the civilisation of an empire (made in a fashion he must daily deplore),—at play. He would not mind, we suppose, being called an Anti-Elizabethan; but has he grasped the fact that ours also are spacious times, that distance is in some ways, and in spite of steam and electricity, the equivalent of time, even of a century or so, that there is much of that crude Elizabethan individualism (by which we, Idealists and all, are what we are,) that can never be extinguished but with our extinction?

Take, for example, a typical and

recurrent phrase in Mr. Bryce's speech in relation to the great question, the subject (as much as any one matter can be said to be) of our present difference with the Boers,—the treatment of the native races, notoriously a point where the British colonist, as compared with French, German, Spaniard, Portuguese and Boer (especially the Boer), has systematically broken down. It is on this point that there still rings in our ears the utterance of the passionate high-souled Pro-Boer, "*Our hands are not clean.*" Alas, no; and therefore (for otherwise what purport, at such a moment, has this damaging apostrophe?) we must not use them, even though it be to remove with as little violence as may be, things, systems, practices, and constitutions infinitely more corrupt and contaminated. No; we must leave these abuses to the delicate care of a special *posse* of angels from Heaven who will doubtless descend to clear them up in ample time for the Judgment Day. Thus will the Idealist be spared the spectacle of that error and injustice involved too often in the conduct of the best intentioned of (English) human beings.

How indeed can our hands be clean, when we know that they are stained with a hundred individual acts of injustice and tyranny, to which the respectable Englishman, comfortably unfolding his *TIMES* in a West End flat feels rarely tempted, the scandals which those who know whisper into our ears about English residents, capitalists, missionaries all the world over? That, however, is not the question. The question is does our occupation, with all its rude, clumsy, and extremely human activities, make, on the whole, and taking the rough with the smooth, for progress? If it does, then we have still some ground for that belief

in ourselves which is the only sane ground of national action.

Natives, of course, are a somewhat unsavoury topic for the refined and gentle Englishman at home. Left alone in their natural wilds, disporting themselves as hordes of blood-thirsty savages or bestial cannibals, they contribute to the picturesque colouring of that background against which civilisation should stand out, sharply contrasted like a newly built mission-hut against the uncleared jungle. As neighbours or protégés of the white man they become a dangerous part of that gross material world, the world of gold-mines, oil-wells, and rubber-forests, contact with which is so peculiarly deleterious to the (English) moral system.

Deprived of his well-washed spear, and compelled, or persuaded, to work, the savage soon attracts the attention of the numerous philanthropists whose enthusiasm (in the famous phrase applied by Napoleon the Third to the slave-trade agitation) varies "with the square of their distance from its objects." Threatened with flogging, and now and then subjected to perhaps excessive discipline he becomes—well, it is better not to pursue the subject. Let us merely reflect on the different points of view of the humane owner or employer of half tamed savage labour and that of a political Mrs. Jellyby. The point is that gentlemen whose nerves, olfactory or cutaneous, have never yet apprehended the presence of a black man (though we do not blame him any more than another of God's creatures for being what he is) have repeatedly urged upon the government of a great empire that it ought to know no distinctions of colour, should, in a word, as we think THE DAILY NEWS recently phrased it, be "race-blind." It sometimes seems to be thought that this is part of the Imperial business of true

democracy. If so, let us hasten to assert that its business is nothing of the kind. Having politically and socially obliterated, so far as may be, all unreal distinctions, the legacies of an inexperienced past, its business is to lay the foundations everywhere of a truer and more real aristocracy; and, incidentally, to be blind to nothing which concerns the task of government.

It is not a question of what particular phrase comes sweetest to the lips of those of us who live at home enjoying what we should understand to be the expensive luxury of a homogeneous and well-ordered civilisation. It is a question of the inevitable subjection of the simplest class of human animal, harsh as some of the means employed for the purpose may be, to the first rude essentials of political life, which means, in the language of Lord Kitchener's reassuring proclamation, "the just supremacy of the White Races."

Nor is the case one where we can safely urge that it should remain unattempted if the enterprise involves so much that we, with the tastes and ideals bred in our comfortable little island-home, would rather not contemplate. The thing must be done. If you will not let it be done only moderately well, it will be done worse. If our hands are not clean enough for the task, it will fall into hands still less fitted for it. To approach the problem with exalted abstract notions of colour-blindness and equality of races would merely be to court failure. Justice to our inferiors, like other ideals, is not achieved by the most direct and obvious pursuit thereof,—on paper. We see, for example, how American practice, imprisoned in an Idealist formula of equality, has, so to say, corrected the constitutional Rights of Man with the foot-note in red ink,—*modified, in cases of colour by Lynch Law.*

Our business, therefore, is not to consider what would be the position of Black Races in a Utopia designed in the full glare of our English humanity of 1901, not to fetter ourselves with any ridiculous assumptions, but to seize eagerly on the maximum of humanity we can get out of the class of person who is certain to be in intimate industrial relations with the native, and, never relaxing, gradually to tighten and enlarge our grasp.

The matter is closely connected with another even more provocative of hysterics. "The bare idea of a war carried on for the sake of gold," we remember reading in an early outburst on the subject, "must shock the conscience of every Englishman." Without speculating as to the moral attitude of Drake or Raleigh when confronted by such problems, we can see that there are nowadays many good people to whom gold, except in the form of secure quarterly dividends, is a thing shocking in its indecent nudity. But putting aside the objectionable actuality of the particular business of money-grubbing (which seems to throw all the responsibility for the first *irritamenta malorum* on those who dig them up), and the sentimental preference of a pastoral Arcadia to the scarred and disembowelled Rand, it may be observed that a war carried on for the sake of the free development of the resources of a country is a war of the most eternally natural and inevitable kind. And a war between those able and willing (even greedy, if you please,) to undertake such a task and those whose temper and character is opposed to it, is only likely to end in one way. When Stevenson, in his striking address to the aborigines of Samoa, adjured them to dig, cultivate, make roads, and use their country, for, if they did not, some one else would, he was merely stating a great natural

law to which Great Britain remains as truly subject as the late Transvaal Republic.

"Develope your resources, mineral or vegetable, or someone else will." That is the rule, and it is no use buying rifles, said Stevenson, in order to stave off its operation. Nor does the accident that the "someone else" has oftener than not for centuries past been a person of Anglo-Saxon blood in the least affect the question. Yet, if Britain has a charter, her alliance in this respect with the laws of nature and the demands of mankind is certainly a part of it.

The business, or mission, for which the word *Empire* is rather a romantic misnomer, naturally subjects us to much hostile criticism. But is it likely, in the first place, that the chief actor on the world's stage should command the applause of those who passionately desire to come on, or have long been hissed off it?

We hear much of the unpopularity of England on the Continent, though no one seems to know of a great and active nation that was ever universally beloved. But the fact is that there is a great deal of truth in these persistent charges against us of tyranny and egotism, and even of a certain duplicity; the former embedded in our nature, the latter perhaps rather superimposed by the party-system. We do not really know how to do the thing better, and doubtless our sanguine hopes and promises do get a good deal entangled among the dirty actualities of time and space. Montalembert in his famous Apology for Great Britain written half a century ago, admitted that our pushing and grasping foreign policy (what is now called Imperialism) was open to much censure. "It is only," he adds, "when you compare it that your judgment is more lenient." In that case he would like to know who is going

to cast the first stone,—“Not Russia, not Prussia, and certainly not France.” Not even, we might perhaps add, that oldest and most precocious of our children, America, unless it were from that armchair of isolation and inexperience which she is now quitting to take up her share of the White Man’s Burden.

These then are the criticisms of academic Idealists, and very often of the Pharisees who bind burdens, heavy and grievous to be borne, for the shoulders of other people, they themselves having neither the will nor the opportunity for carrying them. This Pharisaism, by the way, has long been a characteristic of the Radical party, as it is now of the Pro-Boer party.

“Do you mean to say,” we hear it indignantly asked, “that this — war [the reader can adjust the adjectives to the shade of feeling he is most familiar with] could not have been avoided by superior diplomacy?” My dear sir, we will go even further. We think that if our diplomacy had been —you know what—a good half of our national troubles might have been avoided. What we want to know is, what right has anyone to demand that our diplomacy should be ideally perfect? It has only got to be reasonably good and fair; we were only bound to make a reasonable, not an unlimited, effort to settle the matter peaceably. Yet I never hear you ask, could this — war have been avoided if Boer statesmen had been merely a little more enlightened and a little more reasonable than they were? And as to the answer to that question, history will have little doubt. Nothing is more certain than that Great Britain, in her then blissful state of ignorance, was ashamed to declare war against what she regarded as a small and insignificant Power, that the electorate would never have approved such a step, and that their

present attitude is largely based on the consoling fact that it was not taken.

With the conduct of the campaign (which must afford a cheering example to those who hope for the gradual extinction of war by the thousand and one sentimental restrictions affecting it) we are not here concerned. The great British nation has appeared for some two years past in the light of an amiable old woman fooled by a racecourse sharper. We have avowed our ignorance and stupidity, and even been pilloried for it by *THE TIMES* in the sackcloth and ashes of Mr. Kipling’s doggerel verses. It is perhaps true that for centuries past no two belligerents ever had less knowledge of each other. But in history, to return to the broad facts of the matter, certain great data, if we are to form any conclusions at all, must be taken for granted.

Our ignorance and stupidity constituted a serious national misfortune, —nothing more. That we should be unaware of the artfully concealed and rapidly acquired resources of a petty State only recently dependent upon us for its very existence was doubtless a disgrace to our Intelligence Department. But that the Boers should have evolved, or that their leaders should have inculcated, such a preposterous misconception of the nature and resources of the British empire was one of those public and international errors that amount to crimes,—crimes for which a people has often to pay with its existence.

It is this ineradicable misconception, more than the much talked of Boer Independence, for which there was no room in the same continent with ourselves. We have heard too much of this high-sounding phrase, as if Mr. Kruger’s countrymen were pious anchorites whom we had insisted on dragging back into the wicked

world. Independence is not even the ideal of Great Britain and her colonies, but an ever closer alliance, an ever more practical connection, under the same broad principles of liberty and justice, with all the world. Isolation, independence of the most important facts of history and economics, is an impossible anomaly; and if Krugerism did not mean this, it was the most wicked of political gambles.

It is a mistake to suppose that a small State owes nothing, not even civility, to a great one, or that, if this obligation be not recognised, the latter, as *THE DAILY NEWS* seems to believe, is irresponsible before the world for all unpleasant consequences.

In this attempted sketch of its temper and tendency we have not denied the intrinsic virtuousness of the Pro-Boer temperament. Its vice is not seeing that it is only suited for the chamber and the study, and not at all for the public life into which it has, with little difficulty, been prevented from rushing.

We believe that their persistent and faithless depreciation of our national aims, of what in our heart of hearts we mean the empire to be, their preposterous tirades upon the greed of our colonial enterprise and the inhumanity of our conduct are due (except in the case of a few contemptible fanatics) much less to any malignity than to an innate aversion to and incapacity for the real difficulties of Imperial politics.

To say that their rhetorical demands coincide largely with the ultimate ideals of humanity is only to condemn them as a political creed. Hence the bulk of their eloquence has been, we believe, rather of the self-indulgent order, and, when not irritating, futile and banal. The most useless of publicists can turn with a weary sigh from the dingy muddle of actual life to the speckless empyrean of what ought

to be, and fare like the astrologer in the fable.

The surprises, the sharp suffering, the long anxieties of the past two years have, we suspect, evolved in many minds, which had scarcely reflected on the subject before, some outline of Imperial ethics, some sort of a philosophy of national action.

As to the first, they see that, however much other races, whose genius or circumstances draw them comparatively less into the turmoil of international life, may pretend to deny the practice, there can be no progress without a certain morally courageous self-assertion, that the State, like the individual, which has no self, no ideals, standards, or principles sufficiently formulated to keep national enthusiasm alive, may as well retire quietly from the great arena. Its conduct, or inaction, may give pleasure to those political agnostics who, having eliminated the old-fashioned patriotic virtues, see in mankind only a mass of equal and colourless conflicting atoms, to those cultured Hedonists to whom only the finished work of empire-making is bearable without the dirt and clamour of the workshops; but for the gross environment of the living, breathing world, drawn ever into closer congestion by the progress of science and mutual knowledge, it will not pass.

And, as to the second point, is it not equally clear that while the unity presupposed by all national action is to the philosophic eye a figment, a convention only to be maintained at the expense of a good deal of compromise (insincerity, it may seem to the Idealist, to others perhaps, patience and self-sacrifice), yet that the maintenance of such a convention, as the framework of a growing reality, is well worth great efforts to those of the patriotic faith. Doubtless the action of such a conventional per-

sonality will at its best be even less pure, in Platonic phrase, less satisfying than the sufficiently complex action of the individual; and that hence, as Mr. Lecky has sadly reminded us, public and private morals will seldom be found to correspond with any exactness. And it might be added that public, in the sense of international, political morals, form a field of action and discussion exclusively modern in its vastness, and that hence the distinction between public and private life was never so real, though it be one of those scarcely brought into general view, as we have said, except at grave crises.

It will scarcely be disputed that we all know virtuous men and women whose influence, excellent in the latter, and perhaps specially adapted for the refinement of mankind, would in the former sphere be dangerous and pernicious. What the particular temper seems to want may be variously called strength, breadth, or an admixture of material clay. Reflections, criticisms upon it, inevitably suffer to the mere dilettante listener from the reproach of vagueness, and are lightly stigmatised as all a matter of degree. But their true drift and point, familiar enough to our private judgment of men and things which is so constantly, if unconsciously, deciding the question of degree, requires now and then to be publicly emphasised.

It may be felt rather than seen in one of those outbursts of our greatest humanist, those rugged chips from the philosophic rock whence we were hewn and the hole of the pit where we were digged.

Take but degree away, untune that
string,
And, hark, what discord follows! . . .
. Right and wrong,
Between whose endless jar justice re-
sides,

Should lose their names, and so should
justice too.

.
This chaos, where degree is suffocate,
Follows the choking.
And this neglecting of degree it is
That by a pace goes backward, with
a purpose
It hath to climb.

This last and most unpalatable truth has been abundantly illustrated by Mr. Lecky in his interesting study of the various departments of public life in which a direct pursuit of the absolutely desirable has no effect but to render impossible the attainment of the moderately good.

The Idealist, then, who cannot face the spectacle of such discord should avoid the trying arena of practical politics. If, persisting, he finds with pain that there is much good in himself somehow not directly applicable to the world's needs, he may console himself with another of the historian's reflections, that the code on which great nations act, and act with what passes for honour and success, is very different not only from his own but from that of the Sermon on the Mount. Of this sort of reference we have heard a good deal lately. Mr. Ellis, in one of his speeches, told an anecdote of two travellers, one of whom, pressed by the other for his views on the burning question of the hour, replied that he wished to be "on the side of Our Lord Jesus Christ in this matter." "Oh," said the other, "I knew you were a Pro-Boer." But we are not sure that the joke is entirely with Mr. Ellis in his emphatic reflections on the frame of mind indicated by this remark. For the attitude taken of late by many pious and well-meaning Christians of the type here indicated, has been one rather exclusive, as might be expected, of the polemic side of Christianity. "Think not that I am come

to send peace on earth ; I came not to send peace but a sword." In the rude inconsistencies of the New Testament there is perhaps a more modern actuality than in the smooth sayings of Quakerism or Peace-at-any-Price philanthropy. Perhaps, this being one of the comparatively few references of the Founder of Christianity to the effect of His teaching on the world at large, it is after all not so easy to be "on the side of Jesus Christ" in matters more complex than the loan of a cloak or a hat ; though no one could wish for a nicer phrase in which to express his views or his inability to form them.

Much the same may be said of Mr. Ellis's final summary of Radical wisdom on the present situation. We read, and we should be shocked not to read, that no enduring settlement of South Africa can be founded "on the basis of military supremacy and force," that it must rest only on "the willing assent of free men," and "the immutable principles of justice, magnanimity, and freedom." This is the sort of eloquence that can be most safely recommended as never likely to do the speaker any harm. We all live in hopes that such language will some day be applicable to us ; but meanwhile is not its philosophy precisely of that impatient order that

By a pace goes backward, with a
purpose
It hath to climb ?

For when we search the pages of past history for any enduring settlement undefiled at its birth by military supremacy, for any great crisis when the willing assent of free men was at once secured by the mere display of the immutable principles of justice unsupported by what people call brute force, do we not realise how little use all this fair verbiage is to the struggling politician of the moment? We observe, possibly with vague regret, that those angelic visitants, the immutable principles of justice, magnanimity, and freedom, select for themselves material habitations compact of gross human clay. If they are not the exclusive heritage of the most warlike races, at any rate they are seldom much to be seen or heard of except in societies well stirred, wrought, and amalgamated by fierce strife and bloodshed, where the endless jar of vigorous life has evolved some rough standard of the righteousness that is stable because it has its root in things,—“The fine flower of Right” that, to the eternal wonder of the cloistered pedant and the anæmic Manchester Schoolman, must and will grow upon “the rugged stem of Might.”

THE LAND OF THE POPPY.

III.—ITS WILD LIFE.

A FEW districts in Poppy Land lie on the borders of Nepaul with the sierras of the great Himalayan range for ever gleaming in their northern sky. In these regions there exist many hundred square miles of forest, and of scrub and grass jungle, in which some of the most remarkable and interesting forms of wild life are still able to find a haven of safety. These forests, which consist chiefly of *sál* trees, are the property of the State, and are consequently under the control of a special department of the Government service. The *sál* (described in botanical works as *Shorea robusta*) affords a valuable and useful timber, and consequently the forests are a source of profit to the Government. They are, as may be supposed, carefully preserved, and for this every lover of Nature in her wild phases should be grateful, since it is only in these secluded spots that it is possible to see many a rare animal and bird that would otherwise have to be contemplated as a specimen in some museum, or as a captive in the collection of a zoological society. To any one who is acquainted with wild creatures this means a great deal, for there is a wide gulf between the appearance of Nature's children when wearily measuring the limits of their prisons, and when moving with the pride and grace of conscious freedom in the leafy solitudes or grassy glades of their native haunts.

It is always twilight in the *sál* forests. The great trees growing close together shoot straight up towards

the sun and air, and do not throw out branches till they have cleared the ground by about ten or fifteen feet. Their foliage is of a dark and sombre green, and forms a thick roof through which the rays of sunlight penetrate with difficulty, and but dimly light up the gloom in which the tall trunks stand. The bark is rough and crossed by many furrows, and is in colour a deep rich brown, which is diversified by patches of many-coloured mosses, olive, green, fawn, white, and black. Around the roots of the trees there is so thick a growth of bushes and shrubs matted together by creeping plants, that it is hard to see clearly thirty yards on either side. Along the edges of the forests are large tracts of rolling plains crossed by innumerable *nullahs* and dotted with *jhils* or marshes. These plains are clothed with long grasses of different species, and with scrub jungle consisting generally of *khair*, a variety of acacia. The most noticeable of the grasses that clothe these plains is the *munj* or *sarpāt*. This grass grows in large tussocks, throwing its leaves six or seven feet high, while its flowering stalks spring out of these some five or six feet higher. The flowers are in panicles, and are of a silvery white colour, but when newly developed have a tinge of purple about them. As they mature and the seed ripens they become very dry and light, and are detached by the wind and blown away. In this manner the seeds are conveyed great distances, and the

munj grass spreads itself quickly over a large extent of ground.

Where the land is low-lying and marshy the *munj* grass gives way to the *narkul*, a kind of reed that grows in dense masses forming impenetrable coverts which are the home of a *fauna* peculiar to them alone.

Close to the rivers the grass jungle is often interspersed with *jháo* or tamarisk. The tamarisk resembles a cypress in the appearance of its leaves, but it assumes a clumpy bush-like form in its growth. By degrees as a river bank is approached the *jháo* grows thicker until it looks like a wall of bluish-green bushes. Here and there in the labyrinths of this jungle the ground is treacherously soft, and quakes ominously at the approach of man or beast as a warning that it is to be avoided. The green belt of the tamarisk is usually succeeded by a stretch of white sand, with a streak of blue in the middle where the river gives back the clear azure of the sky. Far beyond the water with its shimmering reflections is again a line of sombre forest, and beyond this, rise the purple masses of the Nepaul hills, while high above them gleams with a pure radiance the long line of Himalaya's snows.

Chief of all the inhabitants of the *sál* forest is the tiger. By day he rests in a dense patch of *munj* grass generally near some reedy marsh. His hiding-place is cleverly chosen, and the pathways in it are known only to himself. No living creature could approach him without some sound, and the slightest rustle is an alarm to his finely-tempered senses. His eyes are closed in sleep, but his ears stand sentinel over him. While the winter sun spreads a pleasant, if short-lived, warmth through his hiding place, he sleeps calmly, paying no heed to the clucking of the duck and teal, or the trumpet notes of the

great Sahras crane wading in the shallows of the marsh hard by. As he sleeps he dreams of the fat *chital* stag he gripped on its return from the pool in which it had quenched its thirst; or it may be that visions of the young buffalo he slew last evening on the forest's edge pass before his mind, and his sleep becomes troubled for he remembers, though dimly, that the vultures are even now helping themselves to an undue share of his game. The dream becomes so vivid that his yellow eyes open lazily; but they soon close again, and with a low, purring growl he turns to rest once more. The shadows of birds wheeling high up in the air flit past him, and the small reed-warblers soothe him with the endless monotone of their shrill piping. At last the darkness begins to gather over the jungle. The huge cranes flap slowly away, uttering hoarse cries as they go, and the air strikes chilly in forest and marsh. It is growing late, but it is not yet late enough. Another hour passes, and a faint red glow on the horizon is all that is left to tell that it has been day. A grey mist begins to creep up from the marsh, and here and there a star twinkles frostily in the sky. It is time now. The tiger awakes. Throwing off the chains of sleep with a shake of his massive head he yawns, uttering as he does so a long-drawn moan that hushes the forest into silence for a mile around him. Then his jaws close with a snap; he stands up in all his Satanic beauty, and proudly stalks forth from his lair to set him down to his evening meal if he has killed the day before; if not, he peers long and carefully from the edge of his stronghold before he takes a step into the open. He must cross a small bare patch before he can enter the forest, and moving over this as noiselessly as a ghost, he disappears in the

musky shadow of the jungle. Caution is the watchword of the forest, and careful as he has been to glide like a shadow across the open space, he has been seen, and the alarm-note of a peacock, ringing out in the silence, proclaims that the great cat is abroad.

Who can follow him in his long wanderings under the pale winter moon? Who has seen him creeping slowly from tree to tree, or flattening himself down until he is completely hidden by a tuft of grass which no sane man would think thick enough to conceal a hare? Who has watched him bound up to his terrified victim, seize it by the throat, and give it that fatal twist that is the end of the tragedy; or who has seen him turn aside and spring into the dew-laden grass, eager to hide his shame and disappointment when his stalk has not succeeded, and the dappled stag dashes away through the forest-paths making it known far and wide that danger is afoot? These tragedies of the jungle must be built up from the silent witnesses of their occurrence. To one who is skilled in the signs, the history is clear to read. In the soft mud on the margin of the pool the tiger's paws have sunk deep, and it is possible to trace the huge bound the stag made to save its life.

The approach of night does not call forth the tiger alone to roam through the forest in search of food. The panther also then awakes, and quitting his lair in the hollow *semul* tree, or in the darkest nooks of the *karaunda* bushes, proceeds to hunt the part of the forest in his beat. He does this in a systematic manner, and his progress through the forest may be traced by the frequent use he makes of his voice. He is a noisy beast, and gives vent to his feelings in a succession of coughs. The panther's cry, when heard at a little distance, may be

closely imitated by working a saw two or three times on the edge of any empty wooden box; it is a rough, grating and yet hollow sound. He does not seem to care whether his voice may frighten the game in the thickets around him, or perhaps he uses it to drive the timid deer in a particular direction. The grey monkeys, cowering on the rough branches of the ebony-tree, hear him, and shrink down on the boughs, or climb higher up chattering with fear and hate. The panther pays no heed to them. He makes his way down the forest-roads, not even glancing towards the shadowy forms of the wild pig, as they dash into the jungle giving him a wide berth. The panther is fond of pig and appreciates monkey, but now his mind is set on another object. The night is dark and stormy, such a night as would gladden the heart of a daring robber, and he is bent on reaching the cattle-pen on the edge of the forest. As he emerges from the deep shadow of the jungle he sees a row of glimmering fires not two hundred yards from the borders of his domain. Voices echo in the air, and he draws back and crouches to watch what he recognises as a camp of men,—his hated enemies, and the only ones he fears. For some moments he gazes in silent dissatisfaction at the intruders and then, rising, gives notice of his displeasure in deep grunting roars that make the white man in his tent look longingly at his gun and wish it was a moonlight night. For a long time the panther hesitates, walking to and fro, crouching and glaring at the lights, and giving way to noisy bursts of rage. More logs are thrown on the fires that blaze up brightly and the watchmen call to one another, till at last he turns sullenly back, and leaving his favourite road between Lachman Mahto's wheat-patch and the euphorbia hedge, plunges into the thickets, and

makes his way through the wet grass and thorns that lie between him and the cattle-pen. But his noisy anger has betrayed him, and the herdsmen are awake. They have reason to remember his visits, for it was only a week ago that he struck down the red calf that Gopi Ahir had just bought from the Banjara trader for four rupees. The grass crackles as he pushes his way through, and some wakeful monkeys begin to chatter their alarm. But the panther's blood is up, and he advances boldly to the thorn fence inside which the cattle are penned. The herdsmen rush up with loud yells and blazing brands, dogs bark wildly, and some bullocks, breaking loose, career madly round the enclosure. For a moment the panther's green eyes glare with demoniac rage, but a lighted brand falls on the ground unpleasantly near him sending up a shower of sparks that make him recoil a few yards. He is defeated, and with a grunt of disappointment he turns and vanishes in the vague shadow of the forest.

And now, as he walks down a by-path, he hears a goat bleating dismally in the darkness. In a few bounds he is up to it, but to his surprise it does not stir. This puzzles him, and arouses suspicions which require to be allayed before any further action can be taken. The panther sits down, and studies the goat which gazes piteously at him, straining at its rope meanwhile. In a few minutes the mystery has been worked out. This goat has evidently been left here by mistake. It is an ordinary goat tied to a peg in the ground, and a careful examination of all the surrounding bushes shows that there are no traps or snares about it. It can be approached from all sides with perfect safety. There are other arguments urging him to prompt action in the matter; the last meal dates from a long time back, and morning is not far off.

The panther is hungry, and hunger, like love, is often blind. In another moment the second scene in the tragedy is brought to a close. The panther has dislocated his victim's neck, and torn a large mouthful from its throat. With a strong jerk he breaks the cord fastening it to the peg, and drags away his booty to a quiet nook a little distance off. Here snarling and growling with pleasure he eats till morning dawns, and the thin voice of the red jungle-fowl warns all evil things to return to their hiding-places. Rising reluctantly he slowly moves off to the dense cover of a neighbouring thicket, and prepares to sleep away the tedious hours that separate him from his next meal.

In the evening he returns to finish his repast, and it is the last journey he is fated to make. High up in a tree overlooking the carcase of the goat, himself concealed in a nest cunningly wrought of leaves and twigs, sits the white man whose rest the panther disturbed last night. As the beast approaches the kill he looks round carefully, but can find nothing to arouse his suspicions. He is soon engrossed in his meal, when a slight rustle makes him raise his head. He gazes steadfastly before him, then jumps up, for his eyes have caught those of the man who sits up on the tree. The rifle rings out, and with an inarticulate groan the panther falls by the side of his last victim, writhing in the agonies of death. The rest of his history is poor and commonplace. Jackals tear the flesh of his strong muscles, and hideous vultures hold a foul feast over his bones. His skull, nicely cleaned, grins on a shelf in his destroyer's study, and his skin, well cured and mounted on red cloth, lies on the floor, and on the top of it, curled up and unconscious of the exalted position he occupies, little Tim the dachshund sleeps contentedly.

In the long grass on the outskirts of the forest a little spotted wild cat is found. It lurks in the grass, hoping to surprise a partridge or a hare, and is often driven out while beating for the latter. Its career generally comes to an abrupt end on these occasions, as the skin makes a pretty trophy, and the charge of shot intended for a partridge will be sufficient to bring it to bag. This little cat is a fierce creature, and when wounded attempts to sell its life dearly, snarling and growling with all the vicious rage of a wounded panther.

Another inhabitant of the grass on the edge of the forest, and sometimes even of the *narkul* patches, is the hyæna. The hyæna is a lurking coward, and as he slinks along in the shadows the meanness of his nature is well borne out by his ungainly shape. He is the analogue of the foot-pad among human beings; like him he shrinks from the light of day, and shambles along in the gloom with a shame-faced, hang-dog look about him. He peers about for some weak, defenceless creature to pull down, and if he cannot succeed in finding an animal that he is not afraid of, he solaces his gross appetite on offal. Nature has provided him with immensely powerful teeth and jaws, and he uses these chiefly to crush the bones of dead cattle upon which he often feeds. He is an unclean animal, and has the disgusting musky smell of the mongoose family. His voice is hideous to hear, and may be compared to demoniac laughter.

Another animal worthy of note for its vocal powers alone is the ubiquitous jackal, which is also, with the little grey fox, an inhabitant of the fringes of the forest. The wild outpourings of the jackal's soul nightly make these places echo with hideous sounds. The noise that one of these

small creatures can produce is appalling, and the gamut of a pack in full cry is such an extraordinary medley of groans, shrieks, and yells that a few minutes of enforced attention to it makes the listener wish for some lethal weapon to enable him to destroy the whole tribe of jackals at a blow.

The jackal is commonly believed by the natives of the country to be the forerunner of the tiger, but this belief is a somewhat fanciful one. Jackals may sometimes be forerunners of tigers, but it is not of their own will. They prowl about at dusk and at night, and when they scent or hear a tiger naturally express the alarm they feel in a long-drawn howl known as their *phedl* cry from being not unlike that word, with the *a* pronounced broad, and the accent on the last syllable. It is a cry used as a warning to other jackals to be on the alert. Jackals eat anything and everything. In the forests and jungles they prey upon small animals and birds, and close to the villages and cities they exist on offal and refuse, and rank as scavengers with the vultures. Vile as the tastes of this animal are, there are yet races of men who esteem its flesh a delicacy. The Kuch-bandwas, a wandering aboriginal race in Oudh, will readily eat jackal, as also will the Nunias, who esteem themselves higher up in the social scale than the Kuch-bandwas.

The little grey fox is found almost wherever the jackal occurs. His short, sharp bark is a pleasant sound to hear on a winter's night, and together with the shrill frequent whistle of the goggle-eyed plover is one of the established cries of the forests and plains.

Both jackals and foxes if taken young can be tamed, and are then very dog-like in their manners; but being particularly liable to rabies they do not make the best of pets.

The wolf is not uncommon in the grass and scrub jungle, but from its extreme wariness is not often seen. They are generally found in pairs, but have on occasions been seen in greater numbers. Wolves are dreaded by the defenceless villagers on account of their partiality to children, and in districts infested by them they bring sorrow and desolation to many a home. Notwithstanding this grim trait in their characters wolves when taken young become extremely tame, and even develop amusing habits. A tame wolf that came much under my observation had an especial mania for glassware. He would carry off tumblers or wine-glasses most carefully and hide them in various places in the garden without ever breaking one. His master used to play tunes on a little toy musical instrument known, I believe, as a mouth-harmonicon. This instrument Mario, the wolf, regarded with great aversion, and kept watchful eyes upon it. One day his master, having entertained some of his friends with his performances on this instrument, the party being out of doors on the beautiful lawn in his garden, inadvertently left the toy on the ground. Mario stole up with his jungle-walk noiselessly, and quietly appropriating the enemy of his peace, hid it away in a nook in the garden where it was found a month afterwards. It is not recorded whether, like the ass in La Fontaine's fable, he breathed gently into it, and exclaimed "*He, He, je joue aussi de la flûte.*"

The dense coverts of the forest as well as the *narkul* marshes and the tamarisk and grass jungles are equally the home of the wild pig. To the little village on the outskirts of the forest the sounders of pig are veritable scourges. Made cunning by experience the beast issues from his resting-place at night and trots complacently to the potato-patch, which

in a short time looks as if newly turned up with the plough for sowing. During the winter months, at which season of the year alone wheat, potatoes, and poppies can be grown, the inhabitants of these tiny pioneer villages have a weary time with their wild neighbours. They build small platforms on poles, some ten or twelve feet from the ground, and on these the watchmen spend the long hours of the night endeavouring by hoarse shouts or the occasional firing of a gun to keep off the hosts of marauders that steal up in the misty darkness.

In these regions of dense forest it is not considered unsportsman-like to shoot pigs. The spear has to be set aside, for it cannot be used. No horseman, however bold, nor any horse, however strong, could make their way at the pace required to overtake or even to keep a pig in sight, through the tussocks of the *munj* grass or the dense clumps of the tamarisk. In the forest itself a horse cannot go off the beaten track, as the under-growth is so dense that a man on foot can hardly make his way through it.

The spotted deer, or *chital* as it is called in the language of the country, loves to dwell in the deepest recesses of the forest, and it is an extremely difficult task to stalk a stag in his leafy home. Apart from the difficulty of approaching noiselessly through the thick under-growth, there is always a sentinel, generally a hind, on the watch; even when she rests she has, so to say, one eye open and nothing escapes her vigilant attention.

The *chital* is of a rich tawny brown with a darker brown stripe along the spine, and rows of white spots on the sides and flanks. The stag bears large and graceful antlers, and is one of the handsomest of the many beautiful creatures inhabiting the forest. Its colouring is wonderfully protective. In the dim light of the great

forests its dappled coat blends with the withered leaves and brown twigs in such a manner that it is only when some slight movement occurs that the animal's presence becomes evident. As evening draws on the *chital* move in silent procession through the depths of the forest to the lighter coverts on its edge, and here they wait impatiently for the night when the voices of men are hushed. In the faint starlight they step noiselessly from their hiding-places, and enter the fields of sprouting wheat that make their favourite food. If the hunter be keen he will rise in the dark, and facing the bitter cold and heavy dew of the winter morning make his way to the forest-edge and wait. As the white light of dawn begins to show itself the *chital* troop back to the cool bowers in which they mean to spend the day; and it is then that some lordly stag with towering antlers will suddenly loom out of the mist before the watcher's eyes.

Though the *chital* feeds largely on the sprouting crops, he cannot be ranked as a marauder with the *nilghai*. The *nilghai*, or blue-bull, is, with the pig, held in particular detestation by the farmers. He is bold and greedy, and spares no crop, not even the poppy, full of acrid juices, which perhaps he takes as a salad with his other food. The *nilghai* is very bovine in appearance, and to this resemblance to the cow it owes its name, which is a Hindustani word, literally meaning blue-cow or blue-bull. On this account also Hindus will not kill the blue-bull, nor will any but the lowest castes partake of its flesh.

The *nilghai* prefers scrub jungle and tall grass to hide in, and generally lurks close to the field. In quiet places it may be met with at all times of the day, but where it has been harassed by sportsmen it adopts the

tactics of the *chital*, and comes forth only at night. The bull is very strongly built, and when seen among the tall stalks of the silver-flowered *moonj* is a noble animal to look at. His shoulders are very high, and a scanty mane runs down his neck with generally a long wisp over the shoulders. His horns are small and pointed, and the general colour of his body a slaty grey with a few white bars on the fetlocks. The cow is much smaller, and does not hold her head so proudly as the bull. She is of a tawny red, has large soft eyes and no horns. *Nilghais* are often seen in herds, the cows being frequently followed by one or two calves.

These animals are easily tamed when taken young, but the bull is always capricious in temper, and prone to use his sharp little horns when angry or startled. The *nilghai*, the pig, and the black buck are three animals that continue to exist in large numbers in close proximity to man, long after all other kinds of big game have been extirpated. The black buck, although not a forest animal, is to be met with wherever the tall grass thins out and leaves large bare plains in the vicinity of cultivation. They trust to their keen senses and the open nature of the ground they affect, and feed boldly in the day-time. A watchful doe is usually on the lookout, and the herd gets timely notice of the approach of any suspicious character.

The movements of the black buck are light and graceful, and when a herd is making off they often indulge in huge bounds in the air before settling down to the steady gallop which soon takes them out of sight. When moving from one pasture to another, or when issuing from the shelter of the tall grass on the way to their feeding-grounds, the bucks gener-

ally follow the does, loitering with the grand air of easy indifference after their pretty seraglios. Seen from a little distance with the sunshine gleaming upon him, a buck antelope in his winter coat looks as if clothed in black and white satin. He is a daintily finished animal, and will always remain one of the most charming figures to be met with on the wide plains of Poppy Land.

It has been already said that the undulating plains on the edges of the forests are intersected by innumerable *nullahs* draining their contents into large depressions that thus form extensive marshes. These marshes are, as a rule, almost concealed from view by the *narkul* reed which forms coverts so dense and tall that they can be explored only on the back of an elephant. Towards the centre of the marsh, where the water deepens, the *narkul* gives way and a still open lake presents itself to the view, its surface dotted with the green pads and lighted up by the white flowers of the *lotus*. In these secluded lakes, screened from view by towering walls of plumed reeds, the white-eyed duck, the wigeon, the grey duck and the common teal settle in large numbers. As the giant reeds sway and tremble before the line of slowly advancing elephants, breaking under their feet with loud crackling reports, the duck and teal rise up in large flights and wheel excitedly about their rudely invaded sanctuaries. Great bitterns flap slowly away, and blue kingfishers dart across the lagoons, while an army of water-hens, rails, and purple herons keep moving in short flights before the advancing line, and now and then a grey heron flaps heavily away to seek some quieter retreat, uttering hoarse croaks of displeasure as he goes. It is here, in the heart of these vast wildernesses of reeds, that the *gondh*, or swamp-deer, makes its home.

Naturalists call this animal *Cervus Duvauceli*, but in the regions where he is found he is known as the *gondh* or *bárasingha*. The latter name, which means twelve-horned one, has doubtless been given to him with reference to the numerous points on his spreading antlers. The brow-tines of this deer are generally very long, and almost at right angles to the beam. The beam bifurcates near the summit, and each branch bears several tines. The head when well developed has an almost palmated appearance. The *gondh* is one of the shyest of its kind, and loves to feed on the succulent grasses found in damp places. It is perhaps for these reasons that he seeks the shelter of the *narkul* reeds, for there is no sign of any special adaptation for a semi-aquatic life apparent in the structure of this deer, as in the case of the curious African swamp-antelope known as the *Sitatunga*. In appearance the *gondh* is something like a red deer. The hair round his neck is coarse and long, and forms a sort of ruff. The general colour is of a yellowish brown, with a white patch under the tail. The muzzle is elongated and narrow. The hind is smaller than the stag and hornless; she is a gentle-looking creature of a greyer tint than her mate.

In these districts, as has been said, the *gondh* can only be seen from the back of an elephant, and even then a number of those beasts are required to induce him to quit his hiding-place. As the line of elephants advances slowly and steadily the reeds ahead begin to sway and move violently as if some animal is trying to force its way out. It fights for every inch of the cover, moving now to the right now to the left. At last there is not more than a few yards of *narkul* left to hide in when the reeds suddenly part, and with a splash a noble stag emerges to view. He has had a hard

struggle to get out of the covert, and as he stands looking for a moment with wonder and alarm towards the line of elephants, his towering antlers, covered with green festoons, bear witness to the fight he has had with the thick growth of the reeds. For a moment he stands on the bank, his grand form outlined against the sky, and then, understanding that his life is at stake, the noble creature stretches forth into the gallop that frequently enables him to find another retreat in safety.

The *gondh* is one of the animals that retreat steadily before the approach of man, and as the marshy coverts it frequents are being approached steadily on all sides by cultivation, it must be placed on the long list of wild creatures that are doomed to become extinct within a measurable date.

At the corners of the *narkul* patches, where the reed gives way to grass, a curious little deer is often to be seen. This little creature is known by Europeans in India as the *para*, or hog-deer. As it bounds from its form in the dense grass it is at the first glance not unlike a pig in appearance. It always makes off at a great pace, holding its head low and its neck thrust forward, and bounds from side to side as it follows the narrow passages between the tussocks of grass. The does are of a rufous brown colour, and do not carry horns; but the stag bears a pair of light-coloured antlers, with three tines, which sometimes attain to the length of twenty inches, but are generally much less. He is a queer-looking little creature standing high in the quarters, which gives his back a humped and somewhat ungraceful shape.

Apart from the flights of duck and teal, and the swarms of bitterns, rails, purple coots, and kingfishers that find

refuge in the marshes, the most remarkable of the birds to be found in them is the *kyah* or swamp-partridge.

Though fond of low-lying damp coverts this bird does not, as its name might seem to imply, actually breed in the swamps. It is most frequently found in the short grass lying close to the *narkul* patches along the edges of the swamps, and in hollows in the tamarisk jungle where the grass is green and the soil moist. It is a large handsome bird. The male is distinguished by a bright rusty red patch on the throat, while the feathers of the breast and flanks are adorned with conspicuous white central streaks that give the plumage a singularly bright and varied appearance. The legs are red and in the male are each adorned with a long and sharp spur.

In the *munj* jungle the *francolin*, or black partridge, takes the place of the swamp-partridge. The *francolin* is fond of making excursions into the growing wheat-crops where it may often be seen feeding in unfrequented places. It also affects the sugarcane fields, and its pleasant subdued crow may be heard in many places at a considerable distance from the jungle. The male *francolin* is one of the handsomest birds of his tribe. When in full plumage the breast is deep black relieved by lunated white spots, and the face also is black relieved by a white patch under the eye; the throat has a collar of chestnut brown, and the back is a finely barred grey.

The dense coverts, so much appreciated by the *chital*, also afford shelter to the red jungle-fowl. The jungle-cock is a handsome bird, and may best be observed in the early morning on the fringes of the forest. At this time, in company with his harem, the little potentate wanders into the stubble of the freshly-cut rice-fields, and gleans a hasty meal

before the sun gets high and men begin to move about. Jungle-fowls may also often be observed feeding in the forest-paths, especially where two roads meet, and they are frequently to be met with in the neighbourhood of the *gauris*, or temporary cattle-pens in the forests, where they may be seen industriously scratching about among the refuse after the approved manner of the domestic fowl. He is a very wary bird, and is never far from a thick covert into which he runs on the slightest alarm. If completely taken by surprise he will often fly into the nearest tree, and from there make his escape into the jungle. As the cock runs through the forest the golden hackles on its neck and its bright red comb form an effective contrast to the gloomy depths it seeks. The tail is generally carried low, and the neck thrust forward as the bird makes its way through the brushwood. Early in the morning and again in the evening the jungle-cock lifts up his voice in a crow very similar to that of the domestic fowl, but feebler and less sustained. The hens are tiny brown little creatures, if possible even more wary than the cock. Walking stealthily along the edge of the forest one may sometimes surprise a family-party that has just returned from an outlying field. The sight is one of the prettiest the jungle's varied scenes afford, but it is very fleeting. The little birds become aware of one's presence as if by magic, and disappear immediately through the tawny curtain of grasses and leaves into the dark recesses of the forest.

Another noticeable inhabitant of the *sál* forests is the *bhimraj*, or racket-tailed drongo-shrike. This bird is of

an intensely black colour shining with greenish reflections in the light. The head is crested, and the shafts of the two outermost tail feathers are prolonged far beyond the rest. They terminate in spatula-shaped webs, and from these extraordinary appendages the bird derives its name. The *bhimraj* is a noisy bird, often uttering its full-toned whistle as it flits from tree to tree. The whistle is extremely human in sound, and when heard for the first time makes one involuntarily look round for the intruder. Besides this cheery whistle, which is its habitual note, the *bhimraj* is able to produce a variety of others, for it is a clever mimic, and soon learns the cries of the birds around it. It is sometimes kept in cages, and makes an amusing pet, but it requires a constant supply of animal food, for in its wild state it lives entirely upon insects. The *bhimraj* keeps to the forests, and never approaches cultivation as does its fearless little cousin, the common drongo.

Here I must bring my notes to an end, for it is not possible in this glimpse at the life of the forest to describe the ways and manners of all its inhabitants. To one who has visited these scenes with a mind open to the fascinating influence of Nature in her wild moods, the thought of the dimly-lighted arcades of the forest, the bewildering stretches of the flowering grasses, the still reed-covered marshes, the rivers now turbid and bordered with treacherous quicksands, now flowing limpid and clear over beds of rounded pebbles, and the forms and ways of the strange creatures that people these wildernesses, will come back in after days as the recollection of a visit paid to an enchanted land.

G. A. LEVETT-YEATS.

HIS BAPTISM OF FIRE.

HE had too much imagination ; not too much, perhaps, for a poet or a novelist, or a writer of travels, but decidedly too much for a British subaltern on active service ; and it was that which made him so uncomfortable.

He had drifted into the army from family tradition, not from any special liking for the life, except so far as it was a lazy one. All his ancestors,—so far as his descent could be traced,—had been soldiers and he never dreamed of being the exception. He had never calculated that his animal spirits were exceptionally deficient, and that his want of interest in field-sports went far to disqualify him for the profession he had adopted. Civilisation had shielded him from all bodily dangers through his earlier years : yet he had a concealed terror of a horse's hind-legs, and a sickening dread of thunder-storms which might have told him that constitutionally he was a coward ; but he never realised the fact until he knew his battalion was going into action, though he had felt qualms which he acknowledged were unworthy of a soldier from the first moment that he learned that they were destined for active service.

As the thin khaki-clad column wound slowly over the parched surface of the veldt, his unfitnes for the post he occupied became very patent to him ; but that thought was so far the least painful of those which possessed him that he would gladly have dwelt on it, if he had had the power ; but more hideous thoughts would obtrude.

He was going to be killed ; or that he had not the least doubt, and if not in this action, then in the next ; but what would being killed mean ? That he did not know, and there was nobody to tell him. There would be a great crash or shock, he supposed, and then—what ? The end of all things ? Scarcely ; he felt so strongly, as every sentient being must feel, even if he never gives expression to the feeling, that he was the centre of the universe, the final end of all creation, that he could not conceive of a world from which he had been blotted out. There must be a further existence for him, but, being strictly a materialist, he could not credit the teachings of religion. What then would that further existence be ? Was it possible that death destroyed not consciousness, but merely the power of expressing it, that the dead man's senses lingered in a slowly putrefying body ? Pah ! But it was possible,—though, if such was the case, what happened when the body was resolved into its component parts ? He had only thrown the difficulty a few weeks further on. Perhaps no one ever knew that he died but merely died to others, while living on to an eternity in a self-shaped world of his own. To live in a world peopled only by phantoms seemed,—though, why he might have found it hard to explain,—a shade more terrible than to remain the paralysed tenant of a decaying carcase. Or, perhaps, the moment of death lasted for ever. The dying died to the outside world instantaneously, but the sensations of the moment of death

were printed on the individual consciousness and never passed away. That theory was, if anything, worse than the preceding ones.

Of course he had always known he was mortal, and that death must be faced sooner or later; but it had seemed so immeasurably distant a week ago and now it seemed so pressingly imminent, and he had not the faintest idea what it would be like. Every other ordeal in life can be faced with some more or less definite idea of what it would resemble drawn either from one's own experience, or from that of others; but death stood out majestically and hideously apart, though he knew its wings were already enfold- ing him.

He would look at the matter in another light. Whether he died early or late in the action; whether he fell by the first shot fired, or escaped until the victory was won, and dropped as he cheered on the final charge, the casualty-lists would not be made up till late that night. When would they be published at home? Would it be in the morning or the evening papers? Would Flora, that inveterate early riser, discover it in the columns of *THE TIMES*, or Giles, the enthusiastic sportsman, chance upon it as he unfolded his half-penny sheet of glaring head-lines, before he had mastered the latest news from the race-course and the betting lists? Perhaps the War Office would be considerate enough to send a special message, and his father would emerge from his study with a pink sheet fluttering in his hand and launch the news with chastened pride at the unsuspecting heads of his startled family. However they got the news it would hurt them; they were all fond of him, and he was very fond of them; he did not like to be the cause of giving them pain, even

though he would never know that he had done so.

How aggressively callous and unsympathetic they were all round him! The soldiers were whistling the regimental march; his captain was smiling blandly on the company, confident that they would do credit to his training; his brother subaltern actually dropped back to offer him a cigarette. He took it, sooner than hurt the other's feelings, though profoundly conscious how incongruous cigarette-smoking was to one devoted to an early and violent death. He even lighted it, but after a very few puffs he let it out and threw it away; a chubby-faced bugler snapped it up and pocketed it, and yet the bugler was as fair a mark for an enemy's bullet as he was himself, except for some slight difference in size. However, he was going to be killed and the bugler was not.

He realised that his legs were faltering under him and that sweat was pouring down from under his helmet, though he felt anything but warm. This would never do. Surely if condemned criminals could, as he had often read, march with a firm step to the scaffold, with their own burial-service ringing in their ears, he could command himself on the way to die, conscious of no death-worthy crime, but, on the contrary, of the intention of dying for his country. Bah! Death was the all-absorbing factor in the situation; the why and the how were, or soon would be, nothing to him.

Halt! The battalion flung themselves down on the grass as if swept by the fiery sword of an avenging angel. He lay down too, though with serious doubts whether his limbs would serve him to get up again. Crash! what was that? A big gun firing ahead: the last act was beginning. At that sound every one

started up; he hoped no one noticed that he had to use his hands to rise to his feet. There was no need for the colonel to call "Step out, men, we're wanted." They were straining forward as fast as they could go; the ground was slipping back under their feet, and his own brief span of life was slipping away with it.

Crack, crack, crack! A sound as of marbles thrown out of a bag on to a stone floor, dominated by a grunting sound like a panting brazen-throated pig. "Silomio!" ejaculated his brother subaltern, who rejoiced in high-sounding and inappropriate expletives. "They've got a maxim, I suppose; at least we've taken none with us." Another crash, another rattle, each quickening their steps. An aide-de-camp came careering with studied ease of manner to meet them. "That chap's got 'ands," criticised a private who wished to be thought an authority on matters equestrian. "Never mind, Bill, you needn't fear he's come for you, if he hasn't got no tail," commented another.

The aide-de-camp's orders were concise, the colonel's action prompt: "Numbers One and Two Companies, extend." He was in Number Three, which was not to start in the fighting line. So much the worse; if he'd got to die, let him die and get it over. Ah! there was one redeeming feature about death which he had not considered; if he died,—when he had died,—he need never fear death again so long as he lived, or rather so long as his senses lasted. After all, death couldn't be so much worse than the fear of it.

"Numbers Three and Four, supports." That was the last order he should ever obey, at least from those lips; he supposed the captain would find some fiddling details to fuss about before the end, and what was the end going to be like? They were

breasting the ridge now which divided them from the battle-field; a shrapnel burst a little to the left flicking up the dust in impotent malice; a spent rifle-ball or two dropped near them thudding against the ground; the crack, crack, crack was becoming continuous, punctuated by the crashes of the field-guns and drowning the peculiarly distasteful snort of the maxim. There was a louder explosion spluttering off into the accompaniment of rifle-fire. "B. Company, sir," commented his sergeant; "their volleys always was ragged."

They had cleared the ridge now and the rifle-bullets began chipping up the dust round them, and screeching past with a very blood-thirsty note in their flight. "First blood to Private Games," cried the owner of that name throwing up his left arm where just below the elbow a dark red stain was showing on his khaki sleeve. Now it might come any moment, and the sooner the better. One of the fighting line was sitting on the ground, with an expression of displeased astonishment on his face, knotting a grimy handkerchief round the fleshy part of his thigh. People seemed to be getting wounded rather than killed, but this only deepened the horror of it. If wounded, you probably died just the same, after lying for four and twenty hours, or perhaps more, in hideous agony.

"Halt!" They pulled up among a convenient collection of ant-heaps, each high enough to shelter its couple of men. A long-tongued *aard-vark* who had broken down the side of one of them and was making a placid meal off thousands of its inhabitants, withdrew a glutinous tongue and scuttled away just escaping a playful stroke from the butt of a Lee-Metford. They snuggled under cover. "Blaze away, you beggars, we can stay here for a fortnight!" cried

one of the rear-rank men. A well-aimed shrapnel wrecked one of the ant-heaps and the indwellers swarmed out to take summary vengeance on the nearest soldiers. "Damned big fleas!" cried one of the assailed recoiling. It was curious; every one else seemed as unconcerned as possible; he, only he, felt a deadly sickness and a paralysis of every muscle. "Gawd!" cried a man in front of him and dropped. It was Jenkins, the crack bowler of the regimental eleven. "They must have put a break on that ball to reach you, Tom," said his rear-rank man callously. The captain passed slowly along the rear of the line smoking a briar-root pipe, unconcernedly.

"I wish to goodness I could see what was going on," he remarked to his subaltern. This latter made no rejoinder, but by a great effort forced his lips to frame the question which was superseding the fear of death in his mind: "Captain, do I look as if I was afraid?"

"Since you ask me, you do uncommonly; but I don't see any help for it. We're in for it now, but for the Lord's sake pull yourself together. Your face is enough to scare the company out of action."

Well, if the worst was true, he must put an end to it. He made no answer but ran to the tallest ant-heap, at his utmost speed to reach it before his resolution failed. "Give me a leg up, one of you," he cried to the two men beside it. "What, sir?" they rejoined simultaneously. "Give me a leg up," he repeated with the fretful petulance of an invalid. "Isn't that plain English?" It's plain suicide, sir," said one of the men doubtfully. The subaltern made a desperate spring upward, gripped the top of the heap and swung himself aloft with all the agility he could

muster; the men seeing him resolute gave him a jerk under each foot with such determined good-will that they nearly propelled him over the domed top and down the other side.

"Come down, you young fool!" It was his captain who was speaking.

He could not trust his voice to reply, so with trembling hands he undid the case of his field-glasses, took out his binoculars and adjusted them.

The captain said no more,—perhaps he understood and respected his junior's motives,—he only addressed himself to the men. "Come away from there, you two; he'll draw their fire."

"Just as we was so comf'ble too," grumbled one of the couple.

Luckily for his future ease of mind neither of them was hit in changing cover. There he sat, resigned to a panic terror which soon yielded to a vague impersonal curiosity; he could see the fighting line halted under similar cover two hundred yards ahead, the guns booming away doggedly on his right rear and on the left some barely perceptible movements which told of a wide turning operation in progress. At length he found himself looking on so unconcernedly that the thought suggested itself, had he really been killed and was his disembodied spirit watching the progress of the fight? If so, death was not unpleasant; but the objection offered itself that, so far as he knew, men did not take field-glasses and Sam Browne belts into a future life.

"Damn your silly eyes!" It was his own voice grown quite clear and resonant, addressing the remark to the invisible force which had jerked his left arm and made him drop his binoculars, drenching his sleeve at the same time with warm water or some similar liquid. The glasses rolled to

the foot of the ant-heap: curse the silly things, he didn't want them. What an infernal mist there was rising! It would spoil the fight. Was he going to be sick and, if so, why? He thought he had put on khaki this morning but his left sleeve was a dirty red. The chubby-faced bugler suddenly appeared before him holding out the glasses he had dropped. Now, that boy would get shot,—surely he had more sense than to prance about in front of the cover like this,—sure enough the boy had got shot,—at least there was a curious round blob of blood on his face. "You're dripping on to me, sir," said the bugler. Apparently he had been shot himself: he pulled out his handkerchief to tie round the wound wherever it was when, suddenly, there was an almighty concussion and he was sitting on the ground at the foot of the ant-heap with the bugler gazing at him with tender solicitude. "Let me tie it up for you, sir," he said.

"Go away, go away, don't get shot; there must be somebody to blow the advance;" but by this time the linen was roughly knotted round his wounded arm and he felt better.

"And there is, sir!" At that moment the advance rang out and the bugler, raising his instrument to his lips, repeated it with a blast which drowned even the distant crash of the cannon. The wounded subaltern jumped off the ground as lightly as a stag. "Steady, boys," cried the captain, "don't rush it, keep your wind!" What infernal silly rot! Let them get at the beggars as quickly as possible and give them what for. Forwards they pressed, the bullets whistling, shrieking, and hopping round them. What asses the enemy were to waste so many cartridges when they were none of them doing any damage! Forward! they were up with the fighting line now,—up

jumped the latter with smoking rifles, and came forward with their comrades. One or two did not rise; why was that? Still there was no time to bother about them. "Fix bayonets!" the little dagger-blades clicked home on the Lee-Metfords; the bullets whistled and shrieked—they hopped no longer—only thudded now and then with a dull, ghastly satisfaction. "Charge!"—life was worth living now, if death came the next moment—how they tore over the ground, and cheered and yelled and shouted!

One man stumbled on an inequality of ground and brought half-a-dozen others on the top of him, but the heap was left behind and the bottom man's requests for "a little bit off the top" grew fainter and fainter; others dropped and lay quiet. Crash! bang! What had happened? An invisible wire fence had intervened and thirty or forty of the leaders stood for one moment on their heads with their legs wildly waving in the air, but they overbalanced on the right side of the fence, picked themselves up and ran on. "Mazawattee, but it's ripping!" gasped a voice at his elbow; it was his brother subaltern bare-headed, breathless, open-mouthed. Crack! A rifle was loosed off almost in his face and as the grains of powder flicked on to his cheek he saw one of the enemy two yards ahead. He jabbed his sword into him somewhere viciously before he could draw trigger again, and rolled spent and panting against a still-smoking machine-gun. They were there!

Somebody was shouting "Halt!" so he shouted it too, and the wild uproarious men in khaki pulled up not altogether willingly, breathless as they were. He looked at his sword and saw it stained as red as his left sleeve; recollecting the thrust, he went back to investigate its result.

He found a bearded man lying on his back with his teeth clenched and one hand convulsively clutching his side. Seeing the soldier approach the other hand stole towards the rifle he had dropped. "No, you don't!" exclaimed the all-pervading bugler who came up on the other side just in time to drop his foot upon the Mauser. "Say the word, sir, and I'll cut his dirty throat with my band-sword." "Don't be a murderous little ruffian," said the officer, unslinging his water-bottle. "I'm awfully sorry," he went on to the wounded man; "it was a beastly low trick to spike you like that, when you'd got nothing to proggle back with." The other looked at him, uncomprehending, but the proffered water-bottle he seized and eagerly drank from.

"I shall take his blooming rifle," said the unabashed bugler; "'taint good enough to leave a wasp his sting."

A calm, business-like man in plain clothes strolled up with a curious black box in his hand; he was the war-correspondent of an illustrated paper. "Jolly good charge," he commented. "I hope you don't claim any copyright in your face, sir; I've got some ripping good snap-shots of you."

"As how?"

"On the ant-heap over there, picking up your field-glasses, and now giving water to the wounded. If that doesn't fetch the British public, I don't know what will."

"Print 'em, by all means,—oh Jerusalem!"

"What is the matter?"

"Tin-tacks in my back, I should think by the feel."

"Rather, some of these," and the

correspondent snapped a big ant off the other's sun-burned neck. "Thump him, boy," he said to the bugler, "thump him hard and all over!" The boy demurring at so assaulting his superior officer, the correspondent took the job in hand and performed it with such zeal that the subaltern was soon begging him to stop.

"Do you think those snap-shots will come out all right?" he asked.

"I hope so; if they do, I shall publish them."

"Do; if only Gwyneth could see them."

"Who?"

"Gwyneth," he repeated with a frankness which anywhere but on the field of battle would have been foreign to his nature; "the girl I was in love with. She wouldn't have me, preferred some one else. Rather bad taste, wasn't it? Now she'll be sorry." Then recollecting himself, he went on: "No, she'd better not see them; it would only be making her sorry under false pretences, for I hope the snap-shots won't show what a thundering funk I was in all the time."

The victorious force was marched home through the sudden darkness of a South African evening. "Why are you so silent?" asked his captain.

"I was wondering whether it wouldn't be as well to serve out a few ants to the men before battle; down their collars, you know, in case any of them felt at all af,—I mean nervous. Because it must have been the ants biting me which made me forget how scared I was."

"I don't think you needed the application, my boy," said the captain, laying his hand on the other's shoulder very tenderly.

STUDIES IN SHAKESPEARE'S HISTORY.

V.—KING JOHN.

THE time of the early Plantagenet kings is pre-eminently an age of great personalities, of makers of history, founders of nations and institutions. Their number is out of proportion to the time they occupy; they jostle each other upon the stage of history as they did in their lives, and we can neither wonder that Richard the First and John were out-witted by Philip Augustus and Innocent the Third, nor that to those who think of this age as the time of Henry the Second, of Innocent, and of Frederick the First and Second, the sons of Henry seem weak men, incompetent, and unworthy of much consideration. And yet this verdict is by no means just. Their reputation is dimmed by their father's splendour, and by the nobler character or greater success of some of their contemporaries. But there can be little doubt that in any other age Richard would have been reckoned a great general and a skilful diplomatist as well as a brave soldier; and the sagacity of John's political combinations would be more generally recognised had he not been out-witted by those who were even more sagacious than himself.

He has, indeed, been described by one historian as "the ablest and most ruthless of the Angevins," and, though the first epithet is a palpable exaggeration, it comes nearer to the truth than the righteous contempt of those who have denied him intellectual merit because he happened to be singularly lacking in moral virtue.

His skill in politics would perhaps be more naturally described as craft than wisdom; but is not consummate craft a mode of wisdom? And consummate his craft certainly was. The complete hypocrisy with which he veiled his treachery to his father till, having won his confidence, he turned upon him and added all that was necessary to produce the tragedy of Henry's dying defeat, was but the characteristic beginning of a career in which, morally contemptible as it was, we cannot but admire the tireless energy, the intellectual alertness, the adroit self-helpfulness. He made many mistakes; it was as much his fault as his misfortune that he lost the great Angevin empire as rapidly as he did, that he had to make a humiliating submission to the Papacy, that he wearied half his subjects into treason by his tyranny, and that he was compelled to sign a bargain with them which no mediæval king would ever have dreamed of keeping. But all this does not prove him a fool,—unless it must be said that excessive craft becomes folly, because the political juggler, concerned ever with airy tricks, forgets that there is hard ground beneath him on which he may fall.

Wise man or fool, such a character is necessarily of considerable psychological interest and, at first sight, admirably fitted to be the hero in a play written by one who was a great thinker as well as a great dramatist. But a closer study of the man shows pretty clearly that, interesting as his

character is from what may almost be called a scientific point of view, he was very little suited to become the hero of a play, nor was his life particularly adapted for dramatic presentation. For though John is a striking figure in history, it is only occasionally that he is an interesting one; his wickedness does not arouse our hatred, nor his fate our pity, while his ingenuity calls forth a cold admiration quite untouched by emotion. There is but little human interest in his life; he knows neither real love nor true friendship; his ambition is merely negative, a dogged determination not to be beaten. And thus he is something alien, something rather remote, less human than Milton's Satan because without his eloquence; and it is chiefly for this reason, I suppose, that Shakespeare's KING JOHN is among the least admirable of his plays, being both unconvincing and undramatic. One feels in reading the play, and even when seeing it acted, as if the dramatist had striven vainly to make dry bones live, to make the historical King John a real and living figure, and to energise the old drama upon which his play is founded. But the material he had to deal with baffled even his genius, and King John remains a lay-figure in all but a few passages; he is indeed the protagonist only in name, Faulconbridge being the chief speaker and the characteristic channel of Shakespeare's philosophy.

The play is based on two motives; the most prominent, of which Faulconbridge is the principal exponent, being the virtue of patriotism. The Bastard is typical of that somewhat aggressive loyalty so inherent in the Elizabethans during and after the long struggle with Spain.

This England never did, nor never shall,
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,

But when it first did help to wound
itself.

And his patriotism is even more violent earlier in the play when, in braving the Dauphin, he allows his imagination to get the better of him and describes his master, the loser of Normandy, John Sansterre, as

That hand which had the strength,
even at your door,
To cudgel you and make you take the
hatch,
To dive like buckets in concealed wells,
To crouch in litter of your stable
planks,
To lie like pawns lock'd up in chests
and trunks,
To hug with swine, to seek sweet safety
out
In vaults and prisons, and to thrill and
shake
Even at the crying of your nation's
crow,
Thinking his voice an armed English-
man.

One is reminded of Henry the Fifth
and his

I thought upon one pair of English legs
Did march three Frenchmen.

But the utterance of that strong national sentiment common in most of Shakespeare's historical plays is not confined to the Bastard alone. King John himself, before he has been forced to his knees, expresses the anti-papal feeling of Shakespeare's time when he refuses to accept Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury. His language calls to mind both the statutes of Henry the Eighth and the theories of the Stewarts.

What earthy name to interrogatories
Can task the free breath of a sacred
king?
Thou canst not, cardinal, devise a name
So slight, unworthy and ridiculous,
To charge me to an answer, as the
pope.
Tell him this tale; and from the mouth
of England

Add thus much more, that no Italian
 priest
 Shall tithe or toll in our dominions ;
 But as we, under heaven, are supreme
 head,
 So under Him that great supremacy,
 Where we do reign, we will alone up-
 hold,
 Without the assistance of a mortal
 hand :
 So tell the pope, all reverence set apart
 To him and his usurp'd authority.

But the secondary motive, the study of the character of the King himself, is far more interesting, even if, from a dramatic point of view, it is unsatisfactorily developed. Of course, in order to bring the action of his play within a moderate limit of time, Shakespeare began his story of King John when he was grown up and his character fixed, and, even so, has crowded the events of years into a few months. Had the dramatic presentment been possible, how interesting would it have been to know Shakespeare's conception of John in his youth! What were the qualities which made him his father's favourite son? What started him on the course which led him to a cynical treachery to his father, his brother, and his subjects? These and other questions might Shakespeare have solved for us, had he chosen to go back beyond the old play upon which he based his work. The youth of John might have been as interesting as that of Henry the Fifth. But, even within the limits which he took for his play, Shakespeare seems to have found the material so difficult to deal with that we can well believe he regarded a trilogy like the two parts of *HENRY THE FOURTH* and *HENRY THE FIFTH* as impossible.

John's seizure of the crown can hardly be described as a usurpation. He had already been the virtual ruler during a great part of his brother's reign, and, in the days before the

law of hereditary succession was definitely settled, it was but natural that he should reign as being more suited to the difficult position of a medieval king than a boy of twelve. It is improbable that Philip Augustus ever seriously intended to maintain Arthur's claim; out of his persistent enmity to the house of Anjou he came forward as his champion in order to embarrass John upon his accession, and get whatever he could for himself of the territories which he seized in Arthur's behalf. The marriage of his son Louis with John's niece Blanche and the lands ceded by John on that occasion bought off his hostility for the present, and he could afford to wait for a pretext for further aggression.

Nor was it long before his opportunity came. The murder of Arthur was an absurd blunder. Political necessity does not excuse the temerity of such crimes as John's murder of Arthur and Richard the Third's murder of his nephews. Dangerous as the victims were in each case when living, they were doubly dangerous dead, giving the enemies of the murderers the very weapon they needed, the means of stirring up public opinion against them. The usurpation of Richard the Third offended few till the murder of those whom he had displaced roused the disgust even of men accustomed to his methods and experienced in the savagery of civil war. The doubtfulness of John's title was of little account in most of his French dominions, and of none at all in England, until the disappearance of Arthur enabled Philip, in league with John's discontented subjects, to glorify selfish designs with moral indignation. Here, as at other times, John failed because his cruelty made him forget his customary prudence. Or was it perhaps not so much cruelty as a note

of impulsiveness, of impatience in his temperament which hurried him, unwilling to wait, out of the sly caution which is commonly regarded as the ground-work of his character? The murder of Arthur is an act of the same type as the divorce of his first wife and the marriage of his second, a double imprudence by which he offended the powerful house of Gloucester in England and the great Count de la Marche, whose affianced bride he carried off, in Aquitaine. It corresponds exactly with his folly in braving the Pope and rejecting the excellent opportunity for a dignified compromise which Innocent's appointment of Stephen Langton gave him. It is precisely what we should expect of the man whose savage anger at his defeat would not allow him, hypocrite as he was, to pretend, even for a short time, to abide by the Great Charter, but drove him to an immediate defiance of the barons, when a brief period of pretended submission might, with the Pope's aid, have given him the victory. He had his father's craft, while lacking his patience, and his brother's passionate nature without his moments of magnanimity.

The tragedy of the rapid disappearance of the Angevin empire seems hardly to have been appreciated by Shakespeare; its loss he regards merely as a testimony to John's incapacity. His indifference is probably due to the fact that it was a purely dynastic, not a national possession and of little interest to the English people. But, further, it is perhaps not too fanciful to suppose that, like most of our historians, he regarded its loss as a national advantage. The severing of the direct connection of England with the Continent is in any case mainly responsible for what is called the insularity of the English character; and we may note that in the reign succeeding this

the dislike for foreigners was particularly pronounced, exactly as it was in the reign of Elizabeth, when Mary's death without children had just saved England from becoming a province of the Spanish empire. They were the same feelings which prompted the dislike of Richard of Cornwall's election to the Empire, or that of Henry the Third's son Edmund to the throne of Sicily, and which led Englishmen almost to applaud Elizabeth's unprincipled treatment of her allies and of her many intended husbands. Patriotism must perhaps necessarily be somewhat narrow-minded in order to be effective.

But, to return to John, the murder of Arthur is the chief point on which Shakespeare's slight sketch of his character rests. We see little of the real man in the war and reconciliation with Philip; that is but an instance of the universal sway of

That smooth-faced gentleman, tickling
Commodity.

But it is when, in his desire for murder and yet fear to order it (for he already shirks the responsibility), he conveys his wish to Hubert de Burgh in a web of hints and flatteries, talking to drown his own conscience, silencing his horrid fear with words, that we begin to understand Shakespeare's conception of him, the meanness, the cowardice, and the self-consciousness which would make of his own thoughts an audience to be conciliated.

I had a thing to say,
But I will fit it with some better time.

And then notice the curious nervousness which makes him break off and feign, with the most feebly transparent pretence of emotion, to be almost overcome by his friendship for Hubert.

By heaven, Hubert, I am almost
ashamed
To say what good respect I have of
thee.

I had a thing to say, but let it go:
The sun is in the heaven, and the proud
day,
Attended with the pleasures of the
world,

Is all too wanton and too full of gawds
To give me audience: if the midnight
bell

Did, with his iron tongue and brazen
mouth,
Sound on into the drowsy race of night;

Or if that thou couldst see me without
eyes,

Hear me without thine ears, and make
reply

Without a tongue, using conceit alone,
Without eyes, ears and harmful sound
of words;

Then, in despite of brooded watchful
day,

I would into thy bosom pour my
thoughts:

But, ah, I will not! yet I love thee
well;

And, by my troth, I think thou lovest
me well.

Thus he reveals his desire in riddles, and yet in the end is forced to be explicit and utter those words his tongue will scarcely form, "Death, a grave."

Shakespeare has taken no greater liberty with history in this play, notorious for its inaccuracies, than in the part which he assigns to Hubert de Burgh, a great baron and a man of noble character, who it is absurd to think could ever have been appointed gaoler and murderer. The scene in which he attempts to blind Arthur is without any historical foundation; some of us may also perhaps consider it a piece of unattractive melodrama unworthy of Shakespeare. But, keeping to Shakespeare's story, although Hubert does not murder Arthur, he is forced to pretend to have done so for fear of the King's wrath, and the poet makes most excellent use of

John's reception of the news for the further portrayal of his character. The Earls of Salisbury and Pembroke, suspecting foul play, are begging for Arthur's liberation when Hubert enters to announce his death. The King speaks with philosophical resignation:

We cannot hold mortality's strong
hand:

Good lords, although my will to give is
living,

The suit which you demand is gone
and dead:

He tells us Arthur is deceased to-night.

But soon, seeing their indignation and in fear of the consequences, he begins to repent:

There is no sure foundation set on
blood,

No certain life achieved by others'
death.

And when he hears first of the French invasion, then of the death of his mother the great Queen Eleanor, the good or evil genius of the Angevin house, the woman whose wit could ruin or preserve husband or sons according as she pleased; and, lastly, when he is told of the popular discontent and the horror upon the land, he turns upon Hubert in his fear and despair, denying his commission for the murder, and, with the weak ingenuity of a coward, trying to shift the responsibility to his agent. Remembering, perhaps, the murder of Becket he cries:

It is the curse of kings to be attended
By slaves that take their humours for
a warrant

To break within the bloody house of
life,

Hadst thou but shook thy head or made
a pause

When I spake darkly what I purposed,
Or turn'd an eye of doubt upon my face,
As bid me tell my tale in express words,

Deep shame had struck me dumb, made
me break off,
And those thy fears might have wrought
fears in me :
But thou didst understand me by my
signs
And didst in signs again parley with
sin ;
Yea, without stop, didst let thy heart
consent,
And consequently thy rude hand to
act
The deed, which both our tongues held
vile to name.

The tragic episode is complete here, the real inner tragedy of John's life. It matters little now if Arthur be alive or dead, though the news that he yet lives at once restores Hubert to favour. It matters little if John succeed or fail. For morally his failure is now achieved. Hitherto he has been a villain certainly, but he has not lacked a certain grand consistency in his wickedness together with traces of intellectual power. But now in the revelation of his feebleness, of his absolute inability to abide by the result of his actions, John ceases to be in any sense respectable. The attitude in which Shakespeare draws him here tallies with his abject submission to the Pope after defying him for years; neither his submission in the one instance nor his repentance in the other would make him contemptible, were it not for the violence which came first. Audacity can scarcely be reckoned a virtue, but persistent courage even in crime ennobles what it cannot excuse.

But the visible tragedy of his life and its ending were terrible enough. His reconciliation with Rome, though winning him a powerful ally against Philip and saving him for the moment from invasion, seems really to have lost him the respect of many of his subjects who preferred an excommunicate to a vassal king. The barons moreover could neither understand

nor sympathise with his diplomacy. Scarcely less selfish, probably, than John himself they took but little interest either in the chronic struggle with France or in the preservation of the continental possessions of the Angevin House. To them the King's nominal vassalage to the Papacy meant humiliation, and the campaign of 1214 merely a foreign war which did not concern the English and the Anglo-Norman barons. To John the name of vassal implied little, for he had no intention of ever allowing it to be more than a name; whereas to detach Innocent from Philip's interests was for him an invaluable gain, enabling him, with the Pope's connivance, to concentrate his energies on that league of Philip's enemies, which was to win back for him all that he had lost. The complicated negotiations and intrigues, by means of which he formed his great alliance with the Count of Flanders and the Emperor Otto on the one hand and the barons of Poitou on the other, were conducted with masterly skill at the very time when he was hard pressed by the barons at home. If diplomacy alone could win battles, John would have established a great reputation at Bouvines. The patriotic resistance of the French nation and their loyal support of a king so unlovable as Philip Augustus was a thing which John could hardly have been expected to foresee. And so by that one defeat all his hopes were dashed, his schemes wasted, his dream of crushing his rebellious barons, through the added prestige of a great victory over the foe who encouraged them, for ever dissipated.

It has been said that the French victory at Bouvines won the Great Charter for England, and certainly, if John had been victorious, he might have indefinitely postponed his defeat at the hands of his barons. The con-

stitutional importance of that event is not a matter for discussion here, but John's conduct is admirably illustrative of his character and methods, of his shiftiness, his patience, and his obstinacy on the one hand, and on the other of his tendency to lose his balance, fail to grasp the situation, and suddenly collapse.

The victory of the barons was to all outward appearance complete; and yet their position was by no means so secure as it seemed. The King still had powerful friends, he had energy, ability, and his royal rights; moreover factions soon began to appear among the baronial party, the Northern lords, who had begun the resistance to the King, quarrelling with the constitutional party, who were led by the archbishop, while some desired to invite the invasion of the Dauphin long before the King's conduct had convinced the party as a whole of the necessity of this step. But John seems to have been unable to command hypocrisy at the proper moment; the older he grew, the more impossible did a lengthened pretence of virtue become to him. Had he but simulated for a year or two an honourable desire to abide by his promise, he might have easily outwitted the barons by playing off the various factions among them against each other with more success than Charles the First in somewhat similar circumstances enjoyed, inasmuch as the conditions were more favourable and he was a cleverer man than Charles. But his open defiance of his conquerors only a few weeks after he had signed the charter, and his shameless appeal to the Pope to absolve him from his oath, showed them clearly that it was impossible to trust him. Thus upon his moral and intellectual failure as a man was piled his political failure as a king. Well might he exclaim, as at an earlier crisis in his career:

My nobles leave me; and my state is
braved,
Even at my gates, with ranks of foreign
powers:
Nay, in the body of this fleshly land,
This kingdom, this confine of blood and
breath,
Hostility and civil tumult reigns
Between my conscience and my cousin's
death.

And yet he had one more chance, —indeed one of the most remarkable things about his life is the number of chances he had. In this last campaign against Louis, just after his fortune looked gloomiest, it suddenly appeared as if there were yet a possibility for him to recover his position. The factions among the barons were growing more and more pronounced; it was becoming more and more apparent that they were no more capable of good government than he was; and then they themselves discovered, as Shakespeare, no doubt correctly, tells us, that Louis had no intention of keeping his promises to them. But at this point John's own magnificent physical strength gave way. As he was crossing the Wash, his baggage-train was overtaken by the tide and, together with his jewels, was completely lost. Then, whether through mortification, gluttony, or poison, the King was seized with a sudden illness and died in a few days; and thus the last of his many opportunities was, though this time not by his own fault, wasted also.

His death was terrible. He had failed in his own objects, and he had injured his country continuously for seventeen years. The tradition of the horror of his death is said to have lasted for many generations, growing more awful doubtless with the years, like the deaths of those who had offended the Church so deeply that the avenging devils were permitted to invade the last moments of their lives. But Shakespeare has softened

the grimness of the end by transferring it from Newark to the orchard of Swinstead Abbey, which, as a matter of fact, John left a day or two before his death, and in his story the King is forced to seek a place to die in from the hospitality of the class which he had most oppressed.

It is a very fine scene in which John takes his departure from a world most justly weary of him, standing, together with the scene of the subornation of Hubert for Arthur's murder and that in which the King reviles him for carrying out his desire, far above the level of the rest of the play. In his last moments John acquires that eloquence which Walter Pater noted as "a gracious prerogative" common to Shakespeare's English kings, but a bitter, ineffective eloquence, characteristic of one who had striven alone for no noble end and had failed. There is a certain tremendous force about him, a huge vitality which prolongs the last struggle, forbidding him to die at peace within the walls of any house. Carried out into the orchard he cries :

Ay, marry, now my soul hath elbow-room;
It would not out at windows nor at doors.
There is so hot a summer in my bosom,
That all my bowels crumble up to dust:
I am a scribbled form, drawn with a pen
Upon a parchment, and against this fire
Do I shrink up.

It is impossible to imagine a more terribly graphic description of a fever at its height; and then at Prince Henry's somewhat inapposite question, "How fares your majesty?", he again bursts forth :

Poison'd,—ill fare—dead, forsook, cast off:
And none of you will bid the winter come

To thrust his icy fingers in my maw,
Nor let my kingdom's rivers take their course
Through my burn'd bosom, nor entreat the north
To make his bleak winds kiss my parched lips
And comfort me with cold.

The arrival of the Bastard, his one true friend in the play, suggests another metaphor to him :

O cousin, thou art come to set mine eye:
The tackle of my heart is crack'd and burn'd,
And all the shrouds wherewith my life should sail
Are turned to one thread, one little hair:
My heart hath one poor string to stay it by,
Which holds but till thy news be uttered;
And then all this thou seest is but a clod
And module of confounded royalty.

And then, even as he listens to his friend's bad news, this last cord snaps and the King dies.

While far from standing in the front rank of the historical plays, KING JOHN is interesting from its suggestiveness. Shakespeare's sketch of John's life is in reality of the slightest, but it tempts to endless speculations as to his real character and motives, and the reasons for the completeness of his failure. Such speculations I have already indulged in at sufficient length and recapitulation is unnecessary. I would, however, suggest that the explanation of his curiously disappointing failures and his ultimate ruin lies in the fact that he was after all an incomplete hypocrite. He could plot, deceive, and beguile with the utmost subtlety; he could manufacture complicated schemes for out-witting his enemies with complete patience,—in fact in action his ingenuity was consummate.

But of a merely passive hypocrisy he was incapable; his natural impatience had to find a vent in plots and deep designs; when his mind was not so occupied, he was unable to conceal his real nature.

I said in a former paper that the Elizabethan dramatists were frequently fascinated by the study of evil characters, and that in their plays such characters are apt to assume an excessive importance, excessive because absolute wickedness is neither very interesting nor, perhaps, possible. As examples of this ten-

dency I instanced *TITUS ANDRONICUS* and *RICHARD THE THIRD*, and to them *KING JOHN* may, I think, be added. Both John and Richard were, to quote Pater again, "spoiled by something of criminal madness." Richard destroyed himself by piling crime on crime with the fury of a madman; while John, when he might have escaped the reward of his deeds, would not earn impunity by a timely hypocrisy and a patient pretence of virtue.

J. L. ETTY.

PARLIAMENT AND THE PARTY-SYSTEM.

THE most of this paper had been written before I read Mr. Langdon Davies's views on the same subject in the last number of this magazine. I beg to thank that gentleman most cordially for his interesting account of the rise, nature, and effects of the Party-system; but I must none the less own that he has not succeeded in converting me to his estimate of the value of that system, particularly in its bearing on Parliament. My conviction is that the influence of the Party-system is deleterious as regards the Legislature, the two political parties and their policies, and also as regards the larger interests of the nation; while Mr. Davies appears to think that it is something sacred and eternal, since he affirms it to be "wild and absurd" to foretell its decay, holds that it is essential to our Constitution, and declares it inconceivable that it can ever be eliminated from our Government. Yet he admits that England knew not the Party-system in even its crude form till nearly 1700, and that in its present form she did not know it till 1830. Well, some of us think that England was great, and did great things, even before 1700, and that the year 1830, instead of heralding the dawn of a brighter era, rather marked the beginning of our political decadence.

On Mr. Davies's main contention, that under our present Party-system the Legislature is in "almost exact harmony with the nation as a whole," and that as the Constitution becomes still further democratised, and the Party-system in consequence more strongly entrenched, the more com-

plete will become the harmony of the Constitution, I must take leave to join issue with him directly. I maintain that the introduction of democracy has deranged and disturbed the harmony of the Constitution, both by giving undue predominance to the popular branch of the Legislature, and by leaving whole classes without true representation. Surely no publicist can be deaf to the despairing cries of Irish loyalists and land-owners (to take only one class), who have been betrayed and despoiled by each party in turn, and always to serve party-interests. Capitalists, employers, British land-owners and the clergy, who have been harassed and wronged by Employers' Liability Acts, Death Duties Acts, and so forth, fiercely join in the chorus of dissatisfaction and resentment. Surely a strange harmony, this! No, indeed it is not harmony that democracy has brought us, but friction. Class is set against class; the poor are stirred up to envy the rich, and, as a natural consequence, the rich are becoming indifferent as regards the poor. While the suffrage is extended downward, immense interests, both intellectual and material, find it almost impossible to get a hearing, or even a standing, to say nothing of adequate representation. The labouring classes are indeed in a measure satisfied,—as they well may be, seeing that everybody and everything else are sacrificed to propitiate them. But the labouring classes are not the nation, though they are often assumed to be; other classes also exist, and have the right to be considered.

Mr. Davies asserts that two main

parties are essential "if indeed harmony and continuity of policy are to be desired." There is much virtue in an *if*; and, plainly, such policy as we have had for a quarter of a century past is not to be desired, and therefore the sooner its continuity is broken and its harmony destroyed the better for the nation as a whole.

Lamentations on the degeneration of Parliament are becoming unpleasantly frequent. No doubt these are due in part to what may be called the imitative and fashionable pessimism of the hour, and also in part to the desire of the halfpenny journals to provide their readers with some new sensation at all costs. But, due allowance being made for these ephemeral elements, there still remains a substratum of solid truth in the complaint that Parliament is neither what it was nor what it ought to be. We are often told that Parliamentary institutions are on their trial. They are, but that is not the worst of it; a more serious fact is that sober-minded and earnest men are beginning to fear that these institutions will fail under the test, and that they will emerge from the ordeal so discredited as no longer to command the respect of the best elements in the community. If that day ever arrives Parliamentary institutions may have to be thrown into the melting-pot, and what would be put into their place it passes the wit of man to say. To keep them out of the melting-pot by timely and judicious reform is the interest of all concerned. Nobody but a few fanatics would wish to break up the machinery, but there are very many who wish to see the machinery improved and perfected, that it may run more swiftly and smoothly, and produce larger and more permanent results. Not the abolition of Parliament but its re-

generation is what is needed. The nation requires a Simon de Montfort to take this matter in hand rather than a Cromwell. If the reformer does not renovate, the revolutionist will destroy.

What is clear to the plain man is that some subtle disease has got into the blood of Parliament and is sapping its very life. All the limbs and organs are there, and all perform their functions after a fashion, though but spasmodically; the movements are not the natural motions of a healthy organism, but the artificial jerks of a body which is without a full and vigorous life, and which is only now and then electrified into a semblance of vitality. Is the disease chronic, or merely acute? Is it a passing phase, or a normal condition? Is it due to causes which are accidental and transient, or to causes which in a democracy are essential, which are inherent in the nature of democracy itself, and which must therefore be permanent? If the latter be the true view then the matter is a serious one for those who believe that our Parliamentary institutions are essential to the welfare of the nation.

I believe the latter to be the true view. I believe that under democracy representative institutions tend to such rapid decay that they cease to be capable of expressing the views of the nation as a whole and become the mere instruments of contending factions. I believe that the Party-system as it is worked, and as it is bound to be worked, under democracy, is essentially fatal to the higher forms of the Parliamentary organism.

Perhaps this is no very vital matter from the point of view of those who, like myself, hold that Parliamentary institutions are not the higher but the lower forms through which the thought and opinion and intelligence of the nation are expressed in policy

and action, and who could consequently regard the supersession of such institutions with equanimity as a step in the evolutionary process towards better things. It is difficult indeed to believe that Parliament, at all events in its present form and in annual session, is essential to the welfare of the nation, when one reflects upon the singular fact that its main work consists in laboriously pulling down to-day what it laboriously built up yesterday; that the politician of the present condemns and as far as possible abrogates the work of the politician of a quarter of a century ago.

The opinion [wrote Buckle] that the civilisation of Europe is chiefly owing to the ability which has been displayed by the different Governments, and to the sagacity with which the evils of society have been palliated by legislative remedies, must to anyone who has studied history in its original sources, appear so extravagant as to make it difficult to refute it with becoming gravity. Every great reform which has been effected has not consisted in doing something new, but in undoing something old, that is, something that ought never to have been done. When the reform was accomplished the only result was to place things on the same footing as if legislators had never interfered at all.

The student of history knows that Buckle's statement, exaggerated as it seems to be, is really a most sober and moderate expression of a very important truth. To him there is nothing new or strange in the developments of democracy which are going on before our eyes, startling as these may seem to others. He knows that things move in circles, and that what is called progress usually consists in starting at one point of the circle and then coming round to it again; that extremes beget extremes; and that ultra-democracy inevitably leads straight back to despotism. Then the

whole process begins over again. That extension of the electorate which under a pure democracy seems destined to go on and on until every man and woman is equal to every other man and woman as regards the power of forming and influencing the government of the nation, and which involves the dependence of the government upon the ignorance of the many instead of the wisdom of the few, tends directly and necessarily to the deterioration of the elected legislature and to the destruction of the unelected.

But we need not go to history for examples; we have them in what happened but yesterday in our own country. During the Session of Parliament which has just closed Mr. Wyndham, Chief Secretary for Ireland, uttered these remarkable words: "Knowing how mischievous the Land Act of 1881 was the Unionist party fifteen years ago adopted Purchase as its policy. It did it for two reasons, in order to create a peasant proprietary, but also, as I think, to find an exit out of this limbo of litigation into which the land of Ireland had been plunged by the Act of 1881." And during the same debate Mr. Arthur Balfour said of the same Act: "I have never been, and am not now, an advocate of that measure. I believe that in principle it was indefensible, and in practice impossible to carry out effectually. . . . The system is undoubtedly a system from which friction is inseparable, and, administer it as you will, it will never lead to a final or satisfactory result."

Here, then, we have two great Land Acts, that of 1870 and that of 1881, which were passed by the Radical party in opposition to the Conservative party; they were party acts, passed from party motives and for party ends, though of course the actual motive was obscured by clouds

of rhetoric. Fervent professions of zeal for the public good, and rosy predictions of the blessings which would follow these Acts, imposed upon Parliament and people as they had done hundreds of times before, and they pretended to believe that moral and economic laws could be set aside with impunity. Not many years have passed, but disillusionment is complete; nobody has now a good word to say for these Land Acts, not even those in whose interests they were really passed, for Mr. John Redmond, the Nationalist leader, condemns them even more emphatically than Mr. Balfour and Mr. Wyndham.

Other similar examples might be taken from our recent history, especially where Irish legislation is concerned, but these two must suffice. Let it be noted, however, that the process of deterioration has affected the political life of the entire kingdom. It began from the moment when the Reform Bill of 1832 was passed, which may be said to have placed the destinies of the nation in the hands of the middle classes, though it made no rapid progress until after the Reform Bill of 1867 was carried, which transferred political power from the upper and the middle to the lower classes. Then every degenerative process was accelerated and the nation was swept downward towards the abyss as by an irresistible flood. The era of Household Suffrage was, and is, the era of political deterioration and of moral blindness and insensibility. Ever since 1867 Parliament, which is the creature and the reproduction of the electorate, has been degenerating.

And this is no singular phenomenon; it is but the necessary effect of natural law. "The effective power of a political institution," says Sir Erskine May, "is determined, not by assertions of authority, nor even by

its legal recognition, but by the external forces by which it is supported, controlled, or overborne." What are these external forces in the case of Parliament? By what is it created, supported, controlled, and overborne? By the desires, prejudices, caprices, and jealousies of a multitude of people who have neither time nor inclination, nor for the most part competency, to form an intelligent judgment on the varied and complicated subjects designated under the term *politics*. The many are and must be in the nature of things politically ignorant, as they know nothing of history, economics, sociology, or commerce; they are limited in knowledge and vision, and incapable of reflection and reasoning; they are led by impulse and passion, and have little regard even for the moral law. What sort of Parliament are such people likely to create and support? Obviously a Parliament which will consent to be used as an instrument for carrying out their designs; which is capable of being used as a channel to convey to them what they wish. When they have created such a Parliament will they leave it untrammelled? Not for a moment; they will control and overbear it by all the arts of the wire-puller, all the fulminations of the agitator, all the pressure of the Caucus. Such an electorate is not satisfied with free representatives who will promote their interests subject to the restraints of morality, reason, and experience; they demand delegates without opinions of their own, who are prepared to express and carry out the will of their constituents, subject to no restraint whatever, whether from the moral law, from history, or from common-sense.

And the electorate gets its way. Our Parliament consists less and less of men who are at liberty to serve their constituents according to their

own judgment of what is right or expedient, and more and more of men who are willing to take their orders from the people by whose votes they are elected. One result of this is that every member of the House wishes to be in evidence,—to ask questions, to make speeches, to move adjournments, to introduce bills, to influence committees, and so on; the poor man has orders from his constituency to do all these things, and he has no option but to attempt to do them. This leads directly to the congestion of business which is blocking the Parliamentary machine, and which shows this curious result,—that the longer the session of Parliament, the smaller is the legislative product.

Take the Session which has just closed, which was at once one of the busiest ever known and one of the most barren. The divisions up to Whitsuntide amounted to 213, as against 142 up to the same period last year, when the House sat three weeks longer. In the division on the coal-tax 564 members took part, a total which has never been reached since 1888, when 580 members voted on Mr. Gladstone's Irish Land Purchase amendment. In two divisions more than 500 members took part; in four more than 450; in forty-one more than 400; in seventy-eight more than 300, and in one hundred and sixty-four more than 250. In these divisions fifty-three hours were spent; that is to say, members spent over a week of Parliamentary time in tramping through the division-lobbies during the first half of the Session alone. After Whitsuntide there were 269 divisions, whereas in the Session of 1900 there were only 288 altogether. The Home Rule Session, which lasted till Christmas, had 450 divisions; in last Session, which began late, took long holidays, and ended on August 17th, there were 482. In the whole of

these divisions one hundred and twenty hours were spent, or nearly three weeks of Parliamentary time. And yet at the end of it all virtually nothing had been done! Is it any wonder that sensible men are growing tired of the farce, and that they show their disgust by absenting themselves from the House in spite of threatening Whips and angry constituents? What self-respecting man will go down to the House day after day to discuss bills which are destined never to pass? Why should he strive night after night to catch the Speaker's eye if his speech is to have no other practical result than to gratify a few of his constituents? What can a private member hope to achieve as a legislator when it takes a quarter of a century to get a private bill through the House, even when there is a majority in its favour? No wonder that one disillusioned member should have exclaimed during the late Session: "We shall soon be driven to leave the House in despair to the babblers and the politicians." There spoke the practical man, the man of affairs, the man who is in earnest to get something done.

It is indeed a singular phenomenon which we are witnessing in this new Parliament, barely a year old, which consists chiefly of young and able men, but which nevertheless has over it an air of weariness and feebleness, of inertness and disappointment, which is as stale and jaded as our army in South Africa is said to be. But it is part of the price we have to pay for Household Suffrage.

That the demoralisation affects the Conservative no less than the Liberal party is proved by the great difficulty which the Government has experienced in keeping its men up to the mark in the House of Commons. With a majority of something like one hundred

and fifty, it has on more than one occasion narrowly escaped defeat, and on one has actually experienced it, on August 12th, on the "Saturday Stop" clause of the Factory Bill, when the Government were beaten by a majority of twenty-two. On Tuesday, June 25th, its majority fell to twenty-eight, while between ninety and one hundred Unionist members were absent unpaired. And all this while a war which has already cost thousands of lives and millions of pounds is wearily dragging on to an end whose date no man can foresee! *If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?*

Lord Salisbury says his men are apathetic because the "Constitution is no longer in jeopardy," by which he means, I suppose, that there is no Home Rule party in power to disintegrate the United Kingdom. But since he and his party can do nothing better than perpetuate the worst Acts the Home Rule party ever passed, and add to them other Acts still more unjust, it is not clear to impartial men how the Constitution can be any safer in Conservative than in Radical hands. The fact is that the same causes which have led to the deterioration of Parliament are also tending to obliterate all vital distinctions between the two political parties and to destroy the significance of party names. If the Radicals have not become Conservative, the Conservatives have turned Radical; and hence we have, as regards essential principles, two parties which are so much alike as to be virtually one. It would be far better for all concerned if they would drop the pretence that they are antagonists, and act together under one name, instead of keeping up the farce of separate names and organisations. We should then at least know where we are, and we might have a chance of getting that

National party which Lord Rosebery has foreshadowed, but which it is to be feared is still a long way from being realised in actual fact.

Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour have recently censured the Radical party in general and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman in particular because they throw no zeal into the work of opposition. But is this fair? Why, in the name of reason, should the Radicals oppose a Government which does their work for them better than they could do it themselves? An earnest Radical Opposition postulates a Government which is equally energetic in suppressing Radical ideas and preventing their embodiment in legislation. Have we such a Government at present? Everybody knows that we have not. If Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour wish to evoke the fighting powers of the Radicals, and at the same time put new spirit into their own men, let them return to the Conservative principles which they have deserted. They will have little cause then to complain either of apathy on their own side or of the lack of a militant Opposition on the other.

"My wish would be," said Lord Salisbury the other day, "that the Constitution should work on in its old way, and that both sides should exert themselves to the utmost in order to carry out the beliefs which they have been returned to sustain." Very good; but our Premier here assumes that he and his party are exerting themselves to the utmost to maintain the Conservative conception and ideal of government; while in fact they are doing nothing of the kind. Surrender to Radicalism, compromise with Radicalism, absorption of Radicalism,—these are the notes of their policy everywhere; and surely they are sufficient to account for the resentment which it has provoked in so many of their followers.

It will not do for Lord Salisbury to fasten the blame for the present state of things in Parliament upon Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman because he does not lead, that is to say, control and command the Radical party as Gladstone did. Nobody knows better than Lord Salisbury that the process of deterioration has gone much deeper even since Gladstone's time, and that it has not been confined to one side of politics only. Were Mr. Gladstone living to-day he would find it a far more difficult task to lead the Radical party than he did in his own time.

"The Unionist cause has been too successful, and in that very success lay the seeds of danger." This is another of Lord Salisbury's explanations, but it is hardly more convincing than the former. His Lordship was put into power to deliver the nation from Radical doctrines and policy; he has a majority numerous and powerful enough to enable him to carry any Conservative measures which are really necessary to save the country from the predatory and tyrannical designs of Radicalism; but he does none of the things that he was put into office to do; he fritters away time and opportunity, and then confesses that he and his followers have so little heart in their work that even the attendance of Conservative members in the House cannot be enforced. This seems a sufficiently severe self-condemnation, and no very high compliment to Mr. Balfour's leadership.

The net result then of all our boasted Reform Bills is that we have a Parliament which, on the whole, is less truly representative of the nation, and is certainly less effective as an instrument of legislation, than it was in the times before Reform. Of Parliament in the eighteenth century Sir Erskine May says: "Notwithstanding the flagrant defects in the repre-

sentation, Parliament generally kept itself in accord with the general sentiments of the country." And again, of the early part of the nineteenth century he has written:

Notwithstanding a defective representation, however, Parliament generally sustained its position as fairly embodying the political sentiments of its time. Under a narrow and corrupt electoral system, the ablest men in the country found an entrance into the House of Commons; and their rivalry and ambition ensured the acceptance of popular principles and the passage of many remedial measures.

It is questionable whether as much can be said of the House of Commons to-day.

"The control of the purse," Mr. Davies very truly says, "is after all the chief instrument of power." If there is one power which the House of Commons has more jealously guarded than any other it is this. All through its procedure one finds extraordinary powers placed in its hands to enable it to examine, question, and test every item of expenditure, powers which can often be put into operation by a single member, and which, if used for purposes of obstruction, may delay the business of Parliament for days and weeks. Now, by the curious irony of events, the House is losing this most highly prized prerogative.

Owing to the unscrupulous use of the financial powers of the House for purely obstructive ends it has now been decided that no more than twenty-four days of the Session shall be devoted to the Estimates. When that time has expired all the votes remaining to be passed must be passed without a single word of discussion, either for or against, though a division can be taken on each vote. Thus hour after hour is spent by members in tramping through the

division-lobbies, silently recording their opinions, not one of them allowed to utter a word by way of complaint, criticism, or inquiry.

This year twenty-three days were allotted to Supply, yet when the guillotine fell there were still ninety-eight votes to pass. A division on each of these would have meant a waste of no less than twenty-four hours. Mr. Balfour, therefore, induced the House to alter even the reformed system, and one division was made to cover a group of Estimates, thus of course materially reducing the number of divisions, but also still further weakening the control of the House over this principal instrument of its power. For there can be no doubt that under this new arrangement the power of the purse has been seriously weakened, even if it has not been reduced to a mere semblance of control. When millions of money can be voted in three or four hours, in the dark, so to say, abuse and extravagance, if nothing worse, are at least made possible and easy. Undoubtedly, too, many members of Parliament chafe under a sense of their impotence in respect of these matters, and curse the fate which has virtually shorn the House of Commons of one of its most cherished rights. Yet they have only themselves to blame. The change is in the nature of a Nemesis, a retribution which has been brought about by gross abuse of the forms of the House. And every Session proves more and more clearly that if some such precautions had not been taken the Estimates could never be got through at all. Democracy creates conditions under which it is difficult to secure even a modicum of necessary legislation. Let us hear Sir Erskine May once more.

Subjects the most trivial are forced upon the attention of the House by

means of questions and incidental debates; and, after weary sittings, such as no other deliberative assembly has ever been willing to endure, matters of the first importance fail to obtain a hearing. These difficulties were apparent in the first reformed Parliaments after 1832; and they have since been aggravated so seriously as to threaten the character and competency of the most powerful branch of the Legislature. . . . The effective power of the House has often been held in check, and sometimes nearly paralysed.

What will be the next stage in the descent? Will it be the elimination of the House of Lords from our politics as a vital force, either by its formal abolition, or, as is more likely, by its emasculation, so that while it lives in form it will be dead in fact? Some might be inclined to ask whether the latter process has not already taken place. By the law and the constitution of the country the House of Lords has a right to existence which is as indefeasible as that of the House of Commons or even the Throne itself; and not only has it a right to exist, but it is bound to justify its existence by exercising to the full its legitimate functions whenever legislation is proposed which is contrary to moral law and to natural right. For them to acquiesce in such legislation is the unpardonable sin. It is no justification at all for them to plead that "the people" are determined to have these unjust laws. Who are "the people"? Not alone those who shout at public meetings and vote at elections, but also those intelligent, industrious, and peaceable citizens to whom the whole machinery of politics is fast growing an abomination. The House of Lords is not amenable to "the people," who have not created it and who cannot destroy it; its responsibility is to that which is highest in the nation and to history; it stands for the moral law, for righteousness, for that truth which

is permanent in both morals and economics; for those elements which are abiding and ineradicable, as opposed to the transient vapourings of democracy; it is set for the defence of the very things which democracy would destroy, the things which are precious beyond all price and with which are bound up everything that is highest in the national life. If it will not defend these things, it is playing the nation false.

It is impossible to appraise too highly the priceless service rendered to the Empire by the Peers when they so promptly and decisively rejected the Home Rule Bill. They acted nobly in that grave crisis, and it must be counted to them for righteousness for all time. The greater the pity that they should have virtually stultified themselves twelve years later by accepting, at the hands of a Conservative Government, a measure which in all but the name was a Home Rule Bill so far as the loyalists of Ireland were concerned, though no doubt it left the legal and nominal union of Ireland and Great Britain unaffected. The Irish Local Government Act of 1898 is producing all the evil effects of Nationalist predominance in relation to the loyal classes in Ireland, though appearances were saved by giving it a less terrifying name than Home Rule and by taking precautions to prevent it being used as an instrument to injure England. In other words England, while guarding herself against the machinations of Home Rulers, calmly handed over to their tender mercies the loyal classes of Ireland. Those Irish loyalists looked to the House of Lords to save them, and they looked in vain.

Again, nothing could be more iniquitous when judged by the standard either of the moral law or of Conservative principles, than such measures

as the Death Duties Act, or the series of Employers' Liability Acts which culminated this year in the most arbitrary and unjust of them all, in the Act which extends this legislation, in peculiarly oppressive and irritating forms, to agriculture and even to horticulture. It is now the law of this land that the employer of a farm-labourer or a gardener is bound, should such gardener or labourer be injured or killed while at work, to compensate the injured man, or his family in the event of his death, though the employer may have had no more to do with the accident than the man in the moon, though the workman may have caused the accident himself, though it may even have been due to an Act of God. Could anything be more tyrannical or unjust than this? Perhaps it is not surprising that the House of Commons should pass such laws, but it is astounding that the House of Lords should assent to them. It still remains in full possession of every power that it has ever had, and all it needs is the courage to use those powers. If, as Sir Erskine May suggests, the Lords are strong when the Liberal party is weak, what enormous strength they ought to have just now. Yet were they ever weaker? And why? Because the Conservatives have become even as the Radicals as regards all the higher subjects of legislation; they are merely a division of the one democratic party. Hence whichever half of the party is in power, the House of Lords finds itself under pressure to register the decrees of our democratic dictators. It should be clearly understood, however, that it is under no obligation to allow itself to be used in this way; that it is armed with powers which, if used, not recklessly and defiantly but with discretion and moderation, will not

only save its own life and restore its own *prestige* and authority, but will deliver the country from a serious and increasing danger. It is hardly too much to say that the salvation of the empire may depend upon a revival of spirit and courage in the House of Lords.

In the absence of such a revival things will go from bad to worse, and Sir Erskine May's prophecy will be fulfilled: "As the representation of the people is further extended, an accord between the two Houses will be more difficult, while the power of resistance¹ on the part of the Lords will be proportionately weakened."

Whether what is wrong in Parliament can be remedied while we retain our present ultra-democratic system is a large question. Personally I believe that a remedy is possible, though its

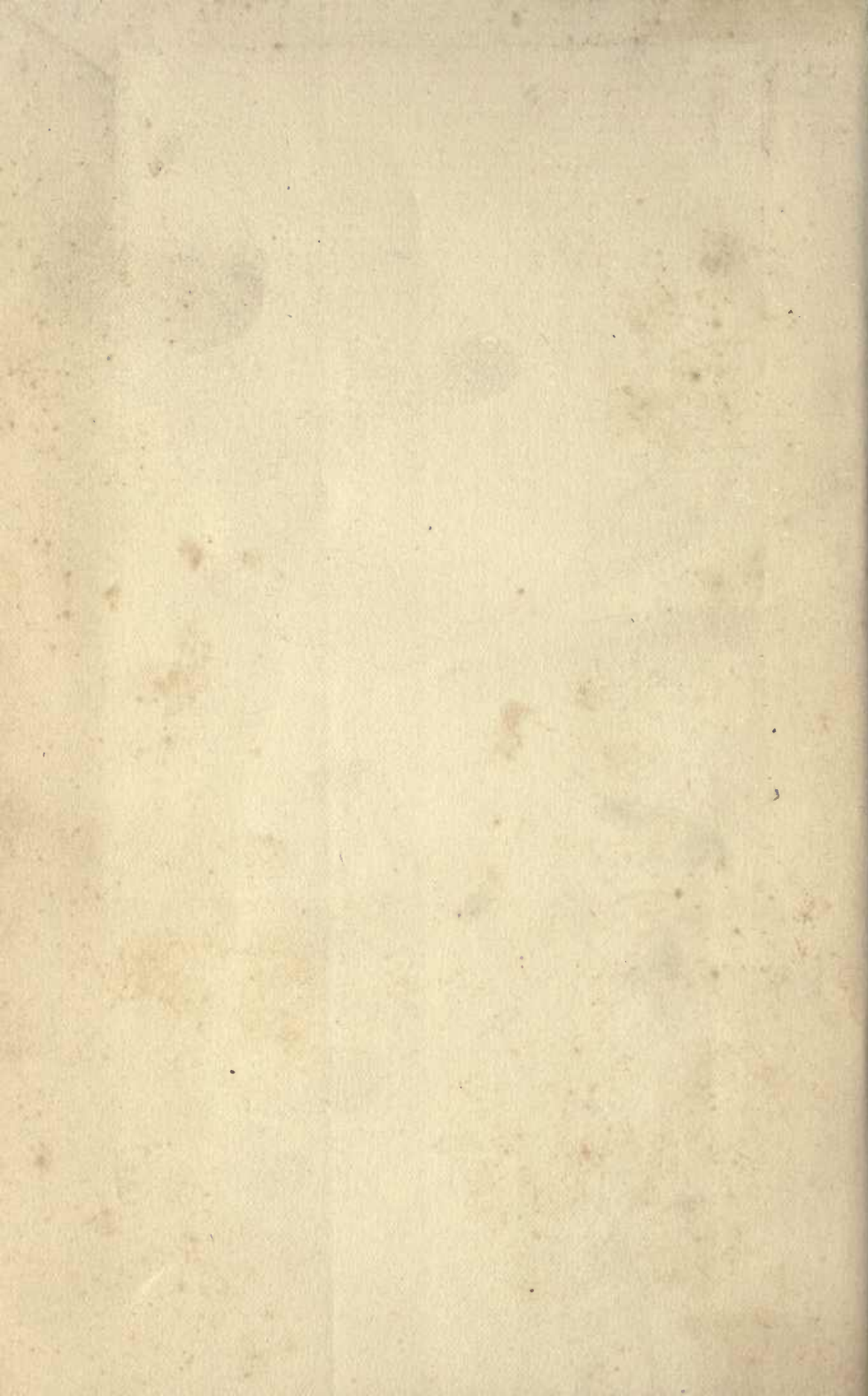
¹ Surely it would have been more correct to say here "the *inclination* to resist" instead of "the *power* of resistance." The Lords have power enough, all that they ever had.

application would involve some considerable modifications in our present form of government. The subject is, however, too large to be entered upon at the close of this paper. I will, therefore, briefly summarise what I have said by again pointing out that in our democracy two tendencies are at work side by side: one ever seeking to reduce our elected Parliament to the level of a body of delegates, whose only function is to embody in legislation the narrow, capricious, and selfish views of the mass of their constituents; the other chafing and surging against the unelected Parliament that forms, or should form, a breakwater against the waves of revolutionary violence, which, were its barrier removed, would submerge all moral ideals, engulf the larger freedom, and dissolve every tie by which men hold their property, or, in other words, their liberty and their life.

JOHN BULL *Junior*.

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