



SIR RALPH ESHER:

OR,

MEMOIRS OF A GENTLEMAN OF THE COURT OF  
CHARLES THE SECOND,

INCLUDING THOSE OF

HIS FRIEND SIR PHILIP HERNE.

BY LEIGH HUNT.

WITH A PREFACE TO THIS EDITION.

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THE

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TO  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
LORD JOHN RUSSELL,  
&c. &c.

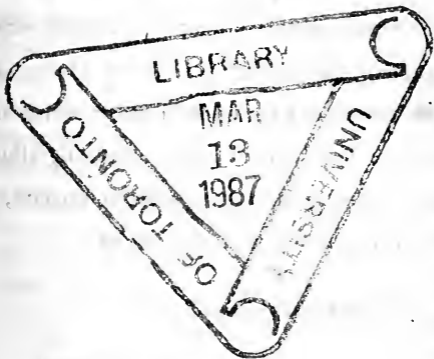
(SINCE gratitude would fain speak while it can, and better occasion may be wanting), this attempt to pourtray some of the circumstances that modify the human character, and some of the phases of a period of history which no statesman has more deeply read, more classically illustrated, or turned to such wise and prospective account, is inscribed, with every sentiment of respect, by

His Lordship's obliged

and affectionate servant,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington,  
December 25. 1849.



# ADVERTISEMENT

## TO THE READER.

As this book was first published without the author's name, many of his readers are not aware of his having produced such a work. It had the further disadvantage (if he may presume so to speak) of being published without any intimation of the mould in which it was cast; so that some persons, on opening it, were indisposed to its perusal by not meeting with the instant amount of action and character into which novels are accustomed to plunge; while others, whose acquaintance with the times of which it treated inclined them to read on, found them so scrupulously attended to, beyond what was customary in the historical novel (the relative ages for instance of parties who really existed having been calculated so as to square with their conduct, no person or event introduced not strictly contemporaneous, and no locality even having been mentioned in which the persons introduced in it would not have been found to have been present on referring to contemporary annals), that a grave inquiry was made of a bookseller by an old reader of such records, as to whether the book was or was not a veritable biography. The author states thus much to give his fiction whatever chances of acceptance, or of indulgence, the state of the case may procure it, and to retreat, if it be found to have no other merits, into those of painstaking. So desirous

was he to be complete in regard to verisimilitude, that in order to account for the modern style of the composition, the autobiographer was feigned to have written his work in French for the amusement of some friends in Paris; and the text purported to be its translation.

The work originated in a design which the author had contemplated of writing a book, entitled "The Wits of the Age of Charles the Second." He had indeed set about executing the design, but found such a deplorable failure of materials, — the gentry who figured under that title having been, for the most part, persons not producible in good company, even on the score of the wit they boasted, that the intention became changed into the present work; in which, while it is hoped that the animal spirits of those times are not absent, and divers of the scape-graces are to be found, an attempt has been made to pourtray the good-heartedness that was still beating in the bosoms of some of their associates, and the wisdom which a more serious and suffering nurture had produced in some of their friends, notwithstanding the pangs caused it by the mistakes both of levity and bigotry.



# INTRODUCTORY LETTER

OF

## THE AUTHOR.

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*To Madame the Countess D'Olonne, Madame de la Peyronnie,  
Monsieur and Madame D'Aubespine, Madame de Caryl,  
and Charles Caryl, Esquire, at St. Germain en Laye.*

[Hethering Bower, June 10th, 1695.

So the Count\* is to tell you all about us, and the Colonel† is to put it upon paper for the benefit of posterity. The prospect is a little startling; but then I am to be beforehand with him, you say, and let the world know how much they are to believe. You remind me of an Irish acquaintance of mine, who, when that silly fellow Wiltshire (do you remember him?) was about to tell one of his long stories, tapped him on the shoulder, and said, "Before your lordship begins, I have one observation to make: remember, I was there."

Grammont, to be sure, is no silly fellow. He has a great deal of wit. But his honesty, as you say, is not on a par with it. Your account of the late gambling affair, and the penitential psalm he wrote after it, made us laugh heartily. His telling his confessor, that he should have to write another, if he returned the money, was just like him.—Well: I will write the Memoirs you speak of; first, because the ladies desire it; secondly, because what you say about the two or three hours of a morning, is tempting to my necessity for some idle occupation; and thirdly, because my Lady Esher,

\* The Count de Grammont.

† Count Antony Hamilton.

though she knows a great deal already about those wicked times, is willing to know more. It is astonishing what an ardour for knowledge there is in women ; and how proportioned it is (I must do them that justice) to their virtues. Here is my lady, daughter of the noble and grave Jesuit, and as grave as her father (to see her at breakfast), who will take her walk in the park, as if nothing had happened, just after hearing one of the liveliest chapters in Stuart history. I tell her that I am afraid I have been too merry for her : but she says I am grave enough, when I go to court ; and that I have a very good public face. What do you think of that ?

It happens, fortunately, (the author's vanity, you see, is already upon me) that I have a journal among my papers, of two or three years of the period you speak of. It is very carelessly written, and with great interruptions. The wine that sometimes inspired me, at other times put me out. But so far this is lucky. It will give me an opportunity of writing it over again, of filling up gaps, and perhaps making a few wiser reflections. I shall also write it in French, for the advantage of the ladies ; and Gravity says, that she shall make a copy of it, that it may have two securities for its appearance, in case the Colonel is saucy.\*

I am afraid she is too much in the right ; for to tell you the truth, I am not sure that there will be any ground for disbelieving whatever the Count chooses to say of us, unless a person of some reputation for credibility shall think fit to contradict him. His own word is as good as that of most of the others in his day ; and the Colonel will probably correct it as he goes. For my part, I should be loth to tell the world at large, how little I care what they thought of me ; but I have friends ; and there are circumstances in my life, which I should not choose to see adorned by the exuberance of Monsieur de Grammont. Sober people would not know what to think of them in his relation. Perhaps they would, in mine.

You ask me if I remember him. Could I ever forget him ? I think I see him coming into the room now, as jaunty and brisk as if he had not been up till five in the morning, — his object, to propose giving me "my revenge" the night following ; that is to say, to increase my vindictive feelings by winning some more money. But he was pretty secure of me on that

\* It is from this MS. copy that the present work is translated.

point. I did not care for cards, and preserved my temper by not losing too much. The Chevalier (for so he was called then) professed to be tender of me, because I was so careless a player; so we used to talk as much as gamble, and he would relate the stories of his victories over a thousand poor devils with a perpetual shrug of the shoulders. Did you ever notice, that there was an absolute shrug of the shoulders in his face? When he stood in a circle, relating one of his humorous adventures, the laugh was not always quite so entirely with him as his wit might have looked for. Perhaps there was something of an instinct of this in his shrug; something of a ready-made indifference, in case of accidents. We thought him more French than a Frenchman; and so did the ladies. They had great difficulty in persuading themselves that he was in earnest; which was a mighty chagrin to him.

This is the secret of what you tell me about Jermyn. The Chevalier did not understand him. He could not conceive how a man, no taller nor better made than himself, not so well dressed, nor half so lively, could succeed where he failed, and acquire the title of Invincible. The reason was, that Jermyn was capable of gravity, and had a certain faith; which he contrived to impart to others. As to Herne, it was still worse. You may be assured the Count will not venture to say any thing about him. But I shall say a great deal; and I suspect that it will be, as it ought, the best part of my book. What think you? I have a journal of his too; and I have his and the Countess's permission to relate to your circle, exclusively and "with closed doors," all that I choose to say about them; so that your curiosity will at length be gratified. He smiles, and says you will not think so well of him, as I fancy; but I will take my chance for that. They and their children are all well. Between you and me, the Countess is as much in love with him at this moment, as if they were to be married to-morrow.

Hamilton somehow I did not like. There was a slyness in his eyes, a hardness in the rest of his face, and a dulness in his conversation, till he got heated with wine, upon which he would bring out a singular store of wit and fancy. You never felt sure of him. I used to wonder he did not turn Jesuit, and would not be certain of it now. However, he is just the man to be the Count's historian. He will exquisitely prune

his exuberances. I do not pretend to his wit; and may be wrong in speaking of his conversational dulness, which I am afraid is becoming my own case till after dinner; on which account, I suppose, Fortune has just led me to thin some vile ink I am using, with a glass of claret. I hope you will feel the benefits of it.

By the way, when I speak of *you*, I reckon upon a certain discrimination. If Beauty is alluded to, Mr. Caryl, I presume, though a good-looking man, will not take it to himself. The wild scenes are intended for him and M. d'Aubespine, though the ladies, I suppose, in their ardour for knowledge, will read them. I take this opportunity of sending you a correct account of the famous story of the Blush. It was Lady Arlington that told the King of it, and not Mrs. Jones. The King made her ladyship repeat it before all the court. "Sir," said the Countess, "your Majesty must know, that Mrs. Caryl is, and always has been, and I suppose always will be (since she has got a habit of it) very fond of her husband: which must be excused, because twenty years ago he gave up his prospects in England to marry her. Furthermore, he has lived in France ever since; and he is a man of great wit and good nature. A little after Mrs. Caryl had ceased to be Mademoiselle d'Aubespine, there was a conversation at the Marquis de Châteauneuf's, which turned upon favourite words, and produced a great deal of merriment. The ladies and gentlemen were to declare what were the most agreeable words they ever heard. So much noise was made, and there were so many complaints of fine things being said instead of true ones, that when it came to Mademoiselle d'Aubespine's turn to speak, I mean, Madame de Caryl,—a dead silence took place. Your Majesty understands that Madame de Caryl was looked upon as very sincere. The quoters of romance hoped to be warranted in their flowery speeches, and the lively were prepared to catch her sincerity at fault. Sir, nothing could be prettier than the way in which she disappointed them; and it was all the better, inasmuch as it came by degrees. First, she blushed like an angel; at which there was a great cry. Then she said, the words were English, which made the cry greater, and the blush sweeter. M. d'Olonne declared afterwards that he had never seen so lovely a blush in his life; and instead of saying *couleur de rose*, he used thence-

forward to speak of nothing but *couleur de Caryl*. "I wonder," said Madame de Caryl, with a sudden hastening of her words, as if to put an end to an embarrassment which she nevertheless bore very charmingly, "I wonder that any body who has been beloved, can hesitate what to say, if they must say it. The most delightful words I ever heard were those which first said to me in English, 'I love you.'" Her voice could not help trembling as she uttered this confession; and but for the dead silence, I believe the last words to have been scarcely audible. Mr. Caryl bowed and kissed her hand with a tenderness full of gratitude; and three parts of the room, if not four, certainly envied them both." Here ended my Lady Arlington. The King was so pleased, that he told the story of "Caryl's blush" twice over the same evening; and next day, at the proposition of the Duke of York, who would not omit an opportunity of doing honour to one of his favourite names, all the ladies appeared in *venez-à-moys* of Caryl-coloured ribbon.

Think of this at the English court, and in honour of a sincere speech made twenty years ago! The effect must have been odd to the spectators, knowing what they do: but this was not all; for his Majesty sending some of the knots to Mrs. Gwynn, she chose to read them as a letter; and accepting the invitation, went to see him in his room where he was sick, and where she narrowly escaped meeting the Duchess.\* The King was frightened out of his wits, but very kind, and they say loves her as well as ever. Nelly said she could not resist the breast-knot, and the sickness, and all. So now, madam, I hope your laurels are complete. The King told this story of Nelly, with tears in his eyes, to Godolphin, from whom I had it. When we think what happened only a few days after, and that *couleur de Caryl* was followed by court-mourning for his death, I hope you will think he was in a sincerer humour than in the greater part of his history.

Apropos of histories, and of speaking one's mind. I must tell you a diverting circumstance of an extraordinary woman, wife to an honest country gentleman, who is taking her to France for the benefit of her health. It is lucky for our polite neighbours, that she does not speak French. She is, or pretends to be, mad; and says, out loud, just what she thinks of every body that comes near her. The first week of her arrival,

\* The Duchess of Portsmouth.

every body went to see if it was true: the second not a soul ventured. The best of it is, she is as civil in half of her speeches, as she is shocking in the rest. If the joke is designed, it is an excellent one. Her manner is this:—an old acquaintance comes in, to welcome her to town:—“Ah Mr. Smith, or Mr. Johnson, I am very glad to see you.”

“I called, madam, to say how glad we are to see you, and how sorry to find that we are so soon to lose you.”

“Now that is so kind, Mr. Johnson:—(*Out loud, and not aside*) a canting old fool!—And how is your son, worthy Mr. Richard?”

“He is very well, I thank you, madam; and reckoned, I assure you, of very promising parts.”

“Oh, I remember my little friend Richard well—(*out loud*) just such another old fool as his father.”

“Well, madam, I am sorry I must make a short visit, but I have an urgent affair to attend to. I thought to have found the reports of your ill health untrue; but you do not look well, I must own; your face is somewhat altered. I hope the air of France will restore you.”

“I have great hopes of it, Mr. Johnson, and I thank you heartily. I shall get rid of your stingy face, for one; and if the French are as tiresome, thank God I shall not understand them.”

A whole party come in. “Hey-day! What now! Who are all these? Ah, Mr. Chaloner, you are welcome. In the name of God, who has the man brought with him? How is your wife, pray, and young Mrs. Chaloner, and all the little dears?—a pack of ill-mannered brats, whose faces I could thump with pleasure. Ah, Mistress Mary is behind you. How d’ye do, Mary, my dear?—Will she never leave off that frightful griu? And old Joseph, too! There he is. How d’ye do, Mr. Griffin?—Griffin by name, and Griffin by nature; the man has a beak like an old jug. Now what am I to give all these people to eat? There’s not a crumb in the house.”

Pray tell this story to Croiset. He will not be afraid, next time, of being struck dumb by Madame de Thianges. D’Aubespine will give it new graces in the telling. He will swear that the English woman is already at Paris; that La G——, and the little Count, and d’Armentieres, and a hun-

dred others, have been to see her ; and he will pretend she spoke French, and that the Siamese grew angry, and then there will be a scene. I see you all fainting with laughter in the little saloon, and Alliot coming in to see what is the matter.

To return to my history. Do you know, that I feel authorship coming fast upon me, owing to your instigations ; that not knowing where to begin, I shall begin with the beginning, when I was a youth, and that I feel much inclined to tell you everything about myself, and about every body else ? Since I was last in France, or rather since you all paid me a visit in England, I have never had such an inclination to talk. You have often been pleased to wonder that I did not write more. The truth is, I have written more than you guess, my journal among other things, besides verses and a play : and half a good tome of a romance, the hero of which was one Julius Cæsar : but my admiration of the wit of others hindered me from publishing my own essays. I threw off a song now and then, well enough, and was critical of the songs of others ; but I was not content without doing better ; and when I came to try that, I found myself too much of an imitator. My short verses were like Butler's, and my long like Mr. Dryden's ; I mean for the sound. Had the true passion of love been in any request, I really think I might have done something ; for I never ceased to worship that in private (week-days excepted) and, as it were, in the Sundays of my heart. I contrived sometimes to bow to the saint, even in the person of the sinner ; and ever since Miss Waring forgave me, you know I have openly professed the true religion. In short, I will not swear, that in making an historian of me, you have not spoilt a restorer of the times of Thyrsis and Saccharissa ; always understanding, that my mistress should have had a better name if not better verses ; and that I was not only in earnest while I was worshipping (which I fear was Mr. Waller's case), but while I was loving too.

Twenty years ago, if I had undertaken to write these memoirs, I should have made a grand romance of them. King Charles would have been Almanzor, or Mithridates, or the King of the Pearl Islands ; Colonel Blood might have been Sanguinor of the Ivory Vizard ; my Lady Portsmouth, Lucretia ; the wits, the Decemviri ; Clarendon, Vitellius,

father of the aspiring Oroncia; and Mrs. Gwynn, the Lowborn Exalted, who, laughing withal like a Venus in green sleeves, led about a ram with a crown on his head. As it is, I shall have no reserves, no mysteries to find out, nor an allegory with gilt horns. My history shall not even be an amorous history of the Ancient Britons; whose manner would very ill suit us, sitting out of doors on their muddy banks, and painting their knee-pans. It is difficult to fancy a mistress, with a horrid face painted upon either *patella*: otherwise, our ancestors had some things in common with us, not very usual, if my brother-historians are to be trusted. Neither shall I follow M. de Bussy, nor the threatened history of the Count de Grammont, in venting piques against my friends, and making their good and ill qualities alike fictitious. I shall be as conscientious as Signor Gregorio\*; with a little more truth in me by way of proving it.

Heavens! what a mighty and a madcap world have you not thrown open for me to live over again! What a glitter of courts! what a pulling off of plumed hats! what a rustling of silks! what a sparkling of eyes! Then what an abundance of rascals; and what an overflow of wine and of wit! (would that I could send you half of either the one or the other, for then it would not have been wasted.) I have goodness, too, to tell you of; yea, even innocence, and some love; and the rascals, as my Lord Dorset says, were not quite so bad "as they flattered themselves." Mr. Harper, who was present when he said this, excepted Rochester and Lady Shrewsbury. "No," said he, "not if you knew all! What a father had Rochester, and how young he came to court! I remember him when he first arrived, blushing at every word he spoke. 'To be sure that was no very good symptom. But there was some good in him: he was *comis in uxorem*. As to the Countess, I know not altogether what to say for her; but, depend upon it, there was something—" And then he made a pretty quotation, which I have forgotten, from one Shakspeare, of whom you know nothing in France; though some of us are impudent enough, on this side of the water, to prefer him to the great poet whom you have lost. "But Blood!" returned Harper, "what does your Lordship say to *him*?" "Oh!" cried he, "the tiger! He had a smooth skin: I would have had him

\* Gregorio Leti, who was in England in this reign. — *Edit.*



fed well in a cage, and shown about for a shilling," "And Titus, the Delight of Mankind?"\* "A mere monster," said the Earl: "why he had a chin three times the length of any other man's: do you think that portended nothing?" But you know the humour of this excellent lord, my old friend and patron, and the delight of all who come near him. He is for venting the whole spleen of the globe in words, with an occasional thrust or two in the ribs, if people insist upon it. He would not have even Titus hung. I confess I like to hear him talk on this point, as indeed he talks admirably on all. I have seen things in the world which have often forced a turn of my thoughts the same way; especially when I had any such hand in them myself as needed excuse; for with a little reflection, the consciousness of error makes men as charitable, as it makes fools hardened and malignant. Here is a pretty turn for you in favour of one's vices, and a fine road to charity! Yet with all these impartial reflections, I found myself the next moment hating shabbiness, and stinginess, and fifty other ungentle vices, as much as ever! and I could have run the Colonel through the body with the greatest pleasure in life. But my lord says there is an involuntary philosophy in my good nature; and that when I am telling stories of old times, I see fairer play than I imagine to all parties; which is a comfort to me, considering that I am to be an historian, and that I hate half a dozen people I could name, worse than mulled port. If it will be better for some, it will be worse for others; for there are some people, who have a trick of getting the fair play all on their own side; and therefore I delight to hear that I shall do them justice.

M. de St. Evremond, who was present at this conversation with Mr. Harper, complimented my lord on the delicacy of the judgment he had delivered. He said it would make a fine essay. He begs his compliments to Madame d'Olonne, and says that the new proof of his candour, which has been growing upon his face these two years, (his wen,) does not give him any trouble at present, though he shall certainly cut it out, and cast it from him, if the show of his imperfections become burdensome. He thinks it may even contribute to his health, by a harmless concentration of bad humours; which opinion he is the more confirmed in, by finding it most affected after

\* Titus Oates.

hearing a bad poem; or when he is obliged to live a whole day without kissing the tip of the ear of Madame de Mazarin. M. de St. Evremond is in excellent health, and as cheerful as ever, though at present he must needs be a little anxious during the interregnum of his pension.

What I am afraid of sometimes, when I think of these Memoirs, is, that I shall cut an ill figure in them myself. Do not be astonished over much. I have known Ralph Esher now (more shame for him) these forty years, and in spite of his defects, I cannot help having a regard for him. But I must take care, if I can, how I express it; for I have noticed that people make great mistakes that way, and never show their faults so much as when they think to conceal them. Nay, I fear that they must come out in spite of all attempts to the contrary; for even a carefulness on this head is a sort of disingenuity. So I must take my chance. The other day, when I was in town, I met his Grace the Duke of Buckingham\*, Lord Commissioner, who is in high favour with his Majesty and Mr. Secretary, for going to mass. Jack swears he is as good a catholic as any of the Caryls, which I did not dispute. In asking after the health of Jack's cousin, it came out that I had been requested to write Memoirs, a design (you know his grand way) in which he was pleased to express his princely concurrence; adding with a smile, that as I avoided the more heroical passages of history, or meant to devote myself chiefly to the recording of trifles and privacies, I might not be unwilling to see a little thing which he had begun in a fit of idleness, on something of a like subject. The next day he sent to my house a packet, which contained a regular commencement of his history, the whole consisting of divers of his calm and courageous behaviours in battle, not forgetting his encounter with Lord Rochester. To compare great things with small, my egregious neighbour, Mr. Lilly (tell the ladies who he was), was once mightily bent on having me for one of his Mecænases and most worthy knights; and accordingly begged permission to send me a manuscript to entice me withal, which he had written for the instruction and glory of "the most noble esquire Ashmole." I had met him in the county hall, where he came cringing up and craving my noble countenance; his whole aspect, hair, eyes,

\* Sheffield. James the Second had just come to the throne, and appointed him to the office here mentioned. — *Edit.*

lips, and shoulders, falling down and absolutely flowing with meanness. His manuscript turned out to be like his appearance. It was no less than a life of the impudent varlet,—making himself out to be one of the greatest mixtures of fool and knave that ever existed. Yet even this, I am told, is nothing to a curiosity in possession of Lord Herbert. It is the life of his grandfather, the first lord, author of the famous book, “*De Veritate*.” He was the first avowed Deist, and an enemy of all superstition and miracles; and therefore what does he do, but kneel down with his deistical book in his hand, and humbly request of God to give him a sign that there are no such things as miracles. The sign was given him, in the shape of a clap of thunder: and from that day forth his lordship was secure that there never had been a Revelation vouchsafed to mankind, except in that particular instance.

After such an exhibition as this, a man who is going to write an account of himself, should set to it as gallantly as if he were at a drinking party. He should make up his mind; that if the wine is to be drunk, the truth will come out. What a pity that everybody has not written a life, especially in this latter generation, — Barillon, Nelly, and all! Oliver should have given us his commentaries, and Lord Shaftsbury his sweet experiences. Jacob Hall should have written too, if he could; and Kynaston, — who used to ride with the ladies in their coaches after the play, in his female dress. What a time we should have of it! Memoir-reading would be a part of the business of life. No matter how many lies. We should sit merrily, like a certain judge on the bench, and fetch the truth out of conflicting evidence, especially if calculated to hang the party; for in that quarter it would be greatest. One's memoirs ought to be a matter of course, like dressing, or making one's will. Solomon ought to have written them; the Greeks and Romans; all the French, Italians, and Spanish; and the Muscovites and Siamese. When the Grand Duke was in England, his secretary Count Magalotti told me, that there was a manuscript life of the old Florentine sculptor, Benvenuto Cellini, which they would not suffer to be published on account of the free pictures it draws of the Pope and the cardinals. The man was a madman, but very clever. I think you have seen one of the cups for which he was so famous, at Fontainebleau. The Duchess of Portsmouth has another; the sight

of which, I remember, one day suggested to our good King the supporters of a coat of arms for one of his little dukes. Well : Cellini tells all,—cups, quarrels, assassinations, and benedictions ; and takes himself for a very ill-used gentleman, a little hot or so, a little given to murder, but nothing to signify ; and the Pope said he was too good a genius to be hung. They could not spare him, he made such pretty cups, and only killed people of a doubtful value. This is better than Lilly. Why do not all people write so, and let us see the good opinion they have of themselves, anything to the contrary notwithstanding. There is something in it, I know not what, which strikes one as right and fitting (murder excepted) ; and makes me long more than ever for Memoirs — Memoirs — eternal Memoirs. They say that my Lord Clarendon, besides the book he was writing for the King, has bequeathed a life of himself to posterity, which you may depend upon it will not see the light, as long as there is a certain chance for *his* posterity. What we may equally depend upon, if we live to see it, is, that he will make no mention of the fat, and the good living, which was the death of him, and a reversion of which his daughters have secured for their benefit. But if the booksellers put his portrait at the beginning, it will do as well.

I shall commence then forthwith, to-morrow morning, with all my sins and all my memories on my head, together with the velvet cap which Madame d'Aubespine made me, and which I keep for grand occasions. I had some thoughts of putting on my wig, that the sight of it over my shoulders might act as an airy inspirer, and remind me of the gallantries of my youth ; but at that time, alas, my wig was my own hair ; whereas, now, my hair is some other man's wig. Not that I could not have a crop sufficient for one still, if the mode permitted ; but I doubt—Here my Lady Esher jogs me, and will not suffer me to write what I was going to say. She says it is not true. She can see, by the colour of my beard, that my hair would be a fine chesnut still. I say nothing, except that it is lucky beards are no longer worn. She differs with me here again ; says that a beard must have been a fine thing, and that it is a great pleasure to her to think that I could have a glorious one if I chose. So I give up. If I am tender about the figure I shall cut in this excellent history, I have no fear, I assure you, for others. I shall be quite impartial with them.

My fingers long to be at them,—to handle my pen, as I have seen Sir Peter do his brush, with a relish in the anticipation; only I trust, that my inferiority in the execution will be made up by the greater truth of the likeness, my heroines having their eyes wide open enough sometimes, and being even decently dressed. Assuredly we cut an ill figure in our pictures, compared with those of the preceding age. Our mothers, in Vandyke's pictures, look like spirited young ladies, fresh as the morning, and about to issue into the morning air. In Sir Peter, I am afraid they look sometimes not very different from my lady's woman, sitting up for the butler.

But I must not calumniate my people beforehand. Neither must I be in too great a hurry. You remember seeing a play of Ben Jonson, whom M.<sup>de</sup> St. Evremond used to talk so much about. It would be very convenient, though not very proper, to begin a history with a list of *dramatis personæ* in his style,—a characteristic nomenclature. (Apply this, by the way, to people whom you know, and see how trippingly the names come off.) There is a poor man here, a puritan, who wrote a strange, wild book, in which he turned it to account in a very singular manner. What think you of my Lord Old Man, the Lord Carnal Delight, the Lord Pride of the Eyes, and Mr. Worldly Wiseman? Also of my Lady Painted Sepulchre, and the Chevalier Having-Greedy?\* Could not a master of the ceremonies match these eminent persons in any court of Europe? I see abbés and dukes by the dozen, flowing out of your lips. I have a duke myself for the Lord Pride of the Eyes: and many a time have I played at cards with the Lord Old Man, who cared for nothing so long as he could see the spots. Take some of my leading persons, Mr. Caryl, and see from what you know of them, if you could not fill up the blanks opposite, with pretty shrewd<sup>d</sup> guesses at nouns and adjectives. There is

- King Charles the Second.
- The Duchess of Cleveland.
- The Duchess of Richmond.
- The Duchess of York.
- My Lady Esher.

\* *Sir Having-Greedy* is in Bunyan; but there is nobody answering to the title of my *Lady Tombeau-Fardé*.

- The Countess de Vavasour.
- The Earl of Clarendon.
- The Duke of Buckingham (not the knight of the *shire*.)
- The Duke himself.\*
- Sir George Hewitt.
- Sir Philip Herne.
- Miss Stewart.
- Mrs. Gwynn.
- Mr. Milton (an odd procession).
- Oliver Cromwell.
- The Maids of Honour.
- My Lord Waringstown.
- Mr. Marvell. †
- Mr. Butler.
- Mr. Dryden. †
- Blood, the rascal.
- M. de St. Evremond. †

*cum multis aliis*; but with some of the best you are not acquainted, except a certain lady, who vows that this letter shall go in front of the manuscript, for a preface, in order that she may not be left out; the rogue; as if I did not think too much of her always. I need not repeat, that nobody but yourselves (and posterity) must read it,—a pretty reserve. Not to mention other reasons, I should be forced to have the honour of fighting with all Buckinghamshire‡, which would be inconvenient at this juncture, and threaten the last hopes of an ancient family.

Adieu, till you have a packet. There is nothing new here, except that Mr. Dryden has written a bad opera, and M. Grabut set it to worse music; which is a critique I hope you will acknowledge to be impartial, making allowance for national prejudices. I like to make it matter of astonishment, that an English wit can produce a dull performance, when we are so ready on this side the water to acknowledge the merits of those who do not care to know anything about ourselves. Even M.

\* The Duke of York.

† The promises here implied, which were acted upon in the MS., have come to nothing in the translation, for a reason mentioned in the Preface.

‡ A sneer at Sheffield, who was forced against his will to have the title of Buckinghamshire, instead of the more famous and sprightly one of Buckingham, a claim existing to the latter in another family.—*Edit.*

de St. Evremond, who has now been with us these dozen years, has not condescended to speak our language ; though it must be allowed, that he both reads and commends us ? Pray do you teach your friends to do likewise ? Mr. Marvell used to say, that a time would come ; but that the wits were not the people to bring it about. Cowley was of opinion, that he alluded to my Lord Verulam. Others think, that he intended Mr. Milton. If he did, I can only say, with all my respect for that surprising genius, whom your ambassador Lord Dorset pronounces to be equal to Virgil, that the world seems as far off, at present, from finding out his Paradise, as they are from agreeing upon the site of the other. — A thousand adieus.

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MEMOIRS  
OF  
SIR RALPH ESHER.

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CHAPTER I.

I AM the only son of an ancient family in the county of Surrey, who had lost everything of their importance but the name. All that we possessed, was a high reputation for honour, and just enough worldly substance to keep us in the rank of gentry. My ancestors had made themselves conspicuous by a zeal for the catholic faith, which did not tend to increase their fortunes. My grandfather became no less an enemy to himself, in the shape of a friend to the puritans: and he was succeeded in all his generosity by his son, my kind stout-hearted father, whom I should never cease to love, had he left me nothing but a straw. He died, covered with wounds, in the Parliament service, when I was just old enough to remember him. He had the decency, without the formality, of his sect (I forget which of the Independents it was); and he was pardoned the deficiency, for the sake of the attachment. I remember a scene, of my mother weeping, and his kissing me with a great helmet on his head which he took off, and which afterwards at college, when I came to read Homer, produced an odd confusion in my mind, respecting the Trojan leader, whom I could not help associating with ideas of the Covenant.

At college I remained but a year. A letter from my mother

recalled me, partly on account of the straitness of the family purse, into which I had made some inroads, and chiefly by reason of the injunctions of pious Mr. Saunders, an Independent minister who had become domesticated with us, and who was resolved I should make the inroads no longer. He was, however, a disinterested man, bent upon heaping nothing but self-denials on himself and all of us. I found him installed in the dignity of spiritual master of the house, my tender mother, who had never raised her head up since my father's death, waiting on every word he uttered, and determined to have as little of the few comforts that remained to her as possible. I believe I saved her life by my arrival; for she could not help taking a delight in my presence; and moreover Mr. Saunders allowed her to think it innocent. Had I been older, I should have pitied them both, and struggled hard to remonstrate. As it was, I unconsciously gave way to their customs, chiefly because my father was understood to have been of the same way of thinking; which made me feel as if my own propensity to cheerfulness need be no hinderance to the general strictness of us all. But I was assisted by another reason which I shall mention presently.

I soon found that the wintry pleasure in his face, with which Mr. Saunders received me, was owing, not merely to his natural kind-heartedness, but to a certain rescue which he had made of me from the jaws of the master of the college, who differed with him in a shade or two of opinion. The master had been strict enough, but he was nothing to mortified Master Saunders. Even the smiles which my mother bestowed upon me, were to be warranted by texts of Scripture, lest they should degenerate into worldly comfort. We had prayers on getting up (but always extempore: there were to be no superstitious observances), prayers before and after breakfast, prayers at dinner, and supper, and going to bed, prayers whenever a friend came in, and whenever any of us went out for a walk, or returned from it; because it is directed that we should be watchful over our goings out and our comings in. It was little that we had our shutters closed every Saturday, in order to prepare for the Sabbath. That was common enough. The very ray of light that came in from the space left at top, would have been disapproved, had not Mr. Saunders found a simile for it in Scripture. This rendered it a light from

heaven, and saved us from making each other's countenances more ghostly by candles at noon-day. Then there were expoundings, and seekings, and wrestlings innumerable, the wrestlings being all on the knees, which used to tickle me so, that I could have torn them to pieces. Nobody thought of the luxury of a hassock. I contrived, as often as I could, to get a table or some other piece of furniture between me and the chief wrestler, in order that I might scratch my knees at leisure. He detected me; and almost made me mad with vexation, by congratulating me on the opportunity I had to show my contempt for that cross in the flesh. I was in the habit of receiving his notions with respect; I was brought up in the spirit of them, though not in this vexatious letter; and it was impossible not to see that he was a very good and kind man; but a few of these little inconveniences, together with the glimpses I had of jollier doings on the part of some respectable neighbours, went more to keep me in a state of convertibility to the church, than all the mightier absurdities he uttered.

A circumstance however assisted to delay my falling off; which was lucky; as it would have gone nigh to kill my poor mother. Among the few visitors who came to see us (for the neighbourhood was inclined to be loyal, and Mr. Saunders's opinions even among his own sect were peculiar) was a young lady, the child, like myself, of a deceased Parliamentary officer, and very dear on that account, as well as for the perfection of her religious faith, to my mother. This little saint used to come among others to wrestle with us, and as she was the first person of her sex and age I was ever so close to, I regretted that she wrestled at the other side of the room. We had been very strict at our college; but discourses on love, not always divine, crept in among us; and the sweet saints that the poets talk of easily became confounded in our imaginations with those of another sort. I therefore fancied myself in love; and as youth is a great mimic, and love too, I took delight in imitating the greater gravity of my fair sister in the faith, hoping moreover that it would recommend me to her notice, and trying to persuade myself that the more solemn we both looked, the more we understood one another.

We had few books in the house. What there were consisted chiefly of prose, and were all on divine subjects. The only poets in favour were Quarles and Wither. Mr. Milton

was in high repute as a controversialist; but his poetry was kept in the shade, for he had not then written the *Paradise Lost*, and there were symptoms of heathenism in his early poems,—unripe and unstaidd thoughts, the vanities of youth. He mentioned cathedral windows, and eulogised the organ. Even a bishop was praised in his Latin pieces; and King James was sent to heaven by the Gunpowder Plot, instead of the way which all parties ought to have gone. This did not hinder me from recollecting some things I had seen in his book at college; such as the portrait of Melancholy, which I applied to Miss Newen,

“ Her rapt soul sitting in her eyes ; ”

to which I could not help adding occasionally that of Mirth, who was to come and trip it

“ On the light fantastic toe.”

A very fantastic toe it would have been in our house. Whether Miss Newen was to dance or walk, all my portraits of her presented a staid countenance. Nevertheless, some lively images out of *L'Allegro* would intrude, nothing the worse for the gravity. As for Wither, who had lately been Major-General of the county, I had a great respect for him; and could not have conceived it possible that the vicissitudes of things would have affected his reputation, or ever brought about a time when I could laugh at his Muse. But I always associated the idea of his poetry with something sacred, even when he vented his spleen, or fancied himself facetious. Quarles impressed me still more with his pictured allegories. The man with the beam sticking out of his eye, raised no image in me of the ridiculous. I took it for one of the sacred marvels of his author. The little fellow screaming inside the skeleton—“ Who shall deliver me from this body of death ”—seemed to me in as natural though awful a state, as if he had been in an infernal prison. These, I thought, were the great poets; but I could not help preferring Mr. Milton, who illegally talked of a

“ Pensive nun, devout and pure.”

Mr. Saunders used often to speak with great indignation and abhorrence of the superstitious practices of a person, whom he called “ poor deluded Mr. Farrar of Little Gidding.” Mr.

Farrar was a gentleman, who, about thirty years before, had set up a kind of protestant convent, in which he and his kindred, to the amount of forty persons, led an evangelical life. They rose at four, went to prayers at five, sang psalms at six, psalms again and breakfast at seven; and so on throughout the day, and the year. It is said, "At midnight, I will arise and give thanks:" therefore Mr. Farrar got up at half-past twelve o'clock at night in the cold, and was thankful. It is written also, "I will cry out in the morning:" therefore Mr. Farrar thought it right to be so vociferous when he awoke, that you would have supposed Mrs. Farrar was being the death of him. So far, all was well. But what Mr. Saunders could not tolerate, was, that all this was done upon system; and that the system was not his own. The crying out in the morning was not unpremeditated and unlooked-for. The rising in the night was Babylonish. The royal psalmist, in his enthusiasm as a poet and prophet, says, on one occasion, that he shall sing without ceasing. Mr. Farrar took it into his head, that his family was bound to do likewise; so there was a constant round of psalmody going on, night and day, one part of the singers relieving the other, and four hours during the night being found sufficient to go through the whole Book of Psalms. Mr. Saunders was the more angry with this, because he really admired the virtue of such perseverance; nor, can it be doubted that had he been of kin to Mr. Farrar, and flourishing at the same time, he would have been one of the most exemplary of the performers. But besides these and other monkeries, such as repeated bowings, more fit for a "shameless Archbishop" (meaning Laud) than a Christian, the profane people of Little-Gidding had music; their chief himself "writhing and unboning his clergy-limbs" by playing on the viol; and to crown Mr. Saunders's wrath, and my secret admiration (for here lay the cause of it), Mr. Farrar was "filthy" enough, as he expressed it, to have seven virgin nieces, who imitated the nuns or angels, and assumed epithets indicative of certain characters which they were to sustain. One was called "the patient," another "the affectionate," a third "the cheerful," &c. How much better, thought I, for every virgin niece to be all these characters in one, and for Mary Newen to be among them, and I there, accompanying the sweet saint on the *viol di gamba*. I did not dare to express such a notion to her. I found it

necessary to look graver than before, so lively did the reflection make me. In a word, I contrived to be very grave, and to get nearer and nearer to her, till the poor girl died of a consumption which every body knew of but myself.

My feelings on that occasion were remarkable. I felt shocked, not so much at the event, as at not being more sorry for it; for I still fancied that I had loved. My delusion was a comfort to all parties. I thought it incumbent upon me, as a lover, to be very miserable; which, as I had never declared my passion, I could only exhibit in a mysterious manner, by a more than usual silence, and by not eating half so much as I wished. How often have I longed to finish the plate which I sent away untouched! My mother thought I had been visited with the deepest and most innocent of first loves; and by permission of Mr. Saunders, she would put the nicest morsels before me, such as I would have given worlds to devour. Mr. Saunders kindly disposed always, never showed it so much as then, for he concluded that the strength of his exhortations supported me, and that so early a calamity had made me serious for life. Poor man! he little thought that hunger and a poetical notion were disputing the matter hard within me, and that the recollection of his face was to be a warning to me, for ever, against parting with my natural cheerfulness. It was a face, naturally benignant, which looked as if it had had three or four layers of peevishness brought upon it by the growth of time. There was a regret in it, that he had not been more comfortable; then a sorrow for the regret; and then a sorrow for the sorrow, as if unworthy of the minister who was bound to endure all things with cheerfulness.

I went on in this way for nearly two years, looking very grave, occasionally sporting in the neighbourhood with serious huntsmen, and nursing a propensity to the acquaintance of the gay and the witty. My mother screened me, when I played truant. I had heard at college of the Denhams and the Cowleys. They were forbidden names in our house, and this made me like them the more. I thought their loyalty a sin; but it began to look rather a pleasing one, like the gallantries of which they spoke; and from pitying them I warmed into admiration. I rode one day on purpose to see Cooper's Hill, because Mr. Denham had written a poem upon it; and hearing that Cowley was coming to see Mr. Evelyn at Wootton, I went

there and waited all the morning, till I saw him arrive. He had a book in his hand, with his finger between the leaves, as if he had been reading. He was a fleshy, heavy man, not looking in good health, and had something of a stare in his eye. Before he entered the gate, he stooped down to pinch the cheeks of some little children at play; and afterwards, when I heard he was put in prison, I could not, for the life of me, persuade myself that he deserved it.

At the end of this period, pious Mr. Saunders died, confidently expecting the bliss which he deserved, yet not able to get rid of the sorrowful expression of his countenance. I hope that a circumstance which occurred a little before, and which gave me a new life, did not help to kill him. I do not mean the Restoration, which happened just then, but the arrival of a little princess of mirth, described as a distant relation of ours, and daughter of a presbyterian, who came as the harbinger of her father to make peace for his long absence, and smooth the way to a plan he had in view. I fancied her my second love. She was as different from the last as mirth from melancholy. As long as she was in the presence of her elders, she kept a grave face, her eyes nevertheless, which were small and long, peering sideways as if she could have taken a sudden run like a kid, and butted Mr. Saunders's legs. Next morning, the elders being as usual at the farther part of the house, she contrived to slip from the old housekeeper, and meeting me in the garden, said to me in a hurried manner, "Are you always so?"—"Always how?"—"Why, always stuck up like ghosts? and do you never speak above a whisper, except when you are praying? Can they overhear us?"—"Who?"—"Why, your mother and Mr. Saunders."—"No," said I, laughing, "they are on the other side of a dozen walls."—"Oh, and you can laugh, can you?" says she; "then look here." With these words, she ran with all her might to the other end of the garden, and cried out, "Ho! ho! Hallo!" Then taking a turn, she scampered up the bowling green, and shouted again with all her force. I found this so diverting, that I ran after her, and leaping on the bench too, shouted three times as loud; at which she laughed ready to die; and then we both laughed for good company, and from that moment were excellent friends.

We ran into every part of the garden, laughing and talking; but what was my horror, in turning an alley, to see Mr. Saunders and my mother coming towards us, with anxiety in their looks. My mother seemed faint, but said, "Oh, 'tis only the children." — "Only the children, madam!" exclaimed Mr. Saunders indignantly, "and alarming tender and christian people with this profane outcry! Mr. Esher ought surely to be no longer a child."

You may rest easy, thought I, for that matter. I turned to my companion, to re-assure her by my looks; but she was as staid as a judge. The disturbance passed over; but the good minister, who began to decline, would pay himself for his patient endurance of sickness, by giving me divers quips about disappointments and evils to come, which made my poor mother shed tears. At other times he was very kind and hopeful, and gave me long injunctions, which he wished to consider as ample securities against evil, though his face and voice were full of trouble when he said it. He was a very different sort of person from the robust soldiers and Parliament's men, of whom I retained a recollection from childhood, and some of whom I saw still treading the land like its conquerors, growling at the light multitude that out-voted them. Had I been under a stouter hand than his, I might have been soured and made wilder than I became. As it was, I retained a kind memory of him, and a very tender one of my mother, who died not long afterwards. Her death was happy, for she was inclined to believe whatever was told her: and though the guardian into whose hands I passed for the remainder of my nonage, was a presbyterian, being the distant relation above mentioned, yet he spoke in a strain so well calculated to keep their differences of opinion in the shade, and to paint bright days both for me and the true church, that she went smiling to the land of good mothers. I was to go and live with him in a short time. Meanwhile I remained at the house of a common friend in the neighbourhood, who, under the guise of austerity, was nothing but a trimmer, waiting his opportunities. He let me do as I liked, now that the King was come back; and, in company with his daughter and my lively cousin, I passed a season so full of gaiety, that I sometimes reproached myself for not taking the loss of my mother more deeply to heart.



## CHAPTER II.

IF the period of life were to be named, at which, with one exception, a man is likely to be happiest, supposing his circumstances to be otherwise not unfavourable, I should think it must be the latter part of his nonage — from fifteen to twenty. He is full of health and hope; has nothing to regret; every thing to look forward to; and if, in addition to all this, you give him a love for books, a love for manly sports, and a love, or what he conceives to be such, to be in love with, he has only to wish what he never thinks of wishing — namely, that he could be so for ever. I was in this state at Epsom, in the summer of the year 1662. It was beautiful weather. My cousin (for so I delighted to call her, though I could not even then discover the relationship,) was to leave us in July; but we were to swear eternal affection, and meanwhile the affection was eternally going on. I read what books I pleased, and became intimate with the works of Sir John Suckling, Carew, Waller, and twenty other gallants, in whose pages I found my mistress and myself at every turn. I rode, I hunted, I strolled the woods, I longed to dance sarabands to the tune of —

“Hylas, Hylas, why sit we mute?”

and I played at bowls with Sir John's verses in my head, and my cousin's little winking eyes looking upon me.\*

Not that I thought bowls at all equal to wit (whatever airs I gave myself in the quotation), or cared for hunting, or for any thing else, if I could have paid undivided attention to Miss Warmestre. I hunted when I could not see her; I laughed because she did; and the greatest pleasure I found in my books (which were the only things that pretended to occupy a thought besides) was in twisting her into every possible heroine, shape, and posture, that were to be met with in the bowers of poetry. She was Chloris, and Doris, and Saccharissa, and Venus: — Venus from that day being a buxom little girl, with a nose inclining to the turned-up, and half-shut

\* “And priz'd black eyes, or a lucky hit”  
At bowls, above all the trophies of wit.”

eyes. So, thought I, the lass of the "Wedding" looked when she was going to be married:—

" Her lips were red, and one was thin,  
Compar'd to that was next her chin,  
Some bee had stung it newly."

Such was the ribbon round the waist, which made the poet very properly cry out, when he got possession of it, and held it waving in the air,—

" Give me but what this ribbon bound,  
Take all the rest the sun goes round."

The little rogue knew her power, and took the passion in the merriest manner in the world: that is to say, as far as she was capable of it; which was about as much, at that time, as was afterwards in vogue. I was more serious; but nothing could hinder her from laughing and playing the romp. Sometimes, when I was saying tender things, full of gravity, she would put on my hat, and go making a thousand antics over the green, for me to catch her. Another time she would dip her head into a great tub of water, and come shaking the curls in my face. Unfortunately, she was not unwilling to make me jealous. I was scrupulous on that point, and hence we came to have some quarrels. However, we parted in July on the best terms, with exchanges of locks of hair, only she was eating a great piece of cake all the while—for which I could have beaten her.

The King was expected at that time on a visit to Lord Berkeley, at Durdans. Miss Warmestre regretted that she could not stay to see him; however, she begged her compliments to the cavaliers, and I was to say she meant soon to be presented. I little thought how soon that was to be, and how we were to laugh together at the recollection. I was dull for a few days; but somehow I did not feel the same impossibility, as I did with Miss Newen, in applying the same passages of books to other girls. I found afterwards, that I was not in love with either; but the gravity of my fancy for Miss Newen associated with itself a stronger sentiment of devotedness. Miss Warmestre, when away, began to be twenty other girls. One had her hair; another her walk; another even better eyes, though perhaps not such a mouth. A token of recollection, which she had promised me in the course of a week, did not arrive; nor the next, nor the next. I began to be

angry, and to look with fresh impatience for the arrival of the King and his court.

The talk of this advent occupied the whole neighbourhood for twenty miles round. Nothing was to be heard but "when is he coming?" and "who will come with him?" for a main part of the curiosity consisted in making inquiries upon the latter point. As the dwellers in Epsom paced, of an evening, that pleasing town, you caught the words, "If the Earl of Castlemain should take it in his head ——" and then, from the next comers, "But you do not imagine that my Lord Berkeley ——"

The King was expected some days before his arrival by those who were not in the secret. Every horseman was watched as he came through the town, under the notion that he brought some intelligence; and no coach could be heard, but everybody ran to the door. The commonest traveller seemed to partake of the dignity of those who were expected, and carried a look of meaning in his face. At length the tradesmen announced, for certain, that his Majesty was coming on the first of September. It wanted four days of that epoch. The men were all bustle in the morning, and drinking in the evening, to pass away the time. The women were delighted with the certainty, and ready to tear their hair at the delay. As for me, I went strolling about the woods, to complain to the deities of Miss Warmestre, and I read some pieces of my favourite poets, with which I stuffed my pockets.

I found several things in Mr. Cowley's "Mistress" to apply to my case. Now I froze—and now I burned,—accordingly as the poet was affected; and then I determined on writing some verses to Despair; justly concluding, that if so great a man as Mr. Cowley could not move a woman to love him with all his learning, no hope remained for a beginner. The conclusion of Sir John Suckling's poem startled me:—

"Quit, quit, for shame; this will not move;  
If heav'n forsake her,  
If of herself she will not love,  
Nothing will make her:—  
The Devil take her."

I was still too much in love, and too little acquainted with the new style of gallantry, to vent so cavalier an impatience. But the advice made me easier. The following also was gratifying:—

“ Out upon it ! I have lov'd  
 Three whole days together ;  
 And am like to love three more,  
 If it prove fair weather.

“ Time shall moult away his wings  
 Ere he shall discover,  
 In the whole wide world again,  
 Such a constant lover.”

Now I had loved for months ; I felt I could have loved for years, and began to consider myself very meritorious and ill-treated. In reading the copy of verses by Mr. Cowley, entitled the “ Chronicle,” I had the curiosity to reckon up the mistresses he has immortalised. They amounted to some twenty or thirty. I took them all for beings of flesh and blood, and not the poetical creations I afterwards found them to be ; and this was new cause for doubting the propriety of my constancy. Then there was the list of all the little chains and arts, used to keep lovers constant, none of which had been practised on me.

Just as I was repeating some of his verses, shaking at the same time the book with one hand, and thrusting forward and brandishing the other in pompous time to the measure, I met an honest gentleman at the turning of a corner, who was coming with his daughter from Leatherhead, to ascertain the day of the King's visit. I had seen him two or three times at mine host's, and his daughter with him. She was not so bewitchingly handsome then as she was afterwards ; but her eyes were a female's, and I thought them bent upon me with an expression of pity. I looked with pity on her's in return, and said to myself, “ This is surely the beauteous Catherine, who is to succeed on the resignation of Martha.” I returned to Epsom in their company, and found so much sense and sweetness in the young lady's conversation, that, by the help of the tenderness that I thought I discerned in her, I experienced a stronger emotion than any which had affected me during the first days of my intercourse with the two others. She and her father were persuaded to stay in Epsom till after the visit. I accompanied them every where : I paid her the more attention in order that Miss Warmestre might be told of it ; and the day before his Majesty's arrival I was all but a declared lover ; I mean as far as myself was concerned ; for, in justice to herself, I must observe, that although of a very innocent and bewitching tenderness, and ready, as it seemed,

to meet any honourable avowal on my part, all the responsibility of the occasion was on my side. Still, I did not feel myself engaged. I was in a delightful state of exaltation between my wish to pique Miss Warmestre, the romantic air of my new passion, and the expectation of seeing the King and his court next day, with all their wit, beauty, and gallant plumage.

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### CHAPTER III.

THE bells awoke me in the morning, ringing a merry peal. When the wind died, they seemed to be calling towards London; when it rose again, they poured their merriment through the town, as if telling us that the King was coming. I got up, and went into the street, where the people were having their breakfasts under the trees, as the gentry do in the time of the races. It was a very animated scene. The morning was brilliant. A fine air tempered the coming warmth. The tables, set out with creams and cakes under the trees, had a pretty country look, though the place was crowded. Everybody was laughing, chattering, and expecting; and the lasses, in their boddices and white sleeves, reminded me of Miss Warmestre.

The King, who was an early riser, was expected accordingly: it was not known at what hour; but everybody was resolved not to miss him. One of our servants had been posted at Ewell, to give us the first intelligence. I returned to breakfast, where I found my new mistress and the family assembled. They were talking of Restoration poems; an awkward subject, I thought, for the host, but he discussed it not only with ease, but with satisfaction. He was now hastening to be a royalist, and was glad to have the countenance of those who had openly committed themselves on both sides. Waller and Mr. Dryden had gone further than he the other way: they now could not go too far for the new one. Not a word, therefore, was said of their panegyrics on Cromwell; but much good will expressed towards their more enlightened effusions. It was the more necessary to put a good face on the matter, because our host's old connections had latterly been quarrelling

with the court; and he took all opportunities of insinuating that their grounds of complaint were new—totally distinct from those points on which he formerly agreed with them. With all my admiration of wit, I could not exactly understand how the Protector's and the King's eulogists could write so well on both subjects, and with so short an interval between; and I marvelled to think, what my poor mother and Mr. Saunders would have said, could they have foreseen us all quoting the new pamphlets, and some of us hardly able to eat for the pleasure of expecting the royal visit. But this touched my own conscience. I therefore swallowed the reflection; and persuaded myself that a variety of new and unheard-of blessings were coming upon us, of which the very chocolate I was drinking was an earnest. The Queen had introduced it from Portugal, and that morning we had been treated with it in her Majesty's honour.

It was not so easy to get over her Majesty's situation at court, which was by this time much talked of. Divers things were said of it among us in a tone of mysteriousness and regret. The Queen was pitied; my friends shook their heads; but Lady Castlemain was very beautiful—extremely beautiful. The ladies, nay, the gentlemen, and some very grave ones, manifested an interest respecting the clothes she wore, and the length of her petticoats. Would she come that day?—Hardly.—Undoubtedly—she was of the Queen's bed-chamber. The Queen's bed-chamber! “Lord bless us!” exclaimed an old lady; “she must be very beautiful, to make the King so wicked.” It was agreed that everybody must get a sight of her face, if only to behold a sorceress.

I listened, and was edified. Things cannot be so bad, thought I, in which every one takes such an interest. Besides, has not love, by universal consent, and from the earliest periods of antiquity, been a licensed intruder upon the gravest? I found myself that day thinking more of Miss Warmestre than my new mistress; and as I thought of her pretty lips and her shape, and then of my own natural conscientiousness, I concluded that King Charles was a very good man, a great lover of chastity, but somehow . . . The excuse was to be found in Ovid: nay, Mr. Cowley had excused it. He, too, had written a coronation-poem, which came with good grace from his pen, because he had been no trimmer. I did not

mention it. It contained passages not so easy to be quoted as those of the accommodating wits above mentioned. Perhaps the author would not have been very well satisfied to have them quoted to himself. But his Majesty had not been so long in England, that his visit to any part of his dominions did not look like a new return; and the people were still willing to be intoxicated.

“There is no Stoic sure who would not now  
 Ev'n some excess allow;  
 And grant that one wild fit of cheerful folly  
 Should end our twenty years of dismal melancholy.”

The fit had lasted a good while; but who was to say what bounds there ought to be to cheerfulness, if our melancholy had been all in the wrong?

While the ladies were dressing, I went out again to reconnoitre. There was a false alarm of the King's coming, which set them all in a hurry, and which had deceived our outpost at Ewell. It was owing to some carriages with the royal arms, which had arrived in that neighbourhood, and put up at Nonsuch. This turned out to be lucky for us, because it drove us to take our stand in a good place sooner than we should have done; for, as our home was in a by-lane, we should have seen nothing, and so had resolved, with others of the gentry thereabouts, to get as near as possible to the gate of Durdans. We found ourselves disappointed by a vast crowd, that seemed to have dropped from the skies; but here, again, our misfortune proved an advantage, for our visitor from Leatherhead being known to Mr. Evelyn, and that gentleman arriving among the first with some other gentry, he contrived to get us inside the gates, and near to the house door, so that we should see the visitors alight at the foot of the terrace, and pass by us. Application had been made to the King, to know if his Majesty had any objection to this admission within the gates. “Not I,” said he, merrily;—“admit all within the gates, cattle and stranger, man-servant and maid-servant.” This joke was much enjoyed by some, who would have thought it a profanation two years back.

A great noise from the town made us all settle ourselves in our places, but it was another false alarm. My Lord Carlisle's coach had occasioned it; being all over velvet and gold. This we learnt afterwards, for his lordship had only come soon that he might be among the last. We had not waited, how-

ever, above an hour, when the continued cries\* announced the real coming, though still there were several noblemen in advance, the arrival of whose equipages occasioned a series of pleasing disappointments. Among them were Lords Oxford and Peterborough, and many others, whom I knew so well afterwards, Buckhurst, Bellasyse, Sir George Horton, &c. The Prince de Tarente was there; noble old Hollis (whom a rough voice behind me, in a low tone, called "the ungodly traitor"), and Lord and Lady Sandwich, his lordship passing without a comment from this interloper among the gay, though he was a turncoat and man of the world, and Hollis was a man of principle. Sir Kenelm Digby came upon a horse, which seemed no bigger than himself, so grand was he of stature, and so remarkably bestrode it. Already appeared some beautiful women, and others who grievously disappointed us; for we had made up our minds, that we were to see nothing but Lady Castlemains.

Enter Mr. Cowley with my Lord Orrery. I was pleased at having seen him before, and could not but look with reverence on his good-natured, paternal face, showing so great a man to be a good one. Mr. Waller was there, but nobody pointed him out.

The Earl of Lauderdale with his Countess: he as awkward as a whale, she as ugly as the devil.

The Chancellor, exciting great curiosity, on account of the marriage of his daughter with the Duke of York; an important looking man, something puffing and blowing, and with a heavy person. Yet so impressive is name, and alliance, and great office, that in that first sight of him, especially as he was not without magnificence in his nature, I could not help thinking that his very corpulence added to his dignity.

Trumpets at a distance, after the French fashion:—enter the carriage of my Lord Carlisle, as if, and yet as if not, belonging to them: but at least within the wind of their glory. He issued out upon us, like a vision of blue and silver; so magnificent was his habit.

The Duke of Buckingham, with his Duchess, and his sister the Duchess of Richmond. Not so handsome, as I had expected to find him, but elegant and courteous. Little did I think of the pranks I should see him play. He was playing them then, for he said something to the ladies, without moving



the expression of his face, which forced them to laugh behind their fans, and then made a very elegant bow to somebody in passing. The Duchess afterwards told me, that he said, "Look at that man to the left, with his chin up in the air, who means to make me a bow." As soon as the ladies entered the door, he returned to the gate to attend on his Majesty, whose arrival was hailed with repeated shouts.

The King!—The silence now seemed to become more silent; and in spite of the opinions in which I had been brought up, I felt what it was to be in the presence of one who inherited sovereign power. His Majesty himself alighted first, and together with Buckingham, presented his hand to assist the Queen. Then came a handsome boy, Mr. Crofts (afterwards Duke of Monmouth); and last, assisted by her cousin the Duke, the long-looked-for beauty, beautiful indeed, triumphantly beautiful. She looked around, and the spectators could hardly refrain from another shout.

The dress at that time was well calculated to set off a woman to advantage. Lady Castlemain was dressed in white and green, with an open boddice of pink, looped with diamonds. Her sleeves were green, looped up full on the shoulders with jewellery, and showing the white shift beneath, richly trimmed with lace. The boddice was long and close, with a very low tucker. The petticoat fell in ample folds, but not so long as to keep the ankles unexposed; and it was relieved from an appearance of too much weight by the very weightiness of the hanging sleeves, which, counterpoising its magnitude, and looking flowery with lace and ribbons, left the arms free at the elbows, and fell down behind on either side. The hair was dressed wide, with ringlets at the cheeks; and the fair vision held a fan in one hand, while the Duke led her by the other. When she had ascended the steps, and came walking up the terrace, the lowness of her dress in the bosom, the visibility of her trim ankles, and the flourishing massiness of the rest of her apparel, produced the effect, not of a woman overdressed, but of a dress displaying a woman; and she came on, breathing rosy perfection, like the queen of the gardens.

I did not see all this at the time; there was not leisure for it; but I had the general impression, which I reduced into detail afterwards. The spectators forgot everybody but the King and her. His Majesty, at that period of his life (he

was little more than thirty), looked at his best, and I thought I never saw a manlier face, or a more graceful figure. He was in mulberry-coloured velvet and gold. He not only took off his hat in return to our salutations, but persisted in keeping it so, as if in the presence of the whole people of England. This fairly transported us. The royal features were strong, somewhat grim even, and he had a black brow and a swarthy complexion, reminding us of the southern part of his stock; but there was good temper in the smile of his wide, though not unhandsome, mouth; and his carriage was eminently that of the gentleman. Lady Castlemain at that time was little more than twenty. The Queen, though short of stature, was young also, and looked handsomer than we expected; and as all parties seemed pleased, and his Majesty's little son came on the other side of the lady of the bed-chamber, we pretended to ourselves that things were not so bad as report made them; though never more convinced, that every thing which had been related was true.

Some other ladies followed; then the Duke and Duchess\*, with more; and then Prince Rupert; the Duke a stiff, dry looking man, very different from his brother; the Prince harsh and plain featured, but with a keen eye; neither of them graceful or princely. The Duchess had her father's tendency to the robust; and as we did not hear her talk, I did not think her so good-looking as she appeared to me afterwards.

When the doors closed, and the spectators moved away, I felt dull, in spite of the presence of Miss Randolph (the name of my new mistress). I thought this an injustice; and she talked so sweetly during our return, that I found myself more in love with her than before, and behaved accordingly. Lady Castlemain had eclipsed Miss Warmestre. She had at the same time made all womankind still more delightful in my eyes; and I began to dress Miss Randolph after her fashion, which mightily improved her.

In the afternoon, as nothing was to be thought of but the royal visitors, we strolled again to Durdans, and were unexpectedly gratified with the sight of them, the windows being open. The house seemed full of music, which was constantly going on; and now and then a party would issue from the

\* Of York.

trees, and cross over the lawn. Miss Randolph entered so well into the pleasure of the scene, though with perfect propriety, that I was charmed with her. [I did my best to please her, like a ready-made coxcomb as I was, not allowing myself to reflect how I might engage her to think too well of me ; and, in the innocence and tenderness of her heart, she ventured to say, when I asked her if she should not miss the gay nobles and cavaliers, "Not if I see you."

A circumstance, which occurred the same afternoon, destined me to see her but a few times again till long afterwards. Her father, after we had gratified our curiosity, returned with her to Leatherhead. I was restless ; and after accompanying them as far as I was permitted on horseback, returned to the scene of interest. His Majesty loved to see his court and the ladies on horseback. Lord Berkeley had proposed to show them a hawkery of his in the neighbourhood, and as I was carelessly riding along, I met the whole court coming out of Chalk Lane upon the downs. The ladies were in riding-habits, with hats and feathers, the hats large and looped up on one side, the feathers of various hue ; which with the stirring sound of the horses, the gallant look of the cavaliers, and the talk and laughter prevailing as they came forth, made a beautiful show. The wind was higher than the day before, and brought the sound towards me. I turned out of the way ; and from an impulse of respect, got off my horse, and stood waiting uncovered.

The King said something which appeared to turn the eyes of his court upon me, and a light female voice made a remark which I did not hear ; when I was roused from my confusion by another which rose into a pretty shriek. A feather had escaped : the wind wafted it towards me ; and by good luck, I succeeded in catching it in my hat. "Well reclaimed ! well reclaimed !" said the King, making use of a falconer's term. I made a gesticulation expressive of my ignorance to whom the feather belonged, and my want of pretension to the right of bringing it, if I knew. I was accordingly proceeding to hand it to the gentleman nearest me, when his Majesty told me to mount, and bring it myself.

My father had put me so early on horseback, that I had grown up a master of the manège. I vaulted upon my good beast, still keeping my hat in hand, and securing the feather

with my thumb ; and so went towards the King's party, which was a little in advance of the rest.

" 'Tis mine, sir," said a beauty, holding out her hand, whom I afterwards found to be Miss Stewart. She would have added something by way of thanks, but her voice died in a little incoherent laugh, as if she knew not what to say. I could not help stealing a look at my Lady Castlemain, who, as if to supply the deficiency, and pleasantly taking up the King's fancy, said, " We are beholden to your art, sir. Methinks, you should be in good practice." The King had stopped all the riders, that Miss Stewart might secure the feather. The Queen, I observed, was not there. I blushed, and answered that I had no pretensions to be a falconer. " You ride as if you had some pretensions, too, young gentleman," said the King : " what is your name and quality ?" My cheeks blushed deeper, and then deeper still for the blushing, as I replied, that I was the only survivor of a decayed but ancient family, and that my name was Esher. " Esher !" cried the King, turning round to his company : " why, that is the name of the old cock of the wood who was so hard in the dying. Nay, man," continued he, seeing the tears fairly start in my eyes at this irreverend speech, which yet I knew not how to resent, " I did not mean to hurt thee ; but so brave and open a spirit as thy father's ought to have been on the right side." This compliment charmed away the tear, and gave me a new confidence. To be plain, I became a royalist on the spot. " Doubtless, sir," said the Duke of Buckingham, " the colonel was a very worthy, mistaken old gentleman ; but he has given your Majesty a younger subject to make amends." " If it should ever be my good hap," said I, with a bow full of gratitude, " to risk my life for his Majesty, I trust I could show what my father himself might have done, had he lived in these happy times." " Well said, i'faith," cried the King ; " we must keep our new friend in sight, eh, my lord ? I doubt whether there is to be much fighting and risking one's life again very speedily ; but there are perils at court, in which a young gentleman might try his mettle. What say ye ? Have we a stray scarf or deputy stick for Mr. Esher ?" It was replied by somebody, that there would perhaps be a vacancy among the Duke's pages in spring. " Well," said his Majesty, " put me in mind to speak to my brother of it : and so, Sir Knight of the Merlin, in spring-time us see thee again."

The King made a gracious gesture with his hand; and, backing my horse quickly, the head of which I always kept to the circle, I contrived to get properly out of the way. The court passed on; and in a few minutes I found myself at home, scarcely knowing how I got thither.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

I DID not recover from my whirl of satisfaction for some days. All my friends congratulated me as if they thought me a great man at once, and I could not help thinking there was more respect than usual in the letter my guardian wrote me in return for the news. Indeed I now thought myself both great and happy for life. I was to go to court: the King himself had spoken to me, and promised me a place there: a duke was to look to it: I had seen the greatest beauties of the age, and they had smiled on me: I was to be conversant with the wits; I should know Cowley and Waller, and sir John Denham, and Mr. Dryden, besides my lord Buckhurst and Sir Charles Sedley, who had already begun to be talked of: and I should come down occasionally into my old neighbourhood to cut a figure in its eyes, and tell of my glories to Miss Randolph. That tender creature (who received the news with seriousness, but I thought with pride) would live for me till it was proper to marry, like a nymph of the woods; and I should write verses to her, and make her my serious passion, while I put lighter feathers into the caps of the Dorises and Clarindas. I already began to consider a name for her, which should be as long as Saccharissa, but better; that sugary appellation being not only bad in itself, but having been much joked among some friends of mine, years back; though all which they said against it could not make me think ill of the sweet poet.

Meanwhile I was left to entertain my fancies by myself, my mistress having returned with her father to Leatherhead. I was sorry for this; because, though I speak of my then behaviour with my present knowledge of it, I took myself to be seriously in love, not being aware that the presence of the beloved object is all in all, and that I ought not only to have missed

her, but to have cared for nothing in the comparison. Had I but touched her lips (which had been prevented by my never seeing her alone) I had so much of the boy in my love, that I should have taken it for a still more serious one than I did; and this is what disconcerted me so much with regard to Miss Warmestre. I thought it particularly cruel in her to forget me, after the gratitude I felt for her kindness; and wondered how she could cease to think of the pleasant hours we had passed, and the places we had met in. My own readiness to love another was not taken into the account. I thought it forced upon me by Miss Warmestre's behaviour; and the exceeding pity I took on myself made me regard my affection the more ill used, the more faithless it became.

Miss Randolph's father was a shrewd, steady old gentleman, who did not choose to trust his daughter too much with an enthusiastic young fellow, even though he had a small patrimony, and abilities to make it larger. The father of Miss Warmestre seemed to have acted on a different principle; and hints, which I cared nothing about, were often given to that effect in the family among whom I resided. How different were those people from my own family, who never talked of any love but that of a divine nature, and who made a point of scandalising nobody but themselves (for unworthy sinners) and the authorities for the time being. My over delicate mother never opened her lips to me on the subject of the passion, even though I knelt down with young ladies, and though it turned out that she thought I was smitten. Accordingly, I was ready, in the midst of all the pieties in the world, to take any thing for love, that came near me in the shape of a female; while the discourse of my new acquaintances, among whom I used to wonder to find myself, and still more to find them so gay and worldly, almost began to make me doubt whether the precautions of Mr. Randolph were not dictated by a subtlety of speculation, very different from what appeared on the face of them. I drove this idea from me as an ungenerous notion, not suitable to my nature; and had Miss Randolph been present, should have made her a declaration by way of amends. As it was, I began to find excuses for Miss Warmestre. I had always considered her my real first love, since the day she gave me an opportunity, during a fit of romps, to salute her. and now, had she been with us, and

shown that she had not forgotten me, which of the two was I to keep company with (the polite phrase in those times)? Thus had I a world of love on my hands, and nobody to make it to.

In the midst of these refinements, a cousin arrives from Miss Warmestre (there is no end of cousins), who looks very slyly at me all the evening; and next day, when she found me alone, puts into my hand a little box. "It is from your cousin," said she, "who has been expecting to return every day, and see the court: her father promised her; but the promise was not kept. Had she foreseen her disappointment, she would have sent you her compliments the sooner." Here was a theme for my repentance! I accused myself a thousand times of ingratitude and precipitancy; but all prudently and to myself. There was something in the new cousin's face, though very pretty, that hindered me from making her acquainted with my feelings. All her hints to that purpose were lost upon me, which I thought disappointed her. I got alone as soon as possible; and, opening my treasure, found a box of sweetmeats! There was something childish in this — perhaps a joke. It looked very like one of my sweet cousin's merry faces, when she would come to me with the kindest air conceivable, and then start off betwixt' ridicule and good-nature, and have a run for it. But then a message had been delivered with it, and a sort of apology. A messenger of that kind implied a *confidante*; and, above all, the box was only half full. She had eaten the rest herself. Here, thought I, is the delicacy and the cordiality of participation. She trusts to her honest nature for a good construction; and in love, the smallest trifle, nay, even what would appear a grossness without it, becomes the most delicate of refinements. It must be owned that I was prepared to throw a grace over one species of love, if not very likely to distinguish it from another.

But what was I to do with my two loves, now that the first had come back? I congratulated myself a thousand times, that I had made no declaration to Miss Randolph; but what showed a little bit of the rascal in me, and forced me to invent a thousand fresh excuses (which I must own I easily did) was, that I found myself riding occasionally to Leatherhead to see her sweet ingenuous face, and find her looking

at me all the while I was talking to her father. The old gentleman at length gave me to understand that he expected me to say something, or put an end to my visits. I had not heard again from Miss Warmestre: I fancied all her charms in Miss Randolph, with the exception of face; and even there she grew handsomer every day. Her eyes had not Miss Warmestre's mirth, but they were fuller and deeper. I could not help feeling, that the power of gravity in love promised a greater charm than mirth: and had it been possible for me to consider myself disengaged, or to marry (and the latter the old gentleman himself would not have allowed, till I had prospects of increasing my fortune), it is certain that I could have married at once, if Miss Randolph would have had me; and so taken my chance for the rest of my days. The whole secret was, that my senses were interested. My fancy adorned them with passages out of Waller and Suckling; and though the King and his court had swept me away at the moment, especially as it contained such beautiful women, I found, or thought I found, that my love was superior to my vanity. However desirous of elevation, I could do without the one, though not the other. What I was to have said to the King, in case I should have succeeded in putting myself at this fine disadvantage with his Majesty, I had not determined. I did not stop to consider the immense distance between us, nor whether he had not forgotten all about me, five minutes after I left him. Love put me on a level with kings. Kings themselves, said the poets, submit to love; and had I not witnessed the truth of the saying in the person of my Lady Castlemain? I had got a vague notion, that in presenting myself at court (which I had never thought of omitting to do) I should even have had courage enough to confess myself to his Majesty. Servants marry as well as masters. Pages and cup-bearers fall in love, as well as kings; and the King being such a lover himself, would know how to permit the passion in another. It was lucky for me I did not vent these notions to my acquaintances. I fancy them now looking at one another, and then staring me in the face for a madman.

The best of it was, that such reflections were superfluous, and involved no necessity of acting up to them. I was obliged to abstain from going to Leatherhead. I heard nothing from



Miss Warmestre ; and not knowing which to love, and concluding that nobody but the parents were in the wrong, I made up a mistress for my imagination, compounded of both, and so managed to preserve my future interest at court. The only solid conclusion I came to, was, that if a person so well brought up and virtuously disposed as myself, could get into such a dilemma with the soft passion, and become liable to misconstruction, how much was not to be [said in behalf of kings and their temptations ; and what an excellent nature in especial did not his gracious Majesty possess, condescending as he was to the youth in question, and disposed to the same tastes for wit, poetry, and virgin sweetness ! The good opinion of myself that gave rise to these interweavings of mine and the royal conscience, and a good deal of personal address, arising from confidence in my movements, as well as the wish to please, and from the very ignorance of the artificial substitutes for it that were taught upon system, never allowed me to dream that I should make any mistakes in good breeding. It turned out that I had something to learn on that point ; but I was not aware, till long afterwards, how much the success I experienced arose from my very fopperies.

I had now to pass the time as well as I could till spring. I found this difficult enough, notwithstanding the ease with which I thought I could have given up the court. My circle of acquaintance, however, had much increased since my new prospects ; and I should have fallen in love with a third pitying damsel, had not mine host, who had designs on me for a kinswoman of his own, given out that I was engaged. He added that I was a dangerous fellow : and the union of these two pieces of information made all the mothers afraid. Now and then, to be sure, I had broad hints given me, that if I declared off from my old flame, and would openly prefer some more attractive daughter, my infidelity would be thought no obstruction to new vows. But I was uneasy in my conscience. The hints about one old flame reminded me that I had two ; and though abundantly willing to be caressed both for my own merits and for my future greatness, I was fain to oblige my guardian's friend by staying much at home of an evening, and considering what was to be done the better to prepare myself for court. Why my guardian himself did not

take me to his house, especially after all that had been said, I often asked myself with wonder; but nothing was remarked upon it; and making up my mind that things might now reasonably wait for explanation till I got to court (which I was led to identify with every satisfaction upon earth), I set about stocking myself with such chattels and accomplishments as I conceived most necessary to put me in advance with my good fortune.

My host had set me upon this piece of providence, which in the liveliness of my expectations I should have overlooked. He called in to his aid a youth in the neighbourhood, who knew the wife's brother's cousin of a friend of one of his Majesty's gentlemen-porters; and I thought the lad never would have done measuring my good fortune with his eyes, while he talked of the clothes it was necessary I should possess. Our choice was distracted between colours, and velvets, and embroideries. Cloths and camblets were to be discussed; laces, and pinkings; ribbons infinite; gloves, perfumes, and plumed hats. Then I was to have a lute, and I did not know how to play the lute. A lute at Cobham would have been the voice of sin; a trap of Satan to catch souls with. My soul, in truth, had often been caught with it, for I was very fond of music, and had been tempted to learn to play at night-time, with cotton to damp the strings; but I could not contrive it. Mr. Saunders's wakeful eye had been in every part of the house. Now how was I to learn to play the lute properly, and such a short time before me? Dancing too. I had not even learned to dance. Strange, thought I, that it should have been looked upon as a thing heavenly to abolish every innocent recreation! And the more I thought on this point, the more I found to quarrel with in my old education. The most innocent people dance, said I; shepherds and country lasses. The Jews danced. Miriam danced and played on the timbrel, and so did the royal psalmist. I have heard him quoted a thousand times in defence of a good slaughter; why not in behalf of a saraband? He fought, inasmuch as he was a chosen warrior, like the Protector; but he danced and sung because he was an accomplished monarch, like the King. I did not carry the simile any further. The angels—No; I was aware of nothing in behalf of the dancing of angels; but they sang. "What know we," says Mr. Waller,

“ Of the blest above,  
But that they sing, and that they love ? ”

Amiable certainty ! And is not this alone an argument invincible against lessons of crabbed self-denial ? It was thus I brought religion to court, playing a lute, and looking like my Lady Castlemain in the likeness of St. Cecilia.

My mother would have held with me to a certainty, thought I, had not Mr. Saunders been in the way. Her spirit was too gentle and beautiful not to have discerned the merit of all the harmonies of intercourse. My father — I could not so well introduce his helmet and his glorious death into the picture ; but, said I, who thought we should have lived to see this day ? and who knows that my father, with his fine sense and his great heart, would not have seen equal reason with so many pious divines and disinterested warriors to incorporate with the new state of things, which, in their opinion, as well as his, the world was never to behold, and which nothing but a providence could have brought about ? Thus would I stand meditating, with a doublet in my hand, or a knot of ribbons ; and if any thing was wanting to the conclusion, the ribbons made it up. The love of dress at that time of life is so strong, if there is a disposition that way, and circumstances encourage it, that I not only do not profess to have overcome it entirely even now, but I cannot but remember, with a pang of astonishment, how upon an occasion of far greater gravity than this, being, in truth, no less than my mother's death, I could not hinder myself from feeling an absolute pleasure (I would say delight, if I did not hope the word was too forcible) in the contemplation of the new and more gallant-looking clothes, which my guardian had caused to be made for me.

The lute was procured, with which I was to take my part among the gallants ; my new acquaintance, whose admiration of me increased at every ribbon I tied on, undertaking to be my teacher. The clothes also were fixed upon ; but I was already wiser than my instructor, and sent to a London tailor to make them up. Furthermore, he was admonished to consult the court tailors, if he did not already happen to be one of them : in which case he might have a chance of adding himself to the number ; though not, if he failed in one iota of good taste. I warned him (such was my tact for

the new world I was about to enter, and the superiority I already felt to vulgar mistakes) that he was to be especially careful how he exceeded in respect to colours and finery, plainness and modesty being the side on which a gentleman should err; though my opinion was in such danger of being confined to externals, that I never thought more unduly of myself in other matters, than for being right upon this one.

My vanity soon received a check. I felt absolutely shocked, when upon inquiring with a serene air of security what else there was, which I was bound to get acquainted with, before I made my bow among the gallants, I learned that there was an accomplishment more indispensably necessary than dress itself (at least the ladies, said my new acquaintance, with a nod, seem to think so), and of which I had scarcely even heard. This was the knowledge of romances; the ponderous tomes of Calprenede and Scuderi. I had heard of them, and barely, at our college, where the strictness of the presbyterian tutors did not permit them; nor could they be smuggled in, like the poets. At home they were never mentioned. Miss Randolph had spoken of them in such a manner as to let me see she was acquainted with them; but she was shy in putting forth her accomplishments; particularly in the presence of those who did not possess them. Here was a dilemma! I was given to understand, that the courtiers did nothing but read these romances from morning to night; that the King read them; that my Lord Orrery (the friend of Suckling) was writing one; and that some great ladies, the Duchess of Newcastle in particular, fairly talked romances.

Luckily, I was passionately fond of reading. The winter was before me. The size and number of the tomes did not frighten me, as they seemed to do my informant, who stood measuring them in imagination with his hands and eyes, as he had just done myself. I was prepared to read hard for my degree, and to issue forth as great a master of the arts of courtship as Ovid or Calprenede himself. I stood smiling therefore at my friend's wondering descriptions, making up by a movement of self-love for the misery I had sustained in being compelled to acknowledge a deficiency before an inferior; but how was my horror renewed, and in what terms shall I express this climax of mortification, on hearing that the greater part of these indispensable folios were untranslated; that is to say,

in French ! French, of which I knew not a syllable, though it seems everybody else did, and though the court spoke it as much as they did English, and more !

The expression of my countenance must have betrayed all that I felt ; for my friend, with a modest pride, thought fit to assure me that he was not a perfect master of the language himself, though it was very easy, and only required a little practice. He read it, but could not speak it. A thought struck me immediately. The same judgment that directed me in my ordinances to the tailor (whom I should now have to hasten for another purpose) impelled me to make a blow, like Cæsar, on the side of Gaul. I resolved on the spot, with a transport, and a sense of my resources, that seized my friend with admiration, and quite restored me to my own good graces, to convey myself forthwith across the channel, and grapple with the French themselves for a mastery over their language.

No sooner said, than done. I was impatient till I got my admirer out of the house, and sat down to write to my guardian. He sent an answer, better than was expected ; for he said he had begun making arrangements directly, for the prosecution of a design that he heartily approved ; that he had had such an intention for me himself ; and that finally, he himself would go with me ; one of the objects he had nearest his heart being to further the new and splendid views which had opened upon the son of his worthy friend, and which were such, he was persuaded, as the excellent judgment and solid goodness of that friend himself would have desired for me, had he lived to see times so reasonable as the present, and so calculated to make true patriots of one accord. These fine long periods, and a new cant that had come up, about reason and good sense, were now only what I looked for from this worthy guardian of mine ; albeit his old friends, the presbyterians, had lately had a fresh and bitter quarrel with the court ; and I could not, for the life of me, see what patriotism had to do with his new measures. I took, however, what he said of my father, for a very sensible thing ; and as I really knew nothing of politics, nor ever thought about them, I was excused for it. I felt certain that there were good and brave men on the side of the King, as well as pleasant ones : my father might have been one of them ; and if I was not secure of being as good as he,

which I doubted, I was resolved not to disgrace him by being bad. Brave I could not help being, both as being his son and a gentleman; and I held myself destined to throw a new lustre over the family of the Eshers, by being as pleasant as anybody.

Would Miss Warmestre come with my guardian? Was she to be our companion in the voyage, and go and perfect herself in her knowledge of the French tongue? For I remembered she did know something of it. She used to torment me with saying something in French, or singing a bit of a song, and then dancing and humming about with an air of superiority. I called to mind one occasion in particular, on which she went about in this manner, laying her cheek against the sun, and winking her eyes, with an air so bewitchingly insolent, that I ran up in order to put myself on a level with her by a kiss; and it was in the struggle which followed, that I got one. It was the first kiss I ever had, and the thought of it renewed all my tenderness. I watched at the window till my uncle came, expecting more and more to see her, and thinking how pleasantly we might visit the alleys and bowers of the French gardens. He came, but he was alone. He was pleased to compliment me in strong terms on my growth and appearance; and brought me divers modest remembrances on the part of his daughter. On expressing the hope that "my lovely cousin" might have come with him, he smiled at the assured air with which I said it, so different from my former quiet manner; and replied, that lovely cousins were not often met with in voyages by the side of fine young fellows. I pretended to smile too at my forgetfulness of so notorious a truth; and next day, in good spirits, we set off.

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## CHAPTER V.

IN going to France, I scarcely considered myself as travelling a different road from that which led to the English court. In fact, it was no other. It was a little circuitous; but not at all tedious, as waiting would have been. I might have made my way into the court next week, and only distanced myself for ever, by betraying my ignorance of its favourite language.

My heart died within me a hundred times, to think what would have been the catastrophe, had any thing French been said to me on the day of the plume. But now I was secure. I felt a confidence in myself, to which the very roughness of the weather and the tumbling of our little vessel contributed; for I had just sense enough of the novelty to feel that it gave me no fear, and that I was beginning my knowledge of the world. When the sea gave us a cuff now and then, and the brine spit in my face, I imitated the careless look of the old seamen, and found a new pleasure in assuming these tranquil grandeurs. I regretted I was not going on some errand more mature;—to carry an ultimatum of peace or war, or fetch a lady for a king.

I shall not dwell on the inexorable fate that sooner or later lays low the pride of all new seamen. We soon reached the coast; and I had scarcely emerged from the cabin, when I found myself riding on a mermaid of an old woman, whose age, sex, and office, robust shoulders, and antediluvian wrinkles, formed a compound I should never have thought of seeing anywhere, much less on the gallant coast of France. The politeness of the interior reassured me; and when we got to Paris, every girl above the condition of a beggar appeared to me a Miss Warmestre. My guardian had taken care to be provided with a French servant, who cheated and lorded it over us with an air of irresistible deference. If I had had no better reasons for learning the language, I should have made haste to do so, in order to get rid of this fellow's superiority.

We took a lodging at the house of an elderly gentlewoman, over against the English ambassador's. She kept some lively company; and in the interval of my riding and my romance-reading, I had the pleasure of conversing with our fair neighbours, which soon got me on. Had my guardian been absent, I should have fallen in love with one of the numerous pretty girls, eminent for their black eyes, white teeth, and *mignardises* of expression; but by a manœuvring which I did not discover for some time, and which he excused by some strange reasons that very much disgusted me, I was rarely left to myself, except when employed in reading. When I found it out, I had passed a good deal of the time, and habituated myself to a particular mode of life; and though at greater liberty after the discovery, Mr. Warmestre contrived by an artful candour,

and some allusions not quite so pleasant, but still more powerful, to my father and mother, to keep my naturally fine conscience in decent order. But what did it more effectually, and to a degree that astonished myself, was an illness I had, and the reading of my romances.

The ferment of spirits I underwent in a new metropolis (and indeed it was the first I had seen, for I had not even been to London yet, so little did young country gentlemen travel in those days), had conspired, I believe, with the vexation my guardian had caused me, and a resolution to be extremely my own master, to throw me into a fit of illness. He attended me with great care, assisted by the mistress of the house and the servant, for which I thought myself bound to be thankful; and a niece on a visit (for so they called her) was permitted to bring me flowers, and pay me compliments on my style of speaking. With her I should infallibly have commenced a new love (not the first I had now experienced in Paris), had I not taken her, in the first place, for the prop and stay of her ancient kinswoman, who made sermons fit to tempt any less conscientious person to the very offences she deprecated; and, secondly, had I not been affected in a very remarkable manner, by those great folios of romance, which they read at such a rate in the English court.

How they read them there, and yet had ladies of the bed-chamber, I knew not. I had not then discovered the secret by which people can read of impossible pitches of virtue, which they flatter themselves they could practise if it were the custom, while they indulge themselves in all the more agreeable licences of the time. I was not aware with how fine and charitable an instinct the fair readers took the portraits of heroines to themselves, all the virtues imagined in the book being natural to them, while their faults were nothing but an accident; or, on the other hand (if the reflection was necessary that way), the overstraining of a particular virtue showing how impossible it was, while the other good qualities were as true, and manifested in their own characters. Then again the speeches made by lovers in real life partook in spirit, if not in letter, of the highest flights of the romance, and proved how natural it was for women to be worshipped in that manner. Nay, if they did not, they ought. The more belief, the greater the encouragement. In short, if there was nothing



more in it, there was a fine stately make-believe; and of what else was half the world made up? If everybody were as good as one's self, all the world might be heroes and angels; if not, it was no fault of ours, and should not hinder us from contemplating our perfections in those unstained mirrors. What completed the resemblance was, that every heroine of romance had a dozen lovers.

I read, and I believed. My education had fitted me for romantic impressions. All the levity in my spirits had not hindered me from retaining a sense that I wanted something solid on which to build its ornaments; and here I found it. Here was high principle, and, as luck would have it, in the most earthly shape. Here kings knelt, and ladies reigned; and empires, though prodigious things, were not worth a glove; and the heroines were so virtuous, that if they had been otherwise, nothing would have been missed out of so vast a stock. Myself and all my acquaintances were gifted with crowns and virtues on the spot. We were also fifty people in succession. However great may have been the additional zest with which these books were received on their first appearance in their own country, by reason of the living characters that were supposed to be shadowed under Grecian and Saracen names, it surely could not have been greater than that with which I discovered fair English faces lurking in every veil. Miss Warmestre was all the sprightlier beauties, Miss Randolph the grave ones. Miss Newen was Alcadiana, who was too divine even to be adored. When the heroine presented herself in her most royal light, she was Lady Castlemain or Miss Stewart. Lady Castlemain was Cleopatra, and Mandane, and the divine Statira. King Charles was Oroonates. For my part, besides being all the other heroes, I was now Tyridates, awakened by a cruel inquietude, and going down to the shore of Alexandria, that is, Calais, to breathe my amorous thoughts over the water. Now I was Coriolanus, prince of Africa; now Ibrahim, the illustrious bashaw; now Brutus, that gallant young nobleman who was taught love and philosophy by Miss Warmestre, otherwise Damo, the daughter of Pythagoras. I was also Palexander, who was carried off to France by a pirate, that is to say, my guardian, and there received an education not to have been looked for in the Canary Islands. Neither could I conceal from myself that I was, or might possibly be

about to be, a gentleman of the name of Ponce de Leon, for whom Almahide, to wit, some reigning beauty at the court of Whitehall, had the boldness to refuse a sovereign.

The "Map of the Country of Tenderness," which has occasioned so much raillery, in the romance where Brutus makes a figure, gave me such delight, that I drew out a dozen maps in imitation of it. *Inclination* seemed to be the most natural of all names for a flowing river. The villages of *Jolis Vers* and *Epîtres Galantes*, I peopled with the wits of the court, and found them as reasonably occupied in tasks analogous to those names as the writer of the finest satire in the world did his rhyming and love-lorn gentry in the episodes of his great work.\* Mr. Waller pointed out this resemblance to me when I had the happiness to become acquainted with him. As to the cities of *Tendre sur Estime*, and *Tendre sur Inclination*, I arrived at them with as serious a pleasure as any traveller could at Chalons sur Marne, or Berwick-upon-Tweed; nor would I take my oath that I could not amuse myself with a similar journey now, in spite of all the sense and reason I have gathered by the way. One must rest one's sense and reason somewhere.

There is one thing I have observed in reading the very dullest of these old books; and that is, that by the time you have entered pretty deeply into one of the volumes, you have fairly a *habit* of reading! You go on for the custom's sake. I have noticed the same thing, if one goes to bed early, under the notion of getting up the sooner. By the time the dawn arises, one has got used to the bed, and does not like to quit it. If to this we add dreams of self-love and of loving heroines, no wonder we sleep on.

Upon the whole, these romances had a surprising effect upon me. They joined with the illness I underwent in helping to allay that craving and restlessness, which the spirits of youth would otherwise have thrown me into; especially in the novelty of my situation. I believe, when I left my bed, and looked abroad again, I hardly knew whether I saw the French king (Louis XIV.) with greater pleasure as the friend and ressembler of my own royal patron, or as the Alexander of Mademoiselle Scuderi.

But what would have astonished some people was, that I

\* Whom the author here alludes to, I cannot say. — *Edit.*

did not like my romances the less, upon becoming acquainted with the writings of the French wits. My lute, be sure, was not forgotten all this while. It introduced me to French songs; the songs introduced more and better songs; I made enquiries, and above all, I went to see plays; and thus I became acquainted with Corneille and Molière, with Malleville, Charleval, Lainez, and the jolly old shoemaker Billaut, who died that year; and I also read Balzac and Voiture. Suckling, to be sure, and Davenant had accustomed me to the union of seriousness and mirth; but I was proof even against the jokes of Molière. I heard remote hints that romances were to go out of fashion, and that great confusion had been caused among the polite parties where their language used to be spoken. But I knew nothing of all this. I felt like a youth, in love with everything that was gallant and striking; and while I laughed with the new French wits, I loved, and carried a great heart with the old. It was lucky, that not having been presented at the English court, and yet having a promise of being there, my guardian persuaded me, that my inability to be presented at the court of France made it as well that I should not seek company in Paris till I paid it another visit. I might have witnessed the decline of lofty speeches at the Hotel Rambouillet, and I might also have seen the face of Mademoiselle Scuderi, which for an adorer of her books was not so advisable. I therefore set down Molière for a witty actor, not well acquainted with high life; and eagerly seized the admission, that his *Precieuses* were a pair of country pretenders, who had no right to imitate the language of the well-bred.

In this temper I was encouraged by a new English acquaintance, whom my guardian had found for me, and who had come upon business to the ambassador. What his business was I did not enquire, having already learnt that secrecy was a necessary thing in affairs of government; and that none kept secrets so well as gentlemen. He was a stout man, approaching the middle period of life, robust but active, with a huge forehead somewhat clouded, but an unaffected smile, and an address of the most pleasing description. He had little acquaintance with books, and did not pretend to it; but the world he professed to know well, and he was willing to give me the benefit of his experience. I was told that he had been an officer in the service of Cromwell, but was converted to the cause of

government, though it had used him harshly ; and this, in a very open manner, he afterwards told me himself. I need not add, that such a person was welcome to my conscience. He said that men grew wiser as they grew older ; that private good must give way to the public benefit ; that courts could not do everything, even when disposed to do it ; and that it became a man like himself, who had seen a great deal of trouble, and not behaved ill under it, to practise the virtue of patience. The task, he confessed, was hard, but therefore the more fitting for an old soldier ; and he had latterly had promises from some noble persons, whom he should think ill of his own heart if he doubted.

I gave the more credit to my new acquaintance, especially for the command he exercised over his feelings, from a little circumstance that occurred, while he was describing some of these persons. We were drinking, and my guardian, in suddenly pushing the bottle, happened to give him a jog. He changed colour ; but smiling immediately, observed how difficult it was to get rid of bad habits. " In Ireland," he said, " he had seen a bloody quarrel, for a cause no greater, and that with an old friend." He did not affect any particular friendship for Mr. Warmestre. His behaviour to him had a reserve in it, different from the entire openness of manner with which he treated myself ; a distinction which flattered me, though it made me take pity on my poor guardian, whom I had learnt to consider not so strong-minded as well-intentioned.

Captain Sandford (for so he was called) proceeded in his pictures of the court, which deeply interested me. He surprised me by admitting some of the wildest stories of the rakerly of the young nobles ; and not less by adding, that persons of the same age and condition were equally wild in Cromwell's time, though less candid about it. It would be better, he said, if the young men could be wiser ; but it was due to them to acknowledge, that there was a gallantry and good-heartedness in their scorning to be thought better of than they deserved ; and all these heats of youth would go off, and leave a set of admirable statesmen. Besides, though some stories were true, others were scandalously false. A scuffle had taken place in which my Lord Buckhurst was concerned, and a man happened to be killed. Oh ! cry the hypocritical, who never drew a sword even by accident, here is a murder !

But what was the real case? A thief is pursued; my Lord Buckhurst is among the pursuers; and the wrong man, in the turmoil, meets with a misfortune. My Lord Buckhurst, continued the Captain, is a most agreeable and worthy young gentleman, though a little careless. He is already celebrated for his wit and poetry, and will make a shining character. Sir Charles Sedley is wilder, but still very amiable. How can we entertain harsh thoughts of the nature that could show such tenderness as he does in those simple and agreeable lines (and here the Captain repeated them)—

“ Were I of all these woods the lord,  
 One berry from thy hand  
 Would more sincere delight afford,  
 Than all this proud command.”

This beautiful passage (for such it really is,—a true touch of nature and love) transported me. I quoted twenty passages from the French songs, including the pretty turn about the empire and the kiss from my friend Charleval, and found that it beat them all. I did not know that there was anything in Suckling or Waller that I preferred to it. Captain Sandford went on to say, that such things were written every day by the new wits. The wine, and my admiration, warmed him; and he gave me very agreeable portraits of a number of other courtiers. The Killigrews were excellent people, particularly the Doctor, who was a preacher at once reasonable and fervid. Mr. Chiffinch, a particular servant of the King's, was a most easy, good-natured man; too good-natured, they said, like his master, and a very fool towards the sex; but the Captain professed to know nothing except from hearsay and a very little intercourse. All he had seen was good and excusable, everything being considered; and if he believed some of the wilder stories, it was because the parties owned to them among his friends. More might be true; but he was certain, at heart, the young gentlemen were as good as anybody. There was the Lord Rochester, an absolute blushing boy, and yet already a wit and a fine gentleman. He wrote verses at fourteen, which Mr. Waller pronounced to be the oldest young verses he had ever read; and the Captain repeated those lines addressed to Charles on his Restoration, dated from Wadham College, and beginning

“ Virtue's triumphant shrine! who dost engage;  
 At once three kingdoms in a pilgrimage;  
 Which in ecstatic duty strive to come  
 Out of themselves, as well as from their home,” &c.

But the Duke of Buckingham, Master of the Horse, was the principal subject of the Captain's eulogy. He had no greater ambition than to be admitted to the honour of kissing the hand of that great man, who, bred up in courts and camps, partook of the best spirit of all parties; and who had married, with the approbation of that illustrious person, the daughter of the great parliamentary general Fairfax; a lady, as the witty yet solemn poet expressed it (another true patriot, now a member of parliament), bred up

" Under the discipline severe  
Of Fairfax and the starry Vere."

Was it likely, asked Captain Sandford, that the Lord Fairfax, one of the most conscientious of men, whose behaviour in the course of the war he had happened to note well, should bestow his daughter on a man such as the Duke was now described to be, and (more than that) should live with him for years in the utmost harmony, and in the exercise of all piety and virtue? It is true, his Grace, being still a young man, and overflowing with a kindly nature, had given into some licences of the times, which Abraham Cowley himself (as I had justly observed) had not scrupled to find an excuse for in this universal excitation of men's minds; fortunate, if they never took a worse direction, nor converted the licence into the old open bloodshed, and secret and worse vices. But the Duke was a wise man, and knew where to stop. The Captain only wished that some others of graver character had as much real wisdom, and did not undertake to hurry a good-humoured prince into too sudden a reformation. They had vices perhaps of their own — pride certainly, — which in a Christian's eye were less pardonable; and though they were persons of great merit in some things, might have seen further into others, had they known more of the world. Colleges did not teach everything, nor even adversity. There were some men who learnt more in a day from casual observation, and in talk apparently trifling, than the pride of learning might discover in years; and it was found, after all, that the gravest men might partake of the very vices they reprobated, and then what became of them? A stranger might be astonished if told all that was said on that matter, or if he believed but a tenth part of it.

In all this part of his discourse the Captain alluded to Lord Clarendon. But to the Duke of Ormond, whose name with

the people at large was another word for virtue, he seemed to have greater objections. Nothing, however, could be milder than the way in which he put them, or qualified with more charitable provisoes. He said it was a misfortune to a man's own mind to detect errors in other people, especially if they had a high character for virtue. It made one doubt everything. The next thing to doubting such men, was to doubt virtue itself; which, though a weak thing to do, yet mankind were weak, and needed every support to a good opinion of themselves. Lord Clarendon was a proud man; but the Duke of Ormond was prouder: he showed it less to the vulgar, by reason of an air of tranquillity and decency; but that was because he had a greater contempt for them. The Chancellor flew into passions, because others were of more consequence to him. The Duke was never moved from his lofty self-opinion. Now the Captain had observed, that the prouder a man is, the less reason he has for it. Gaiety—magnificence—a certain air and carriage, were different things. Pride might or might not exhibit these, according to the taste of the individual; but the pride of the heart, that crime by which the angels fell, and which it was an awful presumption for a poor creature, made of clay, to imitate, what could be said for that? What could be said for it by a man who pretended to go down on his knees, with a daily sense of the wonderful mercies, ay, and of the judgments, of Him in whose sight no man living is justified? Could any but an accursed fool (accursed, I mean, said the Captain, with spiritual blindness) think that he is to go on still in such folly, and that a severe and a terrible judgment will not overtake him? All men are not patient alike. They are too apt to lose sight of the text, which says, that revenge is not theirs. We are told that God sendeth his rain and his sunshine, both on the just and the unjust. That is true; but it is spoken generally, and not of particular judgments. We find it delivered also, "Woe unto you who make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess;" and "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl, for the judgment that is come upon you." "Observe me, Mr. Esher," concluded he, seeing that these texts, which I had so often heard, made a startling impression upon me: "I am no fanatic, no leveller, nor fifth-monarchy man, any more than your father was; but we are all Christians;

and the more charitable and Christian the times, the less does it become us to forget God in our prosperity. The Duke of Ormond is an unjust man, and for his injustice he will suffer; the King is twenty times the good Christian that he is; he shows it by his humility. It is agreed upon all hands, that there is not a better-natured or more loving prince upon earth. His very faults, if one may so speak, are of a Christian sort—an overflow of loving-kindness: and if he is ever severe, it is towards the hard-hearted. Hundreds of valiant officers, disbanded, but of loyal hearts, will not for ever held out to him their tattered petitions in vain, as they have done to the proud Duke. Candour, even towards his Grace, compels me to say that I have been ill-used by him: you will take as much as you please from the bitterness of what I have said, by reason of that confession: but my wrongs are but as the weight of a feather, compared with those which he has caused others of my brethren in arms to endure; and some of these are nigh maddened with their grievances. If the truth be so kept concealed from the good King, as to lead him to deny redress, I fear much that some heavy noonday calamity, to the amazement of men's minds, will not be long in falling upon the head of his evil counsellor. I have heard frightful things said by men, with faces that would make your heart burn within you to look upon them, so haggard were they, and full of misery. You see," added he, with a smile, "I endure better."

I felt extremely interested by this man. My guardian said little, except to intimate his confidence in the virtues and powers of the Duke of Buckingham, the natural friend of the presbyterians. By degrees I was led to speak of my prospects at court; and the Captain, after telling me that his old acquaintance, Mr. Warmestre, had been good enough to favour him, in confidence, with a general notion of the grounds of them, begged, if he was not taking too great a liberty, that I would indulge him with a particular account of my introduction to the King.

For the first time I felt disconcerted in mentioning my good fortune. The low, intense voice of the speaker, the air of interest, the polite solemnity with which he waited for me to begin, and some hints which he had thrown out of the disproportion between the powers and the good wishes of the King,



together with certain proverbs I was now calling to mind, of haughty nobles and caballing courts, threw me off the gaiety of my confidence. I related the particulars, but not in my usual tone of anticipation, and I found that I had done well.

“ You do well, young gentleman,” said Captain Sandford, “ not to be over secure in any matter that concerns a court. It befits the nicety I have observed in your judgment. Yet I doubt not all will go right, provided you do not make a wrong step in the outset, a thing in which the very nicest judgments may err, without a particular experience. Mr. Warmestre tells me, that you have no thought of reminding the King himself. That would indeed be very unlike what I see of your wit and discernment. I knew a foolish youth, who did so upon such temptation as yours, and who had nothing for his pains but a stare in the face, and an angry ejection by the yeomen. But in knowing that we must have a patron to take us in hand, it is much to know what patron to make choice of. I doubt, from what I learn of the ways of courts, from some who are conversant with such matters, whether it would be so politic to begin with addressing yourself to my Lady Castlemain, as Mr. Warmestre tells me you are disposed.”

I blushed, and felt vexed with my guardian. Such had been my intention certainly ; but I thought he had no right to talk of my affairs without leave ; and there was an awkwardness, which I was angry in being forced to acknowledge to myself, in thus having it known to an old republican officer. I wished to be carried gaily in my new career by dint of the feather in my cap, and blushed at being reminded of what my family might have thought of it. A certain tact, however, finer than I thought an old soldier could possess, a disposition to think the best of the lady, and a politic resolution to do so as long as I could, of which my youth and good-nature made very light, enabled me to answer with confidence. I said, that these things, I conceived, depended upon the turn of a die, and upon something in the character of the gamester into whose hands fortune had put the chance. There was a difference between presumption and trust ; and though modesty was a good thing to take everywhere, there was an excess of it which might reasonably make one’s very patrons ashamed of us, as unworthy to grace them or do them service ; and

certainly, from all I could discover, it was not counted the properest thing for a court.

The Captain was pleased to say, that I had hit the matter on the nail. Lady Castlemain, he admitted, would be the best patroness in the world, provided circumstances rendered it agreeable to herself to be so ; which he doubted from something a court intelligencer had lately told him. I might easily conceive, he said, that persons at court, especially ladies, may wish to be seen in such matters less at one time than at another ; and though he doubted not her ladyship would prove even a warmer friend than I looked for, there could be no harm to myself, and might be a delicacy towards her, in seeking my introduction at the hands of one of the other sex. The Duke of Buckingham was not only the most powerful of all the noblemen at present about his Majesty, but had a particular value for sprightly geniuses of my cast, and had even been concerned in my first knowledge of the royal presence. "Only send up word to him," said he, "that you had a command to wait upon his Majesty, respecting which you would be first humbly pleased to consult his Grace, and he will admit you on the instant. When you are before him, you have nothing to do but to tell your own story ; and the plainer you square it with your natural frankness, the better. I would not have you conceal that you come newly out of France (which is a country he has a particular esteem for) ; nor," said the Captain, laughing, "that you met with one Captain Sandford, a sour fellow and a malcontent, who, though he talks wildly against one Duke, is deeply sensible (and here he resumed his gravity) of the obligations he owes in common with all sufferers for conscience-sake, to another. Nay," concluded he, "now it strikes me you may assuredly do me a service, Mr. Esher, by stating that you did meet with such a person, and that this person had lately met with some papers relative to certain estates in Ormond, in the county of Tipperary, in which his Grace appears to be interested ; and you may add that if the Captain's suspicions turned out to be correct, he would take the freedom of sending them for his Grace's perusal by the hand of Mr. Warmestre, who had dealings with the quarter from which the papers came." I was not to say anything, if I did not please, about what he had remarked of the Duke of Ormond. It was sufficient if the

name of the man reminded me of that of the county. All that he should beg of his Grace the Duke of Buckingham, in return, was, a simple acknowledgment of the receipt of the papers through the same channel ; for he had no other object in trespassing upon his Grace's attention, than to show him that a man may be grateful on account of good done to his fellow-creatures. If he could see his fellow-sufferers righted, from whom the Duke of Ormond withheld their estates, he should be glad ; but there were so many to right in these times, and those gentlemen in particular were under such a cloud, owing to the difficulty of disproving certain calumnies arising from former conscientious services (however mistaken) under another master, that he began to despair of redress for them, and to cease to care for it as regarded himself. Adversity had brought him patience ; patience had brought him knowledge ; and with these three friends, none of the fairest to look at, but the least false imaginable, he should retire into some corner, on the pittance that was left him, and there pray for God's blessings on his Grace and his good endeavours.

The party broke up, and I retired to bed that night, fully resolved to adopt my adviser's recommendation, and not to lose sight of himself. Nothing, in the first instance, would have diverted me from making my court through the medium of the lady who had so kindly taken it upon herself to thank me when I achieved my exploit of the feather, if it had not been for what the Captain said relative to certain possible delicacies. But the final introduction of himself, together with the ingenuous manner of it, furnished me with a new reason for admitting his view of the case ; and Mr. Warmestre congratulated me next day on the double opportunity I now had of making my way in the best manner, and pleasing a very worthy man. But, said he, you must keep his secret. He dare not let his name be guessed at, much less his place of retreat, except to a man like the Duke, able as well as willing to resist his persecutor. After making me give him a promise to that effect, which, he said, might show me how serious the matter was, he proceeded to inform me that Captain Sandford was one of Cromwell's disbanded officers, a gentleman of fair estate, and adored by his tenants, till my Lord Duke of Ormond thought fit to deprive them of so good a master. The rest I knew from his story, and it was impossible to

know it better. He (Mr. Warmestre) had made the Captain's acquaintance many years back, when in Ireland; and it was heart-rending to think that nothing could be done for such men, when the Chancellor, at the time he sanctioned the Duke of Ormond's refusals to make the least compensation, and did not hesitate to repeat them himself with the most impatient scorn (as if the lands had not been improved, and the inhabitants too, instead of being cruelly oppressed as under their old tyrants), was sitting every day in a magnificent room furnished out of the spoils of his very friends the cavaliers, which richer conformists were compelled to offer as bribes to his indulgence. "Worthy Mr. Hinton," said my guardian, "persisting in bringing his cause before him the other day, where he sat swelling and glowing with the intemperate ire of his gout, my lord asked him what face he had to avail himself of mistaken generousities, and to allege those countenances of noble peers in his favour, a list of whom he had brought with him. In truth, they might not have known much of the business; but they abided by the man, because they knew him to be honest, though he had been of a different mind from theirs during the troubles. Mr. Hinton, in his christian patience, answered the unworthy taunt by his silence; but he told me that he had much difficulty to refrain from pointing to the gorgeous pictures that hung about the Chancellor's room, and asking him what face his lordship had to sit among those countenances of noble peers, the owners of which would fain have had them restored to their proper mansions."

As this is the last time I shall call Mr. Warmestre my guardian, and as I not long afterwards ceased to behold him again till a very remarkable circumstance took place, which brought him and me and the Captain together, I shall here give a short account of him, brief as my liking of the subject. I had indeed never liked him, but I had seen so little of his person, and knew so much less of his ways, that I used to think I had no right to my disinclination. He had been paymaster, or some such thing, to a part of the commonwealth's forces in Ireland, but professed to live on the remains of a small inheritance. How he lived at home, I mean, in what sort of way, I could not tell; for I never was at his house, and I thought too much of his daughter's presence, to enquire what he did in her absence. He called himself a distant

relation. The distance was more certain than the relationship ; which was so far off, that in truth, I could never discover it. But he persuaded my mother of it ; chiefly, I believe, because he was related to a noble family. Now the noblest might have married into ours, and she herself came of a younger branch of one ; but she had always thought it a pity that piety and worldly honours did not go together. She consoled herself with texts to another purpose, but the desire was strong ; and I believe she would hardly have looked with less horror on the substitution of a papal cross for it, than on the mere taking away of our crest from the backs of the old hall chairs and the diadem out of which it issued. Mr. Warmestre's noble kinsman, though I believe he had nothing to do with him, was his usher to my mother's confidence. He promised to be a very godly and attentive guardian, and for a few weeks behaved as if he was so. He then left me to his friend at Epsom, who turned out a very careless one, for reasons which will be seen by and by ; but he was always kind in his manner, and polite to a pitch of deference. His deference increased with my prospects. Even his pious manner was returning, till he saw that I did not value these outward evidences, in which the world had been so much deceived. He then took to a tranquil and observant silence ; and under the guise of according with all I did, kept me in a state of pupilage, from which I broke in the manner already mentioned. From that moment, which was close upon the time for our return to England, he took a sort of good-natured leave of guardianship, and as soon as he had seen me in lodgings near Covent Garden, formally gave it up, though I wanted some months of being of age.

His daughter I never could look upon as belonging to him ; not because she did not seem to partake of something of his cunning, and had eyes no wider than his, but because she was otherwise of a much gayer and more cordial nature ; or rather, perhaps, because one revolts from finding a resemblance between a person one loves, and another who is not to our taste.

Well, to finish this long chapter, and get into livelier scenes (for I begin to feel the impatience which I experienced in crossing the channel), Mr. Warmestre and I were in England with the spring. We found the cry of primroses in the streets. He took a lodging for me, from which I could see

into one of the gardens by the river, and then left me for a few days to look after my little rents in Surrey. I slept that night for the first time in London, my head full of the rattling of coaches and the beauties of the court ; and sending for my tailor three hours too soon in the morning, was told, to my delight, that I could not do better than go to the Duke's in the French clothes I had brought with me. The man bowed down to the floor at the name, hardly knowing which to think of most, the Duke, or my costume, or the patterns from which he had leave to copy.

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## CHAPTER VI.

WITH an anxious but not a doubting heart, full of the delightful ignorance of youth, I took my road to Wallingford House\*, breathing the air of London as if it was roses and lilies, and expecting to see the Duke immediately. I was told he would not be stirring these three hours.

I made allowance for fashionable sitters up, having enquired into that and a variety of other matters, and laid in, I thought, a considerable stock of town knowledge—from my tailor. But the rogue turned out to be a very uninformed tailor, who had come that morning after the first customer he had had, of any promise. However, he was right about the clothes. I was the more confident of finding my great man risen, because I learnt that the King had been walking in the park for above an hour ; but his Majesty, it seems, was one of the earliest risers in his kingdom, and his Grace one of the latest. I had not forgotten to give some silver to the porter at Wallingford House ; upon which he was kind enough to put on a paternal air, and assure me, that I should be lucky if I found the Duke up when I returned.

The King having left the park, where I went to catch a sight of him, I amused myself for an hour or two with seeing the guards, and looking at a great clock ; and then went into a coffee-house to eat something, my appetite having failed me

\* Wallingford House, then the residence, as it had been the birth-place, of the Duke of Buckingham, stood on the site of the present Admiralty.

that morning in the hurry of expectation. I here found some persons talking very freely of the court, and lamenting certain dissensions among his Majesty's favourites. They talked however so grossly, that although startled at first, I gave them no more credit than they deserved. But I heard some things of similar import, whispered in a gruff voice by a thick-set jolly-looking personage, who sat near me, regaling himself with a tankard and chicken. There was much lamentation in what he said, but no coarseness. He spoke even in high terms of Lady Castlemain, whom he called his "dear beauty," adding a singular remark, that "her nose was out of joint." "But lord!" continued he, "to see how the courtiers flock about Miss Stewart, like flies round a honey-pot: as if my sweet Castlemain was no longer worth looking at; and she to be so worshipped as I have seen her!" He then dropped his voice, looking at the same time about him; and I, finding he did not wish to be heard, moved farther off.

I now made up my mind to a resolution, for which courtiers in ordinary would have pronounced me mad; nor, indeed, did I see the reasonableness of it myself, as far as the court was concerned. But the instinct turned out to be judicious. I resolved to pay my first respects to Lady Castlemain herself. It was Miss Stewart's plume that I had picked up; but it was her ladyship who thanked me: she was now in disgrace, and I thought it a gallant thing to stand by her, and take my chance in that company. In the midst of this generosity of purpose, I could not help feeling a secret conviction, that it was impossible so much beauty and merit should have so sudden a downfall. I pictured to myself woman triumphing, in her shape, over the generous King, granting that Miss Stewart had her merits also; and, at all events, I could still see the Duke of Buckingham, whether it was politic or not to begin with the lady. In fine, was she not the divine Parysatis?

I accordingly presented myself at the door of her apartments in Whitehall, to the astonishment of an usher in gold lace, who asked me if I had had her ladyship's commands to wait on her. I said, no. "'Then how,'" resumed he—I saw he was going to be the ruin of himself whenever he should open the door to me in future, and therefore saved him by a new astonishment; observing, that I had had his Majesty's com-

mand to wait on him at that time, under circumstances, which, though all but an entire stranger to her ladyship, I thought it my duty to call to her mind. The poor man hereupon bowed to me, as if he would have made me an offering of his head, and went in to announce I know not what ; for in his emotion he had forgotten to ask my name.

After a delay which began to distress me, I was admitted. The divinity was seated amidst a world of flowers and splendours, a lute and a bunch of yellow plumes being on the table before her, and another young lady by her side at work. The splendours dazzled me not. I had been too conversant with romances for that. But I was struck with the mingled beauty and exaltation in the countenance of my heroine, and for the moment fairly stood dumb. The colour seemed to have risen in her cheeks, heightening their natural roses ; and her eyes shone haughtily above them. " I begin to fear I have been very presumptuous, madam," said I, " in thus giving way even to the force of circumstances ; but ——"

I was here going to make a pretty finish to my exordium ; when the young lady, putting her handkerchief to her mouth, and rising up, whispered something in passing to her ladyship ; and so went behind her out of the room. The expression of her countenance instantly changed to an open and most lively smile, as if with difficulty refraining from laughter. She said she wondered to see me come in, having been led to expect a message from the Queen, and not knowing by whom it could have been sent, " but if I mistake not," said she, " I see Mr. Esher, whom his Majesty, when at Durdans last autumn, qualified by the style and title of Knight of the Lady's Falcon ?"

" The more I consider your goodness, madam," said I, " in thus allowing me to present myself before you, and the smallness of the occasion that gave rise to his Majesty's condescension (of which perhaps I have been too presumptuously sensible), the more I feel as if I ought to trespass upon it no longer ; yet I may be indulged with saying, that it is no sordid thought which has led me into this freedom, much less the imagination of any claim upon his Majesty's kindness."

I was going to add something, but she began to speak, which made me pause. " Go on," said she, " pray ; and fear not to speak as you think."



“ I was about to add, madam, that I had felt an impulse, and obeyed it ; but having done so, and enjoyed the good fortune of again seeing the face I had never forgotten, in health and happiness, I begin to suspect myself for one who is overpaid, and would fain show that I am capable of making amends for an unwarrantable intrusion by a thankful retreat.”

“ Not so,” returned her ladyship ; “ methinks you very ably sustain the good opinion conceived of you, in your outset of the feather. You do well to give up a claim, whatsoever it be, and not to expect too much from us ; but a feather, a lady’s feather (do not be afraid of the word), may be a weightier matter with some than you reckon ; and I would not have you forego reminding the King of it.”

Lady Castlemain said this with an air of pique, which however gave way as she spoke. I guessed the cause, from what I had heard in the coffee-house, and could not but think it an extreme kindness in her to be willing to forward my views, at the hazard of seeing them turned into a new compliment to her rival. I could not refrain from saying, that I had hitherto thought the value of a feather, even when a lady’s, depended upon the greater or less admiration caused in us by the owner ; that I did not presume to say, what was or was not the amount of it on that score in the present instance, not having remembered the lady to whom it belonged (I suppose it was the court air that led me into this little fib) ; but that I could not but acknowledge, now that I was permitted to think myself excused in combining the two recollections, that a feather had become united in my thoughts with the condescension of my Sovereign, and the sweetest voice it had been my fortune to hear.

“ ’Tis prettily said,” observed her ladyship ; “ but is it not a little faithless ?” It surprised me to hear her say this. “ And how is it, Mr. Esher,” continued she, “ that you have not waited on his Grace of Buckingham this morning, for surely you have not been admitted at Wallingford House at this time of day ?”

I answered, with amazement in my looks, that my gratitude had impelled me to wait on her ladyship first. “ ’Tis gallantly done,” said she, “ and I thank you ; but if I am not taxing Mr. Esher’s good opinion of me too severely, will he be so good as to instruct me how it happened, that he altered

his determination with respect to the Duke ; because I have been credibly informed by the little winged gossip, known by the name of the little bird, who is a mighty breeder in courts, that his purpose to wait on my Lady Castlemain first, had been given up."

The astonishment created in me by this news, and the mixture of kindness and of childish banter in her ladyship's style, disconcerted me so much, that I had need of all my address to enable me to reply. I felt that nothing but the truth could supply it. To pretend too much gratitude for the thanks I had received at Durdans, would have been to make myself of too much importance. Nevertheless, the temptation was irresistible to show how I could forego the politic side for the generous ; and yet in implying the possibility of her being under a cloud, I was not to impress the sense of it too strongly. I did not go through all these reflections at the time, but it is astonishing of what a number of little critical judgments the least conscious of our deliberations is made up. Besides, the better instincts of youth anticipate the last wisdom we can come to. I was naturally quick of discernment. I saw that the beauty before me was proud and vehement, but I thought her generous, and I resolved to move the best feelings of her nature, by the dangerous compliment of proving to her that I thought her above the others. I therefore gave her to understand, in as delicate a manner as I could, what had really led me to pay her my respects before I had been to the Duke. I spoke of my youth, and my admiration of the sex, and my romances, to excuse the zeal with which I had turned the silly talk of a coffee-house into a ground for my presumption ; and I concluded with saying, that I was nevertheless extremely in earnest, and that as my first object in desiring an admittance at court was to admire the wit and graces it contained, so there was nothing I was not prepared to hazard, even the chance of being thought as childish as I was inexperienced, for the pleasure of showing a generous woman that I meant well. "And I use the word woman," said I, "in preference to a more courtly term, because I feel that nothing will or ought to get me out of the dilemma in which I find myself, but the whole truth of my nature, and an appeal to those qualities of the sex, which nature herself has been the first to ennoble."

The Countess arose, and advancing in the most striking and cordial manner, with all her beauties upon her, extended me her hand. "We are friends, Mr. Esher," said she, "from this moment. I will act towards you as a friend; I will even complain to you if my lot forces me to do so; and especially if it renders me unable to serve you. But that it shall not do. Leave, for the present, your design of addressing yourself to the Duke of Buckingham, which indeed might not be so well without other means of getting admittance to him than you have at present; but in the meanwhile omit not to send me intelligence, from time to time, of your welfare—nay, come with it, if that is what you would request; but you must come to my house at Chelsea, not here, where I am on duty upon the Queen. I do not need reminding, but I wish you to be assured that I do not; and it shall go hard with us both, if all does not end well; ay, and in the teeth of some little-minded people, whose teeth, to say the truth of them, are the best things they have to show for their wit. So now," concluded she, changing colour as she spoke, "go forth like a proper knight, with a lady's benison; and shortly, I will let you know how we speed."

In my quality of knight I ventured to kiss her hand; which, as I was going to take it, she very frankly put up against my lips for that purpose. The next minute I found myself outside Whitehall, stumbling among the sedan chairs. I turned into the park to recollect myself.

How my fair patroness had become acquainted with my intention respecting the Duke, I could not conceive. I concluded that the intelligence must have come from Mr. Warmestre, but how, or through what channel, it was impossible to imagine. That quiet person, though I had long doubted him, had no court acquaintances that I knew of. His intimates lay in another quarter, among the old puritans and Commonwealth officers, and he had scarcely left me since our coming to London; but to return into the country. However, the escape of this secret had turned out so luckily, that I soon forgot to think of the mode of it. But did the Duke then know of my coming also? I was either a mighty person all of a sudden, or courts had intelligencers of a very extraordinary description. At all events, though I resolved to make my way to the Duke on the poor Colonel's account, I was rejoiced

to find that I had no reason to seek him directly on my own ; and I blessed my stars a thousand times, that I had been saved from the awkwardness of going to him for no better reason. The King's name had helped me to an interview with Lady Castlemain. It might have got me into the presence of the Duke, but it seemed I should still have been wanting. Neither the Countess nor myself was aware, what a talisman I possessed for his attention in the obscure name of Sandford.

Of some kind of admittance at court, I now felt secure. If not admitted there at once, or even at all, I had gained a more than courtly acquaintance, for whose patronage alone, though I did not well see what it could do for me, I was prepared to complete the story of my disinterestedness, and die a poor gentleman. There were great wits no richer than myself, who would not disdain my friendship, especially with this recommendation. The intimacy of one would introduce me to that of another ; and I resolved to know and relish them all round. I pursued my way up the Mall, making verses on the Countess, and considering whether I should model them upon those on Lady Carlisle's chamber, beginning

“ They taste of death that do at heav'n arrive,  
But we this paradise approach alive ; ”

or whether, I should assume the more triumphant tone of the verses on the Queen, with an eye to those rustical admirations, to which I now began to think myself entitled to be a little unfaithful :

“ The lark, that shuns on lofty boughs to build  
His humble nest, lies silent in the field ;  
But if (the promise of a cloudless day)  
Aurora smiling bids her rise and play,  
Then straight she shows 'twas not for want of voice,  
Or power to climb, she made so low a choice :  
Singing she mounts ; her airy wings are stretch'd  
Tow'rd's heav'n, as if from heaven her note she fetch'd.

So we, retiring from the busy throng,  
Use to restrain the ambition of our song ;  
But since the light which now informs our age,  
Breaks from the court, indulgent to her rage,  
Thither my muse, like bold Prometheus, flies  
To light her torch at Gloriana's eyes.”

I was repeating the last glorious line in a high manner to myself, when I observed the people before me taking off their hats ; and in a moment I found the King coming, leading the Queen by the hand, and followed by her court. He had been playing at tennis in the Mall ; and her Majesty had come to

see him. The people bowed and stood uncovered on all sides in the most respectful manner. I heard them congratulating each other on the harmony in which their Majesties lived, and the falsehood of certain reports. A single spectacle of this kind was enough to make us think the Sovereign the most amiable man in the world. A number of little dogs scampered about before him, and the Maids of Honour came behind. I recognised Miss Stewart with her beautiful shape and little Roman nose. It was said that the countenance of this lady had been put for that of Britannia on the new coin; but I did not see the likeness. The sight of his Majesty thus tender to the Queen made me see it still less. I thought the King looked at me as he passed, but was resolved to be generous, and gave him no intimation that I was the "illustrious person who intercepted the lady's feather." I liked to have a King in my debt; and hugged myself on the advantage I possessed over those about me, in thinking where I had been that morning.

Following the court back, I dined at a tavern, in order to accustom myself to the ways of the town, and then wandered till I came to a book-shop. The bookseller seeing the turn of my inquiries, delighted me by producing the best pieces he had on sale; Suckling's, Waller's, Denham's, and others. He also showed me a great book called Fuller's Worthies of England, of which I conceived a mean opinion, upon finding that the author had only mentioned one of my ancestors, and then written *Asher* for *Esher*. Butler's *Hudibras*, a new poem lately come out, gave me some very uncomfortable sensations, between the love it exhibited for loyalty, and the bitter and vulgar contempt showered on opinions which I had been taught to respect. I wished if possible to unite the two, or at least not to see reverend mistakes treated so irreverently, and I was glad to find that others had been perplexed as well as myself. The wit and the rhymes however made me laugh heartily; and I longed to see the author, while I was glad to think the rest of his poem obscure and unreadable. The bookseller told me, that the King carried it about in his pocket; and that the author expected some great place at court; but, said he, there are so many idle tales, and so many expectors, that one never knows what to believe. He then related a number of wild stories of Sedley, Lord Buckhurst,

and others; observing, that he should not have credited a tenth part of them but for certain trials, in which those persons of wit and honour had been brought forward. "But lord!" said he, "their blood is so pampered with wine and good living, that no marvel it boils over. Youth will be youth. There was wild blood in the time of Oliver. I could show you, sir, a great lady who comes to my poor shop, that they say was Oliver's mistress; and she looks sly enough for it; only they were serious-sly in those days, and now they are sly and merry." He concluded with instructing me on the subject of the plays in vogue; and showed me a copy of verses addressed by Mr. Dryden to the Countess of Castlemain on her protection of his first play, the 'Wild Gallant.' "It was wild enough," he said, "yet it did not succeed. There, sir, you see, he compares her ladyship to Cato; so we cannot be as bad as some pretend." (All this sounded very oddly in my ears.)

Once Cato's virtue did the Gods oppose:  
 While they the victor, we the vanquish'd choose;  
 But you have done what Cato could not do,  
 To choose the vanquish'd and restore him too.  
 Some poets empty fame and praise despise,  
 Fame is the trumpet, but your smile the prize.  
 You sit above, and see vain men below  
 Contend, for what you only can bestow;  
 But these great actions others do by chance  
 Are, like your beauty, your inheritance:  
 So great a soul, such sweetness join'd in one,  
 Could only spring from noble Grandison."

And then the poet went on about heaven, and goodness, and her ladyship's "guarding her own and others' innocence," all which, after I had been in town some days longer, I reconciled to some awkward fancies, by the difference existing between real life and romance, and the truth which nevertheless might exist in both. But already I began to make great progress. The bookseller told me, that Sir Charles Sedley had been reported the other day to have killed a man in the Cock-pit; "when lo, and behold, sir," says he, "he comes the minute afterwards into my shop, as innocent as the babe unborn, having only been drunk and kicked the man; and so he brings me this pastoral to send to the printer's." I read the pastoral, which was in the most innocent style of the lambs and shepherds. The following is a taste of it:—

"Bright Galatea, in whose matchless face,  
 Sat rural innocence with heavenly grace;

In whose no less inimitable mind,  
 With equal light e'en distant virtues shin'd;  
 Chaste without pride, and charming without art,  
 Honour the tyrant of her tender heart;  
 Fair goddess of these fields who for our sports,  
 Though she might well become, neglected courts,  
 Beloved of all, and loving me alone,  
 Is from my sight, I fear, for ever gone."

So saying, he goes out, and kicks a man in a cock-pit.

"I went that evening to the theatre, and saw a play (I forget its name) which transported me by its connection with the romances. It restored me to all my confidence, if not in the actual virtues, yet in the possible; and youth is very liberal at an absolution. But what astonished me was the gravity with which the audience would attend to the highest flights of virtue, and then between the acts laugh, and roar, and quarrel, and gather about women in masks, in a way as different from the decorums to which I had been accustomed in the French theatre, as a court from a drunken mob. In the gallery all was noise and uproar; at the sides of the pit were the bullies and dear hearts, quarrelling and making love; and on all sides were females in the vizards newly come up, which completely disguised their faces, and enabled them to hear and suffer what they pleased. Coming out of the house, some great lady, whose beautiful throat and chest I had been admiring, accosted me, "mistaking" me for somebody else. I explained with the greatest respect; she apologised with the deepest gravity, and curtsayed off in a style that I should have taken for burlesque a month afterwards.

The next night I saw the 'Aglaura,' of my old friend Suckling, and the night following the 'Parson's Wedding,' a very astounding piece of vivacity, all performed by women, and written by Mr. Killigrew, groom of his Majesty's bed-chamber. I was studying hard. The night after was presented the 'Rival Ladies,' a piece by Mr. Dryden, at which I had the pleasure of seeing the King and his court. Lady Castlemain sat behind the Queen with Miss Stewart and other ladies. It was thought that the rivalries among them were pointed at in the play. Besides the allusions in the story, there was a Mask, in which Cupid descended and accused Proserpine of stretching her conquests too far, and bringing war into the peace of heaven:

" Beauties, beware! Venus will never bear  
 Another Venus shining in her sphere."

Some gentlemen near me, who had been criticising the piece, looked up at these passages ; and I thought Venus bore herself proudly, as if to say the poet was right.

I led this life for a week, till I should see Mr. Warmestre. One night, the play being very late on account of some dances and new machines, I did not arrive at my lodgings till my sober host and his wife had gone to bed. I did not choose to knock them up, as she was not only in delicate health, but preparing to gift him with another little goldsmith. She was subject also to frights occasioned by ruffling gallants in the street, and the noises they made. Not long since they had wrenched the knocker off his door, and pulled down his sign of the Golden Pen. I had no money in my pocket ; and by one of those fits of want of reflection which sometimes take possession of us, added to the awkwardness arising from inexperience, I never thought of going to some open lodging-house, and sending to my host in the morning. I therefore made up my mind to parade the town all night. I sought every corner of it, both for diversity's sake, and to keep off the cold, which long before morning began to make me wish myself housed. At one time I was in Clerkenwell, near the Duke of Newcastle's ; then amid the shops on London bridge ; then at Whitehall again, and then upon the fields by St. Giles's. I rescued one woman from some disturbance, who laughed at me for my pains ; and another, who thanked me with tears in her eyes. Towards midnight I was much amused and refreshed by seeing a masquerade come out of the Duke of Buckingham's ; and I found a variety of objects to entertain me for some hours before, in the immense mass of houses constituting Whitehall, and containing lords and ladies, cooks, gamblers, coffee-houses, and rooks and rufflers of all sorts. But the pleasantest sight was a great blacksmith's shop, roaring with its early fire. One set of gentry I followed up the Strand. They went along, knocking at doors, looking into sedans, frightening women, and performing a variety of other urbanities, till they came to York House\*, where they formed into a line of march, and, to the trampling of their feet, began singing a popular invective :

" When Queen Dido landed, she bought as much ground,  
As the *Hyde* of a lusty fat bull would surround ;

\* Where Clarendon thou lived.



But when the said *Hyde* was cut into thongs,  
 A city and kingdom to *Hyde* belongs ;  
 So here in court, country, and church, far and wide,  
 There's nought to be seen but *Hyde ! Hyde ! Hyde !* "

The repetition of the Chancellor's name had really a frightful sound. The noise of the feet and the voices together sounded as if the singers constituted a larger body than they were ; and stouter nerves than his lordship's, then suffering severely under the gout, might have heard in this drunken insult an appalling anticipation. The roysterers passed on into silence ; and the great house was left to itself, looking stately and sullen.

On going home next night to my lodgings, I found Mr. Warmestre returned from the country. He expressed great surprise on my telling him, that I had not been to the Duke's. I related where I had been, and the encouragement given me ; upon which he was pleased to say, that I could not err but to my profit ; and that in securing Lady Castlemain, I had got one of the rivals on my side. However, said he, you must not lose the other. Observing me little bent on that policy, he added " You must not, Mr. Esher, for humanity's sake, and I am sure you will not." I asked what humanity had to do with paying my court to a reigning beauty. He smiled and said, " Nothing with that ; but here is the poor Captain, — Captain Sandford has followed us from France, having been driven away a few hours after our departure by the contrivances of this unchristian Duke of Ormond. He is nigh starving with the suddenness of the expense, besides being in new peril from the Duke, whom poverty now forces him to adventure close upon, in his own quarters. He is therefore compelled to be earnest upon a matter which before was comparatively indifferent ; and it is of the utmost consequence to the poor gentleman that the Duke should be made acquainted with the power he has to serve him, even if in so small a matter as the affair of the district of Ormond. Nothing need be said of the Duke of Ormond, the poor man being so affected as to be willing to forget his personal grievance, and it being as well on all sides at present that nothing should look like a trespass upon his Grace's attention. But the Duke was very generous. I knew not to what extent I might assist in serving the Captain ; and he was sure the pleasure of this consideration would alone induce me not to give up my first intention."

“ But what was I to say to Lady Castlemain ? ”

“ Why,” returned Mr. Warmestre, “ that would seem a delicate point ; but truly your open and generous conduct succeeds in a manner so different from what vulgar politicians would guess, and her ladyship appears to be so well qualified to understand it, that I do not see how you could do anything better, even to please her.”

“ But the secret ? I cannot disclose the Captain’s name ? ”

“ No : but you may say that the name *is* a secret ; that you have been begged to keep it even from the ladies ; and,” concluded he, with a gayer smile than I had yet seen him venture upon, “ the ladies will not like you the less for that ; they will see how you could keep a secret of their own.”

“ ’Tis the very thing which I feel I must do,” said I, “ if I do anything.” I rallied my quondam guardian on the influence which the town air had on his gravity ; and he fell in with my gaiety to an extent not quite agreeable. He said honest men grew more indulgent to the times every day. I suspect, thought I, you are not quite so honest as the poor Captain and I have fancied. However, I determined to go to the Duke instantly, and to be very candid about it to Lady Castlemain. And I told him so.

“ But,” said I, “ Mr. Warmestre, pr’ythee how happened it that the court are already made partakers of my own secret ? The keeping of it was not very necessary ; but you see the mischief it might have done.”

“ It has done nothing but good,” replied the puritan, “ for aught that I see, now that no detriment is to ensue to my poor friend. You have got into the graces of a noble lady : even chance and rashness fight for you ; and as to your secret, which however need surely be no more a secret than the fine weather, I do confess it may have escaped me in the buoyancy of my heart, seeing the introduction you had obtained to the greatest man in England, and the account to which I knew your manners would turn it. In a word, Mr. Esher,” concluded he, taking up his hat, and observing that he had promised to restore the captain’s hopes in case I behaved as he expected me, “ you shall hear, the next time we meet, how it got to her ladyship’s ears ; for I must now stop in town till I see the end of your visit to his Grace of Buckingham ; and I too am not without a fair friend at court.”

With these words my old acquaintance slipped out, leaving me to wonder whether the jumping of our wits with regard to the secret was, or was not, to my worship's honour. Feeling right however on that point, he partook of the credit of it; and I endeavoured to think I had done him wrong both in this and my former suspicions. Every hour I was learning something new; and my experiences were of such a nature, that if I still thought highly of myself and my new friends, I was bound not to leave out one who encouraged me in my charities.

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## CHAPTER VII.

I took care, this time, not to be too soon for his Grace of Buckingham. The porter, as soon as he saw my face, put on his former smile, and said "Well, young gentleman, you have come again, eh? Well, what can we do for you? Not much, methinks, since you have come again no sooner. All in good time, eh!" His familiarity offended me; I assumed all the awfulness of the powers enjoined me by the King, and, to show that I had grown older since last week, bade him send the message to the Duke's gentleman. The Duke's gentleman came bowing into the room into which I was shown; but he was so much of the real gentleman, that I felt ashamed at deriving dignity from his ignorance. However, I had learned enough not to say what I felt; I proceeded by my manner to restore him gently to his superiority without weakening my right of admittance. He concluded, no doubt, that the King, in his careless way, had sent a message by some unofficial person; so resuming the rank I gave him, but not without a sort of wondering respect, he left me to tell his master. In a minute I was requested to follow him.

I passed through a number of people who rose as I went by, then entered a suite of rooms, at the end of which was a sound of guitars and of voices concluding a duet. It was one I had taken a part in, twenty times, at Madame Kerneguy's. The voices ceased; but a strain of violins followed, which I recog-

nised for a march of Lulli's, so that I seemed to approach the Duke in music. We now passed through a second multitude of people, then through another ante-room, then through the music-room, the loudness of which opened upon us very grandly ; and finally, two doors near together being successively opened and shut, which suddenly threw the music at a distance, and left only a listening quiet, I found myself in the presence of a man with a flushed but noble aspect, who stood in a morning gown, dipping his face into a great basket of flowers, as if to cool himself with the dew. He uttered a sort of petulant sigh, as if to say it was of no use. "Take 'em away, Hatton," said he, "they are ill for a morning head. I have risen be- times to attend on my liege lord, and thus is my virtue rewarded. But the billet, take not the billet, thou knave. And these lute-strings,—take them away ; they will never do ; I might as well pinch the cat that begot them. Tell Peter, if he can't procure me better without delay, I must send a man post over the water, or steal some of Arran. Here's a duet waiting to be sung, for which the universe ought to stop."

I said that if I might presume to offer them to his Grace, I had brought some excellent lute-strings newly with me from Paris, which were much at his Grace's service.

"Say'st thou so, Sir Unknown ?" cried the Duke ; "then my Grace will generously accept the moiety. But what of the King ? I call not thy face to mind among the juvenals of the presence. And so the strings are excellent, are they ? what, of the right manufacture ; made by — who is he called, without whom the cherubim can do nothing ?"

St. Ange, I presumed, his Grace meant. I had them from him myself, out of the same box that supplied Mademoiselle La Valiere.

"Ho, ho ! thou art choice," said the Duke ; "and where are they ? and how soon am I to have them ?"

Suddenly, if his Grace so pleased ; they were hard by, at my lodgings in Covent Garden.

"Thy lodgings in Covent Garden ? and what is thy name, young gentleman ? Thy breeding is undoubted, thus letting the affairs of the kingdom wait for a song. But pr'ythée, is it true, what they tell me in the last advices from the ambassador, that the French King goes to visit Madame La Valiere with drum and trumpet ?"

I told the Duke that I had seen him. "He is a great prince," said he, "and does things with a lustre :

' Before him goeth the loud minstrelsie.'

Well done, Cambuscan. And so thou playest the lute ? and canst string it, and put it in tune, eh ? Do they still tune as they used at Paris ?"

I here related what I knew of the musical modes in that city ; and it was settled by the Duke I should return with all speed, and put the strings on the lute myself and tune it.

"And now, Mr. — hum,— ha," said his Grace, putting on an air of business, and looking at me a little sternly, "what says the King ? and pray let me know his messenger."

I told him my name was Esher ; then seeing that I had better not lose any time, nor suffer him to expect more than I could help, I plunged into my affairs at once, by saying that I should not have ventured to trouble his Grace without having had an excuse for so doing furnished me by the King himself, though, unfortunately, on no greater point than my own concerns ; that his Grace, though it was not to be expected he should be able to call it to mind without help, had been pleased, on the occasion alluded to, to say something calculated to strengthen his Majesty's graciousness towards me ; that nevertheless, great as was my desire to avail myself of the royal goodness, I should hardly have been bold enough to think further of it, had it not been for the extreme admiration I entertained for the wit and accomplishments that were only to be found in the circle of his Majesty and his friends ; that possessing a gentleman's independence, though a small one, and far inferior to what an ancient family might have handed down, I could with pleasure, if a footing were permitted me, waive all the ordinary ends that people looked for in such matters of advancement, it being indeed a proud thing to have occasion of showing one's preference of great qualities to sordid interests ; and finally, after all, that his Grace would not perhaps have been subject to my intrusion, were it not that I looked to his charity for pardoning on another person's account what I had no pretensions to on my own, having met at Paris with a poor man, one Captain Sandford, who had some papers relative to an estate in the district of Ormond, which —

I had delivered myself nearly in the above words, so that I

had not been very long in saying a pretty good deal ; but the Duke was getting impatient and about to ask questions, when he suddenly stopped at the name of Sandford, and as suddenly made me repeat it. He then looked hard at me, right in the eyes, — “ Papers relative to an estate in the district of Ormond. I know of such a thing, and am concerned in its issue. Do you know nothing further of it yourself ? ” He came nearly close up to me, and spoke low.

I said I knew nothing further ; the poor man would be very glad to find the Duke thought anything of his papers : respecting which, any intimation with which his Grace might be pleased to favour me would be transmitted through the hands of my late guardian, Mr. Warmestre.

The Duke looked at me again, making me repeat this second name ; and there was an expression of doubt in his face which I thought strange.

“ And this Captain — what is it ? — Sandford, — I suppose he thinks a mighty thing of his having papers that concern a Duke, and talks of this to everybody ? ”

I said no ; that I judged very differently, both from the gentleman’s manners and the injunction of secrecy laid upon myself.

“ Which perhaps you care no more for,” interrupted the Duke, “ than they say I do ? ”

I knew not what to think of this incontinent speech. I felt a little indignant at the supposition, yet doubted whether I ought, seeing the Duke own himself charged with such an offence. “ Pardon me, my lord,” said I, “ if there is anything upon earth which ” — I stopped ; for I was going to imply a vice on his Grace’s part ; when he changed the expression of his countenance in a moment, and, tapping me on the shoulder, he observed, in a very quiet way, that I had interested him in what I had said of my wishes, which he complimented as something that had an agreeable taste of romance ; and then he made me tell him how the King had given rise to them. In short, I related to him all that I had felt and done ; how I had cherished the hope, and how I had gone to France to render myself a little worthier of it.

His Grace broke out in a rapture, very different from what I had looked for when I first entered upon my affairs. He ended with calling for his valet, and said, in laughing haste,

“Come along,—my little friend” (by the bye, I was as tall as he)—“we lose time; I was going to the King when you entered, and you shall go with me. The Majesty of England shall be entertained with a new spectacle, none the worse for the player. *O rara juventus!* a courtier disinterested! a page warring against a salary. ‘I had rather be a door-keeper, eh, in the house of’”—and then his Grace made a profane application of Scripture, which would have turned poor Saunders into a shaken reed.

The coach was ready in an instant; and my grand self found myself seated with his Grace the Duke of Buckingham, master of his Majesty’s horse, in a coach and four that seemed to tear up the road for very scorn and superiority. We stopped almost as speedily at the door on the left hand of the Banqueting House; and proceeding through several ante-rooms, the inmates of which hardly knew which to honour most, the Duke or myself, his Grace spoke a word to another nobleman in a star and garter, and then took me into the King’s closet. Nobody was there. He applied his lips to a place in the corner of the room, which I concluded to be the mouth of a trumpet, and said, gently, “Stennison, come to wait on his Majesty.”

“See where she sits,  
Like day retired into another world,”

said the Duke, looking at the same time into the garden. I looked too, but saw nobody, which made this pleasant minister laugh. “Always *rara juventus?*” cried he; “and now the *purpureum lumen* is on his cheeks: when was it there last?”

Perceiving me not well knowing how to look, between his Grace’s banter and the expectation of again being in the royal presence, the Duke was proceeding to give me encouragement, when we heard steps hastily descending. It was the King. The Duke made a profound reverence. I knelt; and I thought his Majesty knew me; but he did not. “I brought,” said the Duke, “your Majesty yesterday a strawberry as big as my fist; the day before, I had the honour of dismaying you with Queen Elizabeth’s shoes; but to-day my curiosity exceeds all; for I present to your Majesty Mr. Esher, sole representative of the most ancient family of the Eshers, who, though he had the happiness of saving Miss Stewart’s feather from contamination, and

received a most gracious direction to present himself at court thereupon, is not only bashful withal, but disinterested,— I mean exchequer-wards ; for none, as he says, can be disinterested who seek the wit and graces of your Majesty's presence : you see, sir, how his countenance is relieved by this explanation, Mr. Esher himself being a wit, dealing in a most instinctive phraseology of courtliness, and putting us on our defence with pointed periods. But his great marvel is, that he is peremptory for having his throat cut by half your Majesty's acquaintance ; for he is anxious to be distinguished from all money-loving suitors, being enamoured solely of your Majesty's wit and great qualities ; and so, if his gracious monarch does not permit him to die in his service for nothing, he will break his heart, and there will be an end of the ancient and most decayed family of the Eshers."

At the close of this extraordinary speech, I hardly knew where I was ; but the King restored me by speaking in the kindest manner, and giving me his hand to kiss. He said he recollected the circumstance mentioned by the Duke ; he acknowledged the right I had to present myself before him, in consideration of the services I had done a fair lady, and was pleased with the delicacy of my behaviour in waiving my right to claims with which so many inconsiderate persons thought themselves entitled to exhaust him and his exchequer on grounds very far from admitted.

I here took the opportunity of expressing my deep sense of his Majesty's indulgence, and of repeating the assurances of my disinterestedness. I said I did not enlarge upon the latter point, because it would be pretending a right to occupy his Majesty's attention, as well as doing an injustice to my own truth and the conviction he had been pleased to express of it ; and I added, that I could only pique myself upon the waiving so poor an acknowledgment as any services of mine could have been worth, by the consideration that every little became of importance when there were so many petitioners for his Majesty's favour, and that, in loyalty as in love, the smallest evidence of good-will was not despised by the noble.

The King smiled, and said that, as I spoke so well, I should thank Miss Stewart herself for the favour she had brought upon me, for he was determined something should be done without delay, and the Duke of Buckingham, who had seconded



her so well, would see to it. "Will you not, George," added he, turning to his Master of the Horse: "you will speak to my people, the rogues, and insist upon it; and the first convenient opportunity — you understand me — instruct Mr. Esher where to pay his compliments. There — I am bent on it, so no more. The young man — setting our dignity aside — must be paid his salary, if only to give a lesson to the importunity of unhandsome suitors. And so farewell; for I have some very pressing business on hand, which will admit not of delay."

"The business then on which I was sent for," said the Duke, "may wait, peradventure, till your Majesty is more at leisure."

The King blushed a little as he said, "Odsfish! I recollect; but it must, it must. So God bless you, my Lord Duke, and you too, Mr. Fisher, patting me good-naturedly on the head. And in a moment we heard him ascending the stairs in haste.

"So up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,  
And op'd the chamber door,"

hummed the Duke as he led the way out. "You have a gracious Prince, Mr. Esher, and are justly charmed with him. Government with him goes as easily as a tune; and so now for the lute-strings."

I flew, with my heart in my mouth, to Covent-garden, brought away the strings, took them to Wallingford House, new-strung the lute, and put it in the last modish condition. The Duke would have me play with him. I played and sang, and repeated at his request the *Belle Matineuse*, which he made me write down, that he might give it Miss Stewart. The King he said would like it. I noticed that he never mentioned Lady Castlemain, though she was his cousin. I learnt afterwards that they were in open enmity. It was lucky that I was already courtier enough to content myself with answering questions; otherwise his Grace might have taken it into his head to forget me.

For a week or ten days I underwent a torrent of friendship at the Duke of Buckingham's. He would call his kindness by no less a name; and I began to be considered so great a man, that the good fortune seemed natural. In the course of that time I had an appointment, of which I shall speak presently; and by the end of it I was nearly killed with his Grace's hours.

The people at my lodgings, when I took leave of them, looked as if I was going to destruction; and as to Mr. Warmestre, he looked and bowed as if I was going to heaven. I could not lift him out of the profundity of his admiration. I dined with the Duke, supped, breakfasted, heard all sorts of things about everybody, half of which I believed; and by the time I was nearly killed, had commenced life, and was reckoned a made man.

One day we waited dinner for him till *next day*! Happening to look out of window, he left the house to follow a lady, just as the table was dressed, at nine o'clock (the time when other people went to their suppers); and he did not return till nine the next morning, when he dined for the novelty's sake, the spit having been kept in motion the whole time with fresh appliances. I had gone to sleep with a lute at my head; and he woke me in the language of Brutus to the little boy:—

“ O murd'rous slumber!  
Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy  
That plays the music ? ”

I did not quite relish this designation. I thought myself so beholden to him, that he ought not, for his own sake, to rate me so low; but I had observed that he bantered everybody in a similar way, and that he had not the art of making himself as agreeable as he was obliging. Self-love may be blind, inasmuch as it has no eyes for looking in a glass; but it feels, at every pore of its skin, whatever comes in contact with it. The Duke had had too much pleasure, power, and riches, to have any instinct but for self-indulgence; and he could not seem even to worship you, but you found it was for a purpose of his own. Very little things are often great evidences of character. Buckingham was so apt to forget everything but himself, that he would hum an air at dinner as he helped himself to the salt; and the least whim that came into his brain was sufficient to make him despatch a stranger from his table, or an old servant out of his bed: yet he could forget even his interest, if the pleasure of the moment was concerned in it. It was with the greatest difficulty he could keep a secret that concerned people's lives. I should say his own, but that he felt secure upon this head, for reasons which will be seen hereafter. The consequence was, that after I had lived in his house a week, had rioted in his luxuries, sincerely laughed at

his jokes, and thought myself, above all, obliged by him in the highest degree, I came away surfeited as much with him<sup>as</sup> with his Burgundy and quarrelling with myself for not liking him better.

The day on which I took possession of my apartments at Whitehall, and while I was cheating the devil by expatiating on the obligations I owed his Grace, instead of the sense entertained of them, he led the discourse for the first time to the Ormond papers. I had brought them from the Captain through Mr. Warmestre's hands, and was now to be the channel of a regular correspondence. "And nobody is to know of this mighty secret, still, eh, Esher?" said the Duke; "the Captain will not let you off?" I said that it was a deliverance I should never think of requesting, neither did I care about it. "Well," returned he, "oblige his humour as you will; it is worthy of a most ancient and quiet gentleman. His Grace had often hinted to me, that there was more in those papers than I fancied. In short, the secret was dying to escape him, but something prevented it. I little thought to what a test his wine had put me, and that a halter was hardly safer to meddle with than the tape on the Captain's documents.

Meanwhile I had lost no time in going to the Countess to explain. She was not at home the first day, but she was good enough to allow me to fix an early hour for seeing her. I could not but observe that she seemed both disconcerted and offended when I related my interview with the King; but the candour with which I told her of it, of the secret I had promised to keep, and of my resolution to do so, restored everything. "I take the compliment you design me," said her ladyship, "and must own you are a courtier of a very new and agreeable sort; I wish everybody's word could be as well relied on. But have a care of the Duke." She contrived to make me let her see that I did not like him, which so pleased her, that she invited me to bring some French airs the next evening but one.

A circumstance occurred, the day before I went, which completed her kind dispositions towards me, but had nearly lost me some others. The Duke had directed me to keep an eye, at a certain hour, on the door at which the court got off their horses when they returned from riding. I was to put

myself in the way, and if Miss Stewart was there, and the hour was propitious, his Grace was to give me a sign, upon which I was to make use of it to thank her. The meaning of this was, that as soon as the Queen had gone in, and provided Lady Castlemain was not present, I was to say what I intended, but not otherwise. Such was the "convenient opportunity" (though of course I knew nothing of it at the time) of which the King had spoken. I only wondered why there should be any delay in so simple a matter.

On the Wednesday I saw the whole honourable body of the maids arrive on their palfreys. The King and the Duke were there; but no signal. I therefore contented myself with making my bows of gratitude. The Duke helped Miss Stewart off her horse:—Hamilton (George Hamilton) helped Miss Wells, Grammont the Duchess of Buckingham (it was the first time these gentlemen had been pointed out to me); some other ladies I wondered to see alight without help; but what was my surprise and indignation on observing Lady Castlemain among the forlorn? She had her yellow plumes on, which, contrasted with her dark locks, and accompanied by a melancholy expression of countenance, made me wonder that anybody could be so barbarous. What must I needs do, then, like an honest coxcomb, but step from the crowd and offer her my assistance! She was going to decline it; but seeing my face, and casting a flushed look at somebody, she permitted my services; then curtseyed, as if she had never seen me before, and went in among the first.

"Well done, cousin mine," said a fellow among the bystanders; "one must needs make a Duke stare on occasion." I turned round, and gave him to understand that I would make a plebeian stare, if he did not behave himself. He excused his impertinence by reason of his "not having sooner noted my quality," which was a doubtful apology, but such as I chose to put up with.

The French airs had a high reception that evening. Lady Castlemain began by asking me as I went in, whether I had a mind to be ruined? "You will say no," continued she; "and that it is the part of a gallant man to gain success by daring it. Well, I am in no humour to oppose the fancies of my defender; and now let me advise you of three things:—first, that you must enable me to perform this duet to ad-

miration, for the Duke says you brought it up ; second, that you are to thank Miss Stewart to morrow, my Lady Castlemain permitting ; and, third, that on the morrow after next Sunday, Mr. Esher is to be in readiness to attend upon the King's Majesty, in the quality of one of his Majesty's cup-bearers."

The intoxication into which all this threw me, enabled me to behave myself properly. Lady Castlemain behaved like the kindest patroness in the world. She told me a thousand things of herself, of the King, and court, of old times and new, of plays and romances, and of all that had been done, was doing, and might be. Her ladyship insisted on my telling her what I thought of the town. She laughed and sighed by turns ; regretted that romances were not true, though for aught she saw they might be truer than they were ; turned all I said into grace and prettiness ; and was pleased to observe that she had never met with a person who united so little necessity for experience with so small a portion of it.

Her ladyship delighted me by her knowledge of romances. She told me she used to read them for weeks together when she was eleven years old, in a great chamber, big enough for a giantess ; and that her father, the Lord Grandison (what a noble name ! cries everybody) was wont to call her Statira. She laughed when I told her that I had thought of her under the same name. "At the end of those weeks," added she, "I would not attend to them for a moment, nor, indeed, to anything else but running about the park, and riding, and making my cheeks as hard and as red as those false peaches. But I retained so much love for them meanwhile, as to call my horse a palfrey, and baptize it Bucephalus." She said she once spent a month's pocket-money in feeding him with gilt oats, then dressed him up in a damask curtain, and made a cousin of her's lead her upon it, her head crowned with laurel, and the youth blowing a trumpet. This was not her cousin George (the Duke of Buckingham) ; he and she had never been friends. When a boy he behaved to her "as ill as a brother to a sister ;" and when suitors made their appearance, he thought proper to take a fancy to her, and be jealous. It was alternately peace and war with them to the present day ; not (as she hinted) without a like reason ; but the King was the best-tempered of men, delighted in making peace ;

and "so we are all very charitable at present," concluded her ladyship, "more especially my injured self; and are to have no nonsense for a month to come, but a great deal of good sense and dancing; and the Queen comes to my apartments to-night, to a party."

The secret (as I afterwards found) of this sudden change, was an interview, the night before, between her ladyship and his Majesty, during which the former, in a very sudden way, and such as I had no notion of for some time, resumed all her ascendancy. But of this by and by. The King, the Duke of Buckingham, Miss Stewart, all went for nothing; the Queen was secretly glad to make common cause with one whom she had ceased to regard as her first enemy: and before the week's end, everybody was persuaded, that the reign of Villaria (as the Duke called her) would be eternal.

His Grace, for reasons best known at that time to himself, chose to put a good face on the matter when he saw me. I could discern that he was piqued; but I was so grateful for escaping his anger, that I not only succeeded in excusing myself on good grounds, particularly with reference to the Captain, but pleased him with a greater show of affection than I had latterly been moved to evince. He said, "I was a good lad," and that "all parties should consent to the making of me, since I could keep the secrets of all." Lady Castlemain's admonition here came across me; and for the first time I began to have suspicions about the Captain; but I was so gratified with the compliment, in addition to the joy I had experienced in seeing all things go well, that I derived a pleasure from thus bordering on something perilous for the Duke's sake. My vanity did for him, what his own had prevented; and I said something in consequence, which made him look as hard at me, as he did at our first meeting. I observed that something with difficulty remained in his thoughts. He shook his head, and cried gaily, "The women! the women!"

'He talks to me that never yet was pump'd.'

His Grace was proceeding in a strain of banter, when he suddenly turned grave, and complimented me in such high terms, that I knew not what to think of either of us. This style he almost as quickly dropped, and said, "Well then, — now to business," which I observed was a way he had, when

his humour was not responded to as he liked. Some affair was easily found to make good his words. At present it concerned the regulation of my devoirs to Miss Stewart, in the midst of which his Grace took up his violin, and said, "The duet in E, Ralph, or I die of these absurdities."

The next morning his Grace complained of being mixed up with the riding parties. He called himself Slave of the Horse to the King's Majesty; and ran on with so diverting an extravagance about the King's being a centaur, centaurs wearing perukes, mares of honour prancing down Whitehall in petticoats a mile long, and Lord Clarendon having four gouty legs as Chiron, with a bag of oats to puff and blow into, that I writhed in my chair with laughing. He had discovered that I did not like jests that undervalued the sex, which always made him say the more to that end; so that finding me laugh heartily in spite of myself, his good humour was unbounded. He then set out, directing me when to follow, and bidding me, when I kissed Miss Stewart's hand, think of "Hylonome."

I was in good time for the dismounting of the riders. The Queen, I observed, was not present. Her Majesty was ill, with dancing after supper. The Duke smiled and nodded, and the King called me to him. For my part, having become a party to so many of his Majesty's secrets, I hardly knew how to look the Monarch in the face. I comforted myself, however, with adoring him as a good-natured prince, and being ready to die in his defence; and the bashfulness soon wore off, for reasons common to us all.

The King said to Miss Stewart, "Here is your Knight of the Merlin, come to thank you for his advancement." Miss Stewart favoured me with her foolish little giggle, adding, in a proper school-girl tone, that she was very glad to have been the occasion of doing me service. She added something which died on her lips, but all very gracious and civil.

I bowed, and withdrew. In due time I was installed in my office: his Majesty was kind enough to bespeak the goodwill of the new sphere in which I found myself, by telling my associates that I was "a gentleman of an ancient family, very much in love with the new times, and with wit and poetry; and therefore he hoped they would show me their countenance."

“His own,” whispered Killigrew, as the King retired, “is surely enough for any man.” This two-fold or three-fold joke made them laugh. I found that the royal visage was held to be ill-favoured; it had appeared to me far otherwise. It was very dark, and strongly featured; but I thought it manly and interesting. The severity that appeared in it, I did not find in his character; and therefore it went for nothing in his face. Some of them who agreed with me, likened him to the royal animal on his coat of arms; grim and threatening to behold, and all alive, but as harmless as the paint. “He has claws for all that,” said Coventry. Killigrew called him “the sly-'un rampant.” This was a joke with him for some time afterwards, whenever he happened to be near me, and the King suddenly came in. He would try to disconcert me with a look of grim respect, and saying the words in an under tone. His Majesty, though of a graceful carriage, had sometimes a brisk way of making his appearance, and coming along with hasty steps. “Sly-'un rampant,” says Killigrew; and I was obliged to make a horrible contortion of the mouth to avoid laughing. It put me to real pain; for, besides admiring the King, as much as any one, for his wit, I loved him; and I used to think it ungrateful. However, these misgivings wore off.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

I FOUND more work than I expected, not in my quality of deputy to the chief cup-bearer, who seemed little inclined to let me trouble him, but in carrying letters to Miss Stewart; and in taking packets from the Duke of Buckingham to Captain Sandford. The Captain lived in a decent lodging in the very heart of the town, but still professed to be hiding from his great enemy. In fact, he could not have chosen a better place to hide in. He told me, from time to time, that he hoped much from the goodness of the Duke of Buckingham; and also to be really of use to him, in that matter of the estate; but it was a point of delicacy, that his Grace should not be



seen in connection with a person under the displeasure of the Lord Steward of the Household.

I wondered at this, knowing the open dislike which Buckingham professed for Ormond ; but wonder itself soon became familiar to me at court. The correspondence I kept as secret as the grave. It was a point of honour. I was equally close with regard to that with Miss Stewart, to whom his Majesty seemed to think that I belonged. On the other hand, I fancied I belonged to Lady Castlemain ; and the King's mistake helped to increase the fancy.

I now learnt, that the Countess had received her information respecting me from the young lady who sat with her on my first interview ; and that this young lady was Miss Warmestre.

“What, madam ! my cousin, as I used to call her ?”

“No,” returned her ladyship, laughing, “I doubt, from what I hear of her, whether even my courtly presence would have restrained little Nelly.”

“Nelly ! her name was Lucy.”

“I know not how that may be,” said Lady Castlemain ; “I believe they have not fixed upon any of her names yet.”

“And who then is Mr. Warmestre ?”

“Mr. Warmestre is a Mr. Braythwaite, a distant relation of Lord Orrery.”

I was thunderstruck. “And pray, madam,” said I, “will your ladyship complete the introduction which you are so kind as to give me to my old acquaintances, by informing me who I am myself.”

I received an answer, which diverted my attention, at the moment, from everything but the kindness of it ; but seeing me prepared to make new inquiries, “Nay,” said she, “I can tell you but little more. All that I know of Mr. Braythwaite is, that he is a gentleman of a very grave reputation, who being married, but having no children, is so fatherly as to take care of the children of others. Warmestre (which some confound with Warminster) is a name that seems to be no longer the property of any one but the young lady who bears it ; and even she is thought to be somebody else. Not that she is aware of that circumstance. She takes herself at present for herself. But she is very like Miss Kirke, daughter of Mr. Kirke, one of the grooms of his Majesty's bedchamber. Mr.

Kirke swears that she is her cousin, who has never been allowed to see her before by reason of a family dispute; so now the father being dead, the young lady is brought to court, and has just been appointed one of my sisters in office, the duties of which I have undertaken to instruct her in. It is my cousin Buckingham's doing. I have undertaken to oblige him, in order to show him my good will."

"And little Nelly, madam? It is my last question. Have you nothing further to tell me of her?"

"I know not whether that would be quite so proper," replied her ladyship. "Did you never hear a story of a young lady, whom the first Duke of Buckingham brought acquainted with his Majesty's father? The Duke has given me to understand, that some relationship is to be traced between a daughter of that lady and Miss Warmestre. I know not how true it is; but it warrants me in showing her my countenance, without further question. Now merry little Nell makes no claim of this sort, nor any other. Mr. Hart, the player, chose, I believe, to take her mother's word, that she was the daughter of a Welsh gentleman (I forget his name) of great riches, who, being a most forgetful father, could never be brought to think of doing anything for her. Mr. Hart, who is a good-natured man, took the father's duties upon him, and placed her, for her better breeding, with Mrs. Warmestre, though he is now said to be so enamoured of his good work, as to have turned lover instead of father; and 'tis furthermore said, to the scandal of little Nelly, that she has a great deal of gratitude. She has manifested so great a genius for the stage, that she is to come upon it; and t'other day, Mrs. Warmestre brought her here at my request, and she was very well behaved, though a wild creature. I encouraged her to laugh and sing, and to show me some of her mimicry; and she professed to be so much in love with my encouragement, that she took the freedom of nearly killing me."

The day after these surprises (which, I must own, mortified me a little, especially as my lady joked me upon the gravity of my old passion,) I saw Mr. Braythwaite himself. He came to take his final leave of me, previously to his going to France, where he said he had resolved upon settling. At the same time he took the opportunity of explaining some little matters,

that might seem to have concerned me, though they were in reality of no importance.

I saluted him by his new name. Instead of being disconcerted, he was pleased. It saved him a part of his trouble. He said he need not excuse himself to so generous and so judicious a person as I was, for having changed his name. He had done it at a time, when, on account of services to the former government, he hardly knew whether he should be suffered to live. Times had altered, and honest men were safe; but in the meanwhile he had acquired new connections, and he must own, that the fear, however weak (for he had since become wiser), of bringing his honesty into question, had led him to delay too long in resuming his true appellation. His noble kinsman, Lord Orrery, had furthermore been angered with him for not sooner discerning the merits of the new people — a mistake in judgment, to say the most of it, surely pardonable; but this was an additional reason why he had acted as he did. His objection to the new people as governors, had not hindered him from feeling towards them as Christian men, as he should now proceed to make manifest. I have even, as you have found out, Mr. Esher," said he, assuming one of his meek smiles, at once fawning and self-sufficient, for which I always longed to tweak him by the nose, "a fair friend at court, as well as yourself; though not of so high a quality."

"You! Mr. War—Braythwaite!" said I, "I thought you had long renounced the powers of this world and all that belongs to them?"

"Long ago I did," returned he, an expression of triumphant cunning twinkling in his eyes; "and often," he added gravely, "have I repeated the abjuration; but the more one sees of the world, the more one pities, and is indulgent to it. I have observed so much natural goodness where I used formerly to look for nothing but sin and depravity, that I do own I have not been able to refuse my counsel to some who needed it, even among the rich and powerful. In a word, Mr. Esher, I will now just tell you, before I go, a secret which I reserved for this especial time."

He then related to me, in a mysterious manner, and without mentioning names, that he had been applied to on more than one occasion, and by very exalted persons, who had learnt the

charitableness of his nature, to charge himself with the maintenance and education of certain young persons, whom, under the old law, it might have been thought proper to visit with the sins of their fathers. He had had a long struggle with himself in considering whether it was right or wrong to carry his charities so far, but upon the whole he concluded for the Christian side of the excess, and though the task had been one of a great deal more trouble than lucre, which indeed rather enabled him to think it not an ill one,—three such accomplished young ladies did not appear every day, as those who have been entrusted to the care of himself and Mrs. Braythwaite. Two of them I had seen, and could judge for myself: “And so,” said he, “my dear young gentleman, you now understand that I entertain as much reverence for a secret as you do; and when next you see your friend Lady Castlemain, be pleased to make known to her ladyship my gratitude for the kindness she has shown to Miss Warmestre. The young lady was requested to speak very kindly of you in order to smooth away the chances of her ladyship’s opposition; but this you have done for yourself with a judgment and a good fortune, that I shall never cease to admire.”

There was now and then a tone of assumption in the midst of this person’s fawning manner, which I attributed to the authority he had received over me from my mother; I was therefore in the habit of regarding it as little as I did his flattery; for though he had discovered that I liked flattery well enough, he had not found out that I was not fond of it from him. With all his cunning he had not the art of making it agreeable, a defect more common than is suspected. Perhaps there is not one more common with pretenders of all kinds, nor less conceivable by their understanding.

Mr. Braythwaite concluded with saying, as he took up his hat, that he did not intend to take any leave of the Captain. He had not seen him a long time; to say the truth, the poor man had grown so captious with his misfortunes, and he (Braythwaite) saw so little chance of the Duke’s being able to do anything for him, equal to his desires, which began to be a little extravagant, that a visitor who could do nothing at all might as well keep away. He said nothing of my going to and fro with the Duke’s packets; and as I concluded him not

in the secret of my having been turned to such regular account, I said nothing calculated to let him into it. The packets had not come so thick of late; the Duke, like his master, seemed absorbed in pleasures; and I began to think this system of government so agreeable, that I was glad to give up all thoughts of guardians, disbanded officers, troubles, hypocrisies, or anything else but a new play or a fashion. When Mr. Braythwaite turned his back, I seemed to behold the departing skirts of all that was grave and disagreeable.

With regard to Miss Nelly (what's her name? cried I to myself with vexation), I did not feel at all comfortable. In the first place, I thought myself taken in; secondly, I was afraid I had been in love; thirdly, it looked very like it, for I felt jealous; fourthly, I had no right to be so; fifthly, suppose my companions should know it; sixthly, how was I to go to the play and see her? and seventhly, how was I to avoid it? I amused Lady Castlemain with the earnestness with which I begged her to keep my secret; and then I went to Miss Warmestre, to entreat her to show a like humanity.

I had not spoken to this young lady since I saw her at Epsom. My behaviour then had been a little abrupt and unwarrantable, but it was caused by feelings of devotion to another of her sex. I now feared that the latter had not been so deserving. Would to heaven, thought I, I had loved the real Miss Warmestre instead. Thus ungrateful was I, at a moment's notice, to the sweet lips of the one, because she turned out to be nobody; and thus prepared to think highly of the other, because she was said to have some pretensions, which nobody knew anything about.

I found her very kind and acquiescent. Miss Warmestre was really handsome, and I now wondered I had not thought her superior to Nell. Her figure was not perfect; but she was tall, buxom, and of a good carriage, and her face was healthy and good-humoured. Instead of being angry, I found in her manner a sort of thankfulness, calculated to affect a less coxcomb than I was. In short, I perceived she had a great deal of good-nature; and I was very sensible of it. She spoke handsomely of Lady Castlemain, of Nelly, of everybody.

I must except Mr. Braythwaite. She confessed she did not like him; which doubled the effect of her good will to every one else. At the same time she knew little about him. That

was the ground of her quarrel. She had lived with him two or three years, yet knew little more than I did. But somebody, she thought, must know a great deal; for he took long journies, and seemed to have a world of business in his head. Mrs. Braythwaite, his wife, was a good easy body, who let every one do as they pleased. She was a clergyman's daughter, and taught the young ladies to read and write and play on the harpsichord. Provided they exhibited a reasonable quantity of music, went to church, and said nothing of the little parties she had in Mr. Braythwaite's absence, nothing was said of them. A little slyness and a great deal of good humour were the order of the day on the lady's side: slyness and reserve were the gentleman's; and if he had a satisfaction in keeping his secret, the rest of the family had no less in keeping him out of theirs. As to being his nieces, the young ladies really took themselves for such, though they did not well know how it had come about.

Notwithstanding my jealousy, I was willing to put off my encounter with Miss Nelly. I was resolved to take my chance, and see her in public like other play-goers. Meanwhile, I should have fallen in love with the new Miss Warmestre had I not thought myself under the most heroical obligations to worship my Lady Castlemain.

Alas! I knew little about love; but I was young and grateful. Something might have been made of me in those times, if the times themselves, or rather the court, had known more than I did; but we were all pretty much on a par; except that the readers of the romances had the best of it.—The oldest were the worst, as they are apt to be, if bad at all. But no distinctions were heard of between young and old. All dressed and talked, and laughed and buffooned alike, the most romantic always excepted; for it was impossible to read those great folios, full of faith of all kinds, and not have a little faith in something. A certain degree of it was necessary in order to read them. It is true there were some very strange readers. Odd it was to see Harry Blagg or Coventry resume his Cleopatra at page four thousand and one, with all the seriousness of the last night's debauch in his aspect, and start off occasionally to yawn and swear. You would find a paper marking a passage full of the highest virtue and devotedness, where somebody had left off; and the paper should consist of

the last new song in praise of infidelity. The maids of honour had several of these folios in their common room. They were full of marginal readings in manuscript, of blottings out, and of caricatures scrawled over. "Madam," said one of the columns, "when I consider those chaste perfections . . ." — "I marvel," said the manuscript reading, "at their merry recollections."

One of those who least cared for romances was the Duke of Buckingham; and the King was another. Lady Castlemain, I could not but observe, had long given them up. Mr. Waller declared he should always retain a regard for them, and I believed him. You had but to quote a passage containing the word "beauty," or "majesty," and he assumed a look full of worship and dignity, and would say something fine upon it. Mr. Killigrew (I mean the father—the Killigrew that had been Venetian ambassador) was another, who, in despite of all the pranks he had played, and the strange things he had written, swore he could not give up his "old young days." There, indeed, lay the secret. He had the aspect of a Venetian senator, and delighted to say the most fantastic things with the gravest face. He was then upwards of fifty. Waller was near sixty. The King was little more than thirty; Buckingham a few years older; Grammont about the same age. Dorset and Sedley about five or six and twenty; Ossory and Arran the same; the former, perhaps, near thirty; and Rochester, who had scarcely made his appearance, not more than seventeen. Lady Castlemain and the other ladies in vogue were not more than about five and twenty. But there was as little distinction as possible of ages. Even the Queen Dowager, it was said, when handed along by my Lord St. Albans (for I had not yet seen her), gave herself airs of youth. Perukes were not in universal wear at that time, but those who had not fine heads of hair were rapidly adopting them. The Duke (of York) had put on his; and the King, who was already grey, was about to follow. We were all waiting for his Majesty, to know how we should wear our hair, whether false or natural, so as to look like his. The royal crinosity was naturally a deep black, and it struggled hard to look black still, besides being ample and grim. When he turned suddenly upon you, he looked like a black lion who had thrust his face through a hedge in winter.

But he was as merry as the rest, or merrier. The phrase of "merry monarch," which came up afterwards, was first given him libellously by Lord Rochester; but he deserved it in good earnest, notwithstanding his melancholy, for he had a good portion of that too, though he fought hard to have none. You might wear a grim aspect, if nature had given you one, but it was next to treason to think of being gravely in earnest, and not laugh and joke. It seemed as if, by common consent, we had all set out in life at the same epoch, and all just arrived at the age of indiscretion (doubtless the proper term, instead of the one commonly used). Buckingham was a greater boy than Rochester; and Rochester all of a sudden grew as old as Sir John Denham, and as vicious. Waller consented to be old, but his verses kept him young. Poets are always young if they choose. "They talk five-and-twenty," said Lady Chesterfield. They have only not to get fat. At least I have known others besides her ladyship who thought so. I suppose the ladies know not how to be grateful enough to those who confer immortality.

If men had been butterflies, and the world nothing but sunshine, those had been fine times. I retain a decent respect for good clothing still; but I sometimes wonder to think of the profound gravity with which I could then discuss the tie of a cravat, or the colour of a ribbon. What debates have we not had in the pages' room, whether a coat should be blue and silver, or blue and gold: whether it should be pinked upon green, or upon peach blossom: how many yards of ribbon it should carry; what size of a rose in the shoe best set off the leg; and on which shoulder one ought to bring over one's tresses or one's peruke, in order to suit the gallantry of the countenance. The left shoulder generally carried it; vigour, it was said, coming from the right side; and prompting the face to turn upon the left. But there was a heresy, a year or two after I came to court, in favour of the reverse opinion. Lord Arran brought it up, because of his guitar, and he converted the others for a time: "*for,*" said he, "the sword being on the left side, and the act of playing the guitar leaning that way, rather than to the right, the vivacity of the look is of necessity thrown over upon the right shoulder, and therefore the hair should be crossed in



that direction." But they said he did it because his left cheek would bear the more open display.

I passed a delightful winter, carrying messages, going to plays, dining, drinking, dressing, and hearing the King and his courtiers talk. By degrees I was encouraged to talk myself. I got a reputation for being both a hearty and a judicious admirer of wit and poetry, and this procured me the regard of the men I was most anxious to please. Lord Buckhurst liked me because I was discriminating; Sir John Denham, because I listened with respect; Sir Charles Sedley, because none of his similes were lost on me; and Mr. Waller, because I thought him the greatest poet that ever was. I had some misgiving on that point, when I thought of poor Mr. Cowley, who died not long afterwards. Mr. Sprat (lately made Bishop of Rochester, then the Duke of Buckingham's chaplain.) took me to see that great and good man in his retreat in the country, where he talked so delightfully of rural pleasures, that I began to sigh after my old fields, till I heard him say he had realised nothing but agues, and that the Arcadians in his vicinity were any thing but what they should be. He thought, however, he should find them a little higher up the river.

The doctor was certainly the death of him, — I mean Dr. Sprat. They had been drinking at a friend's house in the neighbourhood, and, returning home at midnight, mistook their way, and so remained till daylight under a hedge, which gave the poet a cold that killed him. The dean has another story, but so he had about Cromwell. His reverence was a hale hearty fellow at that time, in the prime of life, and accustomed to the Duke of Buckingham's claret. He ought to have carried the divine old boy on his back, rather than suffer him to perish. 'Tis true, he might not have been quite as stable as he was vigorous; but he might have shouted. I have heard him loud enough after his third bottle, with the Duke and Mat Clifford. Let me add, as a candid king's evidence, that I never approved of the loudness with which he ended his drinking, because of the softness with which he began it.

I could record some discourses I heard at Buckingham's table with Lord Buckhurst, Sedley, Shepherd, and Andrew Marvell, whom his Grace used to call merry St. Andrew; but

perhaps I shall be able by and by to relate some others better, which I heard when I was a little older, and when I could better relish them. Besides, I have other stories to tell. My experiences were destined to have a great lift given them shortly, and I found a friend who will cut the best figure in these pages, though it is the gravest. A terrible year was approaching—the year of the Plague, of the Great Fight, and of the Fire,—and my friend and I, by some remarkable chances, had a shrewd taste of them all. But the court buzzed again, like gnats in the sunshine, as if none of them had been swept away; and meanwhile they buzzed as merrily as if nothing was going to happen.

It was now the summer of the year sixty-four.\* Politics were quiet, or seemed to be so. Proud Clarendon had escaped an impeachment, but was expecting another in grief and gout; and the merry-makers had it all their own way. Nothing in the morning but breakfasting, bowling, dressing, or boating; nor in the afternoon but drinking, gaming, and play-going; nor all the rest of the time but riding, dancing, guitar-tinkling, loitering, and love-making. Item, supper; item, the parks. Now we were at Hampton Court; now at Greenwich; now at Tunbridge, Newmarket, St. Albans. Then we went to Epsom; and I was afraid to ask after Miss Randolph.

I had taken Captain Sandford's word for it, that Clarendon was a bad man; and though I heard some things that made me doubt it, there was no doubt that he was a proud and dictatorial one; and these things go hard to convince a young man. It was pretty clear, I thought, that his lordship was pulling down other men's faults with his own. The Duke of Ormond, who came seldom among us, I held in greater suspicion, also on the Captain's account, but partly from what was said of him by the merry-makers, who, nevertheless, did not treat him as they did Clarendon. One of his sons, Lord Arran, was of the merry system; and the elder, Lord Ossory, I could not help loving for the handsome toleration he put upon it, though he mixed with us but little. By degrees I began to think better of Ormond, because I thought worse of Buckingham; and because his sons, and indeed everybody else, spoke well of him. And his own noble aspect confirmed

the impression. Besides, he professed a most inflexible regard for the King, and he shewed it; nor did I perceive any of the ill effects from his presence, that some talked of, unless it consisted in rendering the conversation rather cheerful than merry, and putting us upon a good taste and tranquillity of behaviour that was very delightful. Lady Castlemain and he were not good friends, and yet sometimes she never looked so beautiful in my eyes as when he was by. The vehemence in her manner became composed, and her aspect was occasionally so touching and even submissive, that if I could have quarrelled with him for anything, it was for not paying her more attention. Captain Sandford began to appear to me a most mistaken disbanded officer; and as I had no packets for him just now, and the Duke of Buckingham never mentioned his name, I began to eject him from my memory as an inconvenience.

There was no such re-action in favour of Clarendon. Everything told against him, particularly his aspect. He would never speak, nor even look, if he could help it, at Lady Castlemain; and that offended my romance. He was always lecturing the King on his pleasures; and it was agreed that he wanted lecturing on his own. Being slender young gentlemen, or not yet arrived at the time of life, or the opinions, in which the person is less studied, we held in horror the intemperance that makes fat. "The gross knave," said Buckingham, "turns himself into a shambles, and then holds him qualified to talk of decency." "'Tis the corpulentest puppy," quoth Sir George Hewitt.

Sir George, who was our fop of fops, and the prince of the drawling indifferent manner, then newly come up, and which affected to be incapable of receiving impressions but from something very exquisite, had lately committed himself, when two gentlemen were introduced to him, by saying, in his extremest style,— "Which — is — which?" Buckingham, who laughed at everybody, friend or foe, had got hold of this; and one day he and Colonel Titus got up a scene that made us roll with laughter. The King had taken it into his head to try if wool-sacks like those used in the House of Lords would make pleasant cushions for an apartment. He had some made, that were of black velvet, laced with gold. Buckingham said they were as fat and melancholy as the Chancellor; and this

reminding him of the Chancellor seated in the House, he made Titus put one of the sacks upon the other, with his head puffing and blowing over the top for Clarendon: then somebody introduced him as Sir George: "Sir George Hewitt; permit me to bring you acquainted with his lordship the Chancellor, and with his lordship's woolsack;" upon which the Duke, shrugging and drawling in the manner of Sir George, said, "Which — is — which?"

Another time his Grace, having made a heartier dinner than usual, threw himself back in his chair, and, puffing and looking loftily about him, exclaimed, "It is amazing, sirs, the modern grossness of manners! — Here, you fellow — a bottle out of the fifth bin: — and to-morrow, see that the sauce hath another ham to it — I was going to forget the fellow's presence, my zeal so eateth me up; but what think you of all this junketing, my lord? (*here he puffs*) — and this dancing, Mr. Treasurer? (*here a twinge of the gout*) — and this courting, Mr. Secretary? No consideration preserved; not a cook nor a kitchen-wench made love to in decent privacy — *cauté, si non castè* — but real ladies and gentlewomen, — creatures well bred, my Lord Duke! of high breeding, Mr. Treasurer! (*puffs*); of the most engaging demeanour, Mr. Secretary!" (*blows.*)

With a succession of these jokes, he used to convulse the King; and very serious jokes they turned out to the Chancellor. It is to be observed, that no credit was given to the latter for any virtues he laid claim to. The truth is, his lordship was honest enough not to pretend to some of them, retrospectively. He could also be more gay and pleasant over his wine, than his enemies liked; and indeed was a very agreeable host, having plenty of stories to relate, and a fine understanding. But at court, credit was given to nobody, for continency of any sort; and the Chancellor, in pretending to have given up the follies of his youth, only aggravated and embittered the incredulity. It was asserted, that he offended as much as anybody, with less excuse; and the candour about his youth was only turned into a proof of it.

One jest in particular made a great noise. It got to the Chancellor's ears, and I believe was the cause of some unlucky expressions and perversities which escaped him at that time, and are supposed to have hastened his overthrow. It was an imitation of his lordship's passage to the Court of Chancery.

I did not see it, but I heard it related by Sir Thomas Osborne (afterwards Lord Danby), who was present. The King sits with his company in a room that has two opposite doors. One of them is suddenly thrown open; and there enters towards the other, a procession like that of the Chancellor, Titus carrying a pair of bellows for the mace, Savile holding a bag of enormous dimensions for the purse; and Buckingham coming behind, swelling and staring, for the great man. This scene was repeated backwards and forwards, to the endless delight of the spectators; and till the Queen, who had lately joined the merry-makers, was fain to bid them hold, for fear of mischief to the succession.

Buckingham had generally some cant joke going forward, which was his favourite whim for the season; or he had two or three at a time. At this period he was all for music and parodies. He was always parodying Shakspeare; and one of his favourite jokes against Clarendon, was to liken him to Falstaff. He said that the only difference between him and Falstaff was, that he was "not pleasant." He was a Falstaff without the good fellowship, and was for robbing the Exchequer by himself.

Thus instead of the "travellers" robbed by Falstaff, Buckingham would read "cavaliers." It was a complaint against Clarendon, that the old royalists could get nothing out of him but by bribes, which they were seldom rich enough to afford, so that the rebels and Presbyterians were advanced, while the King's friends, plundered of what they had had, on all sides were left in the lurch:—

*Buckingham, as Clarendon:* "Down with 'em! Fleece 'em!"

*Cavaliers:* "Oh, we're undone, both we and ours for ever."

*Clarendon:* "Hang ye, gorbellied knaves, are ye undone? No, ye fat chuffs. What! Young men must live. You are grand jurors, are ye? We'll jure ye, i'faith."

Where Falstaff's pocket is picked, Buckingham turned it into the Chancellor's.

*Buckingham.* "'Tis Hyde! fast asleep behind the arras, and snorting like a horse."

*Titus or Savile (acting the King):* "Hark! how hard he fetches breath! Search his pockets. (They search.) What hast thou found?"

*Buckingham* : “ Nothing but papers, my lord.”

*Titus* : “ Let’s see what they be. Read ’em.”

*Buckingham* : “ Item, A capon, — one and twopence.

Item, Sauce, — two shillings.

Item, Frontigniac, two gallons.

Item, Lord Pomfret’s estate.

Item, Orphan’s cries, — fi’pence.

Item, Anchovies, and Frontigniac after supper.

Item, Betty, a penny.”

*Titus* : “ Oh monstrous ! a penn’orth of love to all this repletion.”

Here the King, in his own royal person, is moved to a merry oath, at which Buckingham exclaims :

“ Swear’st thou, ungracious boy ? Thou art silently carried away from grace. There is a devil haunts thee in the likeness of a fat old man. A ton of man is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humours, that bolting-hutch of beastliness, that swoln parcel of dropsies, that reverend extortion, that grey hypocrisy, that pride and vanity in years ? Where is he good but to get money and drink it ? Wherein neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon, or convey an estate ? Wherein knowing, but in craft ? Wherein crafty, but in all things ? ”

*Savile* (acting the Chancellor) : “ I would your Grace would take me with you. Whom means your grace ? ”

*Buckingham* : “ That villanous corpulent Earl, that misleader of the King, Hyde ; that old white-headed Viscount.”

*The King* (speaking in his own person). “ My Lord, the man I know.”

*Buckingham* : “ Thanks be to the Lord that thou dost, for then we know who will be known for the true prince, whom God preserve. Ah, sir ; banish fat Hyde, and banish all your cares.”

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## CHAPTER IX.

It was lucky that I had been instructed about Miss Nelly, for on going to the play one night, who should be the heroine of

it but she herself! It was her first appearance. She was handsomer than ever, and seemed as if she could be wilder, but the occasion subdued her. It now and then threw over her aspect a new and touching shade of timidity. I felt my love fast returning, in spite of her occupation; and it was not diminished by the applauses of the theatre, or by the King's sending for her into his box after the play. "How now," said I, "Mr. Ralph Esher, art thou not growing a pretty rascal! Yesterday thou wert becoming ashamed of the actress, and willing to know nothing about her. To-night, because people admire her, and a King pinches her on the cheek, thou art going headlong to pay her thy respects behind the scenes!"

Accordingly, not to baulk the reasonableness of my apostrophe, I went. I took care, however, to be among the last, when the crowd of fops and inquirers had diminished. Miss Gwynn (for that was her new name) spied me in a twinkling. She directed her cordial smile to me through a host of admirers, and said, with the best air imaginable, full of modesty as well as regard, "I think I have the honour of seeing Mr. Esher; I hope he is well." I went forward, and expressed my delight at seeing her again, under circumstances which made the world acquainted with her talents; and when the crowd had gone away, she took me into a room where she had to wait for Mr. Hart. The door was no sooner closed, than she said, in her former quick way, "May I call you Ralph, when we're alone? and will you call me Nelly? and do you remember the laugh we had when I first saw you?"

I was so pleased, that I felt inclined to behave as if I were not so. The tenderness in her manner looked as if I retained a hold on her affections, while her aspect of joyous good health piqued me, as if I had had a right to see it less gay. I answered with the proper warmth, but immediately added, "Why did you not let me know what you were doing?"

"Mr. Warmestre would not let me. He was angry with his wife for letting me come to see you, and perhaps he was right. A little more, and neither the King's page, nor the little actress, would have known how unsuitable they were to each other."

She said this in such a pretty questioning manner, and with such an unaffected mixture of regret and congratulation, that

while I was chagrined at her not feeling the "little more" for myself, I could not help recollecting that I had failed to do it for her.

I was muttering something between joke and earnest about faithlessness, when she cried out in her old tone of playfulness, "Not a morsel of it! Nobody has been faithless; nor" (added she, laughing, and half shutting her arch eyes) "faithful either, as far as I can see. Lord bless me, Mr. Esher, actresses have not all the faithlessness in the world to themselves. Courts and king's pages have a little bit of it. *Are you always so?*"

She uttered this last sentence in a low voice, coming close to me, and mimicking her own manner so perfectly at our first interview, that both of us were thrown into our old fit of laughter.

"And now, Mr. Esher," said she, "being so faithful, you are impatient to know about Miss Randolph?"

"Miss Randolph!" cried I, with new astonishment; "how can you know any thing about her?"

"Ah!—you see!" cried Nelly:—"Well, you must know, in the first place, that Miss Warmestre came to see you; secondly, ladies talk; and thirdly, Miss Randolph's father died, and the care of her was transferred to Mrs. Warmestre. She remained with us but a little while, and whither she has gone I know not."

It was with some trepidation I asked after Miss Randolph's health. "Oh, she seemed very well," said Miss Gwynn, "and was as gentle and pleasant as a lamb; so you did not break her heart, you monster."

Will it be believed, that in the very midst of the relief and the unequivocal delight which I felt at hearing of this young lady's welfare, a pang of mortified self-love came over me, in thinking that my loss had not made her a little more wretched? I hastened to get rid of the unworthy feeling, and turned the discourse to the merry creature before me.

She then told me of her situation and prospects; how kind Mr. Hart had been to her, in giving her an education, and how he had been her second love, though she had not thought proper to let me know it.

"Your *second*," said I, "Miss Warmestre!—I beg pardon, Miss Gwynn!—I beg pardon, dear Nelly! Why, you are



more faithless than a king's page. And pr'ythee who was the first?"

"My first!" returned Nelly, with great seriousness,—"but you won't mention it, Mr. Esher,—I beg pardon, Mr. Ralph,—I beg pardon, dear Ralph," (and here the giddy creature laughed, and patted me on the cheek);—"but indeed" (and here she resumed her seriousness) "I would not have anybody know it, not even yourself, if you had not been almost as much in love as I was;—but my first love, you must know, was a link-boy!"

"A what!"

"'Tis very true," said she, "for all the frightfulness of your *what*; and a very good soul he was, too, poor Dick! and had the heart of a gentleman. God knows what has become of him; but when I last saw him, he said he would humbly love me to his dying day; and if I ought to think myself faithless to anybody, ah—but no matter for that,—I believe he loved me so much, that I could not love him enough in return; for he used to say that I must have been a lord's daughter for my beauty, and that I ought to ride in my coach, and he behaved to me as if I did. Do you know who my mother was, Mr. Esher?"

"I have heard."

"Why then you have heard right, I'll be sworn. Well, Richard would light me and my mother home to our lodgings in Lewkner's Lane, after we had sold our oranges, as if we had been ladies of the land. He said he never felt easy for the evening till he had asked me how I did; then he went gaily about his work; and if he saw us housed at night, he slept like a prince."

"A great heart may be in a lowly station," said I, trying to reconcile my dignity to a story which the glimpses I had had of love induced me to think better of than I supposed: "Shakspeare, himself, they say, was a link-boy."

"And Cardinal Wolsey the son of a butcher," said Nelly; "and Sir Christopher Minns, the great admiral, has a father living who is a shoemaker. Mr. Hart told me a great many of those things, and that is why I took a liking to him. But lord! how disconsolate you look, Mr. Esher; won't you take a chair?"

The union of these two fancies made me laugh. She

laughed heartily at my laughing, and then said, shaking her head, "Ah, there's nobody loved better than poor Dick. I'll tell you, Mr. Esher, the first time I thought he should have been a gentleman born, was when he came, blushing and stammering,—he, a blackguard boy, too, as he was,—and drew out of his pocket a pair of worsted stockings, which he had bought for my naked feet. Neither of us wore stockings; but it was bitter cold weather; and I had chilblains, which made me hobble about till I cried. So what does poor Richard, but work like a horse, and buy me these worsted stockings. My mother bade me let him put them on, and so I did, and his warm tears fell on my chilblains; and he said he should be the happiest lad on earth if the stockings did me any good. Ah! they make all their lovers to be kings and generals, but the most loving voice I ever heard on the stage is Mr. Hart's, when he plays Othello; and the first time I heard it, it reminded me of Dick Smith's, when he put the stockings on. I told Mr. Hart so, too, and he said I paid him the greatest compliment he ever had in his life; and he is a very clever, knowing man, is Mr. Hart—the King says so, and so does everybody."

I do not know whether the jade instinctively enlisted the royal judgment on her side, in order to give my better feelings their play, but I talked so well about Richard Smith, that she was pleased to say it was well she had not told me the story before. "I used to fancy, Mr. Esher," said she, "that you cared about as much for me as I had done for half a dozen young gentlemen players. Don't be frightened—there's nothing in it; but I begin to think I might have got you into trouble."

So saying, the giddy creature twirled me with her hand, and was in the act of singing and laughing, and flying me round and round, when her guardian, Mr. Hart, came into his room, to take her home. He bowed to me, and said with great good humour, "Well, Miss Gwynn, I guess I have the honour of seeing Mr. Esher."

"Yes, dear Mr. Hart," said Nelly; "and Mr. Esher is impatient for his supper, for he and I have danced ourselves into a devouring appetite."

I was going to protest I had not thought of trespassing upon Mr. Hart's hospitality, when he gave me to understand,

in the politest manner, that these gaieties were a matter of course wherever Miss Gwynn was concerned, and that nothing was more agreeable to him than to see her pleased, adding something about the honour which I must do him at all times by my company. "At this especial moment, however," said he, "we are all demanded elsewhere, for I come express from my Lady Castlemain, to fetch both Miss Gwynn and Mr. Esher to her apartments in Whitehall, the young actress being then and there to repeat one of her scenes, and the gentleman to wait upon his Majesty. There are more ladies and gentlemen assembled, and we have no time to lose."

Lady Castlemain, then, had seen me go behind the scenes, or had heard of my doing so; the new actress was in request, and her ladyship had taken this opportunity of indulging me in my favourite wish of waiting on the royal person.

Circumstances had often enabled me to follow others into his Majesty's presence. I was encouraged by this friend and by that, and his Majesty seemed pleased to notice me, especially when Miss Stewart was present. But I had never yet officiated in my character as under cupbearer.

We found a larger company than I expected. The King had brought with him the Duke of Richmond, the Earl of Arran, Mr. Jermyn, and others, expressly to see the new little actress, who was desired to commence forthwith, as if the play had been continued. I took my station inside the door of the supper room, which was open; and the fears I had entertained of being seen in company with my former mistress, and joked at in consequence, vanished as if I had been nobody. Every face was so absorbed in the new performer, that I almost began to think her a greater personage than myself.

"Charming little Nelly," as they called her, repeated some of the dialogue in which she had been acting, Mr. Hart assisting her; and she received unbounded applause. She then danced a new French dance, and sang a new French song with English words to it; and the applause redoubled. Miss Stewart was not present: already there was a talk of her presence not being so much wished for, by reason of the charming little ballad-singer. Lady Castlemain, however, seemed resolved that the diversion to Miss Stewart's disadvantage should not go farther than was proper, for she insisted on treating Miss Gwynn as a child. "Is she not a merry child?" said she; and after the

performance, it was, "Come hither, child; the King has a box of confits for thee:" so saying, she put the box in his Majesty's hand, who gave it my fair friend accordingly, and thus, by her ladyship's manœuvring, the pat vouchsafed by the royal hand had a look extremely paternal.

"'Tis a pretty child!" said the Countess; "is it not wonderful she can act so well?" "I have seen many act worse," observed Buckingham, "and a great deal older;" which raised a laugh, for nothing was said at court but was supposed to have two meanings."

Said Arran, to somebody who stood next him, "Her ladyship will overdo this infancy if she doesn't have a care. The King will see more babies in the girl's eyes than she looks for." For my part, I could not help fancying there was still more in her ladyship's tactics than the room discerned.

His Majesty and the Duke of Richmond complimented Mr. Hart on the talents of his protégée. They were talking together, and Nelly was standing very prettily under the criticism of the ladies, when I heard Arran's friend say to him, "This is the little girl, is it not, that speaks as she thinks? 'Tis a pity they leave out so rare a gift." "'Fore George, 'tis well thought on," said Arran, and went round to his brother. I saw him tap the Earl on the shoulder, who turned about, and they whispered. Ossory smiled, and shook his head. Arran started off to Buckingham, who looked aghast for an instant, then laughed and rubbed his hands, and proceeded with the notion to the King. The King shrugged his shoulders, but laughed too; and then called for Nelly to come to him.

"What is it?" cried everybody.

"Is it true, my dear, what they tell me," said the good-natured Prince, "that you speak as you think? Why, how came you to court?"

"Mr. Hart brought me, sir:" (a laugh)—"Oh, I see what you mean," added Nelly; and she laughed too: "I beg your Majesty's pardon; but your kindness takes away my senses, I think."

"You are a good girl," said the King, much pleased with this ingenuousness; "perhaps I may venture to bid you tell me, what you think of us all now,—at this instant?"

“Oh, sir,” returned she, “I have no thought, but of my happiness and of my fear.”

“Brava!” said Arran’s friend; “she could not have said it better, had she studied a month. Yet what is she but a poor half-taught little stroller? This it is to speak as one feels.”

I did not know whether to be more mortified at this speech, or more thankful;—but the King’s voice diverted my reflections.

“Well,” said his Majesty, “—but what? *But* away, my dear, pr’ythee:” (patting her head) “’tis a head that will do us no harm.”

The homage paid to the royal jest gave Nelly a little more time. She said, her *but* meant nothing, except that she could have no *but* if she wished it, at such a time. She thought nothing of anybody, just then; except that surely all the ladies were very handsome, and all the gentlemen very kind.”

“Good again,” said the King; “and I’ll be sworn she thinks it too, and for the reason she gives us.” Lady Castlemain seemed inclined to ask a question or two, but to fear it, having had a specimen of Nelly before. There was a world of jesting and deprecation going on among the ladies.

“What’s aw this ye tell us!” cried the Earl of Lauderdale, sputtering his Scotch with his great tongue: “Truth an’ innocence come to court! and in the guise o’ a stage-playing lassie!” And with these words, and a sneer in every one of them, he thrust his great heavy face close down to Nelly’s.

Nelly started. “The Lord be good unto us!” cried she, staring and jerking back.

A roar of laughter announced the defeat of the Earl’s movement. Whether the jade was in jest or earnest, or a mixture of both, the effect was the same. Lauderdale’s uncouth visage gave to the exclamation the whole force of truth. He started back himself, muttering with genuine rage, “Curse the little quean! I could wring her neck.”

His lordship’s mishap put an end to the desire of the spectators to seek further. The new actress was dismissed with applause; and the majority of the visitors taking their leave, the King sat down with a select party to supper.

The party consisted chiefly of ladies. They were not all as beautiful as Nelly, in the vivacity of the moment, had reason to think them; but for the most-part they were undoubtedly

so, and Nelly's reputation for truth did not suffer. The least handsome person there was the Duchess of Buckingham, the daughter of Fairfax; who seemed but too likely a representative of the sturdiness and want of grace in the republican party. But she looked good-natured, and little disposed to mortify herself with grave thoughts. Her body indeed was as little mortified as need be. I had not seen her before, her Grace having been on a visit to her father during my stay at the Duke's. I thought she was as glad to get into merry company again, as the best,—fidgetting, and making herself comfortable between the King and the Duke of Richmond, with an air of jolly expectancy.

Buckingham was there, Lord and Lady Falmouth, Buckhurst, Horton, Shepherd and others; enough to furnish an overflow of wit; and, what with the lights, the dresses, the beautiful faces, and a table sparkling with silver and roses, I felt as if I had been promoted to be cupbearer of the gods.

What, then, have I to say of the discourse? Nothing; except that it turned upon speaking one's mind, and became very edifying. I had ceased to be surprised at conversation, which, to say the truth, would have been very surprising to anybody not intimate with his Majesty's society; but I was so anxious to discharge my office properly, so attentive to the royal thirst, and so conscious of the little jovial butler, who undertook to supply me with nudges, and admonish me of times and seasons, that although I had little to do, I found myself in a state of incompetency to any thing else. I could only resolve not to behave like a clown; that is to say, not to stand staring at every pretty face that spoke; and, saving the royal presence, I was scarcely sensible of any thing upon earth, except that Lady Castlemain was a wonderful woman, and that the tips of my ears seemed to be getting redder and redder.

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## CHAPTER X.

HITHERTO my life at court had been nothing but rose-colour. Few inquiries were made respecting me, when I first came.

I was of an ancient family ; was enabled to cut a good appearance, by reason of certain jewels that I had received, without trenching upon my income ; and as I made good use of the money that remained, was good-tempered, sang and danced, and was ready for any frolic (for in that respect one extreme followed close with me upon another), I might reckon myself a general favourite. The reputation of a mistress was not wanting ; nor did I lose any thing of it by being secret as to the person. I shall say nothing of it even here ; nor disclose, whether in fact there was any such person or not. There were but two individuals, both females, from whom I had no secrets : one of them, because I thought myself bound in gratitude to conceal nothing, whether positive or negative ; the other, because circumstances rendered it impossible for me to have a concealment on this particular point, if I would. And the latter was one of the most thorough kind-hearted persons, in her way, that I ever knew ; and would have fought as hard to keep a secret close, as she would have fought little on any other subject of controversy, not enjoined to a like delicacy. I am writing of a delicate era ; and am told that I must reckon upon more readers than I looked for. So in spite of a joke of my friend Shepherd, who said that Horace must have been a man of a very confined ambition, *virginibus puerisque canto* : all I shall add is, that imaginary mistresses being as much in request in those times as real ones, and imaginary names being allowed in the drinking of healths, I had a cant joke that used to get me off admirably ; which was the giving some sesquipedalian appellation and proposing a glass for each letter, according to the ancient custom. Nobody had mistresses with such long names as I had ; nor was Lucy or Chloris allowed, in my time, at the groom's or page's table. It was always Clorinda and Lucinda. This took so well, that the King was pleased to remind me of it several years afterwards, when his Majesty became fonder of drinking than he had been, and he then re-adopted it. Barbara was stretched into Barbarina, after the Italian fashion ; Anne into Nannette, and Margaret into Margharetina. Grammont, who liked to run to the height of every thing, and to add to what he did not originate, was nearly the death of the royal table, by proposing, one night, to drink all the names of a French lady of his acquaintance ; which were [no less] than six ; upon which other ladies of the

same nation followed; and the French got a new victory over us. It was a *Nox Mirabilis*, was that night; for by the same token, the Count, at two o'clock in the morning, won his great game at push-pin, of the Duke of Buckingham.

But my improvements in Bacchanalian grace were not confined to things nominal. I beg leave to say, that it was I who first revived the ancient custom of decorating wine-glasses with flowers, and drinking claret through odorous circlets of myrtle, roses, and jasmin. I had a party, that evening, of Buckhurst, Sedley, Horton, Harry Nevile, and Fanshawe. Betty Morice came as *Lalage*; nor were other fair fingers wanting to tie our roses; and Fanshawe said, that he believed Sir Richard\* himself would have been glad for once to riot in *impropria personâ*, and enjoy a feast so truly Horatian. I say nothing of my inventions in sword-knots and shoulder-knots; though if anybody says that he invented the *Châine d'Amour*, or the Tassel-Gentle (with silver bells in it), I must observe, that the proclamation of seventy-nine does not hinder gentlemen from crossing the water.†

But there were two discoveries, of which nothing shall induce me to give up the glory. The first is, the invention of artificial grapes and vine-leaves, which I had the honour of adding to the stock of ornaments worn by the ladies, flowers having been the only artificial wear of the kind up to that epoch; and secondly, I beg leave to have it made known, that it was I, Sir Ralph Esher, of Hethering Bower, in the county of Surrey, Baronet, then only in my squirehood, but of ripe years, that did first think of, institute, and cause to be made, those invisible little bottles of water, into which the stalks of real flowers being cunningly conveyed, the said flowers were, and are now enabled, however worn, to retain their freshness a whole evening, to the eternal wonder of the uninitiated, and honour of me their preserver.

But who is to wonder that a genius like this, applauded too and encouraged by such high and fair persons, should suddenly find evil mixed with his good, and envy gnawing at his solid fame? Going to Mr. Killigrew's one morning, to show him a new satire on the Dutch, I saw hanging up over

\* Sir Richard Fanshawe, doubtless the translator; to whom this gentleman we presume was a kinsman. — EDIT.

† To fight duels. — EDIT.



the spot I usually occupied in the common room, a lady's feather hanging from a certain description of cap; and over it, on a fair paper; written these words:—

*Sic itur ad astra.\* †*

Not knowing who was the perpetrator of this inscription, nor being able, with many questions, to discover (for they had most invincible faces, in those times, at a lie), I hung up in the public view, and upon a nail not appropriated to anybody, a sword valiantly drawn, with the reply following:—

*Sic fightur in castra. †*

After this I had no more such quips. Kit Musgrave, in a great passion, took down the cap and feather; and so I took down the sword. But I was not so easy in my condition as before. The harmony of it was interrupted. I suspected this person and that, and probably could not help showing my suspicion; others used to talk of it, not always pleasantly; and I began to think it would be necessary to insult somebody.

The truth is, I dare say, that I had not been able to refrain from giving myself a few airs; but I was really so good-humoured, and we most of us had such a sprinkling of the coxcomb in our compositions, that nothing but bad blood would have thought of such an attack upon me. I now, for the first time, began to see something mock-heroical in my adventure of the plume: I was angry at not having been introduced at court on the strength of my own merits, or for some proper achievement.

Killigrew laughed ready to burst, when I told him of these fancies. "Faith," said he, "Ralph, now you have done it! Some proper achievement, quotha! And where are the proper achievements that have brought all these gentlemen to court, or got them their honours? Let them bring out their 'scutcheons of pretence, and their foolscaps of maintenance; and yours, Ralph, shall be among the first, with the lady's feather in it. Let me see—*Chi mi dira, come sangue si fa?* as they say in Italy. You remember that grave-looking gentleman the other day, who bowed so politely to my Lady

\* Thus mount we the skies.

† Thus camps we surprise.

Castlemain, and then went and kissed her child, when she had done with it. Oh, oh!—you blush, I see, to think how he got his title! Well, you simpleton, then there is another earl, he that was not an hundred miles off the King's person the other night at her ladyship's supper. If Bab May be not an earl next, it will not be his fault. He has produced as many fair titles; or Mrs. Russell swears falsely as well as grievously. Then Elliot—do you know how Elliot's father got his title? Why truly, because he deserved to be hung. The old court fined him a good swinging sum for killing a man; but wanting his service afterwards, they were too poor to refund, and so they made him a knight. Your Duke—I need not tell you about your Duke. He is a Duke, to be sure, because his father was one, which is meritorious; but the father became a Duke, not because he had done so great a thing as pick up a lady's feather, but because he knew how to wear a feather of his own. The rogue dressed himself into a dukedom. Of scandals I say nothing. Stick we to real achievements. Fielding married velvet-cap's sister, and so he became Earl Denbigh. St. Albans is an Earl, because he married an old woman; and Orrery, because he was kind enough not to be able to kill us all in his friend Oliver's time. Then, Sir Winston Churchill hath an achievement, called a daughter; the Duke hath incorporated it into his own arms. You know 'Okey's little chaplain' (as they call him), who is so busy now? He has a title, and offices, and God knows how many thousand pounds besides, by reason of his being despised by everybody for a traitor and hypocrite; nor can even his five mistresses help him to a good name. But he is useful, you rogue; so we despise and pay him. Now you are only innocent and agreeable, Ralph, and must needs have a conscience; and so you have an ill-paid little salary, on which you give pretty suppers. These, however, will get you into debt; so there are hopes of you. Nay, sir, I doubt you will be a very pretty rascal in time. Why didn't you have a mother of the name of Barlow, and get born over seas? You dance well enough. You might have been a Duke ere this, and not had a word to say for yourself; and then nobody would have grudged you the feathers of all the turtles in Christendom."

I had never seen Killigrew's serious face look so grim as it

did now. He was a man of great wit and fancy, and of a life as little correct as any; but there was much vigour in his character. He would fain have seen us active men all the morning, and then paid us with jokes and wine the rest of the day. The whole family of the Killigrews were remarkable. They came, like the Bacons and Cecils, from one of the famous daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke. Sir Robert, the father, had abilities, and so had Sir Peter. There was Sir Robert's son, William, chamberlain to the Queen, a man of a sweet temper, of most entertaining though grave discourse, and a fine play-wright. Then came his brother Henry the doctor, another play-wright, since become a preacher, and an excellent one—such a one, like Dr. Earle, as would make any man in love with an established church, if all its preachers were as pleasant and charitable. And then there's my pretty Nanny, whom I have danced on my knee an hundred times; a born paintress and poetess, as I have heard Mr. Hailes and Mr. Dryden both testify, and with a temper as sweet as a nut. This is the doctor's daughter. Finally, not to mention Captain Harry, my friend's son, whose father let him run riot, out of a notion that such indulgence was kind and did good in the end (and Hal had plenty both of wit and wildness, God knows), there was the wittiest of them all, Tom Killigrew, of ever facetious memory, my friend himself, upon the very strength of whose Christian name, every Tom seems to take himself for a pleasant fellow. The public had a notion that he was a mere droll and buffoon, and they dubbed him "King's jester." He said more good things, grave as well as gay, and gave the King more good advice than any man who came near him, except Earle and Southampton (for Clarendon spoilt his admonitions with his pride, and lay open to too many quips in the stomach). The story of Killigrew's jest about Cromwell has been ill told. He did not go into the King's presence dressed like a pilgrim; upon which the King cried out, "How now!" and then there was a fine ready-made answer, and such-like mechanical nonsense. Tom did not prepare his jokes in that way, nor hazard the looking like a fool. The truth is this. There was a masquerade, in which Tom was dressed like a pilgrim. It was at a time when there was a very general sense of the ill posture of affairs, and a strong regret that the King would not apply his own abilities to the

settlement of them. A group of the masqueraders were talking of it, and Tom had been so moved by what was said, that on the King's coming up and breaking the circle, his Majesty, who was dressed like a knight-errant, asked him, "Well, Pilgrim, whither goest?" "To hell," said Killigrew, between jest and anger. "What for?" quoth the King. "To get Oliver, the scoundrel, to come and do business for us, since honest men will not mind it for themselves." There was a sudden silence, which made the King pause in his laughter; but he recovered in a moment, hit Tom on the shoulder with his glove, and said, "Don't tell the King, or he'll bid you go for a fool." It was in a similar spirit, a year or two afterwards, that he said another thing which has become public. Mr. Cowley told me he overheard it himself, to his great surprise and admiration. The King, vexed with a report that was just brought him of some cunning projects that had failed, was saying that he began to be of my Lord Bacon's opinion, namely, that open ways were the best in politics as well as journeys; and that for aught that he saw to the contrary, the simple men, as they called them, outwitted the double dealers. He had a mind to send for this person and that — meaning some friends of the late Bishop of Salisbury. "If you are for a simple man, sir," said Killigrew, "I know as shrewd a simpleton as any going, and one that would serve your Majesty's turn, better than any you have named, provided his occupation permitted him." "What may that be?" said the King. "Love-making, sir. He is a common love-maker, one Charles Stuart; but so witty, that whenever I see him, I long to make him King of England." "Pshaw!" said Charles, "I believe my people think I could spin the globe, if I would. And so, Mr. Cowley," said he, turning to the poet, "Sir William Temple is right, and the pome-water, for the true hortulan culture, as Mr. Evelyn has it, far surpasses the queening?" And hereupon his Majesty fell into a profound discourse on pippins.

These freedoms with the King were of old standing. There was a pleasant story of old Lord Cottington, which Hyde has been heard to relate, and the particulars of which were told me by a gentleman who was on the spot. The King, during his stay abroad, was going to make Mr. Wyndham Secretary of State, for no better reason than that his mother had been the

royal nurse. Cottington went to his Majesty, and begged his attention for a few moments to the merits of a worthy person of his acquaintance, for whom he had to solicit a favour.

“Let us have 'em, my Lord,” said the King, “and you know if I can oblige the man, I will. It is not money, I hope?”

“Nay, sir, had it been money,” answered the Lord Treasurer, “I should have begged a little for myself, to give some colour to my title, not to mention other reasons, which (God be praised) occasionally make everybody merry, but the baker. It is a much lighter matter on which I come to your Majesty, though of great importance to the poor man.”

“Who is he, Cottington?” returned the King; “a poor man not wanting money is a marvel I would fain be acquainted with. He is the only wild fowl of his species, and must partake of the nature of the bird of paradise, which, they say, lives upon air. Pray let him take me along with him.”

“Your Majesty,” resumed Cottington, “has hit wonderfully upon two points in the man’s fortune: one that concerns his present estate, and one that touches, it is to be hoped, upon his future. Sir, it is of Mr. Wood, an old falconer of his late Majesty, whose humble petition I have now to make known to you. He is a man extremely well versed in his art, having followed it from his youth upwards, to the great content of his late blessed Majesty, and, I believe I may add, of his Majesty’s successor.”

“Old Wood!” said the King; “I knew him well; and a good brisk old fellow he was. He would toss up a lure in a second, that one might have taken for a partridge oneself,”

“Well, sir, he can do as much now. I do not believe there is a man of his art breathing, who is better acquainted with the quality and mettle of his hawks, or more thoroughly experienced in all which they affect, or whatsoever suits their individual natures. He seems to know what sort of relish to give their food, by the very feel of their beaks under his finger.”

“He must be a proper falconer, indeed,” said the King.

“Truly is he, sir; and as his knowledge, so is his care. No man waters or bathes his hawks with more—I had almost

said, fatherly attention ; nor feeds, and looks to their cleaning, with a more happy result."

"Nay, he's something like the son of a hawk, if you come to that," said Charles. "His own beak, I suppose, by one of Sir Kenelm's sympathies, helps him to a knowledge and consideration of all other beaks."

"A shrewd quip, i'faith," said Cottington, laughing ; "and a pity it is that Sir Kenelm, with his stately discourses, heard it not. But, sir, to be serious with regard to this poor man : money is not his most pressing want ; if it were, he would forego the mention of it, like a good subject ; but he is mightily desirous of being serviceable to your Majesty in another way ; and therefore, in pursuance of what I have partly stated, I must add, that there is not a better caterer or coper of his birds, 'twixt this and the Land's End ; none that can cut a pounce with a more masterly nicety, or better provide against dulness and overgrowth in the beak. He is, furthermore, one of those who scorn to have too many fowls on hand, being as active as a youth in taking them in due season ; and for reclaiming and keeping his hawks on the fist, I never met, not only with his equal, but with any man who could stand by him."

"Well, my Lord," said the King, "I know your love of the sport, and fully credit your zeal in behalf of the fowler ; and now what is it I am to do ? for you know, these are not the times or places for adding to the list of our servants ; nine-tenths of whom, as it is, have nothing to do."

"'Tis true, sir," replied Cottington, "but if your Majesty will pardon my zeal in behalf of an old brother sportsman, to whom I have been indebted for many a day's jollity, I may take the freedom of reminding you, that there is a vacancy in the list of your Majesty's chaplains, the filling up of which with the name of my honest friend would make the poor man happy for life."

"The list of chaplains, my Lord Treasurer !" exclaimed the King : "surely—I would not stand upon niceties—but a chaplain and a falconer—"

"Forgive me, dear my liege," interrupted Cottington, with imperturbable gravity, "but knowing your liberality in such matters, and hearing from persons of good credit that your Majesty was about to confer the secretaryship of state on

worthy Mr. Wyndham, I thought I would make a bold face, and lose no time in endeavouring at some preferment for the no less deserving Mr. Wood. He will soon learn to read, if in truth he does not possess that accomplishment already, for I think I have seen him perusing an almanack: and in the progress of a few days, I doubt not he will be quite as able to further your Majesty's interests in the way I speak of, as Mr. Wyndham in his more exalted station."

The King, at this discourse, is said to have looked more disconcerted than he had shown himself on more trying occasions. He blushed, then laughed, then blushed again, and finally settled the pretensions of both Mr. Wyndham and Mr. Wood, by observing, "Odsfish! my Lord, you have dealt me a hard knock; but I suppose it was out of love, seeing that I was going to do a foolish thing; and so I'll not be so foolish as to persist in it. No more on't, an you love me. And now I mind me, Cottington, the Chancellor and I mean to come and dine with you to-morrow, in order to drink to all our reformations."

This was a hit at Cottington, for his reputation of being but a poor host, not very willing to bring out his wine; but as he was an attentive good servant, more willing to entertain his master than any one else, and, above all, was a man of great shrewdness and wit, and very apt to be in the right, all went merrily the next day; especially as the King had the pleasure of seeing both his Chancellor and his Treasurer, the two sages of his court, all but under the table.

To return to my narrative, Killigrew, though an honest fellow, may perhaps have spoken of some of these titled gentlemen with a degree of bitterness, in consequence of his having no title himself. He had followed the King in his fortunes, for better, for worse, and surely deserved it more than half the Knights whom his Majesty created; but I have observed more than once, that if people will gratify kings for nothing, they are in general very readily permitted to do so. Tom said nothing about it, and Tom he remained. I will not swear that the King did not wince a little sometimes; and that those who expect titles of any sort, had better deal in nothing but praises; that is to say, unless they are considerable enough to be of use in the way of money, or to commit high treason. Be this as it may, Tom did not make an end by

pelting his Majesty with libels, as some did. He had an excuse as well as a hit for him, to the last.

I was much comforted by what Killigrew said, touching the subject of achievements; but still I did not feel so confident as I had done; and it was with great relief that I heard of volunteers going to sea against the Dutch, and that I might be one of them. The king gave me his permission. Lord Arran spoke to the Duke himself about it, and I was enrolled immediately among his Highness's volunteers, so that I might be considered, for the time, as belonging to his court. I thought that Buckingham did not like it. His Grace indulged in his usual raillery on the subject. Sir George Hewit happened to be with him.

"Why, what has made thee in such a hurry; Ralph, to get shot?" said the Duke. "Has thy mistress put a sugar-plum in somebody else's mouth? or hast thou discovered that she grows fat in thine absence?"

I said that I wished to be stirring, and get a name, like other young men.

"What, like Scipio Africanus?" returned Buckingham. "Or like a puppy, that scampers about," quoth Sir George, "and is called Frisk! Comprehend me, Ralph," continued the Baronet; "I mean not to speak offensively; but to show thee the superfluousness of thy excessive love of action."

The Duke's reference to the noble Roman had a double meaning: for Lady Castlemain had a black footboy, whom they called Scipio Africanus, famous for hopping with a salver hither and thither, as if he was frightened.

I shall set myself more on a level with these gentry, thought I, by a lift in my fortunes; and then will I speak like one of the ancient stock of the Eshers. For the present, I was content to parry their facetiousness, with a philosophy that could have cut their throats.

"Nay," said the Duke, "far be it from me to obstruct thy cognomen. The Eshers are to vacate, eh? and thou rejectest the other ancients. Well; as thou art too modest to share with the African, thou shalt be called Ranulphus Batavinus."

"Keep the Dutch off," said Sir George, "and no appellation will be too great for daring to defile thy fingers with the tarpaulins. There have been herrings in the atmosphere during the whole of this east wind: so thou hast no time to lose."



“All the perfumes of Amboyna,” said the Duke, getting into his favourite parodies, “will not sweeten them, by this hand! No, they the rather—what is it, Esher?—will

‘The multitudinous seas Davanianise,  
Making the salt, one herring-pond.’”

“’Tis marvellous to me,” quoth Sir George, “how they can have the face to fight with gentlemen. ’Tis like a parcel of cheesemongers rampant! an insurrection of chandlers’ shops! I hope you go to war, with your Hungary water in your hand.”

“I am afraid,” said I, “Opdam is hardly devil enough to tack about for a perfume, even if it were *eau-d’ange*. Van Tromp, my Lord, did not care for a smelling-bottle, when he cracked Blake’s cabin-windows.”

“Ah, but they had no perfumes in Cromwell’s time,” returned Hewit; “the experiment has never been tried. I remember when I was a boy, I used to hear a man in a little black cap read out of a great book; and then I heard something about an angel, who put a devil to flight with an odour.”

“Yes, but ’twas a fish odour,” said the Duke; “the very thing with which these heavy cherubim are coming against us.”

“So it was,” replied Sir George, “I have the cursedest memory:—well,” continued the Baronet (who like a proper sovereign coxcomb, affected a bantering superiority to the follies he cultivated), “if I had the settling of this affair, most certainly I should not think of troubling myself with the Dutch watermen. I should send the constable, water-bailiff, or what d’ye call him, to tell ’em to go.”

Hereupon Sir George showed his white teeth; and all of us being set on our ease by the humanity of a laugh, I took the opportunity of merging my own soreness in some new satires that had lately appeared against these offensive people the Dutch. I asked his Grace if he had seen the two new pieces by Mr. Marvell and Mr. Butler.

“No,” said he; “what are they, Ralph? where are they?”—all impatience at a new scent.

I produced them. Buckingham sat down on the lower bench, (it was in the court bowling-green,) and read them aloud, interrupting himself with fits of laughter. Sir George manifested

a more tranquil ecstasy. Butler's was a description of Holland, representing the territory of their high Mightinesses, as

"A country that draws fifty foot of water,  
In which men live as in the hold of nature;  
A land that rides at anchor, and is moored;  
In which they do not live, but go aboard;  
Feeding, like cannibals, on other fishes,  
And serve their cousin-germans up in dishes,"

"Rare! rare!" cried the Duke, "I should like to have a bout at it with him. The Dutch are a fine subject. They cut up like whales:

'Feeding, like cannibals, on other fishes,  
And serve their cousin-germans up——'

and then he could not proceed for laughing. "I think I see the Dutchman opposite a John Dory, rolling about, and staring with his friend the Porpus!"

"Damme!" said Hewit (for he affected much that new mincing way of swearing) "'tis very convulsive. Mr. Butler is droll to the last degree, when he is not stupid: I mean, when you can get him to speak: which is not to be done without a deal of sherry."

"That is a part of the judgment, George, for which he is so famous," said the Duke.

"I mean it so. 'Tis pity his judgment is not equally nice in his apparel. The dog has the most insipid coat and breeches. The first time I was introduced to him, I thought they had brought me before a clerk of the peace."

"Listen, listen," cried Buckingham; "here is Andrew, better still: nobody like my saint, for full measure, pressed down, and running over:—

'Holland, that scarce deserves the name of land,  
As but the off-scouring of the British sand,  
And so much earth as was contributed  
By English pilots, when they heave the lead,  
Or what by th' ocean's slow alluvion fell,  
Of shipwreck'd cockle, and the muscle-shell,  
This ort and muddy refuse of the sea  
Fell to the Dutch by just propriety.

'Glad then, as miners who have found the ore,  
They, with mad labour, fish'd the land to shore;  
And div'd as desperately for every piece  
Of earth, as though it had been of ambergreece;  
Collecting anxiously small loads of clay,  
Less than what building swallows bear away,  
Or than those pills which sordid beetles roll,  
Transfusing into them their dunghill soul.

'How did they rivet with gigantic piles  
Thorough the centre their new-catched miles,  
And to the stake a struggling country bound,  
Where barking waves still bait the forced ground!

Building their watery Babel far more high  
 To reach the sea, than those to scale the sky.  
 ' Yet still his claim the injured ocean laid  
 And oft at leap-frog o'er their steeples play'd ;  
 As if on purpose it on land had come  
 To show them what's their *mare liberum*.  
 A daily deluge over them does boil ;  
 The earth and water play at level-coyl.  
 The fish oft-times the burgher dispossess'd,  
 And sat, not as a meat, but as a guest ;  
 And oft the Tritons, and the sea-nymphs, saw  
 Whole shoals of Dutch serv'd up for Cabillau ;  
 Or as they over the new level rang'd,  
 For pickled herring, pickled heeren chang'd.  
 Nature, it seemed, ashamed of her mistake,  
 Would throw their land away at duck and drake ;  
 Therefore necessity, that first made kings,  
 Something like government among them brings.  
 For, as with pigmies, who best kills the crane,  
 Among the hungry, he that treasures grain,  
 Among the blind the ooe-ey'd blinkard reigns,  
 So rules among the drowned, he that drains.  
 Not who first sees the rising sun commands ;  
 But who could first discern the rising lands.  
 Who best could know to pump an earth at leak,  
 Him they their lord, and country's father, speak.  
 To make a bank, was a great plot of state ;  
 Invent a shov'l, and be a magistrate.' "

In reading these lines the Duke exhibited a transport, inconceivable perhaps to any one not accustomed to similar exercises of the fancy. He rolled, he thumped his knee, he ran into high tenuities of voice, and sometimes could not get out the last three or four words of a couplet. "New caught miles," said he whining — "a struggling country," and then stopped in an ecstasy : —

"Invent a shovel, and be a magistrate."

"George!" cried he, giving Hewit a clap on the shoulder, — "write a line like that, and coats and breeches be d—d."

The excess of this transport enabled the beau to retain his self-possession. The louder the Duke grew, the more Hewit contrived to mingle his approbation of the verses with a laughing astonishment at the reader's extravagance.

"'Tis very suffocating," cried he ; — "I know not if a man has a right to threaten a Duke's life so far. And Mr. Esher here ; he is *particeps criminis*. You see, Mr. Esher, what you have done to the ducal œsophagus."

I said that I knew his Grace would go as great lengths as any man for a high and princely satisfaction ; which I took such raptures to be ; and that if the Duke died of wit, it would be in his own cause.

"Thanks, Esher," cried Buckingham : "'tis well said,

i'faith ;" and his Grace recovered his breath, and was now as much disposed to praise me, as he had been to rally. Such power has the least shadow of a pleasant speech, to do away an ill-feeling of the moment, in the complacency it produces, both in the giver and receiver.

But I had not lost all desire of vengeance nevertheless ; so, basely making common cause with the more powerful, I contrived, as I withdrew, to leave a savage sting in the delicate gloved hands of Sir George. He was launching out into a sudden panegyric on the French, as contrasted with the Dutch ; when pretending not to hear him, and to be on the wing towards my provider of naval stores, I drew from my pocket another satire by Mr. Butler, which had just escaped on the town ; observing, that it had hardly yet been shown, but to his most intimate friends. The Duke snatched it out of my hand, and fell to reading it aloud, while I was bowing off. It was entitled ' On our ridiculous Imitations of the French,' and, together with many others of Mr. Butler's pieces, has not yet been given to the world, to the great defrauding of his fame ; of which they are quite worthy.\* I have unfortunately lost both this and two other copies ; but I remember it began —

" Who would not rather get him gone  
Beyond the intolerablest zone,  
Or steer his passage through those seas  
That burn in flames, or those that freeze,  
Than see one nation go to school,  
And learn of another, like a fool ?  
To study all its tricks and fashions,  
With epidemic affectations,  
And dare to wear no mode or dress,  
But what they in their wisdom please ;  
As monkeys are, by being taught  
To put on gloves and stockings, eaught."

Then there were jests about coats and breeches, and

" — hats sometimes like pyramids,  
And sometimes flat like pipkins' lids ;  
With broad brims sometimes, like umbrellas,  
And sometimes narrow as Punchinello's."

Then came a shrewd touch, which Sir George must have felt to his fingers' ends ;

" And as some puppies have been known  
In time to put their tutors down,

\* Several of the pieces here alluded to, and this particular one among them, have since made their appearance under the title of " Genuine Remains of Samuel Butler." They are, as our author says, quite worthy of the fame of that great wit, and perhaps are calculated to give more pleasure to the general reader than Hudibras itself. — *Edit.*

So ours are often found t' have got  
 More tricks than ever they were taught;  
 With sly intrigues and artifices,  
 Usurp their ailments and their vices;  
 With garnitures upon their shoes!  
 Make good their claim to gouty toes:  
 And lest they should seem destitute  
 Of any mangle that's in repute,  
 God be behindhand with the mode,  
 Will swear they're 'all but dead, by God;  
 By sudden starts, and shrugs, and groans.  
 Pretend to shootings in the bones,  
 To cuts and torments: and lay trains  
 To prove a weakness in the reins."

Then followed some admirable banter on the other shrugs and grimaces of these gentlemen; on their "wearing their very limbs" after a fashion; assuming a right to decry every thing, as if knowledge consisted, not in knowing, but in despising; and finally, in affecting to lard their English with French, a charge to which Hewit was specially obnoxious. I could not help turning round to look, as I walked away; and I caught the Duke's eye, who shook his fist at me, as much as to say, "You rascal!" — continuing to read, nevertheless. Sir George had shifted his posture, so that his back was towards me; but I saw him stooping close down to Buckingham, as if pretending an anxiety to hear; and in his right hand he twirled a glove.

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## CHAPTER XI.

SIR GEORGE'S objections to the Dutch might not be very statesman-like, and yet I could never understand that our reasons for going to war with them were much better founded. In fact, for all that I observed afterwards, (for I thought nothing about it at the time) I believe that our peruked and polished Court hated them as much for being money-getters and "vulgar merchants," as any thing else. Vulgar merchants was a phrase made use of by Landerdale. Without a king, and without ladies of the bed-chamber, the Dutch pretended, nevertheless, to be somebody: they had rivalled us at sea; and Charles had no very agreeable recollections of the time he passed in their neighbourhood. Clarendon disliked them for having no literature and bishops; and Buckingham for their beer and fat women. We felt with regard to them, much as

a gentleman of an old family would feel towards a citizen who should set up a mansion in his neighbourhood, and affect a voice in the county. They had been servants to Spain; but though we hated the Spaniard, yet the latter was a man of birth; and his factor, notwithstanding his right to leave him, had no right to strut about in slops, with a little hat and tobacco-pipe, on the same *pavé*. The Most Christian King, who lived on the other side of the intruder, had the same feeling towards him, though, like ourselves, he was fain to league with him now and then, to hinder a predominance in the parish, as he was doing at this present time. Etheridge, afterwards Sir George, who was hardly less a fop than his namesake, called the Dutch (by a new figure of speech, and punning on their canals) the *Canaille par impudence*. "The vulgar dogs!" said he, "they have not a friend in the world, but the sugar-bakers."

Our fleet thought to get to sea in March, but we were not out till the beginning of May. Having the good fortune to be in the Duke's own ship, I was in excellent company: and, being young and in good health and condition, the newness of every thing was delightful, till we had foul weather. The sea air made us as hungry as hunters; we already began to get brown and ruddy, which made us anticipate the admiration of the ladies, forgetting that we might have no heads to be admired with; and, with the exception of female company, all our old habits were joined with our new, which made a delicious mixture:—the tender played their guitars; and the rough, as if the fighting they were going to have was not mustard enough to their beef, had a main of cocks; having brought some poor devils on board for that purpose. It was piteous to see the gallant birds drenched with salt water after being torn with their spurs: and but poor relief to be told that it was "good for them." I thought some of the old seamen did not like it. These men were the best specimens I had seen of the old republicans;—stout-hearted, steady fellows, as immovable-looking as the bulks they leaned on, and as quiet, till circumstances roused them. Some of them looked even meek, and had meek voices; and the tranquillity and neatness of their operations, contrasted with the prodigiousness of their fists, formed a spectacle which I never beheld without a kind of awe. Their "Ay, ay, sir," when the master bade them do any thing, seemed as if it was

not to be gainsaid, had he bade them go through a rock. While we read the last new comedy they read the Bible. Going one night to take a message to the watch, I found a party of them sitting at the stern, talking of old times. One of them in a low, but firm voice, gave out the Psalm—

“ This spacious earth is all the Lord's,”

which they sang in a like manner, “ not to disturb the gentle-folks.” I thought of my father, and was glad to find myself joined in the same cause with his old comrades. Otherwise there was something in all this, that would have disturbed me. I had just come out of the Duke's cabin, where his Highness, in what I must call his very unpleasant cold manner, had been telling a gay story to Lord Falmouth ; and coming thus suddenly upon a party so different, the other for the first time seemed a kind of impertinence. It was a fine night, after some hard weather, but without a moon ; and as the stars shone innumerable over head, and the dark bodies of the ships were seen hulling around us, the psalm had a communion with the greatness of the scene, such as made it a pain to me to go down again. I thought of poor Mr. Saunders and my mother, and found I knew not what novel sort of strength in a feeling of weakness.

These impressions, of which my early education had left me not incapable, I would not have mentioned for a good deal to most of my friends on board. Their different breeding would not have known what to make of them : nor indeed did my new breeding allow them to remain long upon myself ; but they affected me so much at the time, that I imparted the secret to one person, whom I had become intimate with on board, and who speedily became the friend of my heart.

This was the stranger I overheard talking to Lord Arran, the night of the exhibition of little Nelly. He was called Sir Philip Herne. He was at that time a pale-looking young man, seemingly not above five-and-twenty, though he was nearer thirty. He was perfectly well made and genteel, with a profusion of brown locks like silk, and eyes as blue as the heavens. His paleness was not healthy. He suffered under severe head-aches, which gave him a habit of knitting his brow ; and the sourness of this look over his eyes, contrasted with the sweetness of the lower part of his face, produced a remarkable

expression, which upon the whole was very becoming. His forehead was the largest I had ever seen, with the exception of Captain Sandford's. They were about of a size; a great deal too large, I thought for handsomeness (my own, between ourselves, being the true thing in that respect); but the brow of Sir Philip was well adorned with his locks: Sandford's was bare, and had a look of effrontery. Besides, the more I thought of the two men, the less this piece of common property rounded to the Captain's advantage; it brought the rest of their faces into comparison; and together with the suspicions I began to entertain of Buckingham's acquaintance, made me call to mind differences I had but lightly noted before. Sandford it is true, might be called handsome. He had regular, well-proportioned features, and a colour in his cheeks, and his insinuating manners completed the favourable impression made by his appearance, as long as you did not see him in repose. There was then something equivocal in his aspect; something which the occasional evidences that escaped him of a temperament of suppressed violence, made you call to mind afterwards, rather than notice at the time; though it is true I might never have thought of it, but for the Duke and Mr. Braythwaite. There was a trouble in his brow, as well as in Sir Philip's; but I now thought of a very different character; and in the rest of his face there was a kind of bloated prominence, or rather burliness, (for it did not look disease) which combined, in a singular degree, laxity with determination. His features seemed to hang on the look-out for some daring enterprise. Sir Philip's countenance was as different in this respect, as refinement from grossness. His features were not so regular as Sandford's, but none of them were coarse: and his look was that of thoughtfulness and endurance, prepared for action, rather than given to it.

This is an after criticism, the result of long acquaintance; and there may be nothing in it; though it singularly corresponded with events. Perhaps, even in this sentence, I am confounding prophecy with retrospection. But I have known more than one ingenious person (Sir Philip was one of them), who suspected that there was much in the faces of men, beyond what the world supposed. There is a tendency among all classes to draw judgments of character from the countenance; the passions speak loudly in it; and probably in this as in every



other case, if we know a little, we may be pretty certain that there is a great deal more to be learnt.

I had been introduced the day before to Sir Philip Herne by my namesake Ralph Montagu (afterwards so great a man, and ambassador.) "Sir Philip," said he, "here is a gentleman desirous of the honour of your acquaintance upon a ground very remarkable, considering he is one of the court. He has fallen in love with your regard for the truth." I explained; and Sir Philip, smiling on the sudden, and looking as open and gay as he had before been thoughtful, accepted my hand with an air as if I had conferred an obligation upon him. This extreme change of countenance was peculiar to him. It would not so well have become a less sincere man, nor indeed is usually an indication of sincerity. But the alteration, in his case, was owing to the very truth of his feelings. He was always the same in temper, but his thoughts were apt to be as remote and grave as his inclinations were social; so that when he suddenly smiled and opened in this manner, it was from delight on finding his thoughts called pleasantly home.

Persons of an ingenuous temper, when they give an explanation, are apt to wander into others. At the end of our first evening's acquaintance, I found, not without some misgiving, that I had related my whole history, short of the secrets I was bound to keep, and one or two others which I instinctively kept back. Sir Philip however discerned that I had been retentive, as well as communicative. He asked me bluntly, if I did not pique myself on keeping a secret. I said yes; and he turned upon me (it was in walking the deck) with one of his delightful smiles, observing, "I am some years older than you, and have seen more trouble. Will you allow me to say, that I have been long looking for a disposition like your's, and that your friendship, if I may reckon upon deserving it, will be a greater good to me than I can express?"

I cannot say how pleased I was at his thus more than meeting me half way. "I have a story," continued Sir Philip, "to relate in turn; but I will not do it this moment, because it is a melancholy one, such as does not suit preparations for battle; and I am willing to avoid telling it by word of mouth. Should a bullet take it into its head to be uncivil (for there is no settling the mathematics of those gentry, or saying—Let  $AB$  be your right line) you will find, in a red trunk with my

name on it, a packet sealed and tied up, and directed to yourself. Nay, you may well be surprised; but I speak, not of what is, but what is to be, for I shall write the direction forthwith, and fill up some vacancies. I was going to take the freedom of addressing it to another person, who has done me the honour of encouraging confidences on my part; but perhaps he might condescend to be vexed at missing a paper which he would hope to see in company with it; and I should also have to make a more peremptory injunction on a certain point, than his dignity would perhaps think quite proper, even with a dead man's apologies."\*

I had observed that my friend (for so I may already venture to call him) scarcely ever dilated on any topic, even when it was a sorrowful one, without showing a vein of pleasantry which completely put me out in my speculations respecting grave people. Certainly Mr. Saunders had exhibited no such vein; my mother had nothing of it. Captain Sandford gave way to it once and away, in a phrase or so, but not comfortably; and Mr. Braythwaite's pleasantry was anything but pleasant. I had taken the inmates of the court, and such as resembled them, for the only persons to whom a strain of lively remark was natural. Gravity of reflection appeared to be something incompatible with levity of speech. A different story had been told me of Bishop Earle; but him I had never the pleasure of hearing in private; and the wit of South, Lord Clarendon's chaplain, whom I had once been taken to hear, I could not regard as belonging to a serious character. I could never take even Morley for a proper bishop. Doubtless my first impressions had influenced me in this matter. South turned out serious enough; that is to say, he was a morose, violent, discontented man of no very understood principles; and he has profited so little from age, that having become, not long ago, one of the royal chaplains, he did not scruple to curry favour in the coarsest manner with Charles, by speaking scurrilously before him of the republican master he had flattered. The King said he should be a bishop for it; but his Majesty's failures in his word are not seldom on the right side.

But I digress. Suffice it to say, that I have since learnt

\* There is a mystery here, which is not explained. I suspect it alludes to an attempt of the Duke of York to convert him. But the passage is still perplexing. — *Edit.*

better ; though in consequence of my intimacy with that mixed temperament of my friend's in which sociality of disposition gave a playful turn of discourse to his very melancholy, I afterwards ran the hazard of setting down every one of a lively conversation for being melancholy at heart.

To proceed with my narrative. "You will find," continued Sir Philip, "two packets within the envelope ; one addressed to a person into whose hands you will be kind enough to deliver it yourself, in case I — (here his voice faltered a little) — you understand me ; — the other is for the bearer of the packet, whoever he should turn out to be, which is now the friend beside me ; and this will make you acquainted with my story. I have only to add, that if I am as alive and in good case, as there is no reason why I should not be, as well as others, you shall still read the manuscript addressed to you, because it will save me some painful repetitions ; and in either case, whether I am my own conveyor of letters or not, you must promise me not to say a word of their contents, as long as the other person I speak of (his accents here were still more disturbed) — is an inhabitant of this strange beautiful world ; so beautiful and so discordant."

I expressed my sense, in due terms, of the confidence Sir Philip reposed in me ; and seeing that he had spoken thus sorrowfully, in spite of himself, I took the liberty of giving a turn, without violence, to the discourse. The world, I said, was discordant enough, in all conscience, as we were all of us about to show ; "but are we quite sure, Sir Philip, that you and I have a right to complain, just now, of its want of harmony ? Do we not resemble musicians, who instead of bearing their parts properly, and sustaining the previous counterpoint, should go counter with a vengeance, and commence cracking their violins on each other's heads ?"

"'Tis something like it," answered Sir Philip ; "and yet there is a conscience even in the breaking of heads. If violins must in the nature of things be cracked, it is as well that the destruction should be performed by those who can crack them, as Hewit would say, in the genteelest manner. You know they say that a violin, like a wit, is sometimes the better for being cracked ; so we must hope that humanity itself sometimes acquires a better tone from the like accidents. The process is a little hazardous ; nor, as Falstaff says, can he reap much

benefit from it, ' who died a Wednesday.' But at all events, we can break heads in the most reconciling manner, and be vastly civil and murderous, like the knights of old."

I mentioned the impression made upon me by the old seamen, and by the hymn they had sung. " They are fine fellows," said Herne, " and worthy of our respect ; and yet these same men would probably be guilty of a sort and degree of violence, of which you have no conception. You have seen the chaplain we have on board. He is a very civil and a very religious man, and yet he hardly dares to get up before those quiet persons on a Sunday morning, because he is suspected to be half a papist. Between you and me (and I have the Duke's warrant for mentioning it to whom I please in case of accidents, though I can hardly think it discreet in his Highness to have brought the man hither) there is another person more than suspected of being a papist, whom you will see on all occasions standing at a few paces distance from the Duke. He is very dark, and speaks broken English ; and a very worthy man he is. But he is a popish priest in disguise. He became passionately attached to the Duke's service, when he was abroad ; for which reason his Highness says he has not the heart to keep him away ; so a few of us, who have warrants to commission others, have a charge to keep an eye on him, in case the seamen come to the knowledge of the secret, and appear inclined to do him a mischief. I tell you this, because I am sure you would willingly join in saving the poor man under such circumstances, especially as the Duke has very properly given orders, that he is only to be rescued and defended, and on no account is a hair of the seamens' heads to be touched. Whether such nicety could be observed by every body in case of a scuffle, is to be doubted ; but you and I would surely be among the punctilious ; and in fact, I have told the secret but to one other individual. I am to be stationed near his Highness's person, and I will contrive that you shall be so too."

The discourse then fell upon war and fighting, upon which Sir Philip made remarks of a nature I had never heard before. The declamations of Mr. Saunders I used to regard as something official and gratuitous ; he did not, or would not, see any fair play ; all was on the side of meekness and submission, except where certain opinions were concerned, which put the doctrine to the test. He was for fighting and not fighting : in

short, I could not tell what to make of him. Unfortunately he was of a weakly habit, and saw discord and bad passions where a sanguine youth like myself could discern nothing but sport or a scuffle; so that his peace-makings I set down to the account of his ill health, while his departures from them in favour of the godly seemed convincing proofs what a desperate fellow he would have been, if he had had but a good digestion.

Now these reflections were familiar to the mind of Sir Philip; I should rather say that it was he who first made me conscious of them myself. He did justice to both sides of the question; and he talked so well upon it, that seeing me look graver than usual, and retaining my gravity for upwards of a dozen remarks, he broke off, and said with vivacity, "Pretty fellows we, to sit here like a couple of gownsmen, arguing upon questions which a little action reduces to nothing! Suppose we try to square the circle of the first bullet!" He then talked of music, of painting, of the last new comedy, and told me a hundred amusing anecdotes of the state of things at court during his Majesty's exile, having been there on his tour. It was of him I learnt the story of Lord Cottington.

The weather, which had threatened us once or twice, was now growing boisterous. Not meeting with the Dutch, we had gone to look for them on their own coast; where we beheld them accordingly, at anchor in the Texel; but the same wind that opposed their coming out, treated us so roughly, that after some of our masts had gone by the board, we were fain to go back to Gunfleet, and refit. Never heard I in my life such an infernal noise as our great gawky ship made, tumbling about like a whale full of machinery. The bulks, the barrels, the chains, the rolling guns, the creaking of the timbers, the buffeting of waves, the shrieking, rattling, and thundering of winds, shrouds, and sails; the grunting of swine, the higher remonstrances of the poultry, the banging of the ship, fore, aft, and sideways; the digs it received, now in the sides, and now on the decks; its tossing and plunging, like a wild camel; and in short, all the uproar made by it and against it, as if the sea laboured with it like a vexation, and both struggled in the abhorrence, composed altogether such a dance with music to it, as deafened us the minor performers, and forced us to sprawl about, as we could, in desperate acquiescence. However, we were very merry. Sir Philip had a jest for every discomfort.

Ralph Montagu drew comparisons between a ship in a tempest and the luxuries of Whitehall; and Horton took out a license to abuse the Duke for seducing us all to sea, on purpose to have gentlemen to *slide* by him in his adversity.

It was not pleasant somehow (I own it) to go out to fight, and be baulked of one's first heat; neither did this new taste of the salt water make it pleasanter. Volunteers, however resolute, are not old seamen. But a rest of two or three days at Gunfleet, and a burst of fine weather, restored our young blood to its thoughtlessness. The pigs had shown themselves of a more impatient turn. Some of them, who had got loose, jumped overboard, when at a good distance from shore, smitten with an *amor patriæ* above all our vaingloriousness. The boatswain screamed as he saw them going. It was a bad omen. "They will cut their throats," said he, "before their time, the wilful fools! I'd ha' given ten pieces it had not chanced." Horton asked him the reason. The man looked a little ashamed, superstitions of this kind being contrary to the new light he had received; but habit was too much for him. However, he was an Independent, and had a right to his opinion. "The ways of heaven," he said, "were so wonderful, and it had so often made use of the meanest of its creatures for a sign, and a symbol, and a testimony, that he had not altogether made up his mind to reject the least evidence of its doings in the great waters; where, mayhap, greater lights than himself had had occasion to see little." The greater lights on the other side had no reason to laugh at this reasoning. Our chaplain, who smiled at the pigs, had been kept awake the night previous by a death-watch; and the Duke himself, while leaning over the gunwale with Lord Falmouth, and listening to a licentious story, was seriously disturbed at his Lordship's proceeding to whistle a gavot. Falmouth stopped suddenly, and with admirable address excused himself for having so far forgotten his *manners*. The Duke, smiling, pressed the good-natured captain of his guards on the shoulder. It was this obliging disposition of Lord Falmouth, and his happiness at giving a pleasant and accommodating turn to every thing, which, in unison with his great courage, made him a favourite with all the world.

At Gunfleet we had visitors from the other ships. Among the rest Lord Buckhurst came to see us, and who should follow

but Sir George Hewit! We expressed our surprise at his thinking it worth his while to forego the society of the ladies, for so strange a spectacle as the Dutchmen.

“’Twas the strangeness of it,” said he, “that drew me. I came to see whether it be possible for a Dutchman to think of facing the Duke’s court. Nothing but ocular demonstration would satisfy me.”

I now found true what I had not believed possible; to wit, that Buckingham had come to join the fleet, and gone back again, not having been put into a position, he said, worthy of his rank. We made no comments on this before Sir George, nor did he encourage us.

“And with whom do you sail, Sir George?”

“With Mons Acutus; with Ned of the Peak, as Buckingham calls him; I beg pardon, I mean with my gallant commander, my Lord Sandwich, Admiral of the Blue. He is the man for the Dutch; do you know I left him playing the theorbo?”

“The guitar, somebody told us.”

“Yes,” said Buckhurst, “he has a guitar for soft evenings; but he prefers the theorbo of a morning. We left him just now, in the fortieth year of his age, smiling East by North at the enemy, and singing a song called ‘Beauty retire.’”

This produced a hearty laugh at his lordship’s expense, and a volley of other jokes; the commanders of ships in those days not being famous for speaking the best of one another.

“Oh, but you mustn’t underrate my little Montagu,” interrupted Sir George, who felt the laugh going too far, and who called everybody ‘little,’ in his endearments, though he might have been seven feet high. “His Highness himself has shown his princely countenance to the guitar, and has won victories with it before now, over persons of an extremely Dutch turn of mind, or their spouses are belied.”

The Duke of York laughed, and the scale was turned in the Earl’s favour. Sir George, however, could not resist a joke, even at the hazard of hurting his fopperies. He was really a pleasant good-natured man, with a strong sense of humour; and the present evidences of his courage gave a new air to his plumes.

“His Lordship,” said he, “means to sing on deck; and the

Dutch, out of mere astonishment at an elegance, are to retire. *Beauty* is to retire."

"He is the naval Tyrtæus," said Buckhurst; "it was, questionless, out of pure astonishment, that the Spartans of old were moved by the lute-playing schoolmaster from Athens. It must have been a confounding spectacle to see him riding down their ranks, wielding that new weapon. I vote that we all hold back, while his Lordship goes the round of the enemy's fleet, and tinkles them into humanity."

"Arion, Arion's the man," cried Hewit; "the Admiral, in case of the worst, will save himself, if he saves nobody else. He will ride to shore in triumph; and a Dutchman will be his dolphin."

We took a walk on shore to stretch our legs, or rather to steady them, and extend their line of action, the feeling of *terra firma* being pleasanter than any rest on board, even after so short a voyage. Some poor devils of seamen tried hard to go with us, especially one who had been lately pressed, but they were not to be trusted. The boatswain's mate, however, went; charged to secure some pigs, to supply the loss of those which had jumped overboard. We saw him in Harwich, trying all the cottages in the suburbs. The boatswain had agreed to go shares towards the purchase, but he was equally decisive as to the impossibility of going any further than the sum mentioned, and the absolute necessity of getting the pigs; so that the man had a hard time of it. After all, he could not procure the whole number; which had a visible effect upon his officer's countenance. Doubtless he drew the most ominous presages.

We turned into an alehouse, to divert ourselves with the humours we should find there; but the room was nearly empty. A press-gang had swept the neighbourhood, to make up the complement of some of our vessels. The landlady was sulky, because her bills had not been paid; and, as the undress we were in hindered her from knowing what great folks had come to visit her, she seemed inclined to do nothing for us. Buckhurst gave her a crown, upon which she would have done anything; and a daughter made her appearance to wait on our honours.

We were paying the young lady some compliments on her beauty, to enhance the value of which she stood biting her



lips, and mustering up all the seriousness of her habits of life, when a circumstance took place, which made me glad that I had told so much of my history to Sir Philip Herne.

5. On our first speaking to the landlady at the bar, I thought I saw a face inside the little room that was familiar to me. We had not been ten minutes in the house, talking of the girl who had just left us to bring some punch, and admiring the classical inscriptions on the wall and ceiling, when we heard a scuffle in the next room, and a little deformed fellow, known about the place for his loyalty and his drinking (the Duke having once chucked him a Jacobus) came in, holding another man by the skirts, whom he accused of "high treason!" The solemnity of the charge, delivered with a great deal of puffing and blowing, and by a huge-headed dwarf, half intoxicated, produced as much laughter as surprise. The traitor spoke in a mixed tone of ridicule and indignation. He tried hard to pluck his skirts out of the accuser's grasp: we bade him quit his hold, which he did, hearing, as he said, we were "gentlemen volunteers to the Glorious Duke;" and Buckhurst, declaring himself a lord, and thereby constituting himself something that represented the whole body of government, had the business in his hands to settle as he pleased. The mystery was soon explained.

.. It is too well known, that our seamen, always more famous for being a bold than a contented race (as indeed is but natural to men made such rough use of at one time, and forgotten at another) had particular reasons throughout the whole of the reign of merry King Charles for being braver and more grumbling than ever. Their bravery (which we received in capital condition from the republicans) was exercised by the Dutch; and their dissatisfaction, I must say, was most unremittingly kept alive by the perpetual want of money in our coffers. The irregular payment of a salary such as mine was nothing, at least I thought so at the time. I drew on my next year's income, and was amply reimbursed by one of his Majesty's gracious notices. But these would not keep the sailors in bread and clothes. His Majesty, who had a turn for naval affairs, would show himself now at Greenwich, and now at the Nore; and the sailors, delighted to see him among them, endeavoured to draw favourable omens for next quarter-day. The omens came to nothing, and the fleets threatened to do so

likewise Nobody knew how it was that we took so many prizes, and made visible so little money. Money was wanting for the men, men were wanting for the ships: it was a marvel how we had got to sea this time; and even as it was, the Duke had had to send back some of his vessels, and put the press-gangs in motion. All this and the gaities at court gave occasion to much talk and complaint; and every body threw the blame on everybody else. The most extraordinary thing was, that the least popular were those who least deserved to be otherwise; I mean on the score of supplies; for though Hyde was too anxious to enrich his title, there would have been plenty of money, had every one been as prudent as he; whereas the King, who showed himself ready to work like a sailor (had his call lain that way), and who certainly enjoyed himself like a sailor, was thought to have reason to complain as well as his subjects. There was no necessity why those who had the virtue, should have the money too; the monopoly was too great. It was at that time known to few, that his Majesty was becoming a pensioner of France; and the people, who saw him patting his dogs in the Park, or taking the rudder in hand when he went to Greenwich, beheld a man like one of themselves, and could not but believe that he would live and let live as much as any body, if circumstances did not go crossly. After all, there was something in this philosophy, as I shall again have occasion to notice.

Our friend the dwarf entered loudly into these matters, but all on the loyal side, accusing his antagonist of doing directly the reverse, and calumniating the whole government, in mind, body, and estate. "I don't believe," said he, "there's a single gentleman or great lord in his sacred Majesty's court, whom he has not tarred from head to foot; and he makes out his most sacred Majesty to be the blackest devil of them all."

"A mere jest, my Lord," said the culprit; "your Lordship knows that his Majesty is a black man: I was only speaking of his face."

"His face!" cried the other contemptuously, "you made him out to be as black as the black man himself, with a wanion to you; and by the same token, you called his ladies his witches—ah, you may look;—and by the same token, now I think on't, you said the Duke of Buckingham was the only good man in the court, and would scorn to eat or drink if he

was in the King's palace, till he saw every man jack in the navy paid. Now that's what I call 'high treason ;' and with high treason I charge you, before Mrs. Gosset and their noble lordships."

I had by this time recognised the defendant for a man who had been in Mr. Braythwaite's service ; and as I did not much relish the meeting, I hoped to avoid his eye by keeping in the background ; but in the laughter which was occasioned by the mention of the Duke of Buckingham's goodness, my head and shoulders were left exposed, and the enemy seized upon me. Mrs. Gosset, in her anxiety to save both the drinkers, and not without alarm at hearing these frightful words in her house about treason, especially before the noble volunteers, was setting forth with a most uneasy smile of indifference, and many smoothings of her apron, how certain it was that there could have been nothing but a little mistake between the gentlemen, when the offender cried out, " I can settle the thing at once, my Lord. God bepraised, I see noble Mr. Esher behind your lordship. He will speak for me. He has known my character these five years ; I have served my worthy master, you know, sir, Mr. Warmestre, for nearly that time, though sorry I am to say we have now parted ; and your honour will bear witness for me, that I am an honest man."

I had, in truth, nothing to say against the man ; except that I had not known him all that time, and that what little I did know I never suspected to be worth much ; but I had no charges to bring, and therefore I thought proper to say nothing, except that I remembered him. The other fellow was a drunken fool ; and so it was agreed by my lord the judge, that the case should be dismissed, on payment of a fine of ten shillings from each party for disturbing the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King by their mutual errors.

The accused party seemed not unwilling to get off so easily ; the other stared and began to cry out, when Buckhurst, as the representative of his Majesty, settled the matter by declaring he would pay the fine himself, in order to show how superior he was to such mistakes among the drunken part of his good people. " You," said he, " fellow," (to Braythwaite's servant) " clearly know nothing about us ; and you, Signor Grosse-tête," (to the dwarf, who was looking triumphant,) " know less ; so our hostess, the courteous Gossetia here, and her fair daugh-

ter, Eleonora, will see that ye be kept apart, and go about your respective ignorances." His lordship then handed over the fine to the ladies, who with many thanks curtsied us to the door, the criminal seizing the opportunity to be off at another portal.

We took our way back to the vessel, lamenting that the court was no richer, and that the people were not without reasons for complaint. I thought proper to explain what I knew of the man who had been talking so boldly; Sir Philip, with his usual goodnature, enlarging on one or two points, to let them see that I had told him as much before. I was glad afterwards that this had been done; for the suspicions I now began to entertain of Mr. Braythwaite, as well as Captain Sandford, in regard to some connection with the Duke of Buckingham, not quite justifiable, turned out to be a great deal too lenient. Hewit said, that he understood the want of money was all owing to Penn and "the fanatics;" which was very absurd. When we came on board, Penn asked what news; we told him there was a complaint of want of money for the navy; upon which he said it was all owing to Monk. The truth was, there was everywhere a want of public credit. But we thought no more of all this in a few minutes, than we used to do at Whitehall. That night, however, I dreamt that Braythwaite was hung, and that when on the scaffold he appealed to me for a character; upon which the mob all turned about and looked me in the face.

Our discourse was interrupted by the Duke, who, coming in smiling, with papers in his hand, told us we might expect the Duchess in an hour or two, her Royal Highness having taken occasion of his stoppage on the coast to come to see him.

Our delight may be imagined. We should see the ladies again, and there would be dancing and a feast. Durfort sang a chanson. Boyle skipped about like a young colt. Lord Falmouth looked as pleased as the Duke, but for a different reason. Hewit looked at his cuff, and blew a feather off it. Montagu was very merry. Herne congratulated everybody, but did not seem very happy. Buckhurst was suddenly pensive. It was understood that he envied Falmouth his wife. As to Muskerry, he hoped his wife would not take it in her head to come; and his hope was gratified.

"Dear creatures!" cried Hewit, "how tender they will be!

"We shall see in their eyes the rewards of our glory, before we have ventured for it. I begin to think it will be better to cheat 'em, like the little boys ; get the sugar first, and then reject the physic."

In an hour or two, a salute from shore announced the arrival of the Duchess. It was weather fit for the occasion ; warm as love, and blue as the ladies' eyes. The ships were manned ; the quarter-decks were hung with awnings of flags ; and a thundering hurra from the whole fleet announced that her Royal Highness was coming. The Duke would have gone to fetch her, but she surprised him with sending word that she was setting off from the commissioner's house, and he had only time to dispatch Harman with the boat.

Imagine a whole fleet of men-of-war, the shrouds filled, the sides hung with officers and men like bees ; streamers flying, cannons saluting, the sea half shaded with shipping, and half dancing with sunbeams ; and down below, in the midst of all the vessels, a boat coming, filled with gallant sailors and beautiful women.

The rogues of young officers glowed with pleasure, as they assisted the Duchess's court up the sides. In a few minutes all were on deck under the awning, laughing, shaking hands, adjusting their hair, and making a thousand pretty remarks on their boldness.

" 'Tis hardly fair," said Buckhurst ; " you will take the hearts out of us, and then what shall we do with the Dutchmen ? "

" Oh fie, my Lord," cried Lady Falmouth, " as if we had left you any hearts already."

" Why that's true," said the poor lover, and turned aside. Buckhurst had formerly written something a little severe on her ladyship (then Miss Bagot), and he now repented of it, which she guessed, though not to the extent of his penitence.

" If you behave yourselves very ill," continued the Countess, " and show symptoms of not being able to do without it, perhaps we may restore you a little bit or so, just enough to fight with."

" A very little bit will do," said Hewit ; " 'tis impossible the Dutchmen can stand it, having no women."

" Alas !" said Lady Falmouth, more gravely, " we are sad wild creatures ; but if my Lord and the rest of you had not

such great hearts, we should think it necessary to be merrier than we are, I assure you, in order to conceal our griefs; for we do not like it, this fighting; so you must all be very gallant and amusing; and the Duchess will not care how soon we dine, I think."

Dinner was served up with a speed, and what's more, with a splendour that surprised us. Cleopatra herself might have countenanced it. The Duke, it seems, had had notice a day or two before of his wife's intentions; though, after his fashion, he said nothing about them. Fish, flesh, and fowl, the finest apples and pears, strawberries, and May-cherries, and more fruit, natural as well as forced, than anybody could have expected another year (for the season was very hot), abounded; to say nothing of wines and jellies, and a thousand other things, which nobody cared about. Whatever old fellows say who have lost their memories, women and wine cannot co-exist together in any proportion. Wine may help an old gentleman to admire a woman; but women make the young ones forget their wine.

Our fair visitors complained that the dinner was too good. Plain beef and sailors' fare would have pleased them better. Some junk was accordingly set before them, to the delight of the men who saw it, who went and told the rest; and I believe the crabbedest saint on board felt propitious towards the fair mariners. The comfits we turned into shot. The ladies having exhibited this turn for the sea, we compelled them to drink a little more wine than usual, insisting upon turning them into regular sea-women, which notion gave rise to a million of metaphors, astonished at meeting together, such as syrens and Dutchmen; Venuses, trowsers, and cosmetics; shot-silk and midshipmen; *jardinées*, beef, orange-water, and boatswains; besides a marvellous set of people (as Falmouth styled them), called mermaids. But the glory of the entertainment consisted in those who gave rise to it. The occasion and the sea air heightened their complexions; and the colours of the awnings over head struck down a bloom over the whole scene, as rich as one of Rubens's pictures.

In the afternoon we had tea and chocolate, dances, music, and every pleasure that ship-board could devise. The Duke danced with every lady; but I believe he danced five times with Miss Churchill. Durfort led off Miss Blagg; and as

the latter did not speak French, he half killed us with laughing at the broken English he was compelled to gabble. He called her "one charming fish-woman;" and complained that her eyes, instead of being "towers on fire" (beacons) "to serve to navigator for self-know," would make them "expose themselves to the swallow-up."

Hewit was right about the favour we should all be in. In truth, it would have been wonderful if such kind hearts did not feel more than usual for a parcel of young fellows, about to risk their lives for their good opinion. I believe we all made greater way in it, in one day, than courtiers at home could in a year; and more than one attachment took place, which lasted, I believe, even longer.

Our pleasures lasted till we prepared to set sail again. The wind shifted, so as to be favourable to the Dutch for coming out, and the ladies took their departure. It was lucky the interval was so short between our enjoyment and our bustle. Falmouth himself seemed inclined to be melancholy, and Buckhurst was absolutely peevish; a very new thing with him. Just at this moment, fresh dispatches came to the Duke, and a new turn was given to our discourses by a paper among them, which contained an account of Lord Rochester's having been sent to the Tower.

"To the Tower!" cried everybody. Brunker told Hewit, just as he was leaving the vessel, and Hewit came back to astonish us.

"And what prank has Virgin-modesty begun with," cried Portland, "to get him into the Tower?"

"Virgin-modesty," answered Sir George, "ran away the other night with Virgin Mallett, but was brought back again; so they clapt him into the Tower, for not doing it better."

I had been greatly interested by this young nobleman, Lord Rochester; more so, at first, than by Lord Buckhurst. Perhaps one reason was, that inheriting a great devotion to the King, and finding I was about his Majesty's person, he did me the honour to seek my acquaintance. He was not yet of age, a stripling in person, handsome, full of vivacity, and yet possessed of a certain softness, and intelligence of address, that looked like the very genius of good breeding; for he had scarcely been anywhere but at college. The only drawback upon it was his tendency, to blush which got him, from the

King, the title of Virgin-modesty. He had a perpetual flow of spirits, as if his veins ran Burgundy. He was an excellent scholar, and talked of wit and poetry, as though he had been born a master of both (as, indeed, it turned out); nor could people help wondering, some time afterwards, that a young nobleman, capable of shining to such a degree at home, and becoming the mirror of a court (to say nothing of love and the ladies), should choose to hazard his person, twice over, in the rudest kind of warfare, as if nothing but an excess of triumph in everything could content him; for stripling as he was, he was in the second Dutch fight under Albemarle, and afterwards in the desperate affair at Berghen. 'Twas as if he had been a kind of god Mercury, and had a patent for escaping death and the bullets.

The truth was, that inheriting from his father a great deal of loyalty, and very little money, he thought of pushing himself forward in the naval service: and above all, he had really a great deal of ambition. The battle in which we ourselves were now about to be engaged, set a great many others upon a like road to admiration, and Rochester did not choose to be behindhand. The pleasantness of his intercourse was in a great measure owing to the happiness of his blood, and the perpetual pleasure he gave and received; but under the softness of it, there lurked a pride, and an impatience of contradiction, which manifested itself in those frequent blushes, which I have spoken of, and which, to casual notice, had something in them touching (as the king said) almost virgin-like. In short, his lordship wished to be the first in everything. Perhaps there was even a degree of constitutional weakness in the passion with which he pursued this object. In spite of a natural tendency the other way, which exhibited itself too plainly afterwards, he acquired a reputation for daring courage; yet being rallied one day on his fondness for the bullets, as if not without ostentation or fool-hardiness, his colour mantled as usual, and he proceeded, with an address and vivacity hardly to have been expected from that symptom, to give such an account of his reasons for not choosing to be more tender of himself, as doubled the admiration of the company, and made them laud him to the skies. These reasons were connected with the adventure of the running away; of which adventure, as I afterwards heard the particulars from



his lordship himself, I shall here give an account; first, because it took place at the epoch of my history, and secondly, because we did little but talk about it till we put to sea again. His great enemy in the business was Lord Sandwich. Sandwich wanted the lady for Hinchinbrook. The King, who was the more willing to get money for his old friend's son, since he had none to give him, had often spoken to Miss Mallet in his behalf; but owing to the distance at which he was kept, and the number of his rivals, Rochester had never been able to converse with her in private till the night he took her off. I suspect the King was in the secret, and that the young lord was sent to the Tower as a cloak. The lady had been supping at Whitehall, in the apartments of Miss Stewart, where it is pretty certain his Majesty could not have refrained from going, at least for some part of the evening. Rochester said nothing about the King; but it was clear from what he let fall, that he had reckoned on some particular influence with the lady, and that others had prepared her to listen to him. His lordship posted himself at Charing Cross, with horsemen and footmen. The lady was to go home that way by coach with her grandfather, my Lord Hawley. The servants having been tampered with, the coach arrives, but finds a difficulty in passing another coach. In fine, a wheel gives way. Rochester comes up with his attendants, proposing to assist. The horses are made uncomfortable; the lady is frightened, and gets out, the old lord, a jovial fellow, but gouty, constantly lifting up his voice to inform her that nothing is the matter. The old gentleman then swears at his toes, and is impeded with heaps of assistance. The young lord meanwhile makes up for lost time; the lady listens, trembles, cries out (her grandfather always bidding her be easy), and finally, betwixt crying and laughing, she finds herself in the coach hostile, which dashes away for Piccadilly.

“My poor grandfather,” cried Miss Mallett, weeping, “what an agony he will be in!”

“Yes, madam, of the gout; but consider how soon we shall revive him!”

“Not so soon, my lord, as you imagine. He will see nothing before him but black and dismal images.”

“The two negro boys, I own, madam” (the lady laughed); “but there is your picture by Lely, till you come back; and

when he sees you again, the sight will make him forgive me everything."

"And what am I to do, sir?"

His lordship here launched into seas of description and accounts of duties incumbent upon young ladies who are run away with, which fairly took away her power to reply; but she listened betwixt astonishment and good-nature, till they were far on the Uxbridge road. In a word, all would have gone well, if the old lord, on the strength of his being a horse-officer, and meeting with some of Sandwich's people, had not sent a whole body of cavaliers after them, who came up just as he had seen her housed at Uxbridge. They met him in the street, looking about for a parson. "Such are the calamities," said he, "which a man gets into by having a conscience!"

"And what will he do in the Tower?" said Portland.

"He will do as Monk did," answered Buckhurst: "he will philosophise, and make love to his washerwoman's daughter."

"And marry her when he comes out?"

"Nay, youth will do much; but I doubt whether Virgin-modesty will go so far as that. Rochester has young blood, but an old head; now I doubt whether his Grace of Albemarle has not always had old blood, and a pericranium juvenile."

"Your lordship, however," said Mr. Pearce, the surgeon, who liked a bit of gossip, "does not take his old blood to be cold blood; I mean, not fearful blood?"

"Oh, extremely fearful," replied Buckhurst,—"to the enemy. Cold blood! ay, about as cold as the steel that is coming to cut one's throat; as cool, Mr. Pearce, as the lancet with which you mean to twinge us. No, no, 'George,' as the Duchess calls him, is as brave as—what shall I say,—as the Duchess herself; and he is a bold man who should call her prowess in question. 'Tis more than the Duke dare venture upon. If his Grace fears anybody in the world, 'tis the dowdy his wife; and if there is anybody in the world he despises, 'tis the enemy."

"Pray, my lord," inquired Pearce, "is it true that her Grace is so totally unqualified by her manners for the high rank to which she has been raised?"

"Why, I'll tell you," said his lordship; "you have heard of Troutbeck whom he drinks with. Well, Troutbeck once prevailed on Sir Charles Sedley to go and taste some of the

Duke's claret, which he said had been sent him by the French King. Sedley, who repented next day his having agreed to go; contrived to get me invited too, in order to stand by him; so we went, and found a dirty table-cloth and four lumps of meat. Bess (for so Troutbeck calls her, though her name be Nan), was in high good humour, and would have crammed us with beef and claret together, her lord, she said (who by the way is a little stingy), being but a plain soldier, and not understanding the ways at court. His Grace was sitting all this while at the other end of the table, eating like a giant, and saying nothing. The Duchess undertook to apologise for his silence, touching her forehead significantly, and saying, 'Always in the wars; always in the wars.' 'That's the reason, I suppose,' said Troutbeck, in a low voice (for he was getting drunk), 'that you have furnished him so well with *chevaux-de-frise*.'

"'What's that you say, Mr. Troutbeck,' said the fair Nan, 'with your shiver and freeze? Pray, gentlemen' (her colour rising violently, for it seems she had just had a quarrel with Troutbeck, and she suspected he had been saying something against her), 'is it the custom at court for people to tell lies of one another to their faces; for I know they do it behind their backs?'

"'What's the matter there?' inquired his Grace. 'Oh, don't mind Troutbeck; you know he was not himself yesterday, when he offended you, and he was sorry for it.'

"'Sorry me no sorrys, my Lord Duke,' cried the Duchess; 'if Mr. Troutbeck tells lies of me, I'll tell truths of him.'

"'That's very savage,' said Troutbeck.

"'Sedley was impudent enough to assure her Grace, that Mr. Troutbeck had told no lies of her: upon which I ventured to tell a greater; namely, that no lies were told at court, as far as I knew.

"'What, not even behind one's back!' cried the Duchess.

"'No, madam; nor sideways, that I am aware of,' said Sir Charles.

"'See there now!' cried the Duchess; 'Ay, ay, the gentlemen are fairly caught; for my Lord Buckhurst is a courtier, and Sir Charles is a courtier, and if they hav'n't been telling me the greatest lies in the world, into the very eyes o' me...'

“ Here her Grace broke into a jovial laugh of triumph, in which we all joined, and harmony was restored.”

“ I am told,” said Pearce, “ her Grace prefers ale to wine ; and does not stick at an oath or so.”

“ 'Tis very true,” said Buckhurst ; “ but we must have a care, Mr. Pearce ; the limit is very nice between high breeding and low. I will not wager that there are many ladies at court who prefer ale to wine ; but I know some who will drink a good deal of both ; and if ‘ d—ns’ and ‘ by G—ds’ are not counted precisely the thing, ‘ i’faiths’ and ‘ deuces’ are privileged ; and there is a relish, with some of the high-flyers, for ‘ zounds.’ I have known very pretty lips cry ‘ zounds’ and ‘ the devil.’ The King likes it ; and you know their anxiety to please him.”

This part of his lordship’s information did not quite please me. I had had suspicions to the same effect respecting a lady to whom I thought myself under obligations ; and his lordship seemed to confirm them.

I was going to make some remark, when conversation was interrupted by final orders for sailing. The boatswain piped all hands, and every one hurried away.

Instead of ladies and dancing, it was now to be the Dutch and hard blows.

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## CHAPTER XII.

THE return of the east wind, which fetched out the Dutchmen, caused us some difficulty in going to meet them, nor did we discern them till two days afterwards, when, upon coming to anchor in Southwold Bay, we saw them about one o’clock in the afternoon, to the windward of us. Still, owing to various causes, and to the endeavours of both sides to get the wind of each other, the two fleets did not come together for nearly forty-eight hours. It was two o’clock in the morning, on the third of June, when the enemy were discovered lighting their matches ; and, after contriving to get the wind of them, the battle began about three. It took place off Lowestoff, and was the most memorable one of the kind that had yet been known.

We had about a hundred ships on our side, the Dutch a good many more. His Highness's vessel, the Royal Charles, by some mischance or another, was not so much engaged at first as many of the others. Gallant Kit Minns, who so shocked the Spaniard with his brief name, and delighted Nelly with his plebeian origin, got a-head of us, and was the first to engage; and afterwards the Earl of Sandwich succeeded in breaking the enemy into two divisions, which was the ultimate cause of our victory.

How all this took place I cannot pretend to say; nor, for aught I could learn, were more official persons much better agreed upon it. All I know is, that the weather was very fine and clear when we began, with not a cloud in the sky; that we made a number of tacks, signals, stoppages, and other phenomena, as unintelligible apparently to those who assisted in making them, as to us volunteers who looked on; that when I fancied we were close to the Dutchmen, I found, by a little turn of the vessel, that we were a good way off, as if, when about to strike one another in this martial dance, we suddenly thought fit to curtsey round about; and that, finally, on a sudden, drums beat, and trumpets sounded, and we found ourselves giving and receiving thundering broadsides from a Dutchman, as was the case with most of the other ships. There was a show of something like order and design at first, and the opponents approached each other in line; but it did not hold. We proceeded to charge through one another's ranks, as well as we could, which we did several times, exchanging salutes of the most violent description; and then, it should seem, we selected our individual foes, like the heroes in Virgil, and so stabbed away for it.

We had long prepared for battle. Everything was in order. The looks of the old seamen were quiet, as usual; those of the new ones more so, but a little pale. 'Twas like the hush before a tempest.

The first crash of the broadside was tremendous. There was a flash like lightning, and then the side of the vessel seemed giving way like a house. This was followed by groans, and the flying of splinters and pieces of iron. The men hurra'd.

I was stationed with Herne and some others on the quarter-deck, in the capacity of aid-de-camp to his Highness. It is

lucky he had no orders for me very speedily ; for the novelty, the noise, and the mystification, fairly took away my senses for a moment. I believe Montagu said something to me which I did not very well understand. I soon however recovered ; and felt nothing except a greater wish to be stirring. The seamen were at their guns ; the smoke was thickening ; and Herne was at my side, watching the Duke, who walked up and down before us, conversing with his Captain, Sir William Penn. The Duke then called back to him my Lords Falmouth and Muskerry, who had been conversing with him before, and resumed the discourse. They were joined by Dick Boyle, who had been laughing to us about a notion of Hewit's, that the Dutch made cannon-balls of their cheeses. A minute had scarcely elapsed, when a little powder-monkey, running past us (a boy with flaxen locks like a doll), cried out, in his penny-whistle voice, "D—nation!" his heels being tripped up at the same time by a splash of blood. This blood was poor Dick Boyle's. One of the cannon-balls he had been joking about, as if to make him eat his words, had swept, at a blow, himself, Lord Falmouth, and Lord Muskerry, knocking off the head of our gallant acquaintance, and dashing the blood and brains of Lord Falmouth over the Duke's person. Sir Thomas Clifford was talking with the disguised priest.

We all ran up to his Highness to see that he was safe.

"Some vinegar and a sponge ; you'll find it in the cabin, gentlemen," said Penn.

"Go, Esher," said Herne ; "for something has hurt my side."

Something had hurt both of us a little. I know not what it was, but it came from our poor friends. It was said afterwards to be Mr. Boyle's head. My wound was in the left arm. I did not feel it at the time ; but when I proceeded to use the muscle in getting the sponge and vinegar, it gave me an agony that turned me sick. I fetched what was wanted, and had the honour of assisting to purify the royal person. Some blood had spurted over the Duke's face. His Highness was very firm ; but talked more than usual. He made us note down the hour, and other circumstances attending the accident.

Warm work continued till about two in the afternoon, when the fire of the enemy beginning to slacken, and Opdam not

shouldering us, or making so much noise as he had done, the Duke gave the word to forbear firing a little, in order that the smoke being diminished, we might know what we were about.

Having thus cleared our eyesight, we found ourselves agreeably accompanied by the Royal Oak and some other vessels, which had dropped out of the battle to refit, an addition to our strength which so daunted the enemy, that they had begun, though in a very brave and reluctant manner, to give way. It was a pleasant sight to see friends so close to us instead of enemies ; for though I had been set in the place of an officer who was killed, and had now some active work to look to, and so was occupied, and full of any thoughts but uneasy ones, yet the sense of hazard doubles the affectionate as well as hostile emotions ; and our hands longed to grapple as much in a friendly way with our countrymen aboard the new comers, as they did to settle the pertinacity of the Dutchmen.

The Royal Charles now recommenced firing, and the battle was again raging in other quarters, when a noise, as if the ship had burst asunder, suddenly took place. This was succeeded by a darkness and a silence like midnight. I had no conception what it was at the moment. It seemed like an earthquake at sea ; or rather (Sir Philip said) as if heaven had thrust down its foot, clothed in night and darkness, to trample us for our folly. The ship trembled, and the sails plunged like a shaken carpet. A thick smoke then fell upon us.

It was Opdam, who had blown up. A dead quiet succeeded through the whole fleet for at least ten minutes, interrupted only by the working of the ship, and little cries of men. We seemed to hear even the silence for the space of a minute or so ; in the course of which, the man who had been working the gun next me, said in a low, but unfaltering voice, " He shall feed me in a green pasture, and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort." The voice then retreated inwardly, still muttering the psalm.

The tranquil beauty of the verse that was thus audible, accompanied by the mysterious horror of the circumstances around us, had an effect singularly corroborative of the awfulness of the moment. A little after the explosion, and when the mind had become, as it were, duly sensible of its extreme terribleness, I shook from head to foot like a frightened horse. Older men did not hesitate to avow themselves as much

affected. My friend Herne not only shook, but somebody whispering to him, to know what it was, he said his tongue cleaved to his mouth, and that he forgot the man's name who asked him.

The first thing that roused us from our astonishment was the falling of splinters, pieces of rope, and fiery pitch and oakum, which alarming us for the safety of the vessel, put all hands in requisition. The Dutch had now quite given way, and were preparing to run for it, with the exception of the Orange, a fine eighty-four, commanded by one Seaton, a man of Scottish parentage; who being a stout fellow, and of a family celebrated for their high spirit, must needs resolve to run his vessel on board us, and so have the honour of taking, or being taken, by the Duke. We discerned him, like the image of a gallant seaman, against the red and dark-rolling smoke, mounted aloft on the stern, and brandishing a two-handed broadsword. Seeing him advance thus boldly and alone, some cried out it was a fire-ship; but the Duke bade them be quiet; for they would see their mistake presently by the broadside he was preparing to give us. The honour, however, of being thus set to rights was interrupted, like that of our leading the van, by a vessel a-head of us; which running between, and getting yard-arm and yard-arm with the valiant Scot, received the intended broadside, giving him one in return, though not without a loss of sixty men. Seaton had soon to do with more than one enemy, and so was compelled to strike; and in three days after, "he died, sir" (as I heard the Duke say to Mr. Evelyn); "died, sir, of his wounds and bruises, the consequence of his rash ambition."

This vessel was fired, and the men taken out. The same destruction overtook five or six other vessels in a more terrible manner, by means of our fire-ships. Their crews plunged out of them into the waters, fairly covering the sea round about us. At this sad spectacle, with the inconsistency so remarkable in human nature, and at which in our reflecting moments we know not whether to admire or be angry, everybody was putting forth to help the enemies they had just ruined, hazarding their own lives with receiving and dragging them up into their boats, some of which threatened to swamp at every dip. My friend, Sir Philip, making nothing of his wound (indeed it was not much) had eagerly asked the Duke to let him go upon



this service. His Highness, who had a great regard for him, affectionately bade him not to be too eager; adding, as he saw he wished it, that I might go and assist him; and desiring me to control his ardour. But we forgot everything when we saw the drenched and earnest wretches crowding about us, weltering and beating against the boat. The great basin of the sea, in which we suddenly found ourselves let down, the huge hulks of the vessels around us, the cries of the boats' crews and their officers, the sulphureous atmosphere rolling around and narrowing the horizon, and the very colours of the officers' heavy coats, with their reds and blues, make up sometimes a picture in my imagination, as if I remembered observing it all at the moment. The men, whom we had just been regarding as enemies, seemed now to consist of none but sons and brothers, for whose fate we were as anxious as if their kindred was our own. 'Twas an affecting sight to see rugged old men kissing our hands, because the nearness of death had made them think of their children; and beardless boys lording it over older but duller seamen, in the vivacity of their rank. "My God!" exclaimed Herne, looking at a boat close to us, and turning as pale as he had latterly been red, "it must be done! — See, Mr. Walters!" — addressing a Master's Mate, who was with us. Walters turned about, and taking a marling-spike in his hand, stretched over to the boat, and dashed it on the knuckles of a man who was struggling to get in. The poor wretch gave up the struggle, and retreated into his watery grave; but the boat was saved. Sir Philip turned aside, and tried to conceal his tears. "God bless you, sir," said Walters; "you have been the salvation of a matter of thirty men." My friend said nothing. We were now pulling back to the ship; and he sat with his hat over his eyes, looking on the water. But the same evening he got permission of the Duke to have Mr. Walters presented to him, and his Highness promised to bear him in mind, which he did.

We chased the Dutch all the evening, and took more vessels: nor could the main body of their fleet have escaped us, but for a circumstance that made a great noise. The Duke had ordered the Norwich to keep just a-head of us with lights, so as to give notice in case the enemy altered their course; and next morning we were to set upon them again. His Highness then retired to rest, still keeping his clothes on, to be in readiness;

nor could he satisfy himself before he lay down, without coming upon deck once more, to see that all was right.

He had not been in his cabin above a quarter of an hour, when Brunker, a Groom of his bedchamber (brother of Lord Brunker the mathematician\*) came up to the master, Captain Cox, with directions to slacken sail. The vessel, he said, being so good a sailer, might run in among the enemy during the night, and so be clapt on board by some fire-ship, or find herself next day surrounded and cut off. I was present, and heard all that passed, and so did half a dozen of us. We had been admiring the beauty of the night, and the quiet scudding of the vessel, after all the jolting and uproar; and Cox, stooping sideways from the helm which he had taken in hand, and peering straight before him over the water, had just been saying in his dry manner, "We shall have 'em, every mother's son!"

Brunker gave his direction in a hasty and decisive but polite manner, and then stood in the act of preparing to return: waiting the Captain's answer as a matter of course.

Cox begged him to repeat what he had said.

Brunker did so; adding, that the matter was a very nice matter, no less a person than the heir of the crown being concerned in it; which made it imperative on the Captain to run no risks.

"I am bound to run just as much risk, sir, and just as little, as I am ordered," said the Master: "the Duke bade me hold right on; and 'tis my duty to do so. Does the Duke send me a countermand? You say you have directions, Mr. — a — pray favour me with his Highness's words. Does he *order* me to slacken sail?"

Brunker replied, that the Duke had not given him a direct order. His Highness had said, that he thought it would be better to do so; upon which he (Brunker) regarded himself as desired to give directions accordingly; and that he had left the cabin expressly for that purpose, the Duke not ordering him to remain.

He concluded with repeating, that "the matter was a very delicate matter, and that gentlemen about a Prince in so great

\* He had himself a turn for science, and was a great chess-player. The libellers and gossips of the day represent him as occupying the chief post in no very honourable intendency under the gallant Duke, the same that Bab May and Chaffinch had under the King his brother. — *Edit.*

a station, next heir to the crown, and the hope of the people, were not expected to wait for every nicety of direction, when orders were to be understood."

"Orders," returned Cox, "are everything; but, under favour, they must be understood to a tittle; and furthermore, they must be brought by the right officer. The matter, as you say, Mr. — a — a — what is the gentleman's name?"

"Brunker."

"The matter, as you say, is a very nice matter, Mr. Bunker; but I am only the Master, you see; and as you are only a—a — person on board,—I beg pardon,—what is the gentleman's rank, if I may be so bold?"

"'Tis Mr. Brunker, Groom of his Highness's bedchamber."

Cox resuming with a dip of his head, which was to be understood as a bow: "As you are one of his Highness's Grooms, Mr. Blunker, and not an officer of the vessel, I can only say, that his Highness gave me positive orders to keep within gun-shot of the enemy, and that I must continue to do so, unless one of my superior officers brings me a countermand."

So saying, he gave a push to the tiller; and jerking some tobacco from his mouth a yard off, seemed to dismiss both that and the subject together.

Brunker, however, was not to give up the point so easily. He recommenced, by complimenting the Master on his zeal; but observed, that peculiar circumstances made a difference in what would be the properest thing in the world under any others. And then he set forth the danger of needlessly hazarding the life of his Majesty's brother; which he said might be taken ill by the King himself; adding, that the Duke, and indeed all his officers and men, had conducted themselves already like heroes, and won a glorious victory; and that he could not see the policy of doing more than was necessary, when everything had been done so well.

"Policy!" exclaimed the Master in a heat:—"what the devil have I to do with policy? Damn it, sir, you seem to me —I beg pardon—but you're in my way, Mr. Blunder;—you should never get in the way of the helmsman, sir:—and so, sir, I can't do it, by G—d; and that's the long and the short of it."

"Then I am to tell the Duke so?"

“Damn it, sir, what signifies talking? The Duke’s too good a seaman to expect me to act unseaman-like. He gave me orders not a quarter of an hour ago, to keep right up to the Dutchmen; — he came back again, as the gentlemen here can testify, to say so again; and unless his Highness’s Lieutenant brings me counter-orders, or somebody else who knows something about the matter, and has a right to speak, d—m me, if Bill Cox shorten sail a thread.”

The Groom of the Bedchamber, much disconcerted, went off to Sir John Harman, his Highness’s Lieutenant. Most of us followed him.

“Sir John,” said he, “will you be good enough to give your directions to Captain Cox to shorten sail? The Duke wishes it, but I cannot beat it into the Master’s head that he can act without the orders of a superior officer. I hope indeed I am not in the wrong on that point. If so, Captain Harman will set me right, and the Master too.”

Sir John, who was in the act of taking some supper off his knee, nearly tilted over his beef in looking about him. His lifted eyebrows asked us for information. We told him that Mr. Brunker had been to Captain Cox with wishes from the Duke that he should shorten sail, and that the Captain said he could not do it without regular orders.

“Certainly not,” said Harman; “’tis impossible, Mr. Brunker. Shorten sail! God bless your soul, d’ye see the way we’re in? Right and tight, and not a man to escape us? Why, it’s all as plain and straightforward as a punch in a Dutchman’s guts.”

“Nay,” said Brunker, ready to make way by a jest, “you should say rather a *kick* at a burgomaster, for he is running before you.”

“Mayhap it might be said so,” replied Harman, “if the Dutch showed his hind-quarters for nothing; but that’s not the way with a brave man, Mr. Brunker; and so we talk, like gentlemen, of punching him in the guts.”

“Like a proper belli-gerent,” quoth Montagu.

“Right,” said Brunker, and he laughed again; but the Groom did not seem to be quite easy.

“All that,” continued he, “is very true; yet it is no less true that the Duke wishes to let the poor devils take breath awhile. He sees no use in being in such a damned hurry.”

“ Oh, ho ! ” quoth Sir John, “ we are thereabouts, are we ! But are you sure the Duke’s wishes are what you say ? ”

The Groom shrugged his shoulders, as much as to reply that he hoped he was not capable of stating what was untrue.

“ I beg your pardon, Mr. Brunker, ” resumed Harman, “ but are you sure his Highness was quite awake ? People mutter strange things sometimes, when they are going to sleep. ”

Brunker took advantage of this remark as quick as lightning. He said he could not answer for that. Sir John had thrown a new light on the business : but he would go down and make certain.

He went accordingly, and a pause took place, nobody choosing to speak before the Captain, and he not knowing what to say. At length he muttered aloud, “ D—n his pimping face ; what would he be at ? Here we are, gentlemen, wind and tide in our favour, and the Dutchmen in our very hands, and this silk-petticoat son of a bitch — eh ? — it looks very like it ; but we have nabbed him, I think. Let him bring me the Duke’s message, if he can. ”

Alas ! poor Sir John had nabbed himself. Up comes Mr. Brunker a second time with the very message, or what he states to be such. The Duke, he said, was as wide awake as himself, and now sent positive orders to shorten sail, and to Captain Harman.

“ Positive ? ” said Harman.

“ Positive, Sir John, ” and then laying his hand upon his heart, “ upon my honour. ”

Sir John evidently felt that he had hampered himself by the question he put at first. He muttered, shifted his posture a little, and half laughed, as men do when about to acquiesce in a foolish thing. Finally, he said, “ Well, if I must, I must ; ” and then not only shortened sail, but for a while brought the ship to. He evidently did this, in hopes that the Duke might send up to inquire why he had exceeded orders, which would have given him an opportunity of ascertaining whether Brunker had not exceeded them. No notice, however, was taken. The stoppage threatened, ere long, to disorder the fleet ; so he put before the wind again, though not quickly enough to regain the time. At day-break the top-sails were hoisted just as the Duke had left them, so that although the Dutch were far

a-head of us, we were still a good way in advance of our own fleet; which was afterwards given as a reason for a circumstance that struck us all when his Highness came upon deck. This was, that he expressed no surprise at his being thus out-sailed, nor indeed uttered one syllable on the matter from beginning to end.

We knew not what to make of it. Every moment after his Highness had made his appearance we expected him to say something. Harman wished to find his orders confirmed, but did not dare to hazard the discovery of their non-existence. Cox looked dry. Bruncker kept close to his master. How the matter escaped discussion I cannot imagine. But the Duke did not stay on deck long; and Bruncker followed him.

The upshot was, that the main body of the enemy not only escaped, but were enabled to pretend that they got the victory. Very different stories are told on such occasions by the two parties. But no Englishman doubted that he had won a victory, and a great one. Very good reasons we had to show for it; as good for the putting to flight, as they were little and marvellous for the non-pursuit. Neither did anybody, as far as I could see, doubt the courage of the Duke. To be sure, Montagu, and one or two more, ventured to think that he might have been struck with the fate of Lord Falmouth and the others, and so have been the more willing to put up with Bruncker's proceeding. But we were all so much puzzled we knew not what to conclude, and in a short time we said almost as little about the matter as his Highness.

This business was destined to be mysterious to the last. The examination of it did not take place in the House of Commons till nearly three years afterwards. The Duke's friends affirmed that he had discovered nothing about it till the autumn following the battle.\* Sir John Harman contradicted himself during the inquiry, and was committed to custody by Parliament, but alleged that his memory had been hurt by illness in the service; and, finally, he stood to the account as above stated. Lastly, Bruncker was both turned

\* Clarendon says, not for the long period before mentioned; but the present is the date assigned by James himself, in the Life published not long ago, and collected out of "Memoirs writ by his own hand." vol. i. 4to. 1816, p. 422. What is the reason of this extraordinary difference between the Chancellor's statement, and his royal son-in-law's? Is it a fresh instance of the great historian's manœuvring? or another specimen of the reserve for which James II. was famous? —  
*Edit.*

out of Parliament and dismissed the Duke's service, in the spring of the year sixty-eight, upon which he fled over seas, but returned in autumn, and was suffered to make his appearance at Whitehall. He was afterwards a commissioner of trade and plantations, and cofferer to his Majesty; and he lately succeeded his brother the Viscount. It was a joke, when he was playing chess, to call the pawns cabin-boys, and the King his antagonist a Dutchman.\*

Pleasant was it, on arriving at the Nore, to talk over our dangers again with our friends in the other vessel. One had miraculously escaped this and that peril; another had more luckily obtained a convenient wound, just enough for a sling, which was my case. Herne lamented that in a day or two he should have no pretensions even to a limp. Our losses were much deplored, but as none of us but our commander missed any particular friend, we looked more grieved than we felt. Our own safety, and the prospect of a brilliant welcome at home, made us too happy. The truest regret felt by any of us was for poor Dick Smith! You remember Dick Smith, Nelly's link-boy! Yes, even so: he died of a shot right through him in this battle, and he died as he had lived, with a heart fit for an admiral, which I would not swear he did not reckon upon becoming. He had tried hard to go with Sir Christopher Minns, and that prospect failing, was about to enter another vessel, when Sir Christopher himself, seeing his eagerness, spoke to Sir William Penn, who dismissed a bad servant and put him in his place. Bill Penn, as well as Kit Minns—"Bless," cried Hewit, "their little dirks of names!"—had risen from the humblest stations, and Dick Smith felt as happy, and as luckily named, as they.

Poor fellow! I never think of the acquaintance I made with him, but a real shadow falls on my mind, for all I write about him so lightly. The first time I saw him was in the Duke's cabin. His Highness had got a large party to dinner, and Sir William's servant was stationed behind his master. The Duke, though so cold and proud in his address to strangers, could be pleasant enough at the head of his table, especially when the wine was flowing, and he had the reputation of some flourishing amour. The talk fell as usual upon love; but, as Sir William and one or two other strict persons were present, was more restrained than ordinary, which, to say the

\* We suppose, because the King at Chess cannot be taken. — *Edit.*

truth, did not make it less agreeable. It then turned upon little Nelly, and the conquests she was likely to make. I related, as delicately as I could, and with a good deal of reserve as to myself, the first adventures of the new actress, not omitting the story of the gallant link-boy. Dick met with much eulogy. Buckhurst swore he was worthy of a ballad, and hoped he would give rise to many.

At this point of the discourse, cries Sir William to his servant, "What are you about, Smith? Have you been to sea these three years, and not yet learned to set a bottle of wine on the table steadily?" The name of Smith which had just been in our mouths made us turn and look at the lad. 'Twas the lover himself. I recognised him by his likeness to the King; a very handsome one, but still enough to strike. This likeness I had mentioned, and so there the poor fellow stood confest. Whether his paleness was owing to the new fortunes of his mistress and the victories we had spoken of, or, as was more likely, to a mixed feeling of anguish at that prospect, with a sudden bewildering joy at perceiving that she had liked him better than he fancied, it is impossible to say, but he could not stand the conflict. "I beg pardon, sir," said he: "I am not very well, I fancy—a little giddy—sir; I hope his noble Highness will not be angry, but I believe I had better go away, for I am not fit to stand." "Go, go, my lad," said the Prince.

He came to me afterwards, a few hours before the fight, begging a thousand pardons, but with a manly humility. He said, that he was sure I should not be above taking charge of a letter for him, in case he and a comrade of his were killed. I told him that it should go in the same box with that of a very noble gentleman, a friend of mine; and that if it were my lot to survive the gallant letter-writers, who I hoped would be as alive and merry as myself, I would carry their packets to the Land's End, if they pleased. He retreated, full of gratitude; and by four o'clock in the evening was a corpse.

About his heart was found tied a piece of the skirt of an old linen jacket, in which was a paper containing these words, well spelt, and in good hand-writing:— "This piece of cloth wiped away the tears, which were kindly shed (January 10th, 1658), when I did her a little service, by the adorable Miss Gwynn."



“That’s true love,” said Herne. “Poor fellow!” added he: — “we call people poor when they die, but they die sometimes very rich, though they have not a stiver. Nelly will weep for him. He was happy surely, for he loved well, and he thought his mistress worthy. I like her still better than before; though perhaps it was as well he should go off in this exaltation.”

The death appeared to be instantaneous. We talked much of it, and the tears came into Buckhurst’s eyes. As to the packet, we shall see, by and by, how that was received. “A truce, gentlemen, to melancholy stories,” said Montagu, as we rode up the Thames in the Duke’s shallop; “they make his Highness think of Lord Falmouth. So we changed the conversation, and returned to those of the gay survivors. Hewit, who was with us, performed his part to admiration, and was a greater coxcomb than ever. It was supposed that he would lessen his pretensions that way, having increased them in a more solid manner; but habit and success together were too much for him; so he continued as pleasant as before; only the right he assumed of bantering his followers, appeared now to have somewhat of graver warrant. He must have gone many a campaign before fopperies like his could have consented to become threadbare.\* But the finest new feather in the cap of our wits was that obtained by Lord Buckhurst, in the achievement of his famous song written the night before the engagement.

At the beginning of the war, a song attributed to Sir John Mennis, had been addressed, in the name of the seamen, to the sweethearts they left behind. It made a great noise, and set his lordship upon writing the present one. The natural air of it was thought the more of, inasmuch as it was addressed to the court ladies. A dozen hands set it to music, and for a week or two after our return we heard nothing but —

“To all you ladies now at land  
We men at sea indite,  
But first would have you understand  
How hard it is to write:

\* Our author is a little severe on Sir George, considering the tendencies of which he is not unconscious in himself, and which indeed he sometimes makes pretty evident. Etheredge is said to have unconsciously drawn his own character in that of the celebrated fop in his comedy (the Lord Foppington of the more modern play); yet he thought he was painting it after this very Hewit; Dorimant, the fine gentleman, being intended for himself. But wits are hardly bound to be patterns of that self-knowledge, which is reckoned so difficult for sages. — *Edit.*

The Muses now and Neptune too,  
 We must implore to write to you,  
 With a fal, lal, de ral, de ra."

The next three verses were much admired :

"For though the Muses should prove kind,  
 And fill our empty brain ;  
 Yet if rough Neptune rouse the wind,  
 To wave the azure main,  
 Our paper, pen, and ink, and we,  
 Roll up and down our ships at sea.

"Then if we write not by each post,  
 Think not we are unkind ;  
 Nor yet conclude our ships are lost,  
 By Dutchmen, or by wind :  
 Our tears we'll send a speedier way ;  
 The tide shall bring them twice a day.

"The King, with wonder and surprise,  
 Will swear the seas grow bold,  
 Because the tides will higher rise,  
 Than e'er they used of old :  
 But let him know it is our tears  
 Bring floods of grief to Whitehall stairs."

The following was a still greater favourite :

"Should foggy Opdam chance to know  
 Our sad and dismal story,  
 The Dutch would scorn so weak a foe,  
 And quit their fort at Goree :  
 For what resistance can they find  
 From men we've left their hearts behind ?"

In short the whole song was a great favourite, and has ever since remained so. I believe a young officer would almost as soon blush at not knowing it, as having no mistress to drink to.

The invidious pretended that his lordship had not written the whole of it that night ; he had only completed and put it in shape. He said, no ; he had really written it ; adding, in his pleasant manner, "By this hand I did it."

"Ay, like a writing-master," said old Robarts.

Buckhurst laughed, "To say the truth," said he, "I had got some of the thoughts before ; but I put them all into rhyme that evening."

"My lord," observed Lauderdale, with one of his sneers, "ye canna escape our admiration so ; for of a troth, at sic a moment, to recollect e'en how to mak rhymes, must needs argue a vara sedate presence o' mind, and a grit superiority to things about ye."

"Oh, my lord," replied Buckhurst, "there is no knowing how valiant a man may be with a bottle or two of wine in his head ; to say nothing of health, and good humour, and the wish to please ; of all which" (bowing to the crabbed minister) "your lordship may judge by experience."

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 VOLUME THE SECOND.
 

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## CHAPTER I.

THE return to court, after the sea, was like emerging from noise, wet, and darkness, into a saloon full of light and beauty. And the best of it was, quoth Sir George, that we returned in good condition. The Duke had waited some time at the Nore, intending to go to sea again, which his Majesty prevented: so that our valets had time to come to us with new suits of red and gold. Thus with health and ruddiness in our faces, clean linen to our backs, and "locks as crull as they were laid in press" (as the old poet has it), we entered amidst the flowers and fair ones of the palace, conquering and to conquer.

Another poet has described us —

"All plumed, like estridges that wing the wind;"

(Our very hats!)

"Bated like eagles, having lately bathed;"

(We had done so;)

"Glittering in golden coats, like images;"

(The red and gold, to wit;)

"As full of spirit as the month of May,  
And gorgeous as the sun of Midsummer."

Then there's something about goats and bulls.

"I saw Dick Tufton with his beaver on,  
His sword-knot at his thigh, gallantly dressed,  
Come from the wars like feathered victory,  
And hand her with such ease into her seat  
(Miss Brooks I mean) as though he had borne arms,  
But to subdue a fiery Maid of Honour,  
And witch the court with wondrous seamanship."

"Bravo!" said Buckingham; "I permit you to have said it, Ralph; though being so good, it should have been mine."

His Grace also permitted us to have our wounds; though he would have been heartily glad of a few on the same terms.

As for mine, it had a delicate white silken sling made for it by Miss Warmestre, and I was cautious how I hurried the cure. Every day the most interesting inquiries were made about it. More than one patriotic damsel offered to make the sling; but Miss Warmestre shrunk, and drew the breath within her teeth in so pretty a manner, at the bare idea of touching it, that I could not but give the preference to my sensitive acquaintance.

“You do not know then,” said Lady Castlemain, “what broke poor Miss Warmestre’s spirits, just after you left us?”

“No, madam,” answered I, expecting to hear something additional to my credit, though rather surprised it should come from that quarter; for her ladyship, albeit friendlier than ever for a day or two, and always lively, had lately taken it into her head to flatter nobody but Mr. Hart. Besides, I had begun to suspect that she did not much relish attentions on the part of the ladies to any young fellow whom she had vouchsafed to patronise, which was true at that period of her life. At all events, she did not like them as long as herself was present. In her absence she might suppose them not to exist.

Her ladyship whispered to me the news of an attachment between Miss Warmestre and somebody that had left her; not without an intimacy of older standing than mine. I was startled at this; but the poor girl looked so humble and sorry, had made such little pretensions of any sort, and was withal so handsome, and so grateful for attention, that it was impossible to quarrel with her, for not having given one an exclusive right of preference. She had her preferences, nevertheless: her humbleness had a pride in it; for Sir Thomas Vernon, a country gentleman, who had been making furious love to her, on and off, for these two years, had been lately dismissed with a vehemence and scorn that surprised everybody. All these circumstances threw a mystery round the fair forlorn, which she seemed willing enough to explain, if I had requested her; but I had not the courage.

To say the truth, I had scarcely the inclination. I could have kicked the unknown to the antipodes, for a minute or so, purely because he disturbed my vanity; but, on reflection, I forgot him, that my vanity might not be disturbed. I was no declared lover of the lady: there was nothing understood be-

tween us: perhaps the inclination, if suspected by anybody, was not suspected to be on my side: in short, I was not in love; and I had become deeply interested in the concerns of a friend who was.

Sir Philip had begged me to delay reading his packet till he left us. He said he should talk plentifully with me on the subject of its contents by and by; but that there were things in it relative to his affairs (I wondered to hear him thus particularise, but the reason will be seen presently), which he would not trust himself to speak of, till I was acquainted with, and had reflected on them. The reserve which he appeared to maintain in the meanwhile, I should find to be something very different from a wish to be close and secret. At all events, it might be an earnest of his power to be silent, in case reserve were required; and he could not hold his tongue with me, if he knew the manuscript had been read. I should learn, he said, with the rest of his history, what affair it was that now took him away; but he should return to seek me at court, or, at all events, write and let me know what he was about, within a month after his departure. With these words he quitted me, to go and take leave of the Duke; and I hastened to unseal my precious deposit.

Imagine my surprise when I found that Sir Philip had been acquainted with a good deal of my own history, before I told it him. Conceive also the mixture of surprise, of regret, I believe I should say remorse, and of thanks to my kind friend for his delicacy, when I found that the person from whom the history came round to him, was Miss Randolph, and that this dear and tender girl had nearly died, out of tenderness for one that did not deserve her; I will do myself the justice to say, that I felt this piece of news severely. It was the first thing that gave me any real gravity, or made me look about myself to cultivate a proper manliness of character. I should have been much laughed at in the ante-rooms, had my reflections been known; but the peculiarity of my education had given me a conscience tenderer than that of most of my companions: and to do some of them justice (though they would have been highly shocked at it), there was more of it among themselves than they pretended. Some indeed had none at all on this point: they were too healthy, and thoughtless, and desirous of cutting a figure; but among others, there was almost as

much affectation upon it, as in the articles of dress and expenditure. The enormity, with some exceptions, was generally in proportion to the time of life. I could not say that Miss Randolph had been in love with me. I began to hope that it was a vanity to think so. Yet selfishness was not to play me a new trick, under pretence of my having grown modest. I was bound to suffer and to draw conclusions like a man, whether for myself or against.

Sir Philip touched upon this very dilemma with the utmost delicacy. He had learnt my history from the lady in whose house Miss Randolph was ill. Miss Randolph had spoken of me in the kindest manner, and had said nothing positive as to love on either side. It was clear, I thought, that both her friend and mine had concluded one of us to have been in love; but Sir Philip chose to leave it in doubt; he confessed as much. Imagine how I felt self-condemned and relieved at the same time, and what new reasons this friend had given me to love him, when I found him writing to me, in the following manner. I tasted at once the bitterness of the first sense of guilt, and the sweets with which a proved and acknowledged sincerity could make it tolerable.

“It requires,” wrote Sir Philip, “no ordinary cast of character to enable a man to receive pain from a friend; nor should a friend, I think, give it but under peculiar circumstances, and where he can at once find good qualities in the person he gives it to, and prove his own power to acknowledge faults in himself. You will not doubt me on either of these points, when I tell you that I was moved to open my heart to you on the subject of both our affairs, first by the delight I experienced in finding your narrative tally so entirely with that which I had received from another; and secondly, by two or three remarkable coincidences in our early life, one of which, though not exactly like the present, so far resembles it as to give me a very lively regret. I have endeavoured to turn this regret to account; and if you would allow me to say so, I would advise you to do as much. It will take away the worst part of such pain as you may feel about it; granting you feel any. I am sure I have reason to be pained: I am not so sure that you have. I have sometimes thought, that all the pains I have endured in love have been the consequence and punishment of that first error: but then I was a mere youth like

yourself ; I was not indeed as thoughtless as you ; I had not that excuse ; but I was thoughtless upon the particular point, and I had nothing around me but mystery and deception. There is something in this, as in all other offences, for which, as we are not the beginners of them, so we ought not finally to suffer too much.

“Conceive, my dear Esher, how the gayer fellows of the court would laugh at us for these excuses. But the truth is, you, like myself, were educated to have a greater conscience than they ; and if we suffer a little more for it, perhaps we shall enjoy more in the end, and cause less suffering meanwhile. At any rate, such will be your case. As for me,—but a truce with superfluous melancholy ; there is enough in what I am going to relate. Fortune, be assured, intends you to be a very happy man ; and I mean to enjoy your happiness, in case I have none of my own.”

So far I quote the words of my friend's manuscript. Perhaps I shall occasionally do so as I proceed ; and I shall always make use of their turn and colouring in the following summary of his narrative ; adding, at the same time, whatever I may think necessary, from what I learnt of him in our after discourses. The style, indeed, I could not very well help, if I tried ; for by long habits of association, our language has become much alike, only there is a greater degree of earnestness and fervour in what Sir Philip says upon graver points. If ever I say anything at once serious and striking, I am not sure that it might not be always traced to some influence of his conversation.

My friend, in the words above quoted, paid me the compliment of finding a resemblance in some early circumstances of our lives ; I fear it was indeed a compliment, however sincere ; but there are points of resemblance, nevertheless. His mother resembled mine, though of a different faith : he knew the worthy Mr. Warmestre, alias Braythwaite ; and had gone through the ordeal of the Duke of Buckingham's friendship. The more I read, the more I congratulated myself on the sincerity and clearness of my behaviour. Braythwaite turned out to be a tool in Buckingham's pay ; and my friend had no doubt that Captain Sandford would prove to be a desperado, under somewhat of the like circumstances. He suspected he knew him, and that Sandford was not his real name. Myself he had

heard of, in connexion with both of these worthies, and I had at one time been under a cloud of suspicion with Arran and Lord Ossory (sons of Ormond) on the Captain's account; but the explicitness of my behaviour on all other points, the surprise I had openly expressed (to the amusement of many) at finding the Butler family such excellent persons, and what is more curious, the very silence I had maintained respecting my intercourse to and fro with Sandford, combined with the dislike I expressed of him, upon after-thought, as my acquaintance in France, and the similar feeling which I could not help manifesting with regard to Buckingham, had had the best effect upon Sir Philip's mind, and shown him that I had been the conscientious keeper of a secret. The intercourse had been found out; but I might think myself lucky in thus having profited, instead of suffered, by a scrupulous observance of secrecy. My friend let me understand all this in the delicatest manner conceivable, without stating anything too broadly. How I longed to have him with me again; or rather, to be with him, and go wherever he went!

Sir Philip Herne, the only survivor of a family that came in with the conquest, was the great grandson of a country gentleman of both his names, to whom Philip the Second, husband of Queen Mary, had stood godfather. The family were then rigid Catholics, and remained so till the time of Sir Philip's father, who, having become conversant in early youth with the most speculative class of the republicans, gave up his faith still more in reality than in appearance. With a lingering regard for the symbols he had been taught to reverence, so great as never to have given up his private chapel, he united a freedom of religious opinion amounting to laxity. He was a man of great gaiety of spirits, the delight of Harry Marten and others, but not without staid qualities that procured him the regard of the Vanes and Lawrences. They were not sufficient, however, to make him listen with proper gravity to the profundity and ethereal mysticism of Sir Kenelm Digby. These made a far greater impression on the son. Sir Edward Herne had passed a jest on Sir Kenelm, which the latter never forgave. The share which Kenelm's father, Sir Everard, had in the gunpowder-plot is well known. "The father," said our merry Papist, "was a man of no words; he would have blown people up, and no harm done; that's soon over; but let the son



have his way, and he will keep the House eternally sitting, that he may eternally talk."

Sir Edward Herne being a man of wealth and influence, a declining faith was anxious to detain him nominally in its service, if it could do little better; but even this hold on him received a great shock, when he chose for his wife the daughter of an open apostate. Her father, Mr. Oglethorpe, a gentleman of property in Oxfordshire, had departed so vehemently from the faith of his ancestors, that it is thought he had been saved from disinheritance, only by the fit of passion which seized his progenitor, and which suddenly killed him. His friends reported this to be a calumny; but it is certain that the old gentleman died at that moment, and that the spirit in which the convert maintained his new faith, partook of the vehemence and uneasiness which belong to persons of an unsatisfied conscience acting upon a wilful temper. He had married a Catholic, whom he endeavoured to force into his own opinions, and who in her own house was obliged to exercise the offices of religion by stealth. The daughter, the only fruit of this union, he sedulously brought up as he wished, by means of violent Protestants whom he put about her; and what between the love for a gentle mother, and her fears of a father with whose religion she had thus been forced to accord, her health was prematurely shaken, and a morbid sensibility to impressions interwoven with the texture of her being.

The marriage with this young lady, which was looked upon by the Catholics as so complete a desertion of their cause on the part of Sir Edward Herne, was regarded by Mr. Oglethorpe's neighbours as a symptom of his return to it. Both were in the wrong. Sir Edward was neither more nor less a Catholic than he had been; and his father-in-law, so far from having returned to his old faith, had found his zeal for Protestantism increasing every day, by reason of the growing authority of the Puritans, of whose power in worldly matters he expected to partake. He saw that they could wink at indulgences for their profit, as well as those whom they denounced for it; and as interest was at the bottom of all his actions, though temper coloured them, he could easily warrant the union of two families long acquainted, on the plea that it might give a final turn the right way to the opinions of so indifferent a Papist as his son-in-law. On the other hand, Sir

Edward, who was a good-tempered man, succeeded in quieting the tenderer consciences for which he had a regard, by dwelling on the known Catholicism of his bride's mother; and the old lady, for her part, was delighted to see her daughter in any hands not decidedly Protestant; a calamity which she had long looked upon as certain. Meanwhile, Mr. Oglethorpe, who would have been sorry to suspect his child of having no truer zeal than himself, after he had ordained that she should be full of it, made a variety of stipulations with Sir Edward, the object of which was to preserve her faith in its purity; and he really thought (so absurd is a despotical temper,) not only that it would have been highly criminal in the bridegroom to allow the least hazard of the reverse, though it was the very thing he had been just doing himself, but that all parties would strain their utmost to oblige a disagreeable old gentleman, who was prepared to insult and outrage every body at a moment's notice.

Not to dwell on these matters longer than is necessary (and the mention of them is only necessary to show the origin of my friend's and his mother's character), Mr. Oglethorpe died without having obtained any of the objects of his ambition: and his wife followed him not long afterwards, worn out with the calamities of herself and her church, but blessing her son-in-law for the faith he secretly allowed to be kept up, and for the shelter his generosity afforded to a persecuted priesthood.

It was at this period that the unhappy disputes having come to their height between King Charles the First and his Parliament, the severe penal laws took place against a body of men for whom the reigning family had always been suspected of entertaining a predilection, and who had latterly excited the rage and indignation of their opponents by a massacre in Ireland. The Catholics, who had formerly been the persecutors, were now to learn what it was to be persecuted. I cannot use a less harsh term, seeing what I have seen in my own time; and yet I cannot affirm, that any one of our new philosophers, Mr. Bayle not excepted, would have been a jot better, perhaps not so good, as many of the persecutors, had they lived and possessed authority in their time. As Sir Philip says, we should then have been no older than our ancestors, whereas we have now added years to their years, and gained knowledge by their experience. At the moment that I am writing these

pages, the Catholics, aided by a very great person, are trying hard to regain their authority ; and some old acquaintances of mine, once the meekest of the enduring, are beginning to assume airs, very unpromising for the toleration they have so loudly advocated. Supposing the Catholics succeed (of which they would have no hope if they knew all) they would only have to alter certain words in our own penal laws, and then we, in return, should have to endure and be meek, and long to cut their throats. Are these lessons for ever to be lost on mankind? Will it never learn, that it is only by a mutual concession of their swords, that warm disputants can argue without danger? In short, that authority is not argument, and man's notion of God's opinions not bound to be his own? Sir Philip says it will learn: nay, that it is learning fast: and he talks of a century or two, as if a few generations were nothing. For my part, I have lived in a court, and am not quite so sanguine. On the other hand, I am not so wise. Twenty thoughts go through his head, for one of mine. I grant, also, that if he has many wise men against him, they are accompanied by the greatest fools I know; — “the confidentest puppies,” to use the phrase of the Viscount. One would think, by the way in which these gentlemen talk of what has been, is, and ever will be, that they were hand and glove with eternity five millions of years ago, and know exactly what is to occur on the 19th of June, sixteen thousand seven hundred and forty-two. If ever Catholic or Protestant, seated in the chair of power, should be able to say, the one to the other, “I give you leave to do as I do, namely, to think as you please without suffering for it,” — I would not swear that, in the course of two or three hundred years afterwards (for the grandeur of my friend's disposal of time seduces me), nations would not begin to think it unnecessary to hack and hew one another to pieces, even to oblige the gentlemen that occupy thrones.

To return to my narrative. The lady of Sir Edward Herne had brought with her, from her father's house, a female servant, a well-meaning woman, extremely fond of her young mistress, and no less attached to the religion with which she had helped to inoculate her. Mr. Oglethorpe having forbidden his wife to speak to his child upon this subject, and an interdict so unnatural producing a variety of other restraints, there

had been a melancholy division between the mother and her daughter's attendants, which produced a tendency to differ on all points, and affected the temper of all parties. Mrs. Oglethorpe's delicate conscience was torn between her desire to pay obedience to a husband, and what she thought the duties of her religion; but the claims of a child upon a mother's efforts for her salvation, swallowed up, of necessity, every other consideration, and she left no artifice untried to drop the good seed, if it were but a seed only, in the bosom of her offspring. She succeeded. Maternal zeal, aided by that very spirit of softness and acquiescence which disposed her to yield in general, and which threw a veil over her manners calculated to blind the self-sufficient dignity of Mr. Oglethorpe, proved to be too much for the coarser guardianship of the servant. Children not only discern acutely between those who only pretend to love them, and such as really do so, but if not very dull, they soon learn how to distinguish the greater and less degrees of love itself. Miss Oglethorpe did not love her father at all, though she was afraid to think so. The servant she did love; but by the time she began to reason as well as feel, nothing could surpass the passionate fondness she entertained for her mother. Esther, with her rustic education, had not only gone too clumsily to work: she had brought with her, from her deceased husband's cottage, together with the breast of milk with which the babe was to be supplied with strength, a set of country superstitions not quite so wholesome; and with these she made a point of frightening, and being frightened, as hard as lay in her power. In vain her master assured her, that there were no such things as beings who danced on the green, and dropped testers into shoes. The existence of witches he admitted, express authority existing for their belief; but it was ridiculous, he said, to believe in creatures not a span long, who were merry and good-humoured, and confined their supernatural offices to the threshing of corn, and pinching of maid-servants. If habit had not been sufficient to convince Esther that her master was wrong, nothing could have done it sooner than an affront to her understanding. She, therefore, not only persisted resolutely in believing every possible belief with the exception of papistry, but proceeded to impart the blessing to his infant; and it was greatly owing to her zeal in behalf of this fantastic creed, that the

mother was enabled to thwart her in the more serious one. The Presbyterian minister who was called in to complete the young lady's religion, was listened to with patience, with sweetness, apparently with conviction, for slavery brings duplicity; but Miss Oglethorpe was a devout Catholic before she was fifteen; and when she entered her new abode, as Lady Herne, the first moment Esther left her alone, she locked the door of her bedchamber, greedily entered the little chapel that led out of it, and prostrating herself at the foot of the altar, poured out her soul in gratitude to the disposer of events, for bringing her into a Christian house.

Sir Edward, it is true, was still but an indifferent Catholic. He had suffered his chapel to go to decay; and by the absence of the crucifix from the altar, and the presence of certain irreligious shoes and boots, Mr. Oglethorpe had the pleasure of discovering that it had even been desecrated. This was true. Sir Edward, really careless about his faith, though, from good temper as well as habit, inclined to keep in with its professors, had gone so far in openly complying with the laws, as to desecrate this chapel; but then he had assured his Catholic friends, that it was only to do them the better service in private; and as a proof of his sincerity, he had secretly established another. He showed them a paper in cypher, given him by the Jesuit who confessed him, that warranted his acting in this manner; and the persecutions against the faith increasing every day, and his generosity increasing with them, (for he was a man of a gallant nature, and began to curse his friends, the Independents, for not doing as they would be done by,) he became in time one of the staunchest as well as safest patrons of an afflicted church. He continued to cultivate acquaintance with the busiest of his opponents, the rigid and universally intolerant, whose conduct, so far, he respected more than that of the others; and as these men were hopeful of his indifference, and did not dislike his good cheer, he had the boldness, during the most active Anticatholic period of the Commonwealth, to entertain them with his dinners below stairs, while more than one priest was sequestered in his rooms above. On these occasions, some pretence was always found for bringing in old Esther, in ostentatious evidence of the host's freedom of opinion. Lady Herne, whose fear of her father's despotism survived his existence, and who

saw in these guests only so many of his representatives, behaved exactly as her mother had done in like circumstances. Being accustomed to talk little in public, she was not troubled with their discourse. She did what she had to do at table; said yes, and no, in an humble tone of voice, little better than a whisper; heard with dread the compliments paid herself and her old servant on the purity of their faith; delighted, nevertheless, to see Esther pleased (for then she knew all was safe); and hastened, amidst hectic blushes and a shower of tears, to receive absolution for her worldly wisdom at the feet of her confessor.

Sir Edward had been greatly perplexed at first to know what to do with Esther. She had accompanied her mistress into his house on the express stipulation of Mr. Oglethorpe; and habit and privilege, as well as the faith to which Lady Herne was supposed to adhere, conspired to keep her in constant attendance upon her person. Luckily, she was not long in exhibiting her respect for fairies and ghosts; and then dreadful things were told her of the two upper stories of the house; of Catholic spectres, blue lights, and walking candlesticks. There was an elf on one leg, that kept his arms stretched out for a cross; and Sir Edward was profane enough to add something about a little scarlet gentlewoman of evil repute, who walked with a bare neck and long-flowing tresses, and said impudent things in Latin. Seeing the coast thus secured, (for nothing upon earth could have induced the woman to venture within two staircases of the haunted rooms, or have enabled her to mount one of the steps, without blinding her eyes and shrieking,) her master laughed at his own tales, affecting a total disbelief in them. He did this, in order that he might account for the choice of his private apartments. And among the pious frauds practised by his lady, was a pretended astonishment at Esther for not choosing to venture higher than the first floor. Her ladyship also would venture an occasional invitation to her, to go up and see "the walking candlestick."

The difficulty was greater when little Philip made his appearance. Esther was so jealous of his being nursed by any one but herself, that his mother was afraid of exciting her suspicions by keeping him too much out of her way. There was no knowing to what mischievous proceeding bigotry might not have provoked her, Sir Edward, to excuse his not permitting

her to meddle with the child's faith, professed always to be hesitating between the Independent and Presbyterian notions (in the latter of which she had been brought up), taking care, meanwhile, to produce in him as much indifference to all, as was possible to a child so circumstanced, and as the father's subtlety could manage to convey it into his mind; a policy which he thought but fair towards a little creature besieged with bigotry on all sides, and not very likely to escape a good deal of it. His wife, who surprised him on her first entering the house with the extreme emotion under which she discovered the accordance of her opinions with those of his own race, he first loved the more for her zeal and gratitude — then pitied — then would rally her gently; till at last, finding that his indifference distressed her, and that the morbid delicacy of her temperament rendered her a companion rather too weak and saintly for one of his festive and not very imaginative turn, he contented himself with being civil and easy, though in a very kind manner, and solaced his regret at what he considered a combination of absurdities, by a variety of jovial amours. Of the fruits of one of these, honest Mr. Braythwaite was the depository: (my cheek tingled at this part of the narrative). Was it possible then that Miss Warmestre was the sister of his friend? or little jovial Nelly? or poor Miss Randolph, towards whom I did not hold myself guiltless? These were all the Warmestre inmates that I was aware of: though doubtless there were more.

Lady Herne felt her perplexities with regard to the child increase every day. He was getting too old to be left to the chance of an erroneous faith; there were no longer sufficient reasons for objecting to his going about any part of the house; and yet he was not old enough to be entrusted with a secret. Accordingly, she thought herself compelled to allow Esther to make an impression on him with respect to the ghosts and fairies, in order that he might not detect the hiding places of her friends; and she endeavoured to tranquillize herself with regard to the rest, by hoping that the delay of a few months could do no harm; at the end of which time a mother's exhortations and tears would, she doubted not, produce the same effect on him, as they had done on herself.

But she had not made due allowance for difference of temperament, perhaps of sexes, nor for the very different impres-

sions made by the characters of the two fathers,—her own and her son's:—the one a harsh bigot, of unconciliating manners, whose doctrine became repulsive in contrast with those of an amiable mother; the other, a kind, if not a very attentive parent, zealous enough on the side of anti-zeal, to give his indifference all the charm of good-humour, and a pleasant association of ideas. She forgot also, or rather she had never reflected, that the servant in growing older had grown more bigoted, and that the popular superstitions of her infancy, which led her former charge into a natural sympathy with Catholicism, had now become so mixed up with her horror of white surplices, candlesticks, and crosses, that the question was likely to be begged against the faith, rather than for it. Circumstances, by degrees, forced this reflection upon her, and then it was that she felt in all its force the perplexity of her situation, and the pangs that await deception in tender consciences. The bodily constitution of little Philip had not yet betrayed any symptom of inheriting his mother's delicacy. He promised, though partaking her features, to have the make and muscular strength of his father. But the usual dread evinced by children, of the dark and its mysteries, began to be exhibited by him to an excess which threatened to blight this promise of vigour. If a candle went out, he came and stood by his mother's side, holding her gown, and trembling from head to foot. He could not be left an instant in a room alone, without running and screaming after the deserting person; and Mr. Oglethorpe, who loved to feel the sense of his superiority even over a child, seldom exhibited a greater willingness to laugh and be amused than when his grandson was unlucky enough to express any such fears in his presence. He would aggravate and play with them, as a cat does with a mouse; and then foolishly pretend, perhaps imagine, that this was the way to render the child sensible of the absurdity, and grow more of a man. In these tricks Sir Edward would thoughtlessly join. He also took a new occasion from them to blind his father-in-law to the illegal state of his premises. Lady Herne sat by, in agony of spirit, not daring, nor indeed wishing, to pretend any gravity on the score of "white men" and "hopping crosses," but wounded in conscience for not opposing other things that were said, and dreading lest something should become visible on corridor or staircase, to war-



rant the child's fears, and excite the suspicion of the unfaithful.

It was at length thought proper to part with the child for some years; a measure to which his mother would have consented long before, but for the hopes in which she indulged herself, day by day, of being able to turn his fancies to her liking. She felt the greater remorse for the delay, inasmuch as the family to whom he was given in charge, besides living in the country, where he would gather health and strength, were secret Catholics like herself, and would strain every nerve to put the heir of such a family in the right path. A circumstance occurred a day or two before he went, which at once brought her alarm to its height, and made her bless heaven that she had resolved upon doing her duty, before absolute necessity compelled her.

Philip had not only been taught to associate the imagery of the Catholic ceremonies with things supernatural and spectral; he had been led to believe it full of a mysterious wickedness. The idea of a man in a long white gown, or the "white man," as Esther called him, included that of a demon disguised in female attire. There was a worse female, the lady in the red gown and long tresses, the thought of whom combined all which the child could conceive of what was forbidden on earth, and insulting to heaven: and the handsomer she was, the more horrid. There was also an old man, called Pope, old, bearded, and wicked, with a shining mitre on his head, who eat little boys; a Grey Friar, who *fried* people (a story, alas! too true, only Philip thought that all friars were so called from the operation); and one Guy Fox, of whom, though he was hung many years since, and Philip knew him to be dead, he yet conceived as of a person alive, constantly going into a cellar to blow up a great house, with God's eye looking at him from the corner of a picture. This picture, which had been saved out of some denounced prayer-book, was kept by Esther at the bottom of a trunk, together with the "Lady and Death," the "Maiden's Bloody Tragedy," and other helps to reflection; and one day she drew it forth and showed it her little friend, telling him it was the picture of one of the "dreadful papishes;" all of whom, she said, looked exactly in that manner, had the same eye, and the same mixture of *fox* and devil. This information brought a relief with

it to the poor boy ; as he now thought he had never seen a living papist, and thus was enabled to double his scorn and derision at somebody who had called his father one ; “ for his father,” he said, “ looked neither like fox nor devil, but a proper gentleman.” It never struck him that he had seen both papists and puritans not a whit better looking than the fox himself, and in fact much resembling his expression. Not thinking ill of them, he saw nothing in their countenances but sickness or old age.

Esther did not tell him that Sir Edward's house was haunted by all the frightful personages above mentioned. She was only sure of the criss-cross-elf, the walking candlestick, the white man, and the wicked woman in red ; one of the daughters, she supposed, or some other wicked limb of “ the great scarlet abomination, who sat upon seven hills ” ( a mode of session, which always puzzled her hearer to know what to think of it ). But as Satan was ever walking about, seeking whom he might devour, there was no saying how far his friend might not accompany him ; and though Philip never imagined that a monster so vast and stupendous as the one which took seven hills to sit upon, could think of paying a visit inside a house, yet old Pope might come, to lurk on the staircase with his mumbling beard ; the Friar with his grey face and his fiery pan, might come ; and the ram, on which the abomination rode, might be in requisition to act as palfrey to the wicked woman ; for so inconsistent is fancy, that although the mother was of such huge dimensions as to occupy a chair of the size of Westmoreland, her person when taking an airing still presented itself to the imagination, as mounted on no greater stud than a common sheep.

Lady Herne, to wean her child from his horror of scarlet gowns, was in the habit of wearing one herself, and as her hair was of a luxuriant length, and her mode of dress a great deal modester than the one in fashion ( for she had something nun-like in all her tendencies, except what Sir Edward was pleased to call the only right one ) the boy perceived well enough, that a real living woman might wear a red gown, and have fine flowing hair, and yet be very good. This, however, did not hinder him from having his old fancies about scarlet ghosts. Lady Herne had beautiful long tresses ; but then the “ naughty neck ” was not seen ; she had not a great

flaring colour in her cheek, like the wicked woman; and she did not walk with her hands before her, smiling like a devil incarnate, and saying wicked words in Latin. The scarlet fiend, according to Esther, sometimes painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out of a window; which description of the proceeding of Jezebel, Philip, as well as herself, took for that of an actual custom on the part of this infernal jade. When he observed his mother watching with anxiety any passenger in the streets, who happened to stand and look up at the house, he fancied she was about to give credit to this story, and would ask whether the men saw any thing strange at the window; nor did the child know what to think of her answer in the negative, when he observed that the question never failed to agitate her, and make her look eagerly in his face.

It happened one afternoon, that the mother left the room in which she was sitting, to cross into one on the other side of the corridor, in order to speak with her husband. Little Philip remained in the room, for Esther was there, otherwise his voice would soon have been heard by the religious above stairs, crying, as they said, "to be delivered out of the pit." His father, at this juncture, who was trying to accustom him to walk about the house alone (secure that he would go no higher than where he was), called out to the boy to come to him. Both doors were open; Philip was close to the one. He measured the distance of the corridor with his eyes; and, resolving to be of a stout heart and please his father, set off with all his might, without knowing that his mother had left the room. Just as he had got half way, he sees her coming from the opposite door towards him. Horror seizes him on the instant. The red gown was converted into that of the ghost. A saying of Esther's darted into his mind, that evil beings made use of known and friendly voices to lure people towards them, and, giving a dreadful scream, he turned round, fled faster than he had come, and fell at the servant's feet in convulsions.

An opportunity was taken from this accident to read the servant a severe lesson on follies which had gone so much farther than was looked for, and also to diminish her intercourse with Philip. Lady Herne would gladly have ended it at once, but, always in a state of hectic alarm, she was cautious of coming to an open rupture. She seized, however, the fur-

ther occasion of announcing the child's intended visit to the country, and (what she had before trembled to speak of) her determination that Esther should not go with him; and as her father had secretly begun to regret his encouragement of the boy's fears, and avowed himself of the same mind, the poor woman, who was an affectionate though foolish creature, was fain to give up with a good grace, shedding floods of tears, and expressing a penitent sympathy with Master Philip's sufferings.

The boy went into the country (the place was in Westmoreland); staid two years; in the course of which both his father and grandfather died; acquired blooming cheeks and double stoutness of limb, and came back, if not a better Catholic than before (the family, who were feeble people, not having succeeded in what they undertook, and being in truth afraid to venture much, owing to some accidents which soon after caused their dispersion), yet no longer frightened at the idea of Catholics, nor regarding them as a set of human devils. For awhile, in consequence of these accidents, the house of Sir Edward was suspiciously regarded; but his jovialities, his flatteries, some say his money, restored matters to their former state of security. Nobody, seeing the way in which he and his Presbyterian friends went in and out, would have suspected that there were no less than three priests in his house, who said mass every day; and that the next house, under pretence of belonging to a bitter enemy, with whom he affected to be on the most violent terms, contained two more, besides the chapel in which they all assembled, by means of a partition in the wall.

There was one thing, as well as health and strength, and a relaxation of his anticatholic prejudices, which Lady Herne rejoiced to see the little Philip had brought with him from the country. This was the power to keep a secret. It had been taught him, as the first step of his theology, by the only clever person that appeared within the doors of the family in Westmoreland; which person was a Jesuit in disguise. Nor must it be omitted, that, to whatever purpose the body of men to which he belonged meant to turn the doctrines they inculcated, Father Waring had the wit to see, and the talent to bring forth, the early capacity of the boy, and put him in a train apparently to think for himself. He first made his own person acceptable, by entering into his sports, riding about the coun-

try with him, and teaching him to climb trees and precipices : he made him a witness of his charities to the poor, which were real ones, and impressed him accordingly ; he turned his very fears to account by converting the story of Cæsar's ghost into a temptation to read Plutarch, an author for whom his pupil ever afterwards entertained the greatest affection ; and he put, what many of his creed would have thought a dangerous and profane book into his hands, to wit, the plays of Shakspeare. It may be unnecessary to add, that Philip was then too young to attack the old heroical biographer in his native Greek. It was in the English translation that he first became acquainted with him. The boy was only of an age to begin his rudiments in Latin ; a commencement, which gave a new and amusing trouble to the good Father (who, like most scholars, could not resist a joke connected with any thing classical) ; for the child expressed great horror of it, asking if it was not the language of "the wicked woman." The depravity of this female spectre had led the boy to entertain an especial horror of female depravity in general, and to connect in his premature, though uninformed mind, the foulest with the fairest ideas ; so that even the word *love*, from any other lips but those of his parents and Esther, and pointing to any thing except an affection such as they entertained for him, appeared to him to contain some frightful mystery of iniquity. It was not the business of Father Waring to lead the pupil into less abhorrent notions of love and beauty ; but as the verbs in the Latin Grammar began with *Amo*, he annexed to it the word *Deum*, and thus in showing the child that it was possible to utter in Latin so pious a sentence as *I love God*, he led him to see that there was nothing criminal in the language of Virgil and St. Augustin, and that the tongue of the mass was not essentially that of devils.

The mode which the good Father took to wean him from his personal dread of the Catholics was very judicious. He pointed out to him, one day, a gentleman of the neighbourhood, who had often taken him on his knee, and given him cakes and kisses. He was coming away from a cottage, the inmates of which, sick and meagre, had crowded to the door, and were pouring blessings on him, this gentleman, for his charity. The tutor, seeing the pupil's face glow with admiration, asked him what he should think of a country in which such a man

as that would not be safe ; of a people who would not only hinder him from doing such kind offices, but actually seek his life, and not suffer him to lay his head down at night in peace. The child could only express his astonishment, and say it would be very wicked.

“ But suppose the English people were to do so.”

“ Oh, the English people could never do so. That is impossible.”

“ No, it is not,” said the Jesuit, “ provided the gentleman were a Papist.”

“ Ah, but it is impossible the gentleman should be a Papist. He is too good ; and besides, he does not look like one of those wicked people. He is quite another sort of a man.”

“ But, my dear boy,” observed the tutor, “ suppose now you were all in the wrong about this look of the Papists, and that they neither had frightful faces nor did wicked things ; and suppose that, instead of these bad actions and looks, many of them were as kind and as handsome as your good father, Sir Edward, and did the same charitable things that he does, and loved little children, and gave bread to the poor ? Did you ever see a gentleman with one of the faces you speak of ?”

“ No, I never did.” (This, as I have before observed, was a mistake of little Philip’s, for he had seen plenty of them, some belonging to very honest Presbyterians ; but they had not the same effect on his mind.)

“ And yet,” returned Mr. Waring, “ you have seen dozens of Papists or Catholics.”

“ Oh, no.”

“ Yes, you have, to my knowledge.”

“ How ? I can’t have done that, or I should never have forgotten it. Besides, Esther told me, and she knows.”

“ Did you never find Esther mistaken ? Has anything she told you never turned out to be false ?”

The boy pondered upon this, and said yes. He had known her say, that she had not been sleeping or looking out of window, when she had. She confessed to his mother and father, that she did not know, for certain, anything about the wicked woman and the man in white ; and he remembered in particular, that having promised to keep secret her going to sleep one night with the candle burning at the bedside, which she

had left so because he was afraid, he got into great trouble about it, because nothing could force him to say, that he knew she was not awake.

Here is moral energy, thought Mr. Waring; out of that we can make all the rest. "Well, my boy," resumed the priest, "you see then that a well-meaning person may sometimes make a mistake; and when not very wise, may now and then be guilty of a little untruth. Perhaps you have been so yourself?"

The boy coloured and was silent.

"I don't mean to be angry with you, my child, for what is past; but you will soon be growing a man, and it is the business of a man to speak the truth." (The good Father did not add, that he had the greater charity on this point, inasmuch as, like many other honest men, who scorned to utter a falsehood, except in the way of business, he could go considerable lengths the other way, in behalf of the interests of his order.)

"I am beginning to leave off story-telling," said the boy, colouring more violently, and with a divided feeling of pride and humiliation. "I have not told a story since I have been at the Lakes, and I did not tell half so many, after my mother cried about it, and begged me not."

Mr. Waring bestowed great praises on his pupil's candour, and proceeded to show him how it was possible to make mistakes, and tell stories about the religion of people, as well as everything else: how the Saviour himself had been abused and reviled and buffeted, and at last put to death by the Jews, in consequence, as he divinely expressed it on the cross, of their "not knowing what they did:" how the descendants of those very Jews were formerly believed by the English people to kill and eat little boys, like the ghost that Esther had so foolishly talked of, though the great man, called Oliver Cromwell, of whom he must have heard so much to his praise and glory, had thought fit in these latter times to think of getting them together, and giving them a church, to pray in: how Protestants had put men to death for not being of the same mind as they, an example of which he instanced in a great preacher at Geneva, who ordered a Spaniard to be burnt for it (the good Jesuit here contrived to say as little further about stakes as need be); and finally, how at that very moment, he knew of a man full of kind-heartedness, a most ex-

cellent man, a lover of little children, and a helper of the weak and poor, who was forced to hide the charitable actions he performed, nay, who was compelled, with the tears in his eyes, to beg the very poor whom he assisted to say nothing about it, lest such of the English as had been led to think ill of Catholics, should find it out and kill him; for, to say the truth, this good man he spoke of was himself a Catholic.

The boy expressed his surprise at all this, saying that he never could have believed it, had not so good a gentleman told him; and adding, that he wondered the poor people, who must know the other gentleman's kindness, did not tell everybody, and so convince them.

"Ah," said the Jesuit, "but everybody is not so clever and kind-hearted as my little Philip; and therefore they are not so ready to abandon a foolish thought in which they have been nurtured. They would only go and tell the gentleman's name to his enemies, and so have him killed. You would not do this?"

"I'd die first," cried the boy, stamping his little foot.

Father Waring saw the reliance he could place on this spirit; and stopping and seating himself on a bench at the foot of a tree, and looking the boy in the face, he said, "Suppose, Philip, I were a Catholic?"

"You!" cried the boy smiling, but changing colour:—"Ah, I dare say a Catholic may do kind things, since you tell me so: but you do nothing but kind ones."

"Allowing that to be true, yet suppose nevertheless that I were still a Catholic? These arms, which have so often embraced you, you would not like to see bound in fetters by a jailer? This neck, around which your own arms were thrown when you recovered from the fit of sickness, on your first coming, you would not bear to see chopped in two, and perhaps the poor pale head smitten on the cheek?"

"Oh," cried Philip, "do not talk so. I cannot bear to think of it."

"And you would die, sooner than go and tell of me?"

"I'd die a hundred times over; and they should smite my head on the cheek, too, though it is very dreadful to think of."

"My dear child, I *am* a Catholic."

"Is it true?" said the boy, instinctively retreating, and looking at him, as if he would nevertheless have avoided him, like a person fascinated.



“The child is shocked,” cried poor Father Waring; and he turned aside, putting his hands before his face.

Philip leaped to him, pulled down his hands, and looked him in the weeping eyes. “Forgive me,” cried he, “’tis all Esther’s fault. I am growing more sensible, you know, every day; and I read Plutarch, and know that there were good men among the heathen: and I am sure—oh, I am sure—(returning the Father’s embrace as he said it)—that a Catholic may be a very, very good man. So do not cry. I never saw a man cry before, and it is very terrible.”

There was now complete confidence between the tutor and his pupil, in all that related to the Father himself. The secret of the family he did not think he had a right to disclose: and as inquiries soon afterwards began to be made about them, and they thought proper to change their quarters, he went also into another part of the country, in order to diminish the trace of connection between all parties. Philip was then taken back to his father’s, but not before the Jesuit had contrived to go there himself in disguise, and, in an interview with Lady Herne, disclose to her the blessed prospect of her child’s openness to conviction.

The boy was greatly affected, on learning from his mother, that she too was a Catholic. Tenderness, pride, and the imperative necessity, as she thought, of delaying no longer the chances of his eternal welfare, prompted her to this step; but the calculation she had made on his filial readiness to think like herself, turned out to be unfounded, for reasons before mentioned. It is not to be supposed that he hesitated on points of controversy; or that, as a devout Christian of some sort (for, between Esther’s folly and Sir Edward’s carelessness, it was not very clear what sort of Christianity it was), he was not equally prepared to be Catholic or Protestant, according as his affections might incline him; but he had been so often told of the impossibility of Catholics to be saved, that after giving up this prejudice to the demands of their reasoning, he was not prepared to concede to them the very same right of exclusion against the Protestants; and Lady Herne, in the heat and anger of her arguments, on finding an unexpected difficulty in her way, threw him out in his willingness to oblige her, by a transport of weakness, which she afterwards bitterly repented. She held the boy at arm’s length, looked him in the face, with

an expression of horror, part of which was affected, and pushing him scornfully from her, called him a little obstinate heretic; adding, that he would go with all other heretics, and Esther, and the wicked playfellow they had brought him, into the place prepared for the devil and his angels.

This playfellow was a little girl, the daughter of one of his father's parliamentary friends. The boy bent his forehead downwards, in the premature meditation to which he had been accustomed, and after a moment's pause, said, "I am very sorry, dear mother, that you should be so angry with me; but what you say is impossible. God is too good."

He would answer nothing but this, to all that she said to him for weeks afterwards; and the answer was invariably worded in the same manner: "What you say" (meaning, that Protestants would be eternally punished for differing with Catholics), "is impossible. God is too good."

The priests concealed in the house, on being told by her ladyship of these frightful responses, rebuked her haste and imprudence. This threw her into a transport of penitential tears; and, glad to be assured that the fondness natural to her would still effect her purpose, she did nothing but caress and fondle the child, and try to unsay, without absolutely doing so, the words which occasioned so much mischief. Father Waring, who had now been added to the number of the concealed, saw that the task of making a proselyte had better be taken out of her hands. He disclosed himself to the boy, who was delighted to see him: he affected, now he was entering his teens, to consider him as at a time of life when he had a right to demand every confidence: and, after asking permission of the brethren, who gave it him with God's blessing and the spirit of so many martyrs (such indeed as they were prepared to show themselves), he opened him the doors of the old dreaded chambers, and introduced him to mild and fatherly men like himself, whom he described as having double his goodness.

This was like making the boy acquainted with a new world; and he could not but feel, that the necessity of secreting itself in this manner, was not to the credit of the old one. But sudden and great experiences are apt to carry thoughts further than people intend they should go. I have had occasion to learn this myself, even in the course of my lighter existence; and my friend Philip was a thinker, at an age when I thought

of nothing but how to get through my lesson, and rush out of doors to play. As he had proved himself a man in keeping a secret, and daily proved it, so he now exhibited a premature manhood in calmness and strength of argument; but his imagination was as extreme as ever, perhaps more so, and his sensibility was proportionate. It was therefore resolved by the good fathers to make a grand overwhelming appeal to his sensibility and imagination. They were qualities that had been old allies of their religion; a soul was to be saved, fit to enjoy them in all their sacred beauty; and a new danger was to be thought nothing of, in bringing the bright vision into play. Heaven, it was resolved, should become visible in the house. The kind hostess would think herself repaid for all her good offices by the sight; to say nothing of the purpose it had in view; and should a beam of the sacred vision escape to the common world and betray them, what signified the sending half a dozen souls to heaven, provided one other accompanied them, who without the hazard would have been lost.

Thus reasoned the kind fathers, chiefly Irishmen, and sanguine by temperament as well as belief. Some small ladders were procured from time to time, and fastened together, so as to enable the operator to command the walls of the chapel; two or three friends came to assist; and instead of the tall dreary room, "walled" about with pretended "disrespect," which a skylight served only to show in its nakedness, when the inmates of the two houses assembled at mass, a scene was to be set forth, which a lively and affectionate spirit should have reason to take for a piece of heaven itself, especially when harps should sound, and odours be inhaled like the airs of Paradise. It may be as well to add, as some further excuse for the risk which the good fathers ran, that the season of persecution just then had become comparatively mild, and that the most sanguine among them believed even a new period to be approaching. Perhaps also, among other motives of which they were not so conscious, or at any rate did not choose to avow to themselves, the having something to do was none of the least.

The house next to that of Sir Edward, or I should now say of Sir Philip Herne, was the middle one of three, situate between Drury House and Lincoln's Inn Fields, near the Duke's Theatre, and looking at the back into the garden of my

Lord Craven. The chapel was on the same side, occupying a part of the building which was lower than the rest, and admitting light from above. Instead of wainscot or tapestry, the walls, divided by partitions of common wood, appeared to have nothing over them but a wash of plaster, broken into patches here and there, and presenting a desolate spectacle. But this was artificially contrived; for in reality, the piers, thus divided, consisted of squares of washed canvas ingeniously fitted together, and concealing a wainscoting of beautiful walnut. The first occupier of the house, who built and was proprietor of all three, had taken these means of at once obscuring and preserving the room, when the persecutions against his faith originally broke out. The squares, though admirably adapted to deceive the eye, could easily be removed; and it was his intention, had he lived till the arrival of a better period, to occasion a surprise to the faithful, not unressembling a miracle, by admitting them to the spectacle of the dilapidation at break of day, and to that of the restored beauties of the room an hour or two afterwards. This marvel it was now the intention of the inmates to put in practice.

But the beauty, thus concealed, was not confined to mere wood, however polished and finely grained. On the side, where the steps remained that showed the place of the altar, and where a large draperied table was set with great labour and trouble, whenever mass was performed, there was a mystery behind the canvas, towards which such of the worshippers as had seen it, still bent the eyes of their imagination, deriving a sacred pleasure, almost as lively as if the sight were visible. This was a paradise, as it is called, or representation of the beatific vision, personified by the holy sacrament amidst circles of angels. It was built up of painting and wax-work, aided by every illusion of perspective, and was copied from a work, said to have been designed by the famous sculptor Torrigiano. (I repeat all these catholic details for the benefit of my children, and for such of you as go too little to chapel.)

Supposing the frames to be removed in this quarter, a curtain became visible, divided in two, reaching from the ceiling to the place of the altar, and of a width handsomely proportionate to the height. The touching of the spring, on either side, would draw back the two draperies, which receding into cases prepared for them, left the folds of two others

visible, each collected by the hands of a gigantic angel in wax-work, so that the curtain seemed to have been withdrawn by celestial means. The recess contained clouds, both relieved and painted; angels of all sizes, placed according to the rules of perspective, and proportionate to their distances: and saints and blessed spirits, many of them children, embraced and welcomed by their younger winged brethren. At the lower part of the scene, the clouds appeared to be almost bursting into the chapel, as if driven at once downward and forward by the sudden opening of paradise. Angels with fervid eyes, too happy for smiling, looked over them, as if into the eyes of the spectators, inviting them into their state of bliss. An interval was occupied by others, ascending and descending, the distance being managed so as to appear wonderfully great. Over this was the heaven of the blessed spirits, newly arrived; and above and behind these, began circles of angels, with harps and palm-branches, looking away from the spectator to a distance more wonderful. These circles, quitting the more gorgeous colours of red and blue, with which the background and other parts of the scene were adorned, went thickening inwards into that heavenly depth, in the manner of a stupendous rose, white but yet with a roseate tinge; and the point of the flower consisted of the beatific vision above-mentioned, consisting of a sacrament or wafer of gold, set in a circle of intense red colour, bursting with golden beams, so that the sacred mystery appeared on fire. When music played in the chapel, with a curtain behind it, especially when it played softly, it seemed as if the angels themselves were the performers; and when loud, as if heaven and earth were lifting up their voices together. Nor could a spectator of any enthusiasm, however accustomed to the spectacle, help being affected by it on repetition, or feeling as if the very springs of his heart were touched, like those that sent the tears into his eyes.

Before the boy, who was now upwards of fourteen years of age, was let into the beatitude of this spectacle, measures were taken to prepare him for it. He was made acquainted with everything that could tell in favour of the Catholic religion, while the harsher parts of it were studiously kept out of sight. The pleasant side of the dwelling-place was thrown open; not a word was said of the dungeons. Nothing damnatory,

nothing bigoted, nothing intolerant made its appearance. Tertullian was not to be found in that mild vestibule. On the other hand, everything conciliating and seductive was brought forward; "whatsoever things were just, whatsoever things were lovely, whatsoever things were of good report." All the common-places of life seemed to be turned into something angelical. As Philip now slept up stairs in the room next his mother, on the plea that she needed somebody like a man to be near her, since her husband was gone, one of the good fathers who played on the lute waked him of a morning with a soft and sacred prelude, at the end of which he heard his mother's voice rising tenderly, though feebly, in honour of the child-loving Virgin. He found roses on his table, which had been set before the Virgin's picture; "there was no harm in that;" and his chamber was solemnly blessed with a like apology. To deny such good offices, merely because they were well intended, would have been ill-natured; and thus good-nature itself was enlisted on the side of the faith. It would have been touching, under any circumstances, to see grown and fatherly men thus waiting on a boy. To contest the point with them would only have rendered it more so. A crucifix was hung up in his chamber, admirably sculptured. It was a symbol forbidden by the protestants, yet surely it was that of the divinest action ever performed on earth. Thus the catholics seemed to love and venerate divine actions, to an extent unknown by their enemies. For his Latin lesson, besides portions of Thomas à Kempis' *De Imitatione Christi*, the noblest passages were set before him out of St. Augustin; and few writers have nobler. He read French in the letters of St. Francis de Sales, famous for converting the crabbedest of the reformed church; and he was made acquainted with the Spanish tongue, by means of the seraphical St. Theresa, whose history soon produced in him a confusion of ideas respecting earthly and heavenly love, more convenient as a means of unsettling his mind in general, than safe for his time of life. Nor were the flowers of heathen genius omitted, though with the canker (as the good fathers thought) cut out. Whatever was to be the case with regard to catholicism, to love he was an ardent convert; and such he would have been, had there been no such person as St. Theresa. There were Theresas among the Presbyterians, as loving, if not as seraphical, as

any. One of these had already made him a proselyte, as will be seen presently ; and Father Preston, who ventured further in this track of discipline than his brother Waring would have done, little suspected that the glowing praises bestowed by his pupil on the fair Spaniard, had an eye to an image of her in an English cap and pinner. They had hung up beside his bed a picture of St. Theresa, as she is usually represented, with a seraph holding a dart beside her. In the face of the saint, the young novice had found a resemblance to his friend in the cap and pinner ; and himself he could not help taking for the seraph. These impressions were completed by a book that had lately appeared, written by a convert to the church of Rome ; to which, besides the attraction of its own merits, of the proceeding of the author, and of a most seraphical style of writing, the puritans had given the last possible zest by an endeavour to suppress it. I allude to the poems of Crashaw, Mr. Cowley's friend ; a man of genius, though perhaps a little weak, who a few years afterwards died at Loretto, where he had become an officer of the famous Flying Chapel. In Crashaw, Sir Philip thought he had found a worthy lover of St. Theresa ; and accordingly, Miss Fleming and he, the poet and the saint, and St. Alexias and his bride, made up a singular confusion of one another in his imagination, all denying themselves their earthly love, only to be able to accord the more vehemently ; and desiring nothing so much as martyrdom, purely because the joys of it were described in language the least resembling a spirit of self-sacrifice.

Philip had been taken several times into the next house, to hear a Catholic sermon, and to witness the performance of mass. He expressed great pleasure at it, smiling at his former fears of "the white man," especially when he saw his friend, Mr. Waring, invested with the awful drapery. It cost him, however, some struggles at first ; and nothing could make him declare himself a Catholic, unless his old friends the Protestants could be guaranteed from eternal reprobation. In vain, it was argued, that they might repent at their last hour ; that a single instant sufficed for confession ; and that it was impossible to say to what helps the divine goodness might not condescend at that awful moment. Philip could not understand how the necessity itself was compatible with the divine goodness. He was told, that thousands of Protestants

were doubtless converted at that moment ; nay, perhaps the far greater portion. "But are there any," said he, "that still remain Protestants, and suffer the dreadful doom for it? Is there a single one?"

"Assuredly. It is doubtless too true ; instances have even been known, in which the obdurate men shut their souls to conviction at that very moment, and died in their impenitence. They have gloried in it."

"And these men were good?"

"It was said so."

"Do you think so?"

"They have done good deeds."

"Were their deeds like those which made me believe in the existence of good Catholics? Were they kind to the poor? Did they visit the sick and fatherless?"

"Yes ; but the same deeds may be performed from different motives."

"That may be ; but who is to say that the motives of Protestants in doing good, are worse than those of the Catholics? Who is to say that Father Waring was kind when he helped the poor traveller, like the good Samaritan you preached of, and that the same action is not equally kind in a Protestant? Why, the good Samaritan himself was not even a Christian, and yet our Lord praised him."

"He had not had the benefit of the light, which was then rising on the Gentiles. It is conceded, my child, that heretics may do good deeds ; they may evince charity, and they may possess hope ; but without faith, without a right belief in the truth (and truth can be but one truth, it cannot be at once a truth and a lie), God, in the depth of his wisdom, has decreed that they shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Men may wonder ; may implore ; may be terrified. The more terrified the better, if it makes them reflect. But it is not for weak and erring creatures to contest the judgments of the All-Wise. The angels themselves cannot fathom them."

"No," said the young Protestant ; "I have often heard you say as much ; and therefore, I tell you this" (raising his voice, and glowing with as peremptory a fervour as any independent of his father's acquaintance) ; "that if an angel himself were to come down from heaven, and tell me that Protestants are to be damned, I should say, I will not believe



it. I can sooner believe an angel mistaken, than God barbarous."

These bold and passionate decisions, in which the conferences of the good fathers with their pupil were sure to terminate, threw our little conclave into tremors of mingled sorrow and anger. Kind counsels however predominated, for many reasons; chiefly because the majority were of kind natures. Accordingly, every tender method was to be adopted, to the exclusion of all others; and a novitiate of sweets was to be carried to its height and beauty, in the spectacle before announced.

A few hours previous to its taking place, Philip was led, as if by chance, into the next house, and shown the chapel in all its desolation. The table was not even there for the altar, nor a single piece of drapery. The walls appeared in their squalid nakedness, looking the more melancholy for a cloudy day. There was a dead silence; and as his mother sighed deeply, the youth called to mind the splendours of which he had heard, as formerly investing the chapel; and could not help sympathising more than usual with a fallen faith. The secret, however, of the real state of the walls was not withheld from him. Lady Herne, divided between her wish to overwhelm him with the full tide of religious joy, and the dread of its affecting him too much, not unmixed with a doubt of what his after feelings might be, when he should find out the deception, had been easily persuaded by the Jesuits to forego the hazard of it. Philip was told, in general terms, both of the concealed wainscoting and of the altarpiece. It was justly concluded, that the surprise would far surpass any thing he could have conceived.

In about three hours after this visit, Lady Herne invited him to attend her to mass. She prayed before she went, in his presence, kneeling under a picture of the Virgin, and "imploring the Mother of Mothers to look down with pity on this dear child, so fitted by the virtues of his heart to be made a companion of angels." She then rose, and, kissing him with the most touching emotion on the forehead and either cheek, grasped his hand, and descended with him by the secret staircase.

She stopped a moment and listened at the chapel door. There was a low sound of music.

"'Tis very beautiful," said Philip ; "but is it not perilous? I thought they were fearful of being heard."

"God hears, as well as man, my child," answered his mother ; "and God will do what seems good to him, whether for our safety or tribulation. Greater risks have been run by the pious, for a less object. We have hitherto abstained from music, rather to assure one another and to show how many consolations we can give up, than from any direct sense of peril. The walls of these houses are very thick ; and the sound is scarcely greater than the good father's lute, that woke you of a morning."

The music was a beautiful strain of Palestrina's, accompanied by two or three soft instruments, and it was suddenly joined by the voice of a female. This was a lady who had come to assist her friends in the good work, not without a strong sense of hazard. Another voice, equally touching, mingled with it after a bar or two.

"'Tis like standing at the door of Heaven," said Philip, considerably moved.

"Thanks, my child, for those blessed words !" whispered his mother. [She was in a state of glowing exaltation.] "Presently you will see Heaven, as well as hear it."

She raised to her lips the hand which she retained in her grasp, and, kissing it fervently, and looking in his eyes, with an air of joyful announcement, lifted a curtain, and led him in.

Though the curtain over the altar still concealed the vision of heaven, the chapel, as it now presented itself, was in a condition highly calculated to affect a less imaginative person than my friend. The sordid and patched wall had disappeared as if by magic, and was displaced by a polished surface of walnut. The weather itself was growing finer, with blue sky after rain, though there was no chance that the sun would be high enough to intrude with its direct beams. Wax candles, apparently of an enormous size, though in reality inserted in cylinders of painted wood, stood lighted on the altar, typical of the seraphs that minister about the throne of grace. The altar, as well as the low benches that ascended to it by way of steps, was covered with drapery ; and on either side of it, covered in like manner, and apparently balustrated with silver, was an elevation, projecting into the chapel. One

of these, surmounted with a green curtain, which concealed them from the spectator, contained the singers; the other, with the curtain thrown open, presented the pulpit, the occupier of which, when he delivered his sermon, stood sideways to the altar. On the steps of the altar officiated some of the good fathers, assisted by youths of great beauty, none of them so old as Philip (such a school of secrecy was this). One of the youths bore a censer of perfume; and the charm of this soft and lovely commencement, touched with music and odours, and waited upon by devout expectation, was completed by the very mystery of the curtain, which concealed the final reward of the righteous.

Philip gazed around him in a state of acknowledged delight. He was almost prepared to think the suddenness of the alteration a miracle. His mother blessed him once more; and turning for a moment, with an expressive clasp of her hands, towards the friends behind her (for the young baronet occupied the chief seat in front), retreated as inwardly into her devotions as she could well manage.

The service was varied that day from its usual forms, to suit the occasion. The voices of the singers were hushed soon after the entrance of the lady and her son. A preacher then mounted the pulpit, and set forth the expectations of the faithful, and the blessings they were to enjoy in Paradise; dwelling particularly on the love and tenderness of the angels one to another, and the special acceptability of the young and innocent. Mass was then performed. The bell which announces the presence of the Divine Being, commenced its silver ringing; every one bowed down (a ceremony in which Philip had never refused to join), and at the close of it, on raising their eyes, the congregation beheld the curtains, that is to say, the heavens, thrown open, and the angels worshipping the sacred mystery. It seemed as if the presence that had just quitted them, had on the instant returned above, and placed itself at the point of adoration. At the same time a double perfume rose from the censer; and the music and voices recommencing with a softness that sounded remote, the celestial choir seemed actually to become audible.

The young and imaginative person for whom this scene was got up, was greatly affected. His teachers, who had been unable to visit him with the darker notions of their creed,

found him an easy recipient for their heavenly ones, at least in spirit. A place in which trouble should find repose, and love its loving reward, appeared to him the most reasonable of all things; and as he had been in the habit of indulging visions of it, modified by those of his Catholic friend Crashaw, and his Independent and classical friend Milton (whose *Comus* and *Penseroso* had not then been followed by the *Paradise Lost*), he now saw before him a picture of their fairest conceptions, so lively and so substantially embodied, as to make it a matter of some difficulty not to take it for real.

“The gigantic angels,” says my friend’s manuscript, “who were represented as having withdrawn the curtains, and were now seen holding them in their hands, and looking into the chapel among the spectators, seemed actually to have performed that office. Those who were discerned midway between heaven and earth, seemed as if the sound of the heavenly harps, and the opening of the skies, had arrested them in rapture on the wing. The blessed spirits, embracing one another, were in stationary postures, though full of life; and the hierarchies of cherubim and seraphim, of thrones, dominations, and powers, which were all occupied in one transport of worship towards the ineffable object of their love, appeared to be suspended in ecstasy, while only a small and chosen choir interrupted the universal stillness, like a rill in the noon of Paradise.”

When Sir Philip had recovered his first astonishment, he called to mind a passage in his friend Crashaw, and owned to himself that he thought it just:—

“Rise, then, immortal maid! Religion, rise!  
 Put on thyself in thine own looks. To our eyes  
 Be what thy beauties, not our blots, have made thee,  
 Such as (ere our dark sins to dust betrayed thee),  
 Heaven let thee down new drest, when thy bright birth  
 Shot thee, like lightning, to the astonish’d earth.  
 From the dawn of thy fair eyelids wipe away  
 Dull mists and melancholy clouds. Take day  
 And thine own beams about thee; bring the best  
 Of whatsoe’er perfum’d thy eastern nest:  
 Girt all thy glories to thee, then sit down,  
 Open thy book, fair queen, and take thy crown.  
 “God’s services no longer shall put on  
 A sluttishness for pure religion;  
 No more the hypocrite shall the upright be,  
 Because he’s stiff, and will confess no knee:  
 Nor on God’s altar cast two scorching eyes,  
 Bak’d in hot scorn, for a burnt sacrifice:  
 Nor with a mean pretence, quenching the flame  
 Of love in love’s own house, swell out a name

Of faith, a mountain word, made up of air,  
 With those dear spoils that went to dress the fair  
 And fruitful Charity's full breasts of old,  
 Turning her out to tremble in the cold.  
 "Oh what can the poor look for, when we be  
 Uncharitable e'en to Charity?"

As my friend gazed on, occupied with these reflections, and willing to divide with them a spectacle, which he would have thought unobjectionably beautiful, but for one point (and this he could not help thinking both presumptuous and poor), he was addressed in a whisper by his mother. He had not observed, that, in the fervour of her delight at a scene far surpassing her most sanguine expectations, she had with difficulty kept herself from swooning. He guessed the emotion she had endured, by the trembling and faintness of her whisper.

"What think you of this, my child? Is it not heaven itself?"

"'Tis supremely beautiful," answered Sir Philip. "Oh, my dear mother, if your faith had nothing in it but such beauties as these ——"

"It *has* nothing else, to angels and blessed spirits; and such, with God's blessing, you and I may become."

"And the Protestants, mother?" Philip was going to say; but he held his tongue. He would not disturb a happiness of which his judgment could not allow him finally to partake. Lady Herne, disturbed already by the doubt intimated in his reply, put her handkerchief to her eyes, and wept. She rose, however, with eyes looking cheerful and hopeful upon him; and the service being now terminated by the drawing of the curtains, and the gradual cessation of the music, which seemed to fade away into the empyrean, the chapel was quitted with soft steps and smiling faces.

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## CHAPTER II.

It was soon found that nothing had been effected with our incorrigible Christian philosopher. Lady Herne wept; Father Waring lamented, but was always kind; the rest were surprised: one or two became angry.

The matter was not mended when Philip came to know the

boys who had officiated, and the ladies who sang. The former were as ignorant as they were handsome ; and though Philip respected their power of keeping a secret, the charm diminished, when he found under what penalties, here and hereafter, they believed themselves bound to it. As to the ladies, two of them were not much wiser than the boys, and they had no beauty at all. One of them gaped all the morning, till dinner came ; and after dinner, till cards. The other, speaking of the chapel, lamented that it was no warmer ; adding, that she could scarcely think of the notes before her, her feet were so cold. She also complained, that she had not seen "a bit of the Paradise." Sir Philip felt, that these were just topics of lamentation ; but where, thought he, is the seraphical ardour ?

There was a third lady a little more seraphical, but hardly in the right way. She was also pretty. She was fond of expressing her admiration of Mr. Crashaw, and her astonishment at Miss Fleming's not liking him better. The fair Puritan had not indeed professed to dislike him ; but her approbation, however lively, was nothing compared with that of the Catholic. The latter, a buxom dame between thirty and forty, with a high colour and long black eyes, dwelt on the beauties of this and that verse, with a relish and a nicety of discrimination, equalled only by that with which she expatiated on a good dish. Her ladyship (for she was a baron's wife) had one day a dispute with Miss Fleming, on the meaning of one of the poet's metaphors. The dispute grew warm : Sir Philip thought Miss Fleming in the wrong, and as both the fair disputants appealed to him for his judgment, he was forced to say so. Lady M. affected great moderation as the person triumphant ; her opponent, detecting the affectation, was the more vexed ; and Sir Philip (to use his own words) completed the error of all parties, by throwing in a remark or two, which increased the vexation. "It struck me," said he, "that I had never before seen my little mistress so angry at my differing with her in opinion ; and laying it to the account of love, I could not resist the temptation of saying more than I thought, in order to heighten her anger and her colour, the trophies, as they appeared to me, of the impression my love made." He went so far in this new pleasure of provocation, that they parted, in real anger on her side, and a greater presence of it upon his.

It was the last time Miss Fleming appeared in the house. Her father, immediately afterwards, forbade her visits, and she was almost as speedily married to a Puritan, who turned out a great profligate, and was thought to have broken her heart. Sir Philip never thought that the love was as great on her side as on his own. He was not sure that there had been any real love at all; but so tender-conscienced had circumstances conspired to make him, that, overlooking his own doubts, and the fact of her having married so soon after her departure, he still, he said, felt occasional uneasiness at the recollection, purely because he could not be sure that he had not contributed to make her unhappy. Such was the case, that was to be a parallel to my treatment of Miss Randolph. I felt that this was a much more excusable one; that, in fact, there was nothing in it; and although this reflection made me think the worse, for a moment, of myself, I wondered to consider what two thin-skinned consciences our religious mothers had given us, and felt mightily inclined to be ashamed for both. Sir Philip afterwards rallied with me on the same point; but, he added, with a tranquil gravity, that if it were not for such niceties here and there, principles themselves would lose their advocates, and the world be nothing but a mass of blind vigour, and helpless victims to it. "Mankind," said he, "cannot at once know, and act as if they knew nothing. They are greatly perplexed, it is true, between a little knowledge and much instinct; and the former seems only, in many instances, to be a sickly impatience. But there it is, and we must make the best of it. Perhaps it is something that will lead us into a better state of health." I confess it was a long time before I could enter into these metaphysical subtleties; but I think I understand them now, and that my friend is right.

I have seen him rough and peremptory enough on occasion, and with as little value for a thin skin as need be. I remember one evening Miss Stewart had hurt her hand, at Whitehall. I know not how it happened: something was said about a window; but the King and all his court were gathered in such a turmoil about the sufferer, that nothing was said or done to any purpose. She was in such pain, that a locked-jaw was apprehended. When the surgeon came, he talked of the necessity of cutting the nerve, but was afraid to do it; the presence and agitation of the King making him think the

responsibility too great. He proposed to call somebody else. "How, sir!" exclaimed my friend, who had witnessed a similar accident, and saw the urgency of the case by the man's countenance; "either do it this instant, or give me the lancet, and I will cut the nerve myself. His Majesty relieves you of all responsibility, do you not, sir?" The King assented, glad to have somebody to think for him; and the nerve was cut.

A greater instance of his firmness has been recorded in the account of the fight at sea; and there was another, which I learnt by dint of putting questions to him, long afterwards. Joking each other on the wounds we got in battle, I asked him, how it was, when Lord Falmouth and the others were killed, that he made so much of his hurt in the side, as to profess to be unable to go for the sponge and vinegar, when on my return with it from below, I found him as active as any one. He confessed that he took advantage of it, that he might get me out of the way of the next shot or two, thinking that I was fitter than he to survive the conflict, because my life promised to be the happier one. Is it any wonder that I loved this man? or that I saw, in the most scrupulous movements of his conscience, something worthy of the respect of the most unhesitating? No man was readier than he to suggest grounds of consolation and self-recovery, to consciences that had the smallest or the greatest need of it; yet he was as subtle, as a self-tormenter, in deprecating all merit on this account. "It is easy," said he, "to find excuses for folly, when the consequences are not to be borne by ourselves." "You would not then find the same excuses for yourself?" "Pardon me," said he, "I would; though I might not, for the same reason, be equally able to entertain them. Others find the like difficulty, which is the reason why you may safely console them. You are to suppose, however, that the regret is a proper one, and that a just knowledge of the offence implies a guard against its repetition; otherwise, nothing is so likely to sin again, as a maudlin repentance. You may repent so excessively, that you must sin again, in order to relieve yourself; just as drunkards are so sorry for their debauch, that they must drink again."

To return to my narrative. Our buxom Catholic, Lady M., undertook to console the young baronet for the loss of his mistress; and she thought she had done so. Sir Philip, in-



deed, was greatly inclined to love her instead, difference of years being no bar to a young passion; but the lady marred her design, by the excess of her information. In addition to surprising stories of confessions and absolutions, she made out that all the world were equally cunning, and had good reasons for being so; not omitting to insinuate, that young limbs were no better than old, and that it was foolish to believe in more virtue than was convenient. "Now," quoth Sir Philip, mentally, "here are at least two lies, to my knowledge; for I myself am not what she calls cunning, and Miss Fleming's cheek was as firm again as hers." And he glowed with vexation, to think that his new teacher, whom he was so desirous of loving, should thus attempt to impose on his understanding.

The Jesuits succeeded no better. They, in like manner, carried his insight into the world farther than it would otherwise have gone, at that time of life; but, in coming to particular points, they wished to stop. They wished him to have as much, and no more, knowledge than was convenient. He went farther; and their pains-taking came to nothing.

"These people," thought he, "who tell me so much ill of mankind, and yet would have me love its calumniators, are better than they pretend to be. Father Preston and Father O'Hara, who tell me I shall be damned for being a Protestant, cannot see me endure a headache without pain; and dear, foolish Lady M., who believes that nobody has more virtue than is convenient, has proved that she can hazard her life rather than betray a secret. She seems even to think nothing of this piece of virtue, though perhaps it is the sole reason for which I love her. The '*perhaps*,'" observed my friend, "was wisely added; for Lady M. was really very pretty and lively; and youth has loved upon cheaper terms."

The upshot was, that the Catholic religion appeared to him, if not a very wise or candid, yet a very good-natured religion, provided its advocates would but let it be so. This, however, they were determined it should not.

Among the priests in the next house, was one of the name of Kirkpatrick, who, irritated beyond the rest by the non-success of his arguments, had often recommended something to be done *in terrorem*; in order to frighten the young heretic. This was strongly opposed both in delicacy to their kind hostess, and in the constant hope that such a measure would

be found needless. Father Waring added a hint, that it would be worse than useless.

Kirkpatrick resolved to effect his purpose alone, if none would aid him. He soon found, however, one of the brethren, who affected to be won over by his reasoning. This was a Father Mansel, a personage remarkable for nothing in general but the quietness of his demeanour, and his acquiescence with the arguments of the majority. He was a short stout man, with a head drooping between his shoulders, and a cautious eye. He had been converted in early life; had been entered of the society at the request of Henrietta Maria, consort of the late unfortunate king; and it was supposed, that there were more reasons for his quitting the Presbyterian persuasion, than he chose to speak of. However, there was nothing to find fault with in his behaviour, unless it was that he was a little too violent in speaking against the parliament, and somewhat fonder of his repose, at other times, than became so loud an objector. He had but lately come under her ladyship's protection, yet had already made so much way in her good graces, by dint of eating her niceties and listening to her while she helped them, that he undertook, in case of necessity, to reconcile her to whatever salutary fright Kirkpatrick should think fit to practise upon her son. Nor did he reckon, as the phrase is, without his host; for he knew very well, what the other good fathers affected not to know, that no step could be taken, beautiful or frightful, which a zeal for the faith would not reconcile to this kind but feeble mother. He would even have told her beforehand, on the plea of being candid; that is to say, in order to bring out her cordials; but this Kirkpatrick would not allow. "Sufficient unto the day," said the good father, "is the evil thereof. If the sinner repenteth, there will be joy in heaven; if not, let weeping and wailing be his portion, not hers."

Father Kirkpatrick, saving a little formality in his demeanour, and a confidence of decision hardly warranted by the amount of his perceptions, was a very agreeable as well as worthy man, and as charitable on ordinary occasions as the most tolerant of his brethren. No man was more ready to assist the poor, or gave them his advice in a softer and more impressive manner. He was a little too apt to think them foolish or ungrateful, if they did not abide by it exactly as he

wished ; nor was he fond of suspecting, that in any matter in which he had been concerned, a shadow of blame could rest with himself. Above all, nobody conceived it possible that he could be a traitor or an apostate ; nor was it. "Out of this character," said Sir Philip, "come martyrs, and the makers of martyrs, not perhaps the best of the one, or the worst of the other class, but the chief of the second among both. He now thought it incumbent upon him to perform a very cruel operation on my fancy ; and he did not spare it."

I once heard a young fellow cry out, when the mob were dragging a suspected Papist out of a hedge ale-house next door to St. Pancras Church —

"Wherever God erects a house of pray'r,  
The devil as surely builds a chapel there."

This, whether intended to be applied to the Papist, or the ale-house, produced a hearty laugh. It was verified in what I am about to relate.\*

Father Kirkpatrick, in one of his disputes with his young host, had taunted him with a singular offence ; namely, that he was *afraid* to think of the eternal punishment of heretics. Sir Philip's imaginative temperament made him jealous of his reputation for courage ; and though the argument was every way absurd, especially in the mouth of one who was always appealing to his fears, and quoting the text in which fear itself is said to be the beginning of wisdom, he was induced to reply, that he dared any argument on the subject, however terrible. Sir Philip has since remarked to me, how weak was this appeal to his weakness, and how easily he could have refuted it, had he been a few years older : for the worse the threat against the Protestant, the less honour it did to the Catholic notion of the Divine Being ; and what was to be thought of a system, the doctrines of which were only endurable by thoughtlessness or want of feeling ? If they could alarm only to a certain extent and for salutary purposes, so far so good, provided that worldliness and hypocrisy had nothing to do with their inculcation, and that there was no reaction of disproof, tending to separate the interests of faith

\* Perhaps the young fellow here mentioned was De Foe. He was a warm politician at an early period of life, and bore arms under the Duke of Monmouth. At all events, the couplet here mentioned appeared some years afterwards, as the exordium of a poem written by the author of Robinson Crusoe. — *Edit.*

and morality. But the moment that wise men came to deny, good men to abhor, and multitudes to scorn and give up, there was an end of all grounds of the very pretence. "Besides," said he, "I could have told him, that the argument of being afraid would better suit him than myself; for I dared to call in question, in behalf of my Protestant brethren, what he considered as the most terrible of certainties."

"I was too young then," concluded my friend, "for these reflections. I could only anticipate them in a dim way by dint of my feelings; and I summed them all up in my old favourite word 'Impossible.' It angered the good father, as much as if I had spoken twenty treatises.

"Father Kirkpatrick" (for I shall now, for a while, continue to copy my friend's manuscript) "took me at my word. He asked me 'seeing I was so bold,' if I should have the courage to meet him in the chapel at ten o'clock at night, and there encounter for the last time, whatsoever he had to urge upon me for the good of my soul. I told him, in the generosity of my valour, that I would encounter the whole terrors of the church, short of what I knew he had not the heart to inflict upon me; and then I thanked him for his painstaking. At the former of these sentences he seemed inclined to be angry; and shook his head, as if I did not know what I was about. At the latter, he relented, and said with a pitying voice, 'Poor boy, you know not what is in store for you.'

"There was something in this speech which I did not like. I had been early made acquainted with the terrors of the church. The white men and scarlet women of poor Esther (though she had long 'stood confessed,' as the poets say, a silly crone) were not without their effects upon me, even at the age of sixteen. My father's Presbyterian friends would sometimes denounce the inquisition and their infernal mysteries, till my mother, out of feelings which I then took to be very different ones, wept and trembled in her chair; and she herself afterwards, from time to time, did not scruple to refer me to these awful 'suspensions of God's mercy,' — chastisements necessary for rebellious children, and inflicted for the most loving purposes. I saw, indeed, that it was all talk, and that she could not help hugging her mother's heart to think that there was no English inquisition: but on reflecting how I had mortified her and her friends, how angry Father Kirk-

patrick was in particular, as well as the little sturdy convert, whom I could not help likening to a familiar, and how easy it might be to reconcile my mother to the most terrible measures, on the plea of averting a doom incomparably more terrible, I considered the matter very boldly till nine o'clock, and then went and consulted Father Waring.

“Father and son were not words without meaning in my intercourse with this excellent man. I had learnt to love him as a real son, and he beheld in me a youth, who had derived from him almost all that he knew, and who was grateful for it. It is true, he had put some very unpleasant thoughts in my head upon subjects connected with death and futurity; but it was rather in the way of speculation than dogmatism; and nothing ever made me more sensible that we love people for their intentions towards us, united with general agreeableness of intercourse, rather than for our never having any great pains to share with them, or even for the absence of pains of their own creation. For a similar reason, I preferred Father Kirkpatrick to Mansel, though the former plagued me excessively with his eternal arguments about my eternal punishment (themselves no mean part of it); whereas the latter was always praising and flattering me, ‘being assured that the young gentleman’s fine sense would, before long, render a thousand arguments needless.’ Even on the present occasion he announced his approbation of the proceeding about to take place with a smile, and converted it into a compliment to my future belief. I used to picture to my imagination Kirkpatrick giving me a wrench with the thumb-screw, and turning pale at the necessity; whereas I could not help fancying that Mansel would have gone quietly to his lobster or venison pasty, leaving me all the while on the rack.

“Father Waring relieved me at once, by saying that he should be in the chapel himself. He said, that Kirkpatrick had persuaded the others, that morning, of the necessity of what he called his ‘visible argument;’ and that, as they had agreed to be present, he had determined on not staying away. I said with a smile (for the phrase had brought back a little of my trepidation) that I was glad the argument was to be only visible, not tangible; and I asked if I might know what it was. I thought it was not without a look of shame, as well as regret, that he answered, he was bound not to tell me:

‘But,’ said he, ‘you need be afraid of nothing that the society would do, or that I can witness. Besides,’ he added, ‘my dear child, are you not our host, our generous and trusting host? — nay, answer me not : — and do you think we would turn your very generosity against you?’ I did not tell him, in reply, that the society were not in such good repute with me as some of the members of it. I might have added, what was the only drawback on the pleasure of our intercourse, that even he, lover of truth as he was, and exactor of it in others, had not been uninfected by the society with mental reservations, and arguments that tended to destroy the limits between truth and falsehood. However, I knew the excellence of his nature : I reposed on it ; and after a few minutes’ discourse on the quietness of the night, and the beauty of the stars, I returned to my room to await my summons.

“ I had an instance, as I went along, of the difficulty we experience in getting rid of the fears of childhood. Father Waring, in his paternal fondness, still called me child ; but I considered myself, by this time, as a man complete, and therefore highly resented my impressions. Nevertheless, I had not got rid of them. That night, in particular, in consequence, I suppose, of what I had been led to expect, I was more than usually sensitive to the mysteries of darkness and solitude. I had been so accustomed to look behind me on staircase and corridor, that when I resolved upon getting rid of the weakness, I could not but relapse, out of the very weakness with which I did it ; for the resolution not to look, became itself a supererogation which dared me to do otherwise ; and so betwixt the old fear and the new restriction, I found myself looking oftener than before, that I might not be tied to the superstition of not looking ! These tricks of the apprehension will appear very ridiculous to such as have not felt them, or to those who cannot see farther than their ordinary experience : but, besides what all the world are aware of on this point, who are aware of any thing, I have known one very wise, and one very brave man, who confessed that they had been often in the same predicament. I allude to Mr. Hobbes and my Lord Sandwich. Mr. Hobbes said, that he, of all men, was bound to laugh at such fancies, according to what was reported of him ; and laugh at them he did, though not for that reason ; but that habit and his nurse had been too much for him. Lord

Sandwich told me that to this day he could not go up a certain staircase at his father's house, without 'once giving a look ;' though, perhaps, it was on the last step but one ; and he said it made him laugh heartily one night, because he had just arrived from a dangerous cruise off the coast of Norway, and everybody had been complimenting him on his valour.

"Well: I was thinking of these perplexities of poor humanity, and resolving this time not to oblige the nonentity who seemed hovering at my ear, and daring me to pass the next landing-place without turning, when fate seemed to have resolved to alarm me, by introducing a ghost in front. It was a figure in white, a proper 'white man,' issuing from the opposite door. My heart immediately began to beat with violence ; I walked steadily up to it, and met a priest who had dressed himself in his surplice for the chapel. He gave me his blessing, and we parted to meet again. This ridiculous no-adventure made me prepare to expect one of a like sort in our place of meeting, and I reached my apartments full of scorn of myself, and indignation against the inferior understandings that could inflict so many of these tormenting absurdities on their posterity.

"I found Mansell with another priest, Father O'Hara, who with a deep air of interest, and in a hushing voice that added to the solemnity of the occasion (indeed the light but emphatic tones, and lifted eyebrows, of the good Irishman, made it appear, as the phrase is, 'as if something was going to happen,') told me, that service waited for me to begin.

"We descended. The night appeared more than usually silent ; and my companions by the extreme softness of their going, added to the sense of listening expectation. The door of the chapel was opened, then the curtain : and I found my hand warmly pressed by Father Waring, who led me to a seat. The chapel, instead of presenting either its polished wainscot, or its coat of pretended poverty, was hung with black. All the fathers were in white, presenting a ghastly contrast to the colour of the walls ; and they formed, with the exception of Kirkpatrick, a semicircle about me, Father Waring remaining on my right hand. Father Kirkpatrick had mounted the pulpit. He was sitting in a posture of inward prayer, with the sleeve of his surplice against his eyes. The candles were not lit upon the altar ; nor was the green curtain visible, that

covered the Paradise ; the walls were black throughout ; but there stood, a little before me, a sort of bier, holding a few tapers, just sufficient to make darkness visible. These, I was informed, represented the souls of the persons present. I said in a whisper, that if that were the case, I concluded mine was of the number. The answer was in the affirmative. I was placed, not as before, in front of the Paradise, but facing the north, the altar being on my right hand.

“ The silence lasted for some minutes, during which every one seemed to be occupied in prayer. It was then broken by the preacher, who going fervently on his knees, and putting his hands together, offered up with a real and touching emotion, which was not lost upon me, a special prayer for the success of their endeavours. He spoke of me in a manner that would have been more startling, but for the presence of Father Waring ; that is to say, as of a beloved but erring child, who was about to die ; not, he said, in the actual body, which was the first and easiest death, and which might be considered as past when I descended into that dark room now the representation of the house of mortality, but in the second and dreadful death of the soul, from which he earnestly entreated I might be saved, as a brand from the burning.

“ He then took for his text the parable of the Wedding Garment, and entered upon a discourse of considerable length. It consisted of all the ablest arguments that had been adduced in favour of a one and indivisible belief, out of the pale of which it was as impossible that salvation should exist, as good out of the pale of good. I will not repeat them here, both because it is painful to repeat such melancholy sophistry, and also lest I should be thought to go as much farther than I intend, as the good father did with his popery. Certainly he did any thing but persuade me. The very alternative that he was compelled by the nature of his arguments to set before me, however contrasted with the description of the joys of heaven, and with expressions of wonder, now affectionate and now scornful, at the possibility of their rejection by a loving and a rational soul, was, of itself, an eternal and overwhelming argument against them. My old objection, ‘ impossible,’ seemed to be riveted more deeply at every blow. He aimed apart from it in vain ; the hammer still struck there. At the same time I found it in vain to try not to be affected with his de-



scriptions, whether celestial or otherwise ; and when he alluded to me in terms of anxious affection, and drew pathetic pictures of the forlornness of a soul, left out of the congregation of friends and mothers, I wondered, for an instant, whether it was not possible, by some chain of causes, known neither to him nor myself, that so kind a man might be in the right. He made me feel very sensibly, how painful it is to contemplate one's omission at any time, or on any occasion, out of a kind and conscientious body of men, setting aside even their chances of being ultimately happier : and at these passages of his discourse I was obliged to remind myself, that there were other church-goers besides his ; that the assumption of a chance in his favour did not take away that of others ; in short, that the Protestant body in England was far greater than the Catholic ; and so I warmed and re-assured myself in imagination, by the press of that immense human multitude. If the Catholics were more numerous on the continent, that was a consideration too remote, and might be carried further than either side would have approved. Among the Protestants I was still at home. They were round and about me, in immense crowds, at that moment ; and if my mother and Mr. Waring had been but among them, I should have felt that the Catholics were cut off from me, and not I from the Catholics. In a word, the discourse of the good father was too full of assumptions of every kind ; and the knowledge with which his society had provided me, enabled me to resist them.

“ In the course of the sermon I found what was intended by the appearance of all my friends in their surplices. These were the wedding garments of the text, and shadowed forth the state of beatitude, of which the hearers were to partake. My attention was directed to a like garment, which lay over the chair before me ; and I was repeatedly given to understand, that on my putting my hands to it, which was to be understood as the signal of my conversion, I should witness a sudden change, internal and external, of the most ravishing description. I learnt afterwards, that had the signal been given, the black draperies that hung around were to fall from their nails, the curtains of Paradise to fly open, the altar start into a blaze of light, and music and hymns of triumph express the joy of heaven over the sinner that repenteth.

“As it was, the surplice was washed in vain; the preacher’s voice grew more melancholy towards the close of his sermon; nobody moved; Mr. Waring did not press my hand, though I was visibly affected; and at the end of the discourse, when a pause took place, and every one bent his head in prayer, I bent likewise, with my handkerchief to my eyes, resolved to prove, both to myself and them, that in thus obstinately holding out, I was not influenced either by unsocial or irreligious feelings.

“While thus occupied, and in the middle of an intense silence, some female voices, which I could not find in my heart to identify with my commonplace friends, began a *Miserere*, so soft and affecting, that I cannot write of it without emotion. For the moment I seemed to have done a wrong, and to require, as a criminal, the pity it implored; and in the mere softness of this fancy, which it seemed at once a pain and a pleasure to me to indulge, the tears poured down my cheeks. The pain, however, so much prevailed, that by a strong effort, I threw the blame on those about me, pitying them heartily, instead of myself; and it was at that moment that something took place in my mind, which I have noticed at the termination of severe illnesses during childhood. I mean, that I felt a singular access of knowledge or reflection, and found myself grown stronger by the weakness. My pity was without pride. I seemed to know too much to be proud of any thing; but it was full of wonder; and to the thoughts that came upon me at that moment, but which I was still too young to admit in their full force, I attribute the detention of an illness upon me at the age of twenty-one, when circumstances made them haunt me for some years.

“The voices ceased for an interval, during which the preacher, assuming a more confident tone, which he intended for joy, delivered a brief but touching homily on the text, *Beati qui in Domino moriuntur*. The singers took up the theme in a motett, the work of some rare Italian; and I observed that on the repetition of the word *moriuntur*, the lights on the table, one after the other, were extinguished. A movement, by the side of me, made me observe, that the good fathers, during this interval, had gradually knelt with their faces to the ground. On the extinction of all but one (which, not without anxiety, I concluded to represent my own spirit),

the altar suddenly burst into a blaze of light, the fathers arose, and the curtains of the Paradise flying back, I beheld the beatific state into which all but myself were supposed to have been received. A noble *Magnificat* ensued, the composition of Palestrina: instrumental music fell in with the voices; and, with the exception of the forlorn Philip, everybody was understood to be in a state of triumphant rapture. In a little while, the music ceased; the Paradise was shut up; the blaze of the altar was quenched. At this juncture, I heard Father Waring, in spite of his celestial happiness, give an earthly and profound sigh.

“ If any thing could have made me forego my sense of duty, it was a sound like this; nor was it the less impressive, in appearing to me to contain more of earthly sympathy, than of religious zeal. Indeed, I know not how far the claims of ordinary good-nature, and the wish to please, might not have gone with me at that time of life, either had it been possible to keep the minacious part of the doctrine out of the way, or had my friends been content to sophisticate as much on that point as they certainly did on others. But zeal made the cleverest of them indiscreet, with the exception of Father Waring. I believe I should say, he was too kind to dwell upon what he could not help taking for unkindly doctrines. I had afterwards good reason to suspect that had not the Society been in trouble, and himself hampered with many ties to it, he would have been as glad as myself to extricate Catholicism from its drawbacks, and retain nothing but what adorned and honoured it. But Father Kirkpatrick would hear of no compromises. ‘Buy the truth,’ said he, ‘and sell it not.’ ‘Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or one tittle of what I have said shall not pass away.’ ‘The Lord will cut off all flattering lips.’ ‘If any man shall take away from this writing the words of the book of prophecy, God shall take away his name out of the book of life.’ And so with these and many other texts, losing sight of their particular application, and all else which qualified their meaning, the good father at once contradicted half his own measures, and put an end to all chance of converting me.

“ When the preacher gave out his text of the Wedding Garment, he had not repeated the whole parable. He con

cluded with the passage, where the guests were assembled. He now took up the verse, at which he had left off.

“ And when the King came into see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment :

“ And he said unto him : Friend, how camest thou hither, not having on a wedding garment : and he was *speechless*.

“ Then said the King to his servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

“ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

“ At these alarming directions, I began to fear that the fathers, in their loving kindness, might intend some experiments upon me, not very suitable to any of us. I was preparing to resist them accordingly, when Mansel got up, and transferred the taper, that represented me, to the opposite side of the chapel; where it stood, twinkling in solitary dimness, and looking, I must say, very like what it was intended to symbolize. Father Waring, at the same time, again made me sensible of the pressure of his hand.

“ Encourage him not in his error, Brother Waring,” said the preacher. ‘ Think you that mine own bowels yearn not towards him, even as a father’s towards his child ; more especially seeing, that he is about to behold an image of the dreadfulfulness of the second death ? O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not ! Know you not the text which says, ‘ He that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me ? ’ Surely I will do that which I am called to do ; and nothing shall hinder me in the work of the Lord.’

“ Father Waring was about to make some reply, when I pressed his hand in return, to signify that I was prepared for whatever might be shown me, and that we had better remain in silence to the end. He answered the pressure by another, as if to thank me ; and then let my hand go.

“ A portion of the black drapery on the wall opposite the Paradise was now withdrawn : a grinding noise ensued, as of gates revolving on their hinges, and a spectacle became visible, the existence of which would certainly never have been dreamt of under that roof. It seems, that the founder of the diviner

show thought fit to add the present one, by the same hand, in order to furnish a contrast that might be exhibited for greater edification at certain penitential seasons. My first feeling on beholding it, was a violent effort to resist the impression it was so well calculated to make upon the imagination ; my second was an acquiescence in the impression, for the sake of neutralising it : my third was a mixture of horror, indignation, and scorn, to think that any one set of believers should arrogate to themselves the right of exercising so profane a threat over another.

“ It will be recollected, that the *Paradise* was copied from a fine work, said to be the composition of no less an artist than Torregiano. The present was a copy of another work, of similar repute ; and as a production of art, it amply deserved it. The great Italian poet, of whom I have heard Mr. Milton speak, could not have surpassed it in horror. Perhaps he furnished some of the imagery. Similar spectacles, upon a greater and still more awful scale, the scene taking place in the open air, were not uncommon at a former period in the cities of Italy. They were also known to the Spanish, and even to the old English stage ; at least when religious mysteries were performed among us ; and I have seen pictures to the same purpose, hung out over the church-doors in Genoa and Milan.

“ Imagine a masterly composition in wax and other materials, assisted like that of the *Paradise* by all the illusions of light and perspective (for there were lights in the inside), and presenting to the spectators a lively picture of the terrors denounced against sin and heresy in the next world. As two angels appeared to undraw the curtains concealing the state of bliss, so two others, with looks equally earnest, but most melancholy, seemed to have descended from heaven to perform the like office for this opening of the gulph of perdition. The scene (and you will bear in mind, that being thrown to a great distance, the figures, however small, appeared of the size of life,) consisted of a lake at once black and fiery, hemmed in by pallid rocks. Into this lake, from a stormy sky, and pursued by angelical faces and a rain of fire, fell a multitude of naked human beings, some alone, some looking frantically upward, others more frantically on the gulf beneath, many linked together from the top of the scene to the bottom, and in vain essaying to remount by each other's limbs. Here

were lovers turning from one another, as they descended, with an aversion more horrible than the torments they were about to experience; there, old people tearing their grey hairs; there beautiful women, trampled and plunged upon by demons with pitchforks; there, mothers and fathers offering to give up their heretical children to the angels their pursuers, who repelled them with eyes of scorn. Scenes of the like nature were observable by the rocks that bordered the lake, black demons, who glowed with a fire of their own, thrusting and pronging back the sufferers who attempted to get out. In the lake itself, the groups that were visible did not seem correspondent in magnitude to the numbers coming down; but on looking more narrowly, and wondering what that innumerable scatter of something white consisted of, as if the gulf had been sprinkled all over with the leaves of some pale tree, you discerned, that it was a mass of myriads of human hands, clasped together, and praying in agony out of the burning pitch.

“I will not enter further into these horrible details, especially as one thing remains to be told which doubled their horror, and completed the indignation that was rising within me. At the turning of some machine, the whole of this infernal spectacle was set in motion; and as if my ears had suddenly been thrown open, I heard, as from the distance, the cries of the voices, and the clapping of the hands. You know how loud and multitudinous a small sound will appear, if believed to be remote. The present sounded in my imagination like that of millions in agony.

“I could contain no longer. Fear and loathing conspired to wind up my anger to a pitch of frenzy, and I was rising to cry out against the profanation, when a voice arrested me from above, in a tone that I shall never forget. ‘Horrible wickedness!’ it cried, ‘Most accursed blasphemy!’ The sound came with a certain dimness to my ears; but still very distinctly. The fathers were in confusion.

“I had scarcely known, for the moment, whether to apply this denouncement to those about me or to myself, but another moment undeceived me; for a great crash proclaimed the destruction of the skylight, and in louder tones there burst in upon our ears, ‘Horrible impiety!’ ‘Detestable and blasphemous wretches! To the Clink with ’em! To the Clink!’ A throng of heads looked in upon us, talking and crying out.

“The name of the prison-house to which Papists were sent, explained all. I proposed to retire instantly to our places of concealment; and said that I would go forth to the people if necessary.

“‘It is of no use now,’ said Father Waring, ‘we are betrayed. Where is Father Mansell?’

“Father Mansell was not to be seen. He had set open the infernal exhibition. He now left others to close it.

“‘This unhappy sight,’ murmured poor Waring: — ‘better had they seen us performing works of beauty and charity: — but this is not the time for regret. My dear brethren,’ continued he, aloud; — Father Kirkpatrick interrupted him. ‘Move not,’ said he, ‘brother Waring; be comforted, my brethren. We will remain as we were.’ (He spoke with great energy, though not without considerable agitation.) ‘If the heathen fathers of Rome could sit unmoved, while the enemy was at the gates, how much more does it become us, Christian fathers, true soldiers of Christ, to stir not for the threats of the adversary?’

“‘Oh,’ cried Waring, ‘but our kind hostess above! This young gentleman! Consider, my dear brethren; and you, dear Kirkpatrick — I need only remind you of the good Lady Herne. For her sake let us retire and see what is to be done.’

“The preacher immediately descended. We all thronged up stairs, and a brief consultation was held, previous to informing my mother.

“There was no time to lose. The noise increased out of doors every moment, and it was feared the house would be burst open. I was never more astonished or appalled in my life, than when, on going to the windows of the room that we had entered, I beheld a countless multitude of people, collected by torch-light, and all bent on some determined purpose against the house. I should not have thought it possible for such a crowd to assemble at this time of night.\* They seemed to have risen from the ground. I blush to say, that my first thought was joy at my own probability of safety. I was not a Catholic, and I was well able to prove it. The thought was instantly succeeded, and punished with agony for the fate of my mother. Mr. Waring, also, even my other less

\* It might be then about eleven o'clock; but the inhabitants of the metropolis kept earlier hours at that period than they do now. — *Edit.*

amiable friends whose good qualities I knew as well as their prejudices, I felt myself bound to stand by to the utmost. I resolved to do so, and was restored to a comparatively tranquil use of my energies.

“I did not go to my mother before the rest. I feared for her weak frame, and knew that the danger would be better disclosed, in connection with the aids of religion. But I waited within call to fly to her, and had made up my mind to be taken for one of her persuasion, rather than be separated from her in case she was removed. There was no chance of escape. The three houses forming one solitary mass, every side was invested. On the other hand, the fear of the multitudes pouring in, was speedily dissipated by the arrival of the regular officers of the law. Father Waring, after a brief colloquy, let them in. He had taken upon himself the painful task of being the first to disclose the state of the premises to my mother, and the singular ceremony that had preceded it. He then went down to answer the knocking at the door, first taking the rest into my mother’s chamber; and while they were still there, he brought the officers up stairs. He introduced them to me in an emphatic manner, that brought the first tears to my relief. — ‘This, gentlemen, is Sir Phillip Herne, the master of this house, well known to some of your most eminent authorities, and himself a Protestant. Pray forget not that.’

“A person with a long aspect, and a ‘forehead villanous low,’ as the poet calls it, bowed to me, and congratulated me on my favourable prospect. The others made a lesser inclination of their heads, as if fearful of committing the dignity of authority, or hazarding a premature opinion. The politer individual, whom I remembered to have seen before, was your friend Mr. Warmestre, alias Braythwaite, of whom you will presently have a more particular account.\*

“‘The gentleman will go along with us,’ said the leading officer.

“I need not say that I intimated my obedience; but my mother! it was desirable that I should see her alone, or at least without the company of so many strangers. Father Waring motioned to me that he understood my wishes, and

\* This piece of information, like several other passages in my friend’s MS., was inserted by him, after my introduction to him on shipboard. — *Note by Sir Ralph.*



proposed the thing plainly to the officers ; adding, that the lady was in delicate health, and that the other inmates of the house could be at once summoned away from her, and counted, so as to give me the opportunity I wished for. He at the same time showed the officers that every thing was secure. In making this proposal, I observed that he looked anxiously at a paper which the pursuivant held in his hand. The truth flashed upon me in a moment. There were women in the house, the female singers. I had forgotten them till this instant, and now saw that their safety depended on the absence, or presence, of their names in that document.

“ ‘ I have directions,’ said the officer, ‘ to seize the bodies of six persons, all in priests’ orders ; but they are not the only ones on my list.’

“ ‘ The enormity of six priests all in one house was an unusual occurrence.

“ ‘ Be good enough to read the list,’ said Father Waring, ‘ and I will undertake that the whole of the persons mentioned shall be forthcoming.’

“ ‘ All in good time, all in good time,’ cried the man : ‘ what’s the use of counting one’s sheep till we’ve got ’em ? Pelham, you have seen to the doors ? ’

“ ‘ There’s a man in every room in the house,’ said Pelham ; ‘ leastways, where there’s a key to it ; and in no time there will be a man in every other. Hark ye, sir,’ there go the picklocks.’

“ At the same moment, more than one violent noise took place like an explosion, occasioned by the bursting open of doors.

“ It was the object of Father Waring to ascertain, whether the names of our female friends were in the list. In that case he intended to summon them from the place of retreat, into which he had abruptly conveyed them. He knew, that at all events their lives were safe ; and a prompt appearance might secure them indulgences, otherwise not to be expected. If their names were not in the list, he felt secure both of their lives and liberty, for reasons hereafter to be mentioned. The bursting open of the doors did not alarm him. The ladies were in a place, the entrance of which was so admirably contrived, as to be undiscoverable, either by sight or sound. No difference was perceptible from the thickest and commonest

wainscot ; and a man must have been an architect to discover, that the space it occupied was necessary to the entireness of the building. It contained also wine and bread in plenty, as well as comprised chamber and sitting-room, being in fact the place provided, in case of necessity, for the retreat of the whole household. The plate and other sacred furniture of the chapel was there, and a considerable sum of money.

“ Was it likely that such a retreat as this would not be denounced ? Father Waring had reasons for thinking it would not, especially when he saw Mr. Braythwaite among the officers. But the moment was trying.

“ It was distressing to me to hear, that there was a constable posted in every room. There was one then in my mother’s. I waited impatiently to be summoned to her. The pursuivant moved forward with his men, not being disposed to oblige Mr. Waring ; the brethren were at the same time called out of her chamber, and I was about to wait no longer but go in, when Father O’Hara intercepted me, saying in an impressive tone, ‘ Not yet.’ What the reason of this delay was, I could not conceive. I resolved however to be patient a few minutes longer, the more so as I had been unable to gratify the good fathers on other points. My patience was speedily re-absorbed during the interval, in anxious interest for the welfare of our female friends. The pursuivant, at sight of the assembled brethren, proceeded to read his list, as follows. I retain it in my memory, as distinctly as if every word had been carved upon my brain.

“ ‘ Richard Waring.’

“ My friend answered to his name.

“ ‘ Patrick O’Hara.’

“ ‘ Here ’

“ ‘ Patrick Monaghan.’

“ ‘ Here.’

“ ‘ Thomas Moleyn.’

“ ‘ *Adsum, mi fili.*’ This scholastic answer from the good old father, produced a smile among us, in spite of our sorrow.

It was increased by an objection on the part of the reader, who said that there was no such name in his list ; it was plain ‘ Thomas Moleyn.’ The venerable priest, with a countenance full of benevolence, was about to explain, when Father Waring, begging his pardon, interrupted him. He said that his good

brother merely meant to answer as the others had done. Waring was afraid that something would have been said about Latin, a tongue which these enemies of the mass held in peculiar abomination.

“ ‘ Ah,’ said the pursuivant, ‘ I conceive ; the gentleman speaks Irish.’ ”

“ The raised eyebrows of my Hibernian friends were raised higher at this mistake ; they were mightily inclined to vent a bitter jest upon it, but their cooler brother again interfered with a sign. A violent pinch of snuff was taken out of their respective boxes, and they reinstated themselves in their endurance. O’Hara even presented his box to the pursuivant, as if by way of having a generous advantage over him. The man looked at first as if he would have retreated from the offering, not knowing whether it might not be some Papistical temptation, or powder of a more dangerous result ; but he finally took the pinch. I thought he would have willingly taken the box also.

“ I should wonder how I cared at the time to notice these lighter passages, or how I could now set them down ; but that on occasions of great trouble moods lose their ordinary distinctions, and mirth is either welcomed while it is scorned, or sorrow is too great to see the value of one human emotion more than another. The man proceeded with his list.

“ ‘ Talbot Kirkpatrick.’ ”

“ ‘ I am here.’ ”

“ ‘ Oliver Plunket.’ ”

“ ‘ Here.’ ”

“ ‘ Dame Elizabeth Herne.’ ”

“ ‘ Blessed saint !’ cried Kirkpatrick, ‘ thou can’st not harm her.’ Father Waring intimated to the pursuivant not to attend to this ebullition, and then pointed to the chamber, as much as to say there was no fear of a sick woman’s escape. The mention of my mother’s name, I observed, brought out all the handkerchiefs of the good fathers, and for the first time they shed tears.

“ ‘ Sir Philip Herne, Baronet, harbourer of the above.’ ”  
 “ ‘ How !’ I was about to exclaim, ‘ a harbourer of my own mother ! Is this the way a son is to be designated ?’ Waring, who was our *Numen Prudentia*, without whom fortune would have gone still harder with us, pressed my arm in token of

silence. 'This is the young gentleman,' said he; 'I introduced you to him but now.'

" 'Esther Follet, servant; not a Papist.'

" 'I have been to her,' said Mr. Braythwaite; 'the poor creature is in a state of bewilderment, and sorely smitten.'

" 'Mary Pinnion, servant, a suspected Papist.'

" 'In the next room.'

" 'William Hill, servant, not a Papist.'

" 'He is here.'

" Not a word of our friends in their sanctuary. A glance of congratulation passed round about among us.

" 'Very few servants,' said the pursuivant, 'for so rare a set of masters!'

" Kirkpatrick was going to fire up. 'Our habits,' said Waring, 'teach us to wait upon ourselves. You know that, surely, seeing the number of religious you must have met with.'

" 'Ay, ay,' returned the man, 'I know ye. Let James Gilby alone for ferreting out a Popish badger.'

" But I must call to mind as few of these speeches as possible. They border upon events too painful. Still less can I set down the graver impertinences of one or two of the man's followers, who, in their quality of Independents, lorded it at a rate that would have been ridiculous under any other circumstances, and had a text for every absurdity. I had just seen charity violated by the doctrines of one sect; I was now to be more painfully repelled by the practical intolerance of another.

" 'Will you take your oath,' said the pursuivant's deputy, 'that this list contains the whole of your household?'

" 'Tilly-valley,' cried his superior, 'what signify their oaths?' A Papist and an oath! Lord help us! Oaths and Papists, I say! Why, they would take an oath that you were going to drink Canary, and give you poison.'

" 'We know but of one such person who has disgraced our community,' said Waring, at length moved to show his displeasure; 'he is not here.'

" Father Kirkpatrick held down his head, for he had often protested against our dislike of Mansell. Father Moleyn looked on us all with the wonder and sweetness of a child. The rest were evidently in a state of suppressed indignation.

“ ‘ With your leave, gentlemen all,’ interposed Mr. Braythwaite, with smiling deference, ‘ I may be permitted to bear testimony to the truth of the document, seeing that in former times, together with worthy Mr. Lawrence, and others of the household of faith, I here partook of the hospitality of Sir Edward Herne and his mistaken lady, never dreaming that she could be so far carried away. I call to mind that on the decease of Sir Edward, the number of his domestics was greatly reduced, purposely, peradventure, to admit of the new expenditure. The poor lady, after her light, is extremely charitable.’

“ I had seen this man before. I now recollected, in particular, having dined with him at my mother’s table two or three years back, and I had a suspicion that I had seen him coming out of her sitting-room not many weeks antecedent to the present time. What he had just stated was calculated to do us service ; and yet there was something in it, which, in connection with the suspicion that came upon me, and the speaker’s whole person, countenance, and manner, gave me such an impatient disgust, that I could have seized him by the throat. I looked at Waring, and observed him change colour, evidently from a like feeling.

“ The pursuivant acquiesced in Braythwaite’s judgment, intimating in a brutal speech that his hounds would leave no corner unsearched. ‘ And now,’ said he, ‘ for the poor lady.’ I thanked him for this, however ; happy to see that in the roughest natures there lurked some remnants of human kindness. The man had, in truth, some reason to be kind, seeing that every thing was so straight before him, and submissive ; but he might have done nothing but lord it on this very account. In short, calamity makes us feel as slavishly grateful sometimes for the least evidence of goodwill, as it does bitter and violent against the reverse.

“ The men were accordingly proceeding to my mother’s chamber, when Father Waring took their principal aside, and whispered him. The man looked very serious, asked a question or two, and then looked earnestly at myself. ‘ The door shall be open,’ said Waring ; ‘ but you would not — you will not’ —

“ ‘ No, no,’ interrupted the officer. ‘ Go in, young gentleman, we will await your pleasure.’

“ It is to be borne in mind, that the noise of the populace out of doors, instead of diminishing all this time, had increased to a frightful degree. ‘ Bring ’em out! Bring out the wretches, the sorcerers!’ were among the least of the appalling cries. ‘ Death to the bloody Papists!’ was the cry at one time. At another, the voice of the multitude rose in one according thunder of, ‘ Burn ’em! Burn ’em in their own fires!’ These three last words were then repeated like a burden; and for some minutes, as if the crowd were beating time to what they said with their feet, we heard nothing but a horrible, deep sound of, “ Their own fires! Their own fires!’ Hill, the servant, looking out of window, said that the whole mass was ‘ rocking to and fro.’

“ Most unfortunate was it, that the windows of my poor mother’s bed-room looked full upon this scene, though at a good height. The tumult grew so alarming, that just as Mr. Waring and myself had withdrawn to a side of the room before entering the chamber door (for he wished first to speak with me), the servant came up as pale as death, to know if the crowd had not better be spoken to. I determined to address them accordingly, and was about to open a window for that purpose, when the cries were exchanged for an enormous hurra. ‘ ’Tis a troop of horse,’ said Mr. Waring. ‘ Praise be to God! the relief is inexpressible! Surely,’ he added, in an involuntary prayer, ‘ O righteous God, O great and most merciful Father, the woes of the heart may be indulged a little space!’

“ The scene was tremendous. The voice of the crowd when I first approached the window, at once roared and was broken up, like a human sea. There were so many torches, that the houses opposite, forming the side of an unfinished street, took a glare from them, as if our own house had been on fire; and the light falling on the mass of faces in front, it seemed as if I was about to address a congregation of pallid dæmons.

“ The arrival of the cavalry produced a comparative quiet,—an inexpressible relief indeed. Mr. Waring again led me apart, took my hand in his, kissed it, and could not speak. His whole frame shook with emotion. ‘ My dear friend,’ said he, ‘ my beloved child, for you will never refuse me the right to call you by that title, whether it be for a short time or

for a long, I set you a bad example with these tears and this weakness, but I need not ask my Philip to understand and forgive me: he is wise before his time; unhappy I fear also, not the less on that account.'

[“Esher will forgive my repeating these words, which I do, God knows, out of reverence for him who said them, and not for myself. I would give up all the glories in the world, if I had them, for the sake of one or two beloved and loving friends. Esher will see for what melancholy purpose my tutor was thus raising me in my own esteem.”]

“‘My child,’ continued this excellent man, “I think we poor calumniated brethren have some reason to be weaker to-night, even than our friends who sorrow for us; and I will not scruple to demand of the friend I love best in the world, that he shall help me to support my weakness by dint of suppressing his own. If you, Philip, cannot assist us at this moment, who can? I know what you would say,—but it is not that—it is not of my own sorrows I speak at this moment, nor even of those of the brethren; no, nor yet of any thing that you are hitherto acquainted with. Evils come upon us most unexpectedly, as we have all seen this day; and surely those endure them in the best manner, who endure them in the kindest and most considerate.’

“I began to feel great alarm, not without some suspicion of the cause of it, but I hoped that my dread made me mistaken.

“Father Waring continued:—‘There is no knowing,’ said he, ‘what frightful things may happen to us Catholics. It is necessary that we should look all chances in the face, like men. I do not say that the worst will happen, but it may; and in that case, I ask you, dear Philip, where you should wish me to be?’

“‘Where wish you to be?’

“‘Yes: in heaven or on earth? Would you wish to be in heaven at once, or to remain, and witness the affliction of the church I love; perhaps endure a thousand terrors instead of one?’

“‘Oh, my father, is it possible that you would announce to me—Nay, if my fears be just, you need not tell me so:—say nothing:—I shall comprehend all, and will set myself to act as you would have me.’

“ My friend shook my hand with a manly emotion, looked in my eyes through his tears, and said, ‘ Come ; you will not misconceive *me* when I say, “ Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.” You know where it is that the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. If ever a saint rested, it is she.’

“ His words faded away as he spoke. It was now my turn to lead. I took him by the arm, and we went into the chamber.

“ What need I say ? My mother reclined in her elbow chair, her two hands thrown together on her lap, her cheek leaning against one of the wings of it — dead.

“ ‘ The anticipation of martyrdom (for she feared the worst) had been too much for her. Constantly on the watch against discovery, and believing herself prepared for it, the shock was nevertheless too great when it came ; especially when it came in a manner as terrible as it was abrupt. The first news of it she received with irrepressible alarm, which she vainly endeavoured with many self-reproaches to overcome. At the same time she expressed her gratitude for the endeavour which had been made to convert me, and eagerly asked whether it had succeeded. Father Waring did not scruple to answer, that I was in ‘ a heavenly frame of mind, and that he hoped the very best of me.’ She clasped her hands with transport towards heaven. ‘ But then they will harm him !’ said she ; ‘ they will kill him !’ — sinking from the height of her rapture into an agony of maternal fear. Waring replied, that although my disposition was excellent, and he doubted not I should be an angel in heaven, yet the declaration of my faith had been interrupted by the breaking up of the assembly, and that he had good reason to know that I should be safe.’ — ‘ But you !’ — cried my mother, — ‘ the dear, good fathers !’

“ I must draw a veil over the rest. My poor mother, naturally of a delicate constitution, sick, and worn out with long anxieties, could not help wringing her hands on all our accounts, her own not excepted. This produced a burst of self-reproach, and she grew too agitated to remain in bed. Her servant, Mary Pinnion, almost as overcome as herself, helped her to rise in her dressing-gown ; the noise of the multitude all the while growing more vehement and frightful. My mother was entreated not to go to the window ; but she



seemed to think it necessary ; perhaps the more because of her terror. She seated herself, before she looked, in her chair, which was close to the window,—hesitated, and gasped for breath,—gave one glance, and instantly averting and shutting her eyes, expired without a word.

“The poor girl, Mary Pinnion, though no Papist, nor in the secret, lay on the bed her mistress had left, exhausted with grief and amazement. It was from her I learnt these particulars, which Father Waring would not tell me.

“How often have I gone over the whole of them in my mind, as a sort of penance for I know not what offences. Months—nay, years afterwards, though my reason told me I had no cause, I reproached myself for not having been with my mother sooner. I reviewed every circumstance of my young life, small as well as great, (indeed some of them were more than boyish humours,) in which I had vexed her: in short, I underwent, in double measure, all that tendency to regret and self-reproach, which consciences, tenderly nurtured, are apt to give way to with such wilful extravagance, upon the loss of those whom they have more loved than thought with.

“Yet these were not my reflections at the time. I was greatly shocked ; but I felt such a movement of indignation against the mob, as made me wish myself a destroying spirit, that I might have poured out a phial of wrath upon their assembled heads. The very turmoil of my spirits helped to sustain me. The cause of my poor misguided friends was now entirely in my hands ; and when I thought of the new anxieties my mother would have gone through, had she survived, her departure seemed a providential mercy. Such it was called by Mr. Waring, and such I consented to regard it.

“Some hasty arrangements, with the approbation of the commander of the troop of horse, took place, for the security and respectful treatment of the remains ; after which, the mob now becoming impatient with the soldiery, we all descended to go to prison. Some coaches were in readiness to convey us. The moment the people caught sight of us, they burst into such a yell of execration, that I felt greatly relieved on finding an avenue formed by the troop of horse. There were, in all, three coaches, some prisoners and officers going in each ; and as each of them was filled, it moved a little onward, so that the mob crowded to the windows before the soldiery had

time to settle themselves on either side. It was truly frightful to see them thrusting in their faces and hands, and avowing all the while the most ferocious wishes, loading my companions with abuse, as if they were rather demons than men. I was in the first coach. They asked if I was the young gentleman 'who was to be sacrificed?' and, upon the pursuivant's answering, 'This is the gentleman you mean,' they thrust their hands towards me in congratulation, that I might shake them. I recoiled in horror.

" 'You had best do it, sir,' said an officer; 'great multitudes are not to be trifled with.'

" I looked at Mr. Waring, whose face seemed to say that it would be an adherence to my friends, instead of an abandonment of them.

" I submitted my hands accordingly, as if to a basket of vipers.

" 'You are mistaken, my friends,' said I, 'there was to be no sacrifice.'

" 'What!' cried a tall, rugged fellow, his face seamed with the small-pox, 'tell me that, when I saw it with my own eyes—the flames waiting for you, and the villains whetting their knives!'

" 'Lo you now,' cried another, whose face I could not distinguish, 'see the temptations of Satan, which shall make a man minister to his own destruction.'

" 'Hang 'em all up,' shouted a third, 'and their willing imp of the devil along with them!'

" By this time the soldiery had formed on either side of us, and the procession moved on. The mob accompanied us to the prison, increasing as they went, but gradually becoming silent, with the exception of a few voices now and then, I suppose of the receders. I discerned, between the horses' heads, the same faces that surrounded the coach, the tall rugged fellow among them, who mocked and mowed at me, as he caught my eye. My mind for some time was divided between two feelings: at one moment, I congratulated myself that my danger was not so great as that of my companions; at the next, I resented the thought as unworthy, and persuaded myself that I would fain have been just in their condition, in order that they might have been certain of my contempt and hatred of their persecutors. At intervals,

nevertheless, I felt strongly how painful it is to be at a disadvantage, even imaginary, with any body of one's fellow-creatures ; and when I heard them devoting my friends to the torments of another world, I could not but be struck with the reflection that those friends themselves had just been threatening me with the very same catastrophe. Another reflection also forced itself upon me ; the indignation of the mob, however vulgarly and extravagantly vented, might be traced to the persecuting conduct of the very faith that was now persecuted. Must there, then, thought I, be nothing but persecution for persecution ? Is one wrong eternally to produce a wrong to punish it ? or will a time come when those very actions and reactions will teach people better, and human nature find out that the doctrines which produce them must, so far, be themselves in the wrong ? Can Christianity itself long continue to be mixed up with things unchristian ?

“ Perhaps these reflections were not as clear to my mind then as they are now. Most probably they passed through it with as much dimness as rapidity ; but every new piece of suffering brought a new source of light with it, with which I afterwards investigated my human nature at leisure.

“ The main subject of consideration to all of us, as we went along, was the fate we were going to encounter, the nature and degree of it, and how it was to be arrested or met. When we arrived at the prison we had to undergo another burst of execration, which made us glad to escape into its dreary walls. We were locked up in different cells, and passed a dismal night. Next day, to my inexpressible relief (I could not account for it, but such it was), I was summoned into the presence, not of a subordinate judge, nor even of a secretary of state, but of the Lord Protector himself, Oliver Cromwell.

“ I now understand the secret of this relief. It consisted in my having to answer to a great man instead of a little ; such a one, as I instinctively felt, could truly understand what I meant truly to lay before him ; for there is a sympathy between all genuine qualities, however accompanied by sophisticate ones, and nobody is so capable of appreciating the simplicity of youth as he who sees beyond the rules of ordinary wisdom, and knows the value of those qualities in advanced life. It is only second-rate and subordinate great-

ness that confounds common experience with uncommon, and thinks every thing young a folly because its own youth was vulgarly mistaken.

“ Accordingly, I followed the person who came to fetch me, not, indeed, without anxiety, or even awe (for my father’s visitors had taught me a great veneration for ‘our Chief of Men,’ and his late accession to sovereign power did not diminish it), but with a feeling of hope, or, I should rather say, of security. I contrived to make the sanguine temper I was in known to Father Waring. The manners of this excellent friend had already conciliated his jailers, and a plentiful exercise of my purse completed their good humour. I wondered, nevertheless, to find them so willing to be pleased; but the truth is, they had seen a good many Catholics, and were not so prejudiced against them as most. Some of them had served in the prison when the hatred of popery was at its height; I mean when the avowed superstition of the Queen of Charles I., the suspected faith of the King, the attachment of the Catholics to his person, and their sanguinary impatience in Ireland, had worked up the zeal of their enemies to its climax, and produced that dreadful season of reaction, when the innocent suffered for the guilty, and the most venerable and harmless men were put to death simply for being priests, or being present at a mass. There had been no such scenes of late, but the religion and its ceremonies were still under the ban, not to be practised but in secret, and under penalties that had never been abrogated. It was expected by some of our visitors, that the Presbyterians would call for a repetition of those severities, if for no other purpose but to dictate to their new master. Cromwell himself, in his new scheme of government, though he advocated the independence of religious opinion in all other points, had expressly excepted the adherents to ‘prelacy and popery,’ and now this unfortunate detection of my friends, occupied, too, in a ceremony so unusual, and of so hateful an aspect, might hasten the return, perhaps even sharpen the excess of their afflictions.

“ On the other hand, if my friends had made a mistake, they had also been mistaken by the populace. This might be shown. And Cromwell, besides the natural objection of those who dictate, to undergo dictation from any one else,

carried the principle of religious toleration farther, perhaps, than any man of his day ; that is to say, than any man who professed Christianity at all.

“ But I shall again confound subsequent reflections with immediate ones. Suffice it to say, that I had acquired some information, more or less vague, upon all these points ; and that I was not the worse prepared to encounter the eye of the great man, inasmuch as I was really neither politician nor theologian, but a youth, whose nature he might see through, as easily as if it were cut in crystal.

“ I was taken in a coach to Whitehall, and delivered into the hands of an usher, who, on hearing my name and quality, was pleased to condole with me. Our story, exaggerated in the outset, had gathered much in its progress ; and the good usher was astonished to find, that there were only six priests instead of twenty, that there was no mass called the ‘ Devil’s Mass,’ at which they sacrificed a young Protestant, and that no closet full of bones was discovered, all belonging to children whom they had enticed into the house for that purpose. I was glad to find that my refusal to become a Catholic, was understood ; and equally so, that the other circumstances had been so grossly misrepresented. The sacrifice of the young Protestant their host, was held to be an enormity particularly ungrateful, as it well might be. The usher dwelt upon it as a thing ‘ too horrible to think of ;’ and accordingly I had some difficulty in persuading him that it was not true. He looked at me over and over again, as if he doubted that I, Sir Philip Herne, was the actual Baronet, with ‘ his throat about him,’ and not, as he thought, his next heir and most fortunate successor.

“ It was then the summer of the year 1654. Cromwell had not long raised himself to his high station, but he occupied Whitehall with all the formalities of a sovereign. I have already observed that I was no politician. I was not too young for it ; there were numbers no older than myself, who were fiery partisans, of all denominations ; but the mode in which I had been brought up, and the indifference of my father, had left my opinions to take their course ; and youth is certainly no politician by nature. What is more, my Catholic friends were no politicians. They were pure scholars and theologians, wrapt up in their faith, and very different, so far, from multitudes of their brethren, who were as anxious to

meddle with state as church. I had heard them speak of Cromwell sometimes; and I gathered, on reflection, that their opinion of him was much like my own, namely, that he had succeeded to the throne, something after the fashion of an elected monarch, and that good was to be expected from him, rather than ill. Very little, however, of late, had been said among us on any subject, unconnected with religion and scholarship. It was not to be expected, that my mother would keep up her republican acquaintances. She did not attempt it. I believe Mr. Braythwaite was almost the only one that remained, and he came seldom. I had not ceased, however, to take for granted a good deal of what I had heard them say respecting the affairs of the world; and yet, so strong is the impression made by the pomp and circumstance of royalty upon a young mind, that is to say, of power in its highest and most obvious state of ornament and worship, that I could not but sympathise with the downfall of Charles, nor find myself pacing the very rooms, perhaps, through which he passed to execution, without feeling my admiration of his successor qualified with something like dislike as well as dread.

“The usher, whom I should have taken for one of the greatest men in the world, had he not talked so fast, consigned me into the hands of a far greater man, his superior, who was as silent as his steps. Just before we arrived at this gentleman, we passed two others, whom my conductor named to me before they came up. ‘Two Lords of his Highness’s council,’ said he, putting his hand to his mouth, and pretending to say nothing: ‘he on the left is Sir Gilbert Pickering; and the other is Mr. Edward Montague.’ You know who this is now.\* Sir Gilbert was a very stiff formal-looking man, with the air of an angry pedagogue. Montague had a pleasant countenance, which he seemed trying to compress into the other’s gravity. As we passed, he condescendingly addressed us: ‘It will be of no use, Stratton,’ said he; ‘his Highness is not visible this morning.’ Pickering did not seem to like this remark. Mr. Stratton received the intimation with an air of lively acknowledgment, but resumed his progress. ‘He is out there,’ observed he; ‘but he is a mighty pleasant conversable gentleman, is Master Montague.’ With these words he sud-

\* Lord Sandwich.

denly altered the expression of his countenance ; and opening a door, consigned me into the hands I have just mentioned.

“ My new conductor, leading me through an apartment, paused at sight of a person resembling himself who was standing at a door opposite.

“ ‘ His Highness’s mother is with him,’ said he, partly addressing me, and partly speaking to himself. ‘ It likes him not to be interrupted at such times ; but my directions in this matter are special.’ So saying, he went in, and presently returned, giving me a signal to advance.

“ I went in, and saw a gentleman in black, leaning down, and speaking to a pale old lady, who sat, or rather reclined, in an arm chair. It was the Protector. The old lady was his mother.

“ He turned his face to me suddenly, and said with great haste, not however without dignity, ‘ You are the Philip Herne, the same Sir Philip of whom these idle fables are told ? ’

“ I uttered, as well as I could, ‘ The same, sir.’ The sight of his mother, reclining in that way in her chair, reminded me of my own ; and I could hardly speak.

“ ‘ Lift up your voice, young gentleman, said the Protector, ‘ and repeat what you have said.’

“ ‘ I am the person,’ I answered, of whom your Highness speaks.’

“ ‘ You see, madam,’ said Cromwell, turning to his mother.

“ ‘ And there was no sacrifice ? ’ he resumed, ‘ no devilish and bloody offering, — none of the absurdities, of which the people talk ? ’

“ ‘ None, sir. My friends may be mistaken, but kinder men do not exist.’

“ The Protector seemed again to be re-assuring his mother. He then raised his head, and standing a little apart, but with his hand on the top of her chair, said to me in a lower tone of voice, ‘ What manner of men these skulking knaves are, with their poisonous rag of a religion, assuredly I am not to learn : but what means this disquiet, young gentleman ? Wherefore this trembling ? nothing but the truth must be told here.’ He added this with an air of sternness.

“ I replied that I was well aware of that, and that all my hopes were founded upon it ; but that the late circumstance

had been a thing so surprising, and accompanied with the indignation of a multitude of men so frightful, that I trusted the weakness of my years would be pardoned for not speaking of it without emotion, especially in a presence like that in which I stood.—I thought the venerable lady looked at me with kindness.

“ ‘ How old are you ! ’ said my interrogator.

“ ‘ Sixteen.’

“ ‘ Your appearance,’ he was pleased to remark, ‘ is manly enough, to have said twenty.’

“ I was going to reply, but stopped. The Protector bade me proceed. I excused myself upon the plea, that I had no right to trouble his Highness with my poor thoughts : but he insisted on hearing them out. I then said, that I believed trouble made people old before their time.

“ ‘ A venerable young gentleman, upon my word ! ’ said the Protector, in a tone of good-humoured sarcasm : ‘ and yet,’ continued he with solemnity, ‘ these are serious times, awful and heart-shaking times, for those who err from the right path, whether young or old. Safety is for none but such as the Lord gathereth into his fold, and then who shall harm us ? (He turned to his mother as he said this.) Verily, as a hair does not fall without his permission, so neither does a hair grow grey ; and as I have seen those whose locks have suddenly faded, like smitten blossoms, out of the very anguish of the fears that have come upon them, so have the godly stood flourishing to the end, like the tree by the water’s side.’

“ He bent down to his mother, taking her again by the hand, ‘ Open that casement,’ said he, directing my attention to the window ; ‘ and let us have more of God’s blessed air.’

“ As I went to obey him, I heard him speaking in a low tone, as if something had been finally agreed between them. On resuming my station, he bade me go into a further room and await his coming. He kissed her hand, and she said in a faint voice, ‘ My dear son ! ’ These words completed the likeness I saw between the two mothers, and I was glad to find myself alone, that I might give way to my emotion.

“ I afterwards learnt, that Mrs. Cromwell, who was in a perpetual state of alarm lest something should happen to her son, had been greatly agitated by the rumours respecting the late event. With every popular tumult, whatever might be



its avowed purpose, she connected the idea of an insurrection against Oliver's life. One violence, she thought, must produce another; and all violence could only terminate in putting an end to the person that was dearest to her, the object of so much hatred and envy on the part of so many factions. Her health at that period was in the frailest condition: indeed she did not survive beyond the November following: and it was said that she could not hear the report of a pistol, but she exclaimed, 'They have shot my son!'

"It was to calm her fears on this point, as well as to collect the whole truth of the matter from a person at an ingenuous time of life, that the Protector sent for me so speedily; and there is reason to believe, that her anxiety, in combination with certain views which a friend of Sir Kenelm Digby had been lately opening to him respecting the Catholics, was of service in producing the turn I am about to relate. But he had other clues to a knowledge of us.

"In a minute or two Cromwell made his appearance. He discerned that I had been weeping, and asked me, in a tone of anger; not unmixed with contempt, the reason of it. I explained to him what had moved me when I was in the other room, and apologised for not having been more particular in the presence of the venerable lady, for a reason which her state of health rendered obvious. He was struck with hearing of the death of my mother, a circumstance he had hitherto been unacquainted with.

"'You are a good lad,' said he; 'but goodness is sometimes weak, often misguided. Can you tell the truth, Sir Philip, as well as you can square it to the convenience of a sick lady?'

"'If you will put me to the test, sir, I trust I shall not disgrace the opinion which your Highness is willing to entertain of me.'

"The Protector's manner was now perfectly simple and open; free from the air of heaviness and constraint that was mixed with it in the other room, and as noble as became him. When standing beside his mother, he seemed to be wrestling with contending thoughts, and had a lumbering motion with his shoulders, almost amounting to something clownish. I have since noticed the same thing in persons of a rustic breeding; whose thoughts labour between a love of truth and the wish to conceal it. Oliver now stood erect, with his back

to a fire-place, and resembled the picture which had been lately painted of him by Lely. The artist flattered him perhaps in the general air, as far as it implied ordinary good breeding, and an habitual urbanity of carriage; and yet the momentary look may not have been flattered even in that respect; for as the greater includes the less so the princely serenity which Cromwell could assume as well as any man, or rather which was natural to him in his princely moments, involved of necessity whatever is of the like quality in the self-possession of an ordinary gentleman. You have heard what Cromwell said, when Lely was about to paint this picture? He desired him to omit nothing that could complete the likeness, however it might tell against smoothness and good looks. Not a wart, or a wrinkle was to be left out. Lely accordingly produced a stronger and bluffer face than is usual with him; though it is to be doubted, whether the sense of beauty to which he afterwards made such a sacrifice of his pencil, would have permitted him to go to the extent of Cromwell's direction, granting even that the instinct of a courtier had not prevented it. Nor are we to suppose, that Cromwell himself, however great a man, was displeased to think that his warts and wrinkles had been found less inimical to pleasingness of aspect than might have been looked for. Be this as it may, I was afterwards, when I came to see the picture, highly struck with the resemblance it bore to him at the period of this interview. If there was any defect on the wrong side, it was, that the eyes were not fine enough; not sufficiently deep and full of meaning. And yet they are not vulgar eyes, in Lely's picture. The forehead, and the open flow of hair on either side, as if he was looking out upon the realm he governed, and the air of it was breathing upon him, are wonderfully like; and so is the determined yet unaffected look of the mouth. The nose, which in every face is, perhaps, the seat of refinement or coarseness (at least I have never found the symptom fail), is hardly coarse enough; and in a similar proportion it is wanting in power. Cromwell's nose looked almost like a knob of oak. Indeed, throughout his face there was something of the knobbed and gnarled character of that monarch of our woods. I will add, that as this picture was painted immediately after Cromwell's accession to the sovereign power, the princely aspect of the sitter was

never more genuine, perhaps, than at that moment. But there was one thing which Lely assuredly took upon himself to qualify; to wit, the redness of the nose. It was too red in ordinary, though not so much so as his libellers gave out, nor so distinguished in colour from the rest of his face. When he was moved to anger, the whole irritability of his nature seemed to rush into both nose and cheeks; and this produced an effect, the consciousness of which was, perhaps, of no mean service in helping him to controul himself. Upon the whole, if many princes have had a more graceful aspect, few have shown a more striking one, and fewer still have warranted the impression by their actions.

“The Protector bade me give him an exact account of the circumstances that had occurred in our house. I accordingly entered into the real state of the case. I told him how the good fathers had laboured in vain at my conversion; how anxious they were for my eternal welfare; what steps of various kinds they had thought it necessary to resort to in consequence; how we had been surprised during the spectacle they had thought proper to lay open; how the terror created by the sight of the assembled multitudes had snapped asunder the frail thread of my mother’s existence, and what real good men the fathers were, with the exception of the lay-brother who had betrayed them; how absorbed in their religion and scholarship, and how well affected, I verily believed, to his Highness’s government, having, to my certain recollection, spoken of him as one raised by Providence to reconcile jarrings of all sorts, and enable every man to worship God after the light of his conscience.

“Which they would not endure, if they were in my place,” said Cromwell; “no, not for a day.”

“I bowed in my confusion, not knowing what to answer to this remark. My bow, however, implied, though I was not conscious of it at the time, that it was for a great man, like himself, to know better, and to teach the way to the indulgence. He proceeded to observe, as if in comment upon such an observation, that, ‘the herd, to be sure, were not the herdsman. Will they ever,’ he added, half musing to himself, ‘be anything but a herd? Peradventure they may, seeing that the image is but a type, and the herd of the same nature as the

herdsman. Forty years long! Say, forty centuries! A thousand years with the Lord are but as one day.'

"He mused aloud in this way, as if I was too young to render my presence of any importance; then, looking steadily at me, he said, 'And this is all?'

"I now suddenly called to mind what I had really forgotten since the day before,—the situation of those who still remained in concealment. A blush burned over my face; but my resolution was taken instantly.

"'No, sir,' said I, 'it is not.'

"'Ay,' returned Cromwell, in a tone, which I knew not whether to take for good-natured or displeased,—'you have forgotten something?'

"'Beyond a doubt, sir, I did forget something: but—'

"'But what, young man?' sternly inquired Oliver:—'have a care how you palter with us.'

"'God forbid, sir,' said I, 'that I should do so idle and wicked a thing: but—'

"'But me no buts, sir,' cried the Protector: 'God help me, must boys as well as men think to put my discernment to the stretch? Speak out, and speak truly, my young master; or your friends, as you call them, will suffer for it.'

"I here found myself in a new perplexity. If I told of the women's concealment I knew not what trouble might come upon them: if I kept it a secret, the men were threatened with new penalties. I determined instinctively to exonerate the latter as much as possible, while I did my utmost to screen the partners of their danger."

"'As God is my judge, sir,' I replied, 'I have told your Highness nothing but the truth; and if I have not told the whole of it, it is neither because I forgot it at the moment; though I really did so, nor because the concealment anyway affects the worthiness of my poor friends. Pardon me, sir, if any word I utter displease you; but with the greatest respect in the world, and even awe at your presence, it is not in my power to relate anything further.'

"'How, young man?' returned Cromwell: 'would you tell me, that you are under a greater threat than mine, or fear any more terrible shadow than it is in my power to cast upon you?'

"'Oh no, sir! nothing that man can do to me could surely

be half so terrible to me as this moment, standing as I do under your Highness's displeasure; but God would be angry with me, if I sinned against the light of my conscience.'

" 'And this secret forsooth is not to be told?' said Cromwell in a tone of scornful amazement: 'a boy says it, and fancies that I am to be mastered by his petulance!'

" I clasped my hands with a passionate mixture of entreaty and deprecation, 'Forgive everybody but myself, sir; but it is impossible.'

" The next words of Oliver came upon my ear like the sudden cessation of agony on a nerve. 'I will tempt thee no more, Philip,' said he, in a tone of great kindness:— 'when thy mother bore thee, of a truth did she bear a man child, though I question whether thou couldst be so quick to do as to suffer. Terrible is the other portion of man, a darkening to the face, and a withering to his morning heart; I may say, even sometimes to his morning prayers; and he goeth forth uncertain whether his blows may always be aimed at the true evil, or out of the true and perfect—' (he there stopped abruptly.) 'Is it even so, Philip?' he added, 'and knowest thou aught of these riddles of the Sphinx? Yet this too is endurance; and endurance hath not the wine of action to solace it. Who shall judge!'

" 'And so, Philip,' he resumed, with a different air, 'thou hast been a secreter of the idolators of the mass,—ha! a harbourer of priests? and doubtless thought it incumbent upon thee to do as had been done by thy father and mother before thee? Well; it is a delicate matter, the more especially since the multitude have had the handling of it; but the season may do something towards sweetening it. Mark me, young man: not a word of what passes between thee and me; and now look at that paper.'

" He handed me a document, in which, to my utter amazement, I read a list of all the persons implicated in the business before us, not excepting the three ladies; and it ended with describing the rooms in which they were secreted. A signature had been torn off. I found afterwards, that this signature was the worthy Mr. Braythwaite's.

" The Protector saw the glow of satisfaction that must have exhibited itself in my countenance, the double delight I experienced, at having at once kept my secret, and received an

intimation from him that nobody would be the worse for it. He looked at me with a smile of peculiar dignity and good will, and desired me to give him an account of my childhood. 'I have some few minutes longer,' said he; 'and great things and small in this world providentially hang together.' I obeyed him, not omitting a single circumstance, with the exception of one or two which I had no right to disclose: and at these, I could see, he gave a shrewd guess. When I ended, he called to me for the paper. I had forgotten to return it. On my approaching him for that purpose, he gave me a kindly pat on the cheek. 'Trouble not thyself, Philip,' said he, 'for a loss which all sons must be afflicted with, sooner or later. Think rather of the comforts that may yet reach thee, and the pleasant surprises that may follow unhappy ones. The lives of thy friends are safe, provided they utter not a syllable of the matter. There are those who would fain renew certain laws, better forgotten in a Christian land; men, who know not that they are the objects of their own hatred and persecution, in other shapes. These people are not to be gainsaid roughly; they think they mean well; but they are to be opposed quietly and strongly. Nobody knows better than a soldier, Philip—I would say, a Christian soldier,—that the only final blessings of this temporal state are a reasonable peace and quiet; and it is to secure these blessings to mankind, that God's servants militant are content to hazard their share of them, and take on themselves the burden of authority. I speak to thy twenty years of age, for without question thou wert born four years after taking consideration whether thou shouldst be born or no; and I speak also to the years in thee that are to come; on which I purpose myself to keep an eye; for the race of the Hernes, thus happily converted from their errors, and not to be enticed back to them, are a race worthy of the care of their nation, of which I, being by the unsearchable will of Providence, set over to be the guide and shepherd, do hold myself bound to attend to those things, which concern us all,—I say to those things which all would attend to, if their time or understandings could be that way bent; and truly, there is nothing which doth more concern a people than the well and conscientious bringing up of their gentry: nor was it ever of greater concernment than now, when those things are said and done in it which are a scandal

to this nation, and to the bringing up of their gentry, and nobility; it being considered that a badge of profaneness is a badge of disaffection, and ill will, and clean contrary government to the government of this commonwealth; which though there be somewhat in it,—I mean in those disaffections and profaneness and irregularity of manners,—that doth convey a praise and a contrast to this government, yet it is nevertheless fearful, and not to be looked upon, but for the rooting of it out, to the end that such shallow and godless persons may know, of a truth, that there is a King in Israel; I mean Him that ruleth over both Kings and Captains, and who hath set a testimony in Jacob, that the generation to come might know him.—And so, Philip, thou shalt be brought again to this palace of Whitehall to-morrow, at this same hour of noon; and I will commit thee to the care of a pious and learned person, in truth a great and shining light of these times, with whom I have been communing but now of the like matters; for besides being rightly nurtured, it is fitting that thou set up a special and a bright testimony of thy better knowledge at this juncture, when thy friends, as thou callest them, with their devil's images, have brought the multitude about their ears,—a creature, God knoweth—(I mean when it pleaseth him to let them be so changed from a devout and docile assemblage) of many mouths and little wit.

“The greater part of this speech of Cromwell is more like his manner of discourse in general than the rest of it; and, in fact, if I had reported the whole as it was delivered, there would have been a good deal of the same negligence and incoherence of words throughout; but I could not well make a comic report of so serious a matter; for such, under all the circumstances, it would have appeared. If I seem to contradict myself in the conclusion, it is because my spirits had grown lighter at every word he uttered; and I cannot, at this time, refuse to give my recollections their full play. It is not to be supposed, that the Protector always spoke in this manner, or that he did not vary it sometimes considerably in the course of one and the same colloquy. Even when he gave way to this habit of circumlocution, (adopted, perhaps, originally, from policy, but not without a natural tendency to it, arising from want of letters, and even from a wish to rest his brain, and avoid the sharpness of concentration,) you still discerned

the giant in his undress,—the mighty will, that could take up his club, or dart out his strong arm, when passion moved him; and that loitered and lumbered over his ideas, more like a rich man playing with his pockets, than one who had no money in them to amuse him. At all events, if he had not acquired the talent, he knew himself to be master of the whole treasury:

“ You will, perhaps, be surprised to hear me speak in this manner of Cromwell, especially as I have since been conversant with his enemies, and with such as think they have great reason to complain of him. But you must bear in mind that he treated me thus kindly, before I could be said to have any fixed opinions; that he was my friend long before I knew any thing of the persons in question, or had heard any thing but what was ill; and that if I have since learnt to entertain a more favourable opinion of them, it is because the singular varieties of experience, which fortune has been pleased that I should undergo, and the great necessity for consolation which that experience brought with it, has sharpened my insight into the good as well as evil which is mixed up with the characters of all men, and which I hail with a sort of gratitude whenever I meet with it. I sometimes doubt whether Cromwell was so well-intentioned a man as at other times I am inclined to think him; but I believe him upon the whole to have had more good in him than ill; and he was a kind man to me and his kindred, and an extraordinary man in the eyes of everybody. Now I admire genius, and am grateful for kindness wherever I find it; and pray do not forget, that I was no born partisan, to render my progress in impartiality so difficult as it is with most men, and sometimes so dishonourable and so cold.

“ But to resume my narrative.

“ The expression of the Protector’s countenance, as he thus resumed his speech, struggled with a dreary smile. It was easy to see that the part taken by the multitude in this affair, secretly displeased him. He more than once (for I have not repeated half he said) intimated his anger at the officers of justice for not having performed their work with greater discretion; ‘clambering on sky-lights,’ he said, ‘and drawing the gaze of eve’s-droppers, when they had the straight gate before them; but there is something ever ill done in the cunning of a traitor.’ This was an allusion to Mansel. I little thought in how peculiar a degree the sentence applied to



him. But of this presently. I need not observe, that my fears respecting the fate of my companions were entirely allayed by my interview with Cromwell. I had fancied I know not what respecting the abhorrence entertained of the Catholics, by men of all other denominations, and recollected with terror the account of the mortal severities practised on them some years before. An ebullition against them, such as the present, might possibly, I thought, renew these horrors in the persons of my poor friends; and as my interview commenced in agony, it concluded by putting me in such a state of buoyant delight, that I could scarcely refrain from breaking out into some action of grateful extravagance. Instead of being a mere boyish petitioner, at an immeasurable distance from him whom I had to entreat, and armed with nothing in my friends' favour but the piteousness of truth and sorrow, I found myself both triumphant and honoured. I was praised for my honesty; admitted to a sort of equality of discourse with the greatest man in England, because of the very greenness of my years; commissioned to bear back good tidings to my friends; and constituted a kind of son, in the state, to him who unquestionably stood in the condition of a sovereign prince.

“The truth is, that Cromwell, always beyond his age in wishing to tolerate a variety of religious opinions, was at that time particularly anxious to conciliate all classes and descriptions of his new subjects; for such they might be called. In the course of the ensuing year, he had a plan for making the very Jews a part of the body politic: and though he failed in this design, he restored them to the exercise of their religion. He was the first English ruler under whom they had had a synagogue, since their expulsion in the reign of Edward III. It was now his wish, but with as little noise as possible, to see if the Catholics, in their zeal for a kingly government, would not be glad of a mutual toleration. A friend of Sir Kenelm Digby's (who himself opened a direct communication with him not long afterwards,) had prepared him to expect, not only their good-will, but their gratitude and zealous co-operation; and he was meditating this point, when his old Puritan acquaintance, Harrison, first gave him notice of the harbourage of priests in our house, and rendered it necessary that they should be taken notice of. Cromwell was extremely vexed at this officiousness, which he looked upon as being both impertinent and vin-

dictive, Harrison having quarrelled with him for being neither so good a republican, nor so violent a religionist, as himself; both of which points must be conceded. Mansel was the traitor. The wretch knew well to whom he took his story; but, like most traitors, he was a proper fool, and did not know how matters would terminate. Braythwaite, whom he justly took for a government spy, he forgot to reflect might be a spy on himself also. Former treacheries, to be sure, had succeeded with him; but it was in other times, and the man had no eyes by day-light. What all the world saw, was pure dazzle to him. He had sight for nothing but holes and corners. He was a dogged, skulking, ignorant fellow — a proper dirty lay-brother — the offspring of some parents worse than himself, who had pretended to be converted by one of the priests of Henrietta Maria, and persuaded their son to make a third in the speculation. Braythwaite was Cromwell's agent; Mansel, by a new conversion, had become Harrison's; and the servant was outwitted, as the master had been.

“It will be recollected, that the apartments in which our fair friends were concealed, contained also a quantity of plate and other valuables. With both of these secrets, that is to say, with the probability that the one would exist, and with the certainty that the other did, these two worthy persons had made themselves well acquainted; and the understanding between them was, that as the ladies would infallibly be put into that sanctuary by Father Waring, the moment his brethren were interrupted, the two colleagues would as surely visit the place afterwards, make a merit of saving the inmates, and reward their virtue by a division of the spoil. To this end, they had paid their visits a week before, each on different days, to my poor mother, to whom Braythwaite pretended to be a friend at court; and I know not on what plea, — probably some notion of security in case of danger, they obtained from her a list of all the valuables belonging to us, the Protestant getting the civil list, and the Catholic the religious. This was done upon the understanding that each might be secure of the other's honesty, when they came to share the plunder. So far, so good. But Master Braythwaite, preferring the pure politic part of villainy to the hazardous, had the impudentest trick in the world, of doing you a disservice, and then so contriving his part in it, as to lay you under an

obligation ; and accordingly, he copies out the list in a fair hand, and deposits a duplicate of it with the Protector himself, as my legal guardian : the said *me* being ‘ a young gentleman, whose rising virtues and singular good sense, indomitable by those misguided men, whom it was his painful duty to mask himself for the purpose of counteracting, he had many times witnessed with a secret and pious joy.’

“ Before I left him, the Protector put this new paper into my hand, to show me how well he was acquainted with all matters concerning my welfare, civil as well as religious, and what ease I might feel respecting them. He then told me I should remain in the prison for a day or two, till the officer of the troop of horse, who had made known to him the melancholy situation of things in which the premises were left, had completed a duty which no man could perform better, and which it was desirable, on every account, to leave in his hands ; but I was to go there previously, in order to release the ladies with my own hand, enjoining them at the same time to secrecy, at his Highness’s ‘ special request ;’ and when this pleasure was over, I was to have my goods and chattels properly reckoned up to me, and to see ‘ a fool caught in his own trap.’

“ On taking leave of Cromwell, and joyfully commencing my journey homewards, I found a drawback on my pleasure, in having Mr. Braythwaite assigned me as my warrant and associate ; and the man talked so smoothly, and had really taken such good care of our property, that had he not been a liar from head to foot, I could have found it in my heart to be thankful to him. My first care, on entering the house, was to ascertain that proper respect had been paid to my mother’s remains. Everything was right, — a respectable female in attendance, and the young officer himself in consultation with another man, whose business I guessed, but did not dare to inquire into. I took care, however, to make them acquainted with a wish of my mother’s, who, in spite of that opinion which her faith enjoined her to the contrary, could never bring herself to think of being put into the ground without horror ; and I earnestly begged that it might not be done till the proofs of decease were past a doubt. Her anxiety, which was often expressed, produced a like fear in myself ; nor to this day, whenever I think of it, can I cease to wonder at the indiffer-

ence with which people in general omit all considerations of the kind, and think of their consignment to wood and earth, as if they had never breathed air, nor possessed a spark of imagination. I should, perhaps, be disposed to admire their courage at one time, as much as I am to tax them with stupidity at another, were not the secret explainable by the usual old and dull master of most of our earthly ceremonies—habit. The same persons who care nothing for becoming ‘a kneaded clod,’ and subjecting themselves to a long and wasting companionship with the worms, shall express the greatest horror at the idea of being reduced to ashes; nay, to having the air itself let in upon them, and being ‘disturbed,’ as they call it, in their repose. I once knew a man who thought he should dream in his grave, and that his dreams must of necessity be no very pleasant ones. I asked him, if he really thought so. He said, he at least thought *of* it a great deal; so much, that whenever his health was worse than usual, it was his first and last reflection every day, and haunted him besides in the course of it. I asked him, in that case, why he did not give directions for being burnt like an old Roman. ‘Oh,’ said he, ‘one cannot do that. Nobody does it.’ And there is a good deal in the answer too; but it furnishes no reason, at any rate, why care should not be taken to ascertain that the vital spark is really out of us, and that we should have no wish to rise after dreaming. As to this last fancy, the dreams might not be so unpleasant as my acquaintance presumed. The worst dreams on earth are occasioned by what is not likely to occur to us underneath it; to wit, repletion: and if any sensation could survive us in body as well as spirit, perhaps the mingling with the elements might even be as agreeable a process, as it is a natural one.

“Still I cannot help saying, for one, that I would willingly elude the experiment, and take the wings of the ancient pyro-sophy. And yet let us but be sure that the breath has ceased, and that somebody loves us, and who might not sleep in peace? Alas, I am beginning to touch upon the theme that is most painful to me. Will any one ever visit my grave, and give me a flower or a sigh? Yes, one will, or two; perhaps more would if I knew them, but I mean *the* one—the one, without whom life itself seems but a dream of death!

“The officer was very kind, and everything was settled as

I wished. He was Captain Rich, a kinsman of the Earl of Warwick, whose grandson not long afterwards married a daughter of the Protector. I now went to release my fair friends; Mr. Braythwaite, with his usual habit of doing one a service in the midst of his most objectionable interferences, undertaking to see that nobody interrupted me. Before I touched the spring which opened the first covering of the recess, I gave a knock on the wainscot, as loud, yet in as light and friendly a style, as I could. No notice was taken of it. I gave another knock, and another, but still there was no answer. I began to think something had happened, and converted my style to that of one who would take no denial, touching the spring at the same time, and adding, with my lips close to the inner wainscot, that a friend was there. The sound of my voice showed that the first barrier was removed, and that somebody had come, who at all events knew the secret. 'Who is it?' said a faint voice, which I recognised for that of my lively friend, Lady M. 'Philip;—Philip Herne come to release his dear friends, and to tell them that they are in no danger.' As I uttered these words, I opened the second spring, and was in the apartment, which constituted their sitting-room.

"Nobody was there. I went into the bed-room, and there found my friends, more dead than alive; two of them hiding their faces in each other's arms, and Lady M. in vain repeating to them in a faint voice, that it was Sir Philip himself. My voice soon convinced them. The difficulty now was to make them support their joy. Lady M., in the variety of these agitations, had strength enough to grow a little angry. She seemed inclined, I know not for what reason, perhaps because she could find no other way of showing her regard, to include me in her objections. I put my hand in a playful manner over her lips, and said, that we must all think as highly of one another as possible, and do our best towards a mutual support; for that a circumstance still remained to be told, which would not the less touch their hearts, because there was no peril in it. I then related what was taking place above stairs. My friends were moved to a new passion of tears, but more quietly, with the exception of her ladyship, who, after loading me with kind speeches, and showing herself more agitated than she yet had been, would have set anger and every-

thing else at defiance to show her regard for my mother, if herself only had been concerned. In default of being able to show her sympathy to this practical extent, she turned the vehemence of her feelings against the traitor Mansel, and expected his coming with impatience. The other ladies (for they were not to quit the premises till night, and meanwhile Braythwaite had assured all friends of their safety,) anticipated the meeting with him as a pastime; nor did I know whether to think myself more or less of a man, for not participating the pleasure. I felt as if I should be as much ashamed as he. My fair friends partook of none of these misgivings, whether weak or strong. They expressed a vigorous satisfaction, which put my doubts to the blush; and in default of not having been able to eat much since their concealment, seemed to look forward to the interview as a sort of refreshment to their appetites. Braythwaite, suspected as he was, was forgiven and even regarded with pleasure, for his traitorousness to the traitor. Not being certain of his part in the matter, they chose to be certain of nothing about it, in order that the whole passion of their abhorrence might be devoted to one object.

“In about a quarter of an hour, Mr. Braythwaite made his appearance, and told us that we might expect Mansel in a few minutes. He begged me to secrete myself at first, in a closet which contained some of the valuables, where I was to remain till a circumstance called me forth. This closet was in the chamber. The other precious deposits were enclosed in a wall of the sitting-room; and, like the former, were as artfully concealed as the apartments.

“In a few minutes a dead silence among the ladies announced the opening of the wainscot. I could hear Braythwaite speaking, and then Mansel, but could not distinguish what they said. Mansel pretended that he had secured the safety, not only of the ladies, but of all their friends; and that the late event had been planned by Sir Kenelm Digby in concert with the Protector, in order to frustrate a worse plot. It may be imagined with what faces the ladies received this intelligence; with how tranquil as well as courteous a silence. The murmurs that died on their lips, the poor wretch attributed to gratitude; and begged them not to distress themselves by trying to vent it. The valuables were then to be secured,

and the ladies were requested to withdraw on the plea above mentioned. How the treasures were all to be removed had not been agreed upon. Time and patience would be necessary, as the keys of the house were in the hands of government; but the keys could be imitated; and meanwhile Mansel had provided himself with ample pockets. Lady M. could not resist looking at the operators through the crevice of a small sliding panel, which the ladies had found out in their anxiety, and which she now ventured to move a little back. The men stood sideways to it, and a light from a window above fell on their countenances. They whispered, compared their lists, and then approached the wainscot. Back slid the magic walls and a store of wealth became visible, 'itself,' said Mr. Braythwaite, 'looking like magic.' Chalice, pyxes, crucifixes, silver ewers, the plate of two ancient households, rich stuffs, and cabinets of ebony and silver containing jewels, presented themselves to the beholders in the amplitude of a deep recess, looking like one of the closets of Mammon. Lady M. told me, that for an instant she could hardly help admiring the 'dirty traitor' (an appellation well warranted by Mansel's dress as well as proceeding), as though he had been the possessor of all this wealth; and she said, that the anticipation gave even to his scowling aspect a momentary expression of dignity.

“He turned to survey the apartment, and the panel was hastily closed. On re-opening it, she saw him with a face as mean and anxious, as it was before visited with a glimpse of greatness, hastily stuffing his pockets with the boxes containing the jewellery. When this was done, he sat down, as if in a state of exhaustion. A whispering took place, at the end of which Braythwaite went out; and in a little while, a gentle knock at the bed-room door announced, that Brother Mansel had something to communicate.

“The door was opened. The good brother, with many apologies, said he felt himself ill under these agitations, and requested permission to repose for a few minutes on one of the beds. Mr. Braythwaite, he said, had stepped out, but would return to them forthwith; and then the apartments would be no farther disturbed. The ladies, ready to choke with indignation, and scarcely able to frame an answer, even through the medium of their most vigorous organ Lady M., stepped ac-

cordingly into the room ; and it was not without alarm, that I heard this sturdy thief lock the door after them.

“ For a few minutes I concluded him occupied in surveying the room, to see that all was safe. He then approached the closet, and hastily touched the spring.

“ I retreated into a corner that turned round a little from the entrance, so that in coming in, he pounced immediately on what was before him. It consisted of the smallest but selectest part of the whole treasure, secreted thus as a last resource, in case the detectors of the other closet might have taken it for the only one, or possessed but one clue of discovery. The spring accordingly was on a different principle ; and Mansel had flattered himself, that in withholding a part of this information from Braythwaite, and at the same time contriving to be secure against a like omission in the list of his companion, the latter had not been as cunning as he. Braythwaite, indeed, had omitted nothing, being allowed by government to expect a certain remuneration without hazard ; and trusting, for the amount of it, to the blushing gratitude of those whose property he saved. On the contrary, he had conducted himself in such an open manner towards Mansel, and trusted him so implicitly, that the latter took him for a fool.

“ The lay brother knew very well the amount of what was concealed in this closet. He had the list in his pocket, and was secure of its being a correct one. Besides, he was deeply interested in losing no time. He therefore soon possessed himself of the few small cabinets that contained this quintessence of our stock ; not however without a considerable degree of agitation, his hands trembling, and his cheek looking as pale, as his eye was dark and eager.

“ There was a small round of glass in a corner of the ceiling, that cast the principal part of the light midway between him and myself. I reached forward from my retreat, and on his turning to go out, he encountered a face as pale as his own, that must have seemed suspended in the air. Any face would have struck him with terror at that moment ; but, by the commencement of a broken speech, it was evident that he knew it instantly ; knew it for the face of one, whom he had consigned to a prison, and who for aught that appeared to the contrary, had died, and become a spirit. He rushed by in the utmost



horror, and found Braythwaite and the ladies, and two other persons, standing before him.

“They had entered by a door unknown to him. His terror was unbounded. He bolted from Braythwaite like a hunted ox, turned round to see if my face was still visible (which it was), endeavoured to stammer out something to the women, and finally, beheld, in the strangers, two Catholics whom he had formerly betrayed. These men had professed themselves converts, to save their lives; and while they secretly endeavoured to console their consciences, by doing all they could for their old brethren under pretence of acting against them (a conduct, indeed, for which they had a Jesuit’s warrant), they entertained a mortal hatred for their betrayer.

“The confusion which at first kept him silent, at length forced him to speak. ‘I shall explain all,’ said he, with a despairing affectation of scorn; ‘but not before that man’ (meaning Braythwaite).

“‘All is explained, I think,’ said Braythwaite, with a smile, looking at the closet.

“‘Oh, as for that matter,’ returned Mansel, ‘there are more closets in the world than one.’

“‘If you mean the one in the next room,’ replied his colleague; ‘Sir Philip has a paper of its contents.’

“‘A paper!’ said Mansel, with a sneer. He would fain have added a reason for his sneer; but he mechanically put his hands to his pockets, and his heart died within him.

“‘I know what you would say,’ observed the tormenting Braythwaite; ‘papers differ;—it is very true: but Sir Philip’s property, as well as his person, is under the guardianship of his highness the Protector, whose schedule is as complete as yours.’

“‘Villain!’ cried Mansel, ‘his Highness shall know what you have said of him!’

“Braythwaite laughed. ‘Business,’ said he, ‘is not to be carried on without a capital. I have a license to take out certain privileges of speech in his Highness’s service. In a word, I will put an end to this controversy. Brother Mansel’s business consists in betraying his friends, mine in betraying traitors. His only chance of escaping the gallows is in silence: and this I earnestly exhort him to keep.’

“Lady M. thought she should have a great deal to say on

the occasion, but indignation and her better breeding alike prevented it. She contented herself with putting an end to the scene. 'For God's sake, take him away,' said she;—'and here, my poor friends,' whom by their anxiety she guessed not to be common thief-takers, 'here is money, which Mr. Braythwaite will allow you to drink with.'

"The poor Irishmen (for such they were) poured a thousand angels and saints on her ladyship's head; protesting, with tears in their eyes, that they wished they could all three hang together, for they deserved it; meaning, not her blessed ladyship, but this devil incarnate. Braythwaite explained. He repeated, that silence was best for all who had offended; and intimated, that he knew no limits to what his Highness might choose both to pardon and to tolerate, provided others could forget as well as himself.

"I need not say with what delight I returned to my friends in the prison; nor what a relief it was to the most resolute of them, to find, that they had the glory of having prepared for martyrdom without the necessity of encountering it. Next day, the Protector sent for Waring, and had a long conference with him. 'This is a wonderful man,' said Waring, when he came away: 'to hear him talk, one would think that everybody had it in his power to bring about the Millennium, and so everybody could, if everybody could agree; but there is the difficulty.'

"'The Millennium!' said I, 'why Captain Rich told me, that the men who talk in that way are held by him in profound contempt.'

"'Yes, because they are for thrusting peace and quietness, and a particular set of opinions, down everybody's throat. They tell the lamb to lie down with the lion, and to cease to have his opinions of grass and a stall, on pain of his being torn limb from limb. This is their Millennium. Now his Highness would indulge the whole animal creation in their opinions of food and lodging; with the little proviso, that they all submit to his directions for that purpose; but as he does not think the season ripe for proclaiming his indulgences, and so continues to make exceptions, and to hold a strong hand over all, there are perverse people, who will not take him at his word; and at this he professes to wonder; nay, to weep!'

“‘And does he weep in good earnest?’ I asked; ‘are his tears real?’

“‘As real as a woman’s,’ replied Waring, with an uneasy smile; ‘and perhaps as weak. Ill health and contending humours are very weak things, even in the strongest.’ I asked Waring why he smiled, and yet looked so melancholy. ‘For melancholy,’ he answered, ‘there are always too many reasons, as things go in this world. As to my smile, your question reminded me of a passage in our favourite poet, where the poor old king touches the weeping cheeks of his daughter, and says, “Be these tears wet?” ’Tis a melancholy passage too, —most melancholy; and yet so nearly are the moods of sorrow and mirth allied in the present condition of humanity; that I could not help smiling to think of you as the old King, and the Protector with his rugged face as the fair Cordelia.’

“‘These phrases: ‘As things go at present,’ ‘In this present condition of humanity,’ &c., were frequent ones in the mouth of my excellent friend, particularly when a forlorn sentiment was to be qualified. He was so uneasy in contemplating the miseries of mankind, that he would have loved hope for its own sake, even if he had not looked upon it as a duty. ‘Hope,’ he said, ‘is enjoined, as well as charity. We can no more say that the world will continue to be what it is, than we can say what it was ten thousand years ago; and a Christian has less reason to say so than any other man, because he is expressly enjoined to look for a better state of things, even on earth.’

“‘The Millennium itself?’ said I.

“‘Yes,’ returned the good father, ‘in spirit, if not in letter. I know not if ever lions can be changed as well as savages, so as to lie down with those whom their very instincts, during the present mysterious economy of life and death, call upon them to rend: but change of any sort, however wonderful, is no more wonderful than the existence of the thing to be changed. Perhaps even the good that may come, could not take place without these evils, which at present so much perplex us.’

“‘And this is what you told the Protector?’

“‘Yes; and he was pleased to embrace me for it, telling me that if he could find but one person of my way of thinking, for every different profession of belief, he should not despair of

seeing the kingdom of heaven anticipated by some hundreds of years.'

"After a month's imprisonment, Cromwell set my friends at liberty, dispersing them into a variety of quarters, and enjoining them to keep solitary and silent. To Father Waring he gave permission to go where he pleased, with the exception of Oxford, to which place I was to be sent without delay, in order that my religious opinions might be at once proclaimed and secured; but he was at liberty to write to me, and to meet me anywhere else; and I accordingly saw him whenever I came to London. Cromwell stipulated with him, not that he should be silent, but that he should talk. 'Talk,' said he, 'whenever you can, but especially among your brethren, and in the same strain you have used towards myself. It will assist the views of us both; and I desire you to think well of mine, only so far as they accord with your own, and may be advanced by means of the same wisdom.' Whether this extraordinary person used the 'same strain' next day, in talking to a Fifth-Monarchy Man or a Libertine, may be made a question; but he had the art of persuading some persons little less extraordinary than himself, to believe that he partook of their sincerest and noblest aspirations. Milton was one of them; and I believe Sir Harry Vane would have been another, had he not been in Parliament, and occupied a station which made Cromwell's ascendancy a thing personal. Vane had the profoundest views, and could discuss them in the profoundest as well as clearest manner of anybody I ever conversed with, notwithstanding the jargon in which he would sometimes both talk and write.

"I was anxious to know, after all, how the Protector would quiet the minds of the neighbourhood in which my friends had made a sensation so terrible. He did it by one of his masterly manœuvres. A circumstance of a singular nature occurred the year before, and was about to conclude with a spectacle a great deal more so. Don Pantaleon Sa, brother of the ambassador from Portugal, thinking he could do at London as gentry of his complexion conduct themselves in the capital of his own country, had picked a quarrel with an English officer of the name of Gerard, upon some correction of a false political report, very civilly given him by the other. This absurdity he thought himself entitled to follow up by a mur-

derous attack in open day; and accordingly he proceeded, with a number of armed men, to scuffle with a person whom he took for Gerard, in the Royal Exchange. The poor man was killed; and the Portuguese, to his gentlemanly astonishment, was called upon to be tried for his life. A jury, half English and half Portuguese, found him guilty; and his astonishment, and that of all ambassadors, indeed of all Europe, was completed, by his being executed in the Tower. What rendered every circumstance connected with this matter to the last degree remarkable, was, that Gerard himself was executed the same day in the same place, for a conspiracy against the life of Cromwell in favour of the absent king. This was as much as to say, 'The Protector's life is of the greatest value; so is that of every man in the country, and neither of them shall be assailed with impunity. If an Englishman dies for attempting mine, no quality nor imaginary privilege shall save the man who attempts the life of an Englishman.' The nations heard, and, it may be justly added, they trembled. Cromwell said that he would make the name of Englishman as much respected as that of an old Roman; and it is not to be denied that he kept his word.

"Poor Gerard (who was a captain, not a colonel in the army, as he is commonly styled) was a generous, enthusiastic young man, led away by some doctrines which the gravest of his majesty's counsellors, in the irritability of their exile, did not scruple to countenance. He became their victim; and it will be lucky for some of his patrons, if they continue to be as secure from similar reactions, as their pride induces them to suppose.\*

"Don Pantaleon, being a gentleman, had the pleasure of having his head cut off between walls, and before a select assembly of spectators; but his accomplices were hanged at Tyburn. The execution took place in July, about a fortnight after the mistake of my friends; and Cromwell seized the opportunity of merging the retrospections of the neighbour-

\* This looks prophetic of the severe and all but mortal beating, which Clarendon received at Rouen during his exile. The perpetrators are said to have been seamen, angry at not having been paid certain arrears. And they may have been so; but the memory of Dorislaus and others was probably mixed up with the reasons they had assigned to themselves for turning assassins. Sir Philip is mistaken in his correction of Gerard's rank. He was an ensign (cousin of Lord Gerard, afterwards Earl of Macclesfield). See Clarendon, vol. vi. p. 491. (I quote from a note in Rapin, vol. xiii. p. 101. Edition of 1731.) — EDIT.

hood, in the prospect of this new Catholic spectacle. The parish authorities, by his direction, stuck up a paper in Drury Lane, briefly stating, that a misapprehension had taken place relative to the criminal proceedings of certain papists in that quarter, who were now in prison, and would be dealt with according to their deserts; and then, in terms more at large, it enjoined the inhabitants to behave quietly during the public execution of certain *other* papists, accomplices of Don Pantaleon Sa, *Knight of Malta*, brother of the Portuguese Ambassador, who were to be hung at Tyburn for the barbarous and bloody murder of an Englishman, John Gerard, by name, on Friday next, at the hour of six o'clock in the morning; the said Don Pantaleon Sa, *Knight of Malta*, brother of the Portuguese Ambassador, being to suffer death on the same day, for the same offence, in his Highness's prison of the Tower.

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### CHAPTER III.

“Now comes the part of my history which it is more painful to me to write than all the rest, though containing the brightest of my days. Is it possible then, that I should feel what I do, now that I am writing these very words? That I should wish those days to return at any price, and though their consequences should be worse to me than they have been? Yes, it is even so, Margaret, most beloved of womankind; you who care nothing for me, though I would willingly die and suffer agonies in every part of my being, so that one atom of me might again be able to hear thee say, “I love you!—to hear thee say it, and believe. The hot tears pour down my cheeks, at once taunting my manhood, and enabling me to say I care not for it. Once in many months they refresh me thus; and surely I have a right to take this pity on myself, I who am a human being, and cannot be left out of the list of those who suffer.

“I quit my writing, and walk out into the silence of night.—That there is love in the world, I know, because I feel it. Let this be enough. Of this certainty nothing can deprive me.

“My going to the University was the best thing that could

have happened, to settle the tumult of my spirits, and enable me to commence life upon a plan.—On returning next day to Whitehall, as the Protector had desired me, I found with him a clergyman of a striking and even majestic presence, but with something nevertheless in his aspect highly prepossessing, a look both sincere and benevolent. It was the celebrated John Owen, the bishop of the Independents, and Cromwell's Vice-Chancellor of Oxford. I accompanied him in the course of a few days to the University, and was entered of Magdalen College, where, to my astonishment, I found a chapel in cathedral order, and an organ which was played upon by a kinsman of the famous Orlando Gibbons. These 'abominations,' as they were then termed, had miraculously escaped the purifications which most of the colleges had undergone. I had still an affection, and indeed have now, for those elegancies of the Catholic service, which Protestant bishops have been accused of a wish to retain. Nothing, I thought, could be too graceful or happy to express an intercourse with the joys of heaven; though I gladly sided with those, who would discountenance all attempts to favour us with a reverse to the picture. In our collegiate worship, I recognised, with surprise and joy, a likeness of our Catholic aspirations; the same angelical-looking thing, pruned indeed in the wings, but to the loss of nothing but what was superfluous and discomposed, and retaining its graces, its vesture, and its song. I thought of Crashaw leading his angelical life under the roof of St. Mary's Church at Cambridge, a place neither more nor less Catholic than the one which contained our own choristers; and it is inconceivable what tranquillity I found in thus lighting upon a house of religion, in which my mother's faith and my own seemed to be reconciled. Surely, thought I (and I think so still), the good in everything might be led thus to meet together; and the evil dropped, as a mistake not belonging to it.

“My time at Oxford was spent delightfully. I was a reasonable student. I wandered about the groves; I lapsed about the Isis in a boat, reading or half dreaming: I projected a thousand modes of being useful and renowned, none of which have taken place: and when I went to chapel, I fancied myself in heaven. Among other acquaintances, I had the honour of being intimate with Christopher Wren, who, though younger than myself, knew as much as any twenty of us put together;

and through him I knew Dr. Wilkins, the warden of his college, who afterwards married the Protector's sister; and, perhaps on that account, thought that people, some day, might be able to fly to the moon. Had the flight not been quite so high, one might observe, that it is scarcely possible to say what mankind may not be able to do hereafter, purely because they cannot do it now. If a Roman had been told that a master of a ship, some day, might be able to strike three thousand miles across the Atlantic, straight to his object, without once seeing the stars, and consulting nothing but a circle of brass in his cabin, he would have laughed as heartily as we do at Dr. Wilkins's flying chariot.

“The loss of Father Waring's society, and I may add, my own affectionate disposition, would have led me to form some ardent friendship; but circumstances had rendered me diffident. I hesitated to go out of my own thoughts, or hazard the doubts, perhaps the dislike, of the individuals to whom I could have been so strongly attached. My feelings, therefore, were treasured up, to be poured out with the greater profusion, when a still stronger emotion should arrive. There was a kinsman of Captain Rich, who would perhaps have become my friend, in the high sense which I attach to that word; but he left college almost immediately after I grew acquainted with him, and was killed in the wars in Ireland. I have great love for his memory, because he was the person who introduced me to the lady of whom I am about to speak, and resembled her in some of his best qualities.

“Petrarch has recorded the day and the hour in which he first had sight of the mistress whom he has immortalized. I can immortalize nobody; but I can die for one; and as a lover, who understands and venerates a minuteness that may appear ridiculous to everybody else, I could never forget all the circumstances, had they been the meanest in the world, under which I first beheld the object that was destined to be of so much importance to my life. They were, however, not mean. The representatives of princes were proud to join in them. I speak of the marriage of the Protector's daughter Mary to Lord Fauconberg.

“The week before, his daughter Frances had been married to Mr. Rich, grandson of the Earl of Warwick. Cromwell, seeing my friend among the company, and finding he had just



left college, was pleased to ask after me under the title of 'his little truth-telling acquaintance.' Mr. Cope said that I was as truth-telling as ever, but not quite so little, having started up to a height pretty nearly as great as that of his Highness. 'Then,' quoth the Protector, 'he must come and see us, that we may look him right in the face, which is ever a comfort with the tellers of truth.' I had accordingly the honour of receiving an invitation to the second wedding, and with great delight attended it on the 18th of November 1657.

"It was expected that some extraordinary scenes would be mixed up with the gravity of this occasion, Cromwell, upon the previous one, having given way to some levities into which he now and then started, to the consternation of his Master of the Ceremonies. They were not stranger, though perhaps more violent, than kings have been known to indulge in. I have heard stranger ones related of James; but perhaps they were less looked for in a man of Cromwell's reputation and fortunes; and this may have been one of the reasons why he committed them. Not having been born to his state, perhaps occasionally violating some petty formality of it unawares, he may have acted out of a sort of spite to it; or perhaps his vagaries had something in them of the same hysterical mixture of melancholy and animal spirits, which vented itself at other times in a passion of tears. Again, they may have been part of the simplicity of real greatness—simple in itself, even though condescending to artifice for its purposes; and seeing no reason, at times, why the boy was not as great and wise a thing as the man. Or, lastly, they may themselves have been artifices to create confidence and good will, and baffle the gravity of objection. I would not swear, that sometimes a little too much burnt claret had not to do with it. Be all this as it may, the Master of the Ceremonies was not the less astonished, nor, most likely, the parties themselves. Cromwell would break off from the gravest and most pressing discussions, at the signal of an accidental jest, or a passing expression of fatigue, and play and romp like a boy; throwing about the cushions, pulling hair, and having a ch<sup>ase</sup> round the council table. It is well known, that when he and the other regicides were signing the death-warrant, he smeared Ingoldsby's face with the pen, having dipped it too full of ink. This was certainly an

hysterical action, and the only one that I never could reconcile to my better notions of him. It is impossible to conceive any state of feeling, diseased or healthy, which should have been allowed to disturb the decorum of such a moment. Probably it arose from an intense consciousness of his being ignorant how to hit the exact point of behaviour. His inconsequentialities were usually of a pleasanter character. I remember I was present one day, when, in the course of a most affecting conversation with Lord Orrery, on the subject of childhood, which brought the tears in their eyes, the Protector suddenly asked him if he could play at leap-frog, and actually had a leap or two with him on the spot; delighting, as he went over the noble Lord, to dig his knuckles in his back, and make him groan under the transit.

“ On the present occasion, however, whether matters had been carried too far the last time, or Cromwell was not in the humour, or Lady Fauconberg was of a graver and statelier turn than her sister, the men of the old court were not destined to be shocked. Nothing could be more princely, or *comme il faut*, than the whole ceremony. Cromwell, though he pelted nobody with comfits, nor pitched wine into any of the bosoms of the ladies, (which was an enormity he was accused of in the former instance,) was in excellent but equal spirits, and distributed the gladness and gratitude which princes distribute around their circles by a word and a smile. Lord Fauconberg was a gallant young man, with an open, ambitious front; his bride a truly princely-looking female, as stately as he: and as they stood under the canopy, you might have thought they comprised, in their two persons, the whole stock of a double line of kings.

“ ‘ And there is my friend Philip become a man?’ said the Protector, as he came round among us, and recognised me talking to Captain Rich. I made my bow. ‘ Well, Sir Philip,’ continued he, ‘ why you are a proper youth, and a tall, as they say in the ballads: you would fain overreach us, ha! for all you have no guile?’

“ ‘ I said that would be an impossible attempt, his Highness being the object.’

“ ‘ How so?’ returned Cromwell, in great good humour, willing to give my conceit its effect, and not sorry to be complimented by one whom he thought sincere.

“ I said, that his Highness would always have the advantage of his antagonists by a brain’s height, even if he should miraculously fail in any other respect.

“ He laughed, and turning to a bevy of ladies, cried out gaily, ‘ You should not listen to Dick Ingoldsby; he is a mad flatterer, and means but half what he says. You should talk to Sir Philip Herne.’

“ At that minute, as I looked among the fair circle to whom he addressed himself, I caught the eye of a young lady, who was regarding me with a peculiar expression of interest and approbation. Her face was very beautiful, the expression of it more so; and as it looked at me, it seemed to breathe a trusting and even affectionate delight. It was a flattery that stamped me for life.

“ Margaret Emilia Frances de Tormy de Vavasour, sole heiress of the noble family of de Tormy, was married at an early age to Walter Earl Vavasour, whose widow she became in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-one. When I first saw her, which was in November 1657, at the marriage just mentioned, she was in her seventeenth year, two years younger than myself, and had the most entire and radiant beauty I ever beheld. This look, of superiority without insolence, she has ever retained. Some jealous critics might have thought her too tall; but she was not so, still less in the eyes of a person of my own height and taste, who have ever loved to be on an equality with my friends, and to be able, as the Protector said, ‘ to look them in the face.’ Not that she was nearly as tall as myself: that would have been preposterous in a woman; I only mean she was as much so, as is compatible with feminine grace. Her figure was in every respect womanly; her face as blooming as a country maiden’s, yet with the delicacy of a court; her expression singularly frank, open, and artless. In a word, Raphael or Titian might have painted her, as a specimen of her sex; but to a lover she was more. She seemed active and cheerful enough to walk with you all over the world; and fitted to grace your companionship, wherever you might be found.

“ Alas! I say, *was*, as if she were not as beautiful now, and had not qualities capable of being all this and more; but I speak of a time when I was happy; and I love to paint her, as if she still made me so.

“ I remember nothing more of what took place that day at court, except that we dined, and that I sat within three or four of the beautiful stranger, my whole attention divided between the voice of the Protector and hers. The ladies had made room for me, when introduced to them by Cromwell; and my address not having been spoilt either by rusticity or sophistication, I behaved very well, and was treated with an attention that might have turned the head of anybody, whose thoughts lived in a less romantic sphere. At times, I caught the same divine face, looking at me with an expression of inquiry. At dinner I was unfortunately placed on the same side; but when she spoke, I seemed to behold her with my ears; and her voice, though one of the most natural I ever heard, sounded unlike any other. It seemed, as if she must make happy every person she spoke to.

“ I loved her so, (for surely that must have been the reason) that I often wondered afterwards, how it was that the discovery of her being married did not impress me with greater melancholy. The truth was, that supposing her gifted with all the qualities which were exhibited in her face, I loved her for them and for her own sake, really apart from any immediate result to myself; and perhaps the common lover's idea of an angel was something more literal in my mind than is usual, owing to the extraordinary circumstances in my education. My love for Miss Fleming was purely boyish. Lady M. would have made me believe there was no love, but what all the creation partook of. I was too much taken up with my love to say, ‘ This is love.’ I did not criticise my sensations, nor think at all of myself. I said, ‘ What an angelical creature!’ and this feeling absorbed me.

The first thing that made me at all conscious, was a speech of an acquaintance of my friend Cope's, after I had been talking with her and her husband. Cope had introduced me. The conversation in Cromwell's court was freer than has been supposed, at least among those who retained or affected the old court manners; and, secretly, among others too. I was leaning against a door, reflecting on an observation she had made about festivals and pastimes, when this gentleman, to whom I had been the same day introduced, came up, and said, ‘ You are very lucky, Sir Philip, in knowing the greatest beauty of the court: I have been hunting for Cope to introduce me to Lord

Vavasour, but cannot find him.' I could hardly take this hint, having but just been introduced myself; but I was casting in my mind whether some means might not be found, when Cope came up, and relieved him. 'So,' said he to me in a low voice, as he was going, 'you have found her discourse as charming as her face? Well, do you know who she is?'

"'How do you mean?'

"'Why, I mean, do you remember, at Maudlin, being told of a certain lady, who said you should be her champion, and she would give you a kiss? 'Tis she! 'Faith, it is. You may stare, but it's true as the gospel.'

"'Am I indeed so lucky! thought I; or, how is it, that I feel at this moment so happy, and yet so thoughtful? This then accounts for the interest with which she looked at me, when she heard my name. Did the sight accord with what she had preconceived of my countenance, or did it not disappoint her? Her husband is a great deal older than herself, but still in the prime of life; a spirited man; well looking; conversible, if not altogether agreeable. I wish I could like him better. These thoughts passed in confusion through my mind. I concluded them, by thinking, that on his own showing I should have made her a better husband than he; and then, for the time, I felt as if I was both unhappy and criminal. Of my unhappiness however I could not persuade myself; and my criminality consisted of nothing but an exceeding delicacy, which induced me to reproach myself for the least fancy that associated her image with that of wrong. Any actual wrong, anything like concealment, or injury to either party, I was neither vicious, nor vain enough, to contemplate; but I reproached myself for the least involuntary fancy, incompatible with the truth and singleness of her nature. 'To be unhappy I tried in vain, for I was near her.

"'What Cope alluded to, was this. The Protector, some time after the occurrence, and when a new talk of the Papists had come up, had made some of his friends acquainted with the circumstances that took me to college, Lord Vavasour, among others; and his lordship had told them to his wife. I was declaiming one day to Wren, after my enthusiastical fashion, on the beauty of truth, and the easiness with which it might be practised by all persons of a decent understanding; and my face, I believe, had an unusual glow in it, arising

from the mixed feelings, with which I regarded that of Wren (whose mathematical faculties seemed to doubt what his heart desired), when Cope came in from London; and cried out, 'There he is at it, with Plato and all the prophets; looking, I'll be sworn, just as I have heard him described by as great a man as any of them.' I suddenly halted, wondering what he meant. 'Don't be profane,' cried Wren, 'even in the religiousness of your zeal; but pray tell us your mystery.' Upon this Cope related how he had found the Protector at his cousin Rich's house: and how his Highness, finding him newly arrived from college, had asked after me; and then called to mind the circumstances above mentioned, which the Captain, by his permission, for the first time disclosed to my acquaintance. The Captain then related to Cromwell the impression which my story had made on Lady Vavasour, who turned triumphantly to her Lord, and cried, 'There, my Lord; truth, you see, *is* great, and *will* prevail.'

" 'Ay,' said Lord Vavasour, 'with those who have reasons for letting it.'

" 'He is a fool,' murmured the Protector.

" 'So her ladyship seemed inclined to tell him,' said Captain Rich. 'She had the will, and the spirit too, I'll be sworn, if she had not a secret persuasion, that he knew more than herself.' (This part of my acquaintance's report, I now called to mind in a way that startled me.)

" 'Well,' cried the young Countess, 'if my sincerity is ever put to it for want of a champion, as your lordship forsakes me, I shall apply to Sir Philip Herne.'

" 'And give him a kiss for his conquest,' said the Earl, 'like a proper wronged princess!'

" 'Why not,' said the Lady, 'if it be the custom?' But then she blushed, as much as to say she had not thought of that.

" 'Twas the fool put it in her head,' observed Cromwell—'Tis an honest wench, but she must not talk of kissing, wise or foolish.'—'His Highness, I suppose,' said Cope in conclusion, 'thinks it too good a thing to be talked of. Worse stories are told of him and a certain lady, for all his face-making.'

" 'Let me here remark that not a syllable was ever breathed against the honour of Lady Vavasour; no, not by the wildest

of mankind. The wild, indeed, knew little of her, for she spent the chief part of her time in the country, where her lord, being attached to rural sports, was fond of residing; and he had a sister, who to a maternal time of life added the feelings of a mother, and impressed the staidest principles of old times on the wedded orphan. Lord Vavasour may be said to have received his bride from the hands of a dying father. She had lost her mother before; a stately and somewhat proud woman, but generous. The estates of Vavasour and de Tormy joined. The possessors were old friends and fellow-sportsmen; the Viscount, a trusting good-hearted man; the Earl, a man of the world, less conscientious, but good-humoured, prudent in his pleasures, and with a great reputation for success in all that he did. The Viscount said he should die in comfort, if certain that his daughter had such a protector for life. The daughter, who was very young, assented out of pure filial regard, not needing, on such an occasion, even the deference that was paid to her will, though far from insensible to that pleasure at other times. As soon as custom permitted, after the death of his friend, the Earl married her, glad enough to obtain for his bride the youngest and greatest beauty in Surrey, who was also the greatest fortune.

“I speak of this nobleman with the less scruple, for reasons which will hereafter be manifest.

“I once heard great ridicule thrown upon what is called love at first sight. I sat still, and was silent, fearful lest the warmth of my belief in it should provoke inquiries into what I had experienced. Doubtless there may be imaginary or idle cases of this sort, which deserve the ridicule; but I suppose that love at first sight means nothing more than that we suddenly meet with a person, who seems to realise our preconceived notions of excellence; and that, possessing enthusiasm and imagination, we receive the impression with transport, and entertain it till it becomes a fixture. Alas! to know the grounds of what we feel does not hinder us from feeling it, if it be accordant with our natures. Such was my own case at first: such it is now. I know what such an image as then arose upon me, ought to contain; and I love it for the very properties it refuses to believe in.

“I had an invitation from Lord Vavasour to visit him with Mr. Cope. I went, none the better for my companion's rail-

leries by the way. I went again several times, after the death of that good-natured and gallant friend; and again was at Mickleham for two days, just after I left college. Their house was on the river Mole, in a beautiful hollow between Mickleham and Dorking; lovely with vernal greens, lonely with yew trees. I thought I had better not go that time; but I went. There was no danger to anybody but me; and I persuaded myself, that the gallantry of the consideration gave me a right. It was a bright summer day; and as I turned one of the avenues near the house, I heard her laugh in a manner so open and unconstrained, that the sound smote me with joy and sorrow. 'You have no right in this place, Herne,' I said to myself; 'turn back: now is the time; now is the moment. You have been invited, but only in a general manner, with twenty others: you are not expected: you are not wanted: perhaps you are never thought of. Nay then, I will enter, if it be but once more, in order to console myself.'

"The great charm of Lady Vavasour, a charm in my eyes a thousand times greater than her beauty, lovely as that was, and a proper casket for the pearl, consisted in the perfect air of truth, which accompanied the least of her actions. When she smiled it was a smile unadulterated by the least affectation or drawback; when she looked, she looked only to see, and not to be looked at; when she spoke, you were not only sure of her speaking as she thought, but every thing around you, somehow, looked the truer for it. You felt surer of the very ground under your feet, and the sky over-head. Perhaps this is speaking like a lover; but truth causes it. She was as cheerful as health and youth could make her; generous as became her riches, handsome as an angel; sang, danced, and wrote a letter to perfection; in short, with the exception of one instance, (which, however, she did not seem to be aware of, and therefore it was as if it had no existence,) was a brilliant specimen of a fortunate human being. I never heard her, at that time, express a regret, but at having no children; and this she did in a tone so gay and off-hand, that although she immediately checked herself, and Lord Vavasour looked both sorry and displeased, it was easy to see that the occasion alone had called it forth, and that she missed nothing but the pleasure of having a little playfellow. She was patting the cheeks of a rosy child, the daughter of her husband's steward,



and playfully comparing the colour of its lips with some cherries she was eating. 'Tis a little senseless thing,' said she, 'after all, is a child,' walking away, and affecting, for the first time I ever knew her do so, something which she did not feel: — 'they are best in pictures. Do you know, Sir Philip, we have another Vandyke? 'Tis a portrait of Miss de Vavasour, as handsome as an angel. My Lord has just received it from the executors of her uncle. She says she cannot bear to look at it, she has grown so old; but I tell her, that if I had a portrait of myself like that, I should think I never grew old. I should always say I have nothing to do with age: 'tis none of my seeking, nor I won't have it: — *that's* me.'

"This is the way she always talked at that time, playfully, kindly, sincerely; for her liveliest and most wilful fancies had a foundation of truth in them, nor did it seem more possible to others than to herself, that such a charming creature should ever be old. My Lord looked at her with admiration and gratitude for thus turning the discourse; and for once, I thought his physiognomy was free from a look of sarcasm.

"This, however, was not on the day I speak of. His lordship was in full possession of his scepticism that day. The laugh I heard on turning the corner, was at the expense of my poetical friend Milton.

"Oh, Sir Philip,' exclaimed the Countess, as she saw me, 'I am glad you are come; for you know you are my champion in romance, and here is my Lord profaning my favourite poet.'

"Who is he?" said I, eagerly.

"She had a book in her hand, which she held out for me to look at. It was the volume of poems, which this celebrated partizan had published some years before, containing the 'Allegro,' and 'Penseroso.'

"I have it in my pocket,' cried I, with inexpressible delight.

"That is good,' returned the Countess, 'then we are both armed, and now for the combat.'

"Both armed,' thought I; 'both! — How lovely is the word! Sweet warrior, armed with poetry and beauty! Who can resist thee?'

"Lord Vavasour was in the habit of telling his wife, that all men at a certain time of life gave up the opinions of their youth. I had observed with pain, that her opposition to this

doctrine gradually became fainter ; for he did not confine it to such matters as people must inevitably alter in the course of their experience, but included all such opinions as he laughed at under the title of enthusiastical, such as the more refined notions of love, a superiority to the motives that influence clever men of the world, and a belief in the virtue of anything but custom and law, to which, in the teeth of his being a Cromwellite, he inculcated a profound veneration. ‘Human nature,’ he said, ‘was safest under the greatest number of restraints ; and no change ever took place for the better, though wise men made the best of it when it came. In short, his wise man was himself ; and what others would have regarded as a defect in his wisdom, he looked upon as the greatest proof of it ; namely, that he thought he had nothing further to learn. He had confounded, when a youth, his mere ignorance of certain drawbacks upon virtue, with a belief in it resembling that of cleverer young men ; so, having made this error, he fancied he repaired it, by believing in no virtue at all, but what it was convenient for him to inculcate as a lord and a husband.

“He could hardly be called jealous. He was too vain ; and he admitted not enough persons to his society with whom to compare himself. But the inequality of years between him and his lady, was punished in a vague way, by the uneasiness almost always attending upon that disparity. He had led a freer life than her father supposed ; and, though a man of good presence, and discoursable enough not to disgust her, yet the neglect of his education has left him deficient in those graces and accomplishments, which might have been reasonably looked for in one of his rank. She was therefore the less disposed to be reminded of it by books ; and he artfully contrived to seem as if he rated them at their just value, speaking of them as a father would of a promising boy, and arguing that they were ‘not to be despised.’ He loved an university-man like Cope, who was well educated, and yet cared nothing for scholarship. Cromwell he admired for his great success, and unclerkly speeches ; and though, as a pretended Presbyterian, he was bound to hate no man worse than Hobbes, yet that philosopher unquestionably was his favourite one ; for he had been told, that he read scarcely any books, and believed in no virtues. As to myself, I believe that in the first instance he tolerated me, partly because he thought me a great child, as

innocent as his wife ; and partly because I happened to observe one day, that some men were younger at forty, than others were at nineteen. After this, I never drank with him but he contrived to bring up some observation to that effect ; and if I had studied to obtain his good fellowship, I do not think I could have done it better than by declining to swallow as much Burgundy as he did ; which I should always have done, for one reason ; namely, that he always made a point of drinking till I gave up.

“ ‘ I have been telling my Lord,’ said Lady Vavasour, ‘ that poets do not alter their opinions, whatever may be the case with other men ; for here is Mr. Milton talking of his woods and his knights-errant when he was a young man ; and I am told he talks just in the same manner now to the friends he converses with. Is it true ? ’

“ ‘ No, no,’ said Lord Vavasour coarsely, but not in ill humour ; ‘ his cook-shop and his Independent ranter — that is what he admires.’

“ I said that I had not had the honour of seeing Mr. Milton since I was a boy ; but that I well remembered his handsome countenance and his graceful locks ; and that one day, at my father’s table, when somebody was talking against poetry, he entered into such a defence of it, that poetry seemed to be not only a fine thing in itself, but to comprehend music, and philosophy, and religion, and everything else that could inspire the hopes and capabilities of mankind.

“ ‘ Very fine, indeed,’ cried Lord Vavasour, ‘ and what did he say of cathedrals ? ’

“ Here his lordship burst into a triumphant shout of laughter, in which Lady Vavasour could not help joining.

“ ‘ Of cathedrals ? There is a noble passage in the *Pen-sierosa*, about a cathedral, with

“ storied windows, richly dight,  
Casting a dim, religious light.”

“ ‘ Just so,’ cried the Earl ; ‘ but having become a man, he has altered his opinion, and is for saluting his dim religious light with a brick-bat.’

“ This sally made me join in the laughter. ‘ It is true,’ said I, ‘ that the poet now professes a rule of faith inimical to the ‘ pomps and vanities of prelate worship.’ The painted window,

as well as the cope and mitre, he is therefore bound to have given up; and yet it was but the other day, that a fellow of Christ Church told me he played upon the organ as much as ever.'

“ ‘Ay, because he likes it,’ said the Earl, ‘and thinks he plays well. He would have stuck to the window, had he been a painter.’

“ ‘Then his infidelity to it,’ I argued, ‘does not imply a real change of opinion. Perhaps he likes his gules and argents as much as ever, though he does not allow himself to think so.’

“ ‘Nothing more likely,’ said his Lordship; ‘there are none so fond of gules and argents, as those who affect to despise them. Even Hewson got up a coat no doubt of Dugdale’s making; and the first time I was prevailed upon to go and see that starch fool, Pride, I thought his hall chairs had got the souls of all the rabble his ancestors in them, and had risen in a body, the *hand and club* made such a terrible show on every one of them.’

“ *Facit indignatio prosam*, as well as *versus*. His Lordship was in earnest, and triumphant, and I had never known him so witty. We laughed heartily, and joined in a run of sarcastical jokes, in which, however, I was startled to find Lady Vavasour had become such a proficient. The first subject was then resumed; and his Lordship observed that ‘Young men could be so little secure of what they should say when they grew up, that here was a poet and a great scholar, who would not even maintain the opinions that he very likely adhered to; much less,’ said he, ‘would he now venture to praise King James, as Parker tells me he does in his Latin poems; indeed I have seen it myself in the book you hold in your hand; and I should like to know,’ concluded his Lordship in a bitterer tone, ‘whether this sage poet held the same wild opinions touching marriage and divorce, before he was married, that he would fain would have taught us all afterwards.’

“ The secret of the noble Earl’s anti-Miltonic zeal, was very apparent. Milton had written a book on Divorce, for which the Presbyterian Assembly of Divines procured him to be summoned before the House of Lords; a proceeding which, though nothing came of it, did not render the poet less disposed to differ with his old friends. Lord Vavasour, both as a Presbyterian and a married man, took a dislike to him from

that moment, though he did not choose to let his wife into the knowledge of it. He had by this time, however, taught her to be quicker-sighted than was good for him ; and his incautious triumph, in leading him to allude to the book, brought up a mention of it, which threw a shade over her face, and damped the mirth of us all.

“ I wished to drop the subject, but he insisted on pursuing it. From marriage the discourse turned upon love. This rendered me absolutely unable to proceed. Lord Vavasour certainly discerned in my manner something he had never before observed ; for he looked first at Lady Vavasour, then at myself, and then at the books we held in our hands, with a very remarkable expression of countenance, and abruptly requested me to answer one question. ‘ Do you believe, Sir Philip,’ said he, ‘ in the *perfect* disinterestedness of this love that you talk of? The *perfect*, mind me : no drawback, no misgiving, no doubt about it.’

“ ‘ I do, certainly,’ replied I ; ‘ but your lordship will not agree with me in my notion of disinterestedness. You argue, that the more disinterested a lover thinks himself, the more he is pleased to be disinterested, and therefore still consults his own pleasure, in preference to his mistress’s. He is selfish, you argue, let him act as he may. Now it appears to me, that if I can have the courage to — what shall I say? — to avert my imagination, for instance, from the idea of being always in my mistress’s company, provided her parents forbid it, or it would be injurious to her ; and then, if I am able, upon the strength of my sympathy, so to identify myself, as it were, with her own being and person, as to keep her happiness always before me, instead of my own, — the devil is in it, (I beg your lordship’s pardon,) if this is to be called selfishness in me, when I both think and act, in and for the self of another.’

“ ‘ But your lover would be unhappy,’ said his lordship, ‘ if he did not do so. I mean that in keeping to his own person and his own self, he would be less happy, thinking as he does, especially since he fairly converts himself, as you tell us, into the very person he doats upon.’

“ ‘ No,’ returned I ; ‘ it is well argued, my Lord, but surely it is not true ; for it is too easy to any one, who has been forced into deep thoughts, to reconcile his own will and pleasure with the course of events, and the superintendence of a greater

will above him, unless he be either a very prudent man, or retain some clear principle; of the kind I have been speaking of. *Permitte divis cætera*, says the poet. I could resolve, for instance, to enjoy the society of my mistress, and to let everything else happen as it might, if the image of my own happiness were the predominant one in my mind; but by setting before myself that of her's, I steel my heard against this more *pleasurable* pleasure, and am enabled to endure the melancholy of my own consciousness.'

“ ‘And you really think it possible to practise this new self-denying ordinance?’

“ ‘I do.’

“ ‘Tis a pity you are not a lover,’ said his lordship, with a peculiar expression of countenance; ‘for the proof you know, is the great point. Confess, that you should fail, if you came to the trial.’

“ I was glad Lady Vavasour was walking on the other side of us: for I felt myself blush like one guilty; but it was not with a sense of the truth of his lordship's doubt. If the first part of his speech made me blush, the latter must have made me turn as pale; for a resolution came into my head, which I seized instantly. ‘Now is the time,’ said I to myself — ‘*now*, this *very* now. Not a moment later will do. I see plainly that the comfort of his lordship's intercourse with me will not hereafter be what it was; that of Lady Vavasour must be compromised by it in some way or other, though she may never care for me, nor I make her any guilty declaration. *Now*, Herne, — prove yourself the lover you speak of. Flatter yourself with the thought, if it will strengthen you — prove, so far, the truth of her husband's words; but at any price, for the sake of her happiness, *go*.’

“ A doubt came over me, whether I should be doing her good by my absence. Her delightful singleness of nature is already, thought I, not without some stain of distrust upon it. Should I not visit her from time to time, that I may see if I cannot hinder it from spreading? And yet how could my occasional visits do that? Would not the distrust of Lord Vavasour not only baffle my endeavours, but double his own to counteract their purpose? and would not all parties perhaps become doubly uneasy in their lives. No, no: I must hasten away, and to a distance, somewhere out of England. England is not safe. But above all, I must speak instantly, or I am lost.

“Yet hold; — their ages are unequal? — Be it so. You cannot remedy that.

“Yet there is a worse inequality in their tempers? in their understandings? It cannot be helped. No coxcombical interference of your better temper, or your greater understanding, can possibly do it any good.

“But yet again, the course of events — necessity. The mystery of the universe — am I really my own master? Did I make myself, or the world? do I govern it? Can I govern the least wind that blows? Is not the wisdom of Providence superior to anything I can do, even towards obeying it? And will not the result be just what that wisdom pleases, let me conduct myself as I may? — Alas! this may be logic; may be sophistication; may be worldly wisdom; may be devil’s wisdom; but it is not love. Love may be a helper, even of the divinity. Think so: think anything rather than fail; but speak, and that instantly. One argument more, and the sweetest of all faces may be made unhappy.

“Let me strengthen myself with one reflection before I speak. I will go abroad, and be absent for two or three years, — two at least; and if, by that time, I may be permitted, without evil to anybody, again to behold her now and then, — the longest intervals, — a year between each, — perhaps — oh, let me have this hope, if it be only to sustain me.

“On the strength of thus compromising with my self-denial, I spoke.

“‘Tis a pity, my Lord,’ said I, (with more agitation than I thought I should have betrayed) — ‘’tis a pity that I am not the proclaimed lover of some fair lady, forbidden to me by the fates; for I quit England in a day or two.’

“‘You quit England!’ said both the Lord and the Lady.

“How painfully sweet was her voice at that moment! It was fortunate there had been no such tone in it, before I spoke; for I fancied it sounded regretful.

“‘I am going to travel,’ I resumed: ‘people of my age travel if they can, to add to their stock of ideas. I must do what I am able, to make my company welcome.’

“‘That it will always be,’ said Lady Vavasour.

“‘Blessings on your heart,’ thought I, ‘for saying that. There is no love in it surely, or you could not have said it so smilingly; but it is invaluable. Love was not to be expected.

Yet who knows what might have been, if I did not love her as I do? I have now a companion, if only in that sentence. I am glad. I am full of life.'

"This little speech quite exalted me; and I could have undertaken to go to China. Lord Vavasour asked me if I was in earnest.

"I said I had never been more in earnest in my life.

"He adopted immediately a cordial manner, which affected me; drank more than usual that day, not to out-do me, but to show his regard; and altogether exhibited himself to such advantage, that I envied the effect it had upon Lady Vavasour. However, his extreme friendliness unconsciously excited her to a greater manifestation of her own; and so many additions were made to my precious stock of sentences, that I did not know whether to be more grieved or delighted.

"'There is one good thing in trouble,' said her ladyship; 'it makes us know the value of one another; I mean of our friends. And yet one ought to blush to say it. Sir Philip has always been very pleasant, my Lord, has he not?'

"'Very.'

"'And you are sorry he is going, are you not?'

"'Very sorry; very sorry, indeed.'

"'So am I. But Sir Philip will write to us; won't you, Sir Philip? And we shall hear from Rome, as we did when Mr. Sidney went. Hearing from Rome is like having news from a city in a book.'

"Why did she say those sort of things,—as young as infancy, yet as old as thought? Her husband smiled at her, as if she was really a child;—it was left to the sorrow that made me wiser than he, to discern the sweet companionable wisdom.

"I said, that if his lordship would not consider my letters a trouble, I would venture now and then to write.

"'You will oblige me very much,' said his lordship; 'and pray do not omit to tell us, what you think of the foreign ladies.'

"The permission to write was a dangerous privilege that I had not looked for. It was with difficulty, whenever Lady Vavasour left the room, that I could attend to his lordship, and deny myself the consolation of falling into a reverie on the manner in which I should write, and the subjects that



would occupy my letters. Otherwise, I could think of nothing but her absence, which that evening irritated me, as if it had been an offence. As long as she was present, I thought of nothing but the fact of her being so. I felt myself in a heaven which I was to quit; and took out every instant of it that remained, in a profound consciousness. Indeed, this was the usual course of my feelings, whenever I visited at Mickleham Park. When she came into the room, it was pure delight and abundance. When she left it, everything became empty and vapid.

“The privilege of writing implied, that the acquaintance was to be kept up, and that my re-appearance at Mickleham, on returning, was a matter of course. Yet I listened eagerly for something to be said on that point. I wished to look forward to it as a certainty: so lucky was it, that I was now committed to take my departure! I listened in vain till the very moment of leave-taking: when Lady Vavasour said, ‘The bay-trees will be quite large, by the time we see you again, Sir Philip. I think we must crown you with a branch for your heroism, since you regard your journey as a matter of duty, and would rather not take it.’

“These bay-trees grew by the window, and had been saved from decay in consequence of some advice I had given, from the gardener at Oxford.

“She looked archly, as if there had really been something in what I had observed about a lady and a forbidden match. I could not bear her to think this; and said, not very heroically, that there was nothing I regretted more in leaving England, than the society I had enjoyed in the spot where those bay-trees grew; and as a proof of it, I would rather have my crown at once: I mean, said I, that you shall give me a sprig of it, which,—I was going to say, ‘I will show when I come back,’ but I altered it to—‘and I will see how long it will last.’

“She laughed, as if I were jesting; but seeing me remain in an attitude of expectation, and Lord Vavasour hastily and not very wisely observing, ‘Do, my dear, there is no harm in it;’—she suddenly altered the expression of her countenance, and going to the window, leaned out into the sunshine, and plucked away a bough, which she brought me. There was a hesitation and a breath in her voice, as she said, ‘’Tis very

kind of you to think of us so much,'—which made me suspect that for the first time during our acquaintance, something like a suspicion of the truth came upon her; and she afterwards confessed it to have been the case. Lord Vavasour had drunk so much wine, that he was getting sleepy; nor do I think he would have said what he did, but for the thoughtlessness and good-humour which the table had put into his head. I should not make this remark, had he not acted as he did afterwards. I quarrelled with myself at the time for not being more grateful for his permission than I was. There was something in the manner of it which distressed me for all parties. But perhaps I was not in a condition to judge properly. It was difficult to separate the idea of him from something wrong on my part; and I at once hated, and yearned, to be obliged by him. These, however, were not the reflections of the moment. There was a passing feeling of the sort, but it was smothered up in the delight with which I received the laurel. This I put between the leaves of my volume of Milton, delighting to remind the giver of the two books we admired in common. I then ventured, as I bowed, to salute the hand that gave it me; shook heartily that of Lord Vavasour, with an entire revival of my good will; and mounting my horse with my servant, found myself, almost without knowing it, on the road to Leatherhead. As soon as the house was out of sight, I transferred the slip of bay from my pocket to my bosom, where it remained, till I thought to make amends for the disclosure I had hazarded by it, and so put it out of sight.

“I have it in my possession now, as withered as my hopes.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

“THE Protector gave me his permission to travel, not only with great good-will, but with a licence, nay an injunction, to cultivate the acquaintance of as many Royalists and Roman Catholics, as I might chance to meet with and find agreeable; trusting, he said, to my personal regard for him that I should not forsake his cause, and confessing that he thought I might

do him good among the more liberal of those parties, by stating what sort of a person he was, and how anxious to reconcile the good men of all classes to his government. Cromwell knew, that nothing could charm or fix me so much as a candour of this nature; and I believe he really reaped a benefit from it, as far as the good will of an individual like myself could serve him. He gave me full licence to speak of him as I thought, for I was a 'friend and not a flatterer; and you may say,' added he, 'that I gave you the licence, if you will.' How far he smiled at my youthful candour while he thus ingratiated it, I cannot say. It was believed, probably on good grounds, that he talked in very many different ways to different people. But perhaps there were some things he said, and some confidences he entered upon, which were not compatible with ordinary views of selfishness, or even of grandeur; and I believe he thought so himself, even if he was his own deceiver.

"I set out on my journey to Italy, not satisfying myself till I arrived at 'the city in the book,' from which I had a right to send a letter to Lord Vavasour. The letter contained as much about Rome, and as little about myself as possible. I had scarcely finished it, when I was seized with a shivering which I attributed to staying out late the preceding evening, looking about me for objects to speak of; and then it was, that the illness, or rather the ill and melancholy state of health fell upon me, which I endured for a year and a half, and which, by its constant and sharp train of thought, seemed to cut in upon me the reflections, with which experience crosses others in the course of a long life. I have reason to think it lucky for me, that I sustained this illness abroad; for the novelty of the sights about me, and the succession of them which I afterwards witnessed, could not but excite my attention, beyond what anything less unusual would have done. In a reasonable course of time I received an answer from Lord Vavasour; kind, though brief. I wrote again from Naples, requesting, I thought with sufficient modesty, that a reply, if not inconvenient, might await me at Florence, where I took Mr. Milton's compliments to some Italian families, who had been kind to him many years before, when he visited that city. I had called upon this eminent person, at that time understood to be ostensibly removed from the Protector's service, on account of

his odium with the royalists, to renew my acquaintance with him as 'the little fairy-fearing boy, who had sat on his knee,' and to ask him if he had any commands for Italy. It was a proceeding, which I doubted whether Cromwell would have approved, considering the kind of royal mission he had charged me with; but, though his admirer and well-wisher, I was not his servant; and I could not resist looking at the man, who besides affording me a pleasure which enlarged upon me day by day, had given occasion to the coincidence of the two books. I had learnt from a Christ Church acquaintance, that he was blind. The lids of his eyes, however, were not closed; and as he turned his blind orbs upon you while speaking, they gave him a singular and almost supernatural expression, very well suited to his poetry. His locks had the same graceful flow on either side his head, though his aspect was the worse for years, and I thought not without something of a puritanical irritability. The rest, however, was tranquil and dignified. He was sitting in a darkish room, hung with green, not far from a desk on which an amanuensis was turning over a number of large books. He told me he was compiling a Latin Dictionary! — so much of the scholar remained in him, though he had written poetry in his youth that beauties carried about with them, and a book in his manhood, for which a republic thought itself the stronger. Hearing the way in which I talked, he said he observed I was safe from the seductions, out of which both my family and his own had escaped (for his grandfather was a Catholic); and he then recommended me, when at Rome, to go and hear a *Miserere* composed by Allegri, a wonderful musician whom he had known there, 'kinsman of the renowned Correggio;' and which he said was a piece, that both for the learning of the counterpoint and the 'marvellous and prevailing misery of it,' was fit to be taken out of the hands of 'these profane mummets,' and sung by 'the youngest of the penitent among the fallen angels; — if,' added he, correcting himself, 'it be lawful to suppose, with Origen, that Satan and his ministers ever can be penitent.'

"I visited this celebrated person on my return, and mean to do so again if I live, for there is something in the conversation of such men that exalts us above our ordinary humanity. We feel as we do on mountain-tops, the tranquilliser for the very atmosphere we breathe; though perhaps we have not an actual

trouble the less, nor even converse upon subjects unconnected with sorrow. I believe it is owing to the interest they put into every passing moment, and to the sense of superiority we derive from it. We really are lifted up; are a thought nearer the gods.

“To return to the order of my narrative. — The gorgeous and triumphant aspect of the church of Rome, in its own regal seat, did not conciliate me in its favour. It was surrounded by too many common-places; was accompanied by worldly manners, and reigned in the midst of a common populace. But whether the habitual train of my feelings had served to put me on a level with the poet’s enthusiasm, or I was moved by the recollection of my own family circumstances, or whether the composition itself was really as divine as the poet fancied it, I was not the less affected, when I came to hear the *Miserere*. It is sung on the eve of Good Friday; and as the Passion of the Saviour is supposed to be in a state of accomplishment, the lights are put out one by one, till at the extinction of the last, the whole congregation, Pope and all, are prostrate on the ground; by which time the voices of the choir have become in the highest degree soft and affecting. The extinction of the lights reminded me of myself and my poor mother; the very wordliness and pomp of the congregation, thus laying itself low, became merged in the common sense of the weakness and misery of mankind; and as the soul seems never to have a greater right to take pity on itself, than when it thinks of what everybody else is suffering, I could not deny myself the indulgence of this truly Catholic sympathy; and prostrating myself with the rest, I poured all the sorrow of my love, my weakness, and my martyrdom, into the hands before my face. Coming out of the church, the active look of the out-of-door world, and the energetic beauty of the sky, seemed to rebuke me; and I girt up my resolution, with something like shame, and with the feeling of a manlier penitence. I then ceased to wonder, that multitudes grew hard and worldly, who were accustomed to the alternation of these high strains of enthusiasm and the vulgar business of life. The union of the two things would be unbearable, if people felt more during the one, or were less gay and noisy about the other. In truth, it is a mistake to suppose the Italians effeminate by nature. They are sensitive and enthusi-

astic by nature, but with robust bodies, and a power to grapple with what they feel, analogous to the loudness of their speech. Raphael; for want of being an Italian in body as well as mind; or perhaps from an excess of the perception of beauty, even for an Italian, died at seven and thirty, too weak to sustain any further the eternal round of his visions.

“No reply from Lord Vavasour awaited me at Naples. I wrote a third time, upon the supposition that I might receive an answer at Milan or at Paris. None came. Mr. Ouseley, an acquaintance whom I met at Paris, assured me that both Lord and Lady Vavasour were well; and I learnt in the course of his conversation, that they had heard two or three times from me, during my stay in Italy.

“I could not but take this as a hint from Lord Vavasour to discontinue my correspondence; and under the circumstances, I did so, without feeling hurt, though I could not disguise from myself that my health became the worse for it. His Lordship’s disbelief in a lover’s power of martyrdom was unfounded; but if he thought me not quite so able as I fancied, to identify myself with the consciousness of another, apart from my own wishes, he was right. I believe he really did act, in part, upon that consideration; though writing was not very agreeable to him, at any time; and the further one goes, the less a correspondent seems inclined to follow us.

“But events took place, in the course of a month or two from my encounter with Mr. Ouseley, in consequence of which this unhappy and misjudging person ceased to have any right over my conscience. I have mentioned the neglect of his education, the comparative solitude and rusticity of his life, and the consequent want of diffidence, which injured his natural shrewdness and capacity. Cromwell was now dead; and his son Richard had succeeded as Protector. When the rumours came up of the possibility of the King’s return, Lord Vavasour ridiculed them with so peremptory a scorn, and was induced by the arguments of men whom he despised to commit his opinion with so many prophecies and wagers, triumphantly pointing to Richard’s calm succession, and the overflow of congratulations which he received from all parts of the kingdom, that when the chances of such an event became manifest, he fairly drank himself into a fever, which carried him off. He could not bear, either to have made such a mis-

take in worldly shrewdness, or to stand the chance of being in disgrace with the royal family; towards whom, as a peer and a proud man, his affections had been ever directed in secret, though the love of present power had induced him to join with Cromwell. His rage, and the state into which his physician told him he had brought himself, proved to be too much for the comparative comfort of intercourse which he had hitherto maintained with Lady Vavasour. He did not scruple even to taunt her with encouraging younger men to wish for his death; a charge which surprised, shocked, and at length angered her; for she had secretly a great strength of will on her own part; and though an abundance of worldly goods had hitherto kept both of them in a state of ordinary satisfaction with one another; yet the extreme vulgarity, and poverty, and folly, of such an accusation, showed her at once how little he could have understood or loved her. Lord Vavasour died the week following Charles's entry into London, after writing a brief but furious letter to Monk, in which he consigned him over to 'drink and damnation;' and when I arrived in England, with the stream of gentry and royalists from all parts, among whom my regard for Cromwell had not hindered me from making some acquaintances that respected it, the first answer made to my inquiries at the gate of Mickleham Park, was, that its lady was a widow and ill, and that she saw nobody.

"I wrote a note, purporting that I had no intention of trespassing upon her privacy; but that, having just returned from abroad, I took the liberty of thus expressing an interest in her welfare; adding, that when I should understand the doors of Mickleham House to be open to her other acquaintances, I should venture to beg her excuse in person, for thus reminding her that there was one of the name of Herne. Having given this to the gate-keeper, I rode away.

"I took a lodging in the neighbourhood, and was very happy. I could not persuade myself that it was possible Lady Vavasour's grief could continue long. I was near her: I had even a hope. I passed my days in wandering about the confines of the park, trying to catch a glimpse of her; and at night, after imploring a blessing on her head, and joining myself with her in the prayer, which made me feel as if I knelt by her side in heaven, I had the most tranquil dreams. My illness had left me for some months. Nothing remained of it,

but some dear-bought reflections which stood me instead of a great deal of experience, and a tendency to a beating at the heart, which seized me, to my extreme indignation, whenever peril was to be encountered. I had felt it at sea. I had felt it when there was a cry of robbers in Italy. It made me jealous for my personal courage; and I had resolved not only to face every danger that crossed me, with double determination, but to leave nothing undone in consequence, that could be expected from the most superfluous height of bravery. But I did not think of it then. I was wrapped up in the most delightful day-dream of humanity. I did not even blush to be of no party, notwithstanding what has been said by the Grecian legislator. The extraordinary circumstances of my youth had turned my attention from what occupied almost every other man's, who was capable of reflection; or rather they may be said to have made me over-reflective. I felt at liberty to console myself for the want of party zeal, in my ability to love the best men of all parties; and I hoped, that certain improvements in society would never go back. Under these impressions I gave myself up to the indulgence of my individual hopes; and as all England, but myself and the object of them, seemed to have gone up to the metropolis to witness the new events, I delighted to fancy that we two were left alone, and had the country to ourselves.

“Riding one day, with this fancy upon me, by the side of the river Mole, towards Leatherhead, a gentleman suddenly issued from a turning, whose face I thought familiar to me. He was bound the same way as myself; and as I was only walking my horse, he pulled his hat over his eyes, as if not wishing to be recognised. This made me push forward a little, that I might not be thought to trespass upon his incognito, when, before I had proceeded many yards, he called out to me by name. I was a good deal surprised, for it was a person of all others whose absence from court, at such a season, I should have least looked for; but as his presence in that quarter, alone too, and with his star concealed, betrayed some particular object, I constrained myself from expressing it. It was the Duke, at that time Marquis, of Ormond.

“‘Confess, Sir Philip,’ said he, not without some confusion, ‘that you are surprised.’

“‘If your lordship will have it so,’ I answered, ‘I shall



not deny it ; but I hope you will allow me to add, that I am still more pleased.'

" 'If I did not think that both of us were pleased,' returned the Marquis, ' I should hardly bear this dilemma so well ; for I have not done with my demands. ' Confess that you think me here upon business for the King.'

" 'I do not think about it,' said I : ' pardon me, my Lord, I might have concluded so, if I thought any further ; but after my first wonder, I was alive to nothing but the pleasure of seeing you.'

" 'I had descended from my horse by this time, and as I walked arm-in-arm with the Marquis, the latter pressed me gently, and proceeded to relate what ensues.

" 'Before I repeat it, however, I will mention how I had the honour of becoming acquainted with this nobleman. I was standing looking at the Cathedral at Rouen, one evening in the August of the preceding year, when a gentleman, hastily passing behind me, was stopped by a person wrapped in a tattered riding-coat. The gentleman made an impatient movement to release his cloak, which the other had seized hold of, and the man, letting it go, exclaimed in a tone of sorrow, ' And when was it that the sorrowful and starving creature was passed by the noble Ormond ! ' The Marquis (for it was he) turned about, and impatiently motioning the other to be silent, whispered him in the ear. The man kissed his hand with a sort of transport, and turned to go away.

" 'I followed this person ; and turning round as I went, to catch another glimpse of so famous a man as the Marquis, observed with surprise that he himself was following me. On seeing me join the man to speak with him, he came up, and as hastily addressed me, in a tone which I could neither call respectful nor otherwise.

" 'Perhaps, sir, you overheard this gentleman speak to me just now ?'

" 'I did, my lord.'

" 'The ascertainment of this fact seemed to irritate him. He again whispered the other, who a second time moved as if to depart. His lordship resumed.

" 'You look like a gentleman ; but I have particular reasons for asking what business you have with this person.'

" 'I am not used, my Lord,' replied I, ' to have questions

put to me in this manner; and it pains me to tell a man like the Marquis of Ormond, that I do not hold myself bound to answer them.' (My heart began to beat; otherwise, to say the truth, I should have answered better, and gratified him.)

"'Are you a royalist?' said the Marquis.

"'No, I am not.'

"'That answer ought to imply something candid,' returned Ormond; — 'and yet — so many spies and impostors —'

"'Spies and impostors!' cried I with indignation; 'who dares to insinuate to — But some agitation of the moment excuses your lordship. You know not the person you are speaking to.'

"'Sir,' resumed the Marquis, in an angrier tone, 'I give you notice. I have reason to think, that no Englishman can be in Rouen at this particular juncture, with honest intentions, and not be known to me, or have introduced himself. You know who I am. A gentleman might have made amends for becoming the undesired witness of a secret, by hastening to declare to me, in his turn, who he was; but you are deceived if you think it worth your while to pursue any plan against — I mean that — in short, let me advise you to cease all inquiries, and to convince me, by the mode in which you conduct yourself the remainder of this evening, that you are as honest as you would have me believe.'

"'I would have you believe nothing,' said I, 'except that I am a freeman, as well as the Marquis of Ormond, and that I am to be neither commanded nor dogged.'

"'That language,' said the Marquis, 'is such as I should confide in, did I not know how fatally the best and the worst things are mingled together in these miserable times —'

"'My Lord,' said I, interrupting him, 'I begin to think that what I am doing neither does your lordship nor myself honour, in delaying to be explicit with you. If you can discern truth from falsehood, you will know that I speak sincerely; and if you persist in your disbelief, I shall have a right to doubt, in my turn, the nobleness of your nature, and to tell you so. Probably the dusk as well as a late illness, make me look older than I am; otherwise your lordship might have discerned that I am too young to have designs in me unfitting a man of honour. I am Sir Philip Herne, a ward of the late Protector, to whose memory I reckon myself bound, though in

all honour and freedom. - My object in following this gentleman was to request that he would do me the favour to let me assist him ; and the reason why I did not declare myself to the Marquis of Ormond was, that I was doubtful whether he thought I had overheard his name, and anxious, at all events, to show respect to his privacy.'

“ ‘I believe you to an iota,’ said Ormond, handsomely stretching out his hand. ‘And now permit me, Sir Philip, to ask you whether the sight of me in this place puts you under a necessity, as a gentleman who had obligations to Cromwell, to say anything of my movements ; I mean not, of course, in a way unbefitting a gentleman, but as a matter of gratitude, and such as you could avow ?’

“ ‘By no means,’ I replied : ‘excuse me, my lord, if I ask how Cromwell’s successor could wish me to harass the movements of gentlemen so much at a disadvantage with fortune ? I have been out of England these two years ; and I had no commission from his father, except to be as explicit as I am ; and to let the honourable among his opponents see that he could afford the candour.’

“ ‘I thought Ormond smiled as he shook his head. ‘Oliver was cunning,’ said he ; ‘but I do not the less believe his ward to be noble. Let the untowardness of the fortune you speak of, Sir Philip, excuse the abruptness with which I addressed you : your wish to assist this poor gentleman, a companion of mine in arms, proves that you are richer than I am at present. Perhaps I cannot make you a more grateful submission than by enlarging the debt I have incurred, and begging permission to thank you at a future time for any kindness you may be pleased to show him.’

“ ‘I thanked the noble Ormond as I was bound, and we took leave of each other ; he to rejoin his master Charles (who was in Rouen at that moment, on an enterprise which did not succeed) ; and I to accompany the poor Irish officer to his lodgings, where two or three of them lived in a companionship truly deplorable. These gentlemen had not tasted meat for nearly a month, sometimes scarcely any food at all ; and one of them had become so ill, that Lieutenant ——, in a fit of desperation, had gone out to beg for him. He was vexed beyond description at having interrupted the Marquis ; ‘but,’ said he, ‘who would suppose it possible, that the noblest and most generous

of men, whom I have seen in Dublin Castle living like a king, which he is at the heart of him, should ever live to whisper in a beggar's ear, that he had not a clean shirt to his back ! And the gallant Irishman fairly wept.

“The lieutenant told me, that he was to go to the cathedral door at ten o'clock, where something was to be left for him in a corner, in acknowledgment of which he was to leave a written paper, stating whether such and such a person had left the town. The poor man hastened to procure this intelligence, and then planted himself facing the cathedral, that he might not miss the person who came. I went with him. We stood apart, under the penthouse of a little shop, and at nine o'clock my companion exclaimed, ‘By the powers, ’tis he himself! There he goes, stealing along like a thief, and he a Lord Lieutenant, and the prince of gentlemen born.’ The gallant Irishman stopped a little, as if absorbed in wonder, and then said, ‘And all this is to do a kindness to one who never spoke a word to him in his life, except to say, “No, my Lord,” when he asked me whether the door of the White Tower was locked; which I was very sorry for, because Dick Browne did it, that is to say, didn't lock it; and it was the night before the surprise which we were all preparing against; and so Dick and I fought about it, who is the best friend I have, and I gave him a lunge that never let him set his right leg to the ground properly since; him you just now saw in the fever. But I would do the same any day for the noble Marquis; I mean, give him the paltry shillings that he is leaving there for us; and so look there now, he has got the bit of paper; and now won't you be in time, sir, to hasten after him, and give him those same dues of his that you speak of, which will save me from returning him the shillings, which is what no gentleman would like, lord or lieutenant, who is as much in want of them as the other gentleman, meaning either of us, provided we are in this damned dirty town of Rouen here, and don't know which is worst off.’

“I took leave of the worthy lieutenant, and joining the Marquis in a dark turning, hastily put into his hands a little box, and so went away. I observed him afterwards hastening along, with his cloak about him, as if nothing had happened. He concluded, by the nature of the action, that it was that of a friend. The box contained a few jewels, with a request that

he would pardon the lender if he had too good an opinion of himself. I saw him afterwards go into the convent of the Feuillantines at Paris, and took no notice ; but being requested with great earnestness by Father Waring to be the bearer of a letter which he had written to the Duke of York, at the Hague, after the turn in his Majesty's favour, and which had been dispatched to me at considerable risk by a Catholic messenger, I encountered the Marquis face to face in the street. He looked hard at me for an instant, then held out his hand, with eyes radiant with cordiality, and would fain have taken me directly to the King ; though he said he was already besieged by a crowd of travellers, not one of whom perhaps would have done him a fiftieth part of the kindness that I did at Rouen ; ' where,' added he, ' you made men of us all again, by enabling us to feast like emperors.' I excused myself from an honour, which I might receive with a better grace by and by, if his Majesty thought me worth his notice ; for though the Marquis was not bound to know the extent of my feelings towards Cromwell, which indeed were much more of a personal than a political nature, yet as I had never evinced any interest in the royal cause, his lordship would agree with me, that the moment of his triumph was not the one to make a first appearance in among its friends.

" 'Well,' cried the Marquis, gaily, ' you will put a great number of your old friends to the blush, I can tell you that, by these refinements ; but I cannot deny they become you. I hope we shall see you among us by and by.'

" I said that one Marquis of Ormond was sufficient to attract a person's social ambition to any quarter ; but if there were more such at court ——'

" 'I beg your pardon,' said the Marquis, ' for interrupting you in what would appear flattery from a less ingenuous person ; but I assure you, Sir Philip, as I am one of the oldest, so I am one of the least lively men in this young court of ours, where there is twenty times the wit and conversation that I could afford you : only you must not expect us all to be very staid, after the vagabond life which your acquaintances have forced us to lead these ten years. We must have time to recover from the jollity of our despair, as well as from that of our triumph. Besides, I hope you will not measure the ability of a court by the manners of the courtiers, which you know have never been famous in the annals of philosophy.'

“After some more discourse we parted, and I did not see his lordship again till I met him emerging out of a quiet lane in a village in England.

“‘I am going to be very impertinent,’ said the Marquis, ‘but I have a reason for it, which I hope you will find good. Permit me to ask, whether you are in this neighbourhood for any length of time? To be absent from London at such a period, is less mysterious on your part than on mine; but, as you told me when I saw you at the Hague, that you had no house in England, perhaps you are looking out for one?’

“‘No, my Lord,’ said I, ‘I am not; but nevertheless I am residing, as your lordship supposes, in the neighbourhood; and mean to do so for some days at least, perhaps for some weeks.’

“‘Now then,’ cried the Marquis, ‘for one effort more. Forgive me, but I must complete the list of my impertinences, by asking you a question which is grounded on anything but an impertinent feeling. Perhaps my age may entitle me to ask it of a young friend; certainly, I hope my motives will. Let me add, before I speak, that those motives have nothing to do with yourself, or with your movements; nor is it on your own account that I venture the freedom.’

“‘Pray, my Lord,’ said I, ‘speak: I am in pain till I show you how impossible I feel it for Lord Ormond to ask me anything which it will not be a pleasure to me to answer.’

“‘Then, my dear Sir Philip, let me ask you whether your heart is disengaged enough to contemplate an amiable girl with impunity? I mean, without any wish to render yourself more agreeable to her, than an intercourse, however slight, would infallibly make you? I ask for no names, nor for the least particle of special information; but simply whether a heart like yours has lived to the age of two or three and twenty, without being in love? In short (to give a reason for what must still look obtrusive in me), I ask whether I could recommend to your occasional notice, or rather neighbourly protection, for however short a time, a young lady, whom I may pronounce to be deserving your attention so far; though she is not otherwise in a condition to hazard an attachment on her part? In a word, Sir Philip, I am personally interested in the welfare of this young lady, who is the daughter of a dear friend of mine; now no more; so now having committed my own secret with

you, I trust I may without indelicacy await an answer to the question I have ventured to put.'

"I should have interrupted the Marquis more than once to express my willingness to oblige him; but to say the truth, his question had so surprised me in the first instance, and he seemed so anxious to render his freedom palatable, that I let him, for both our sakes, conclude what he had to say. I now answered him, as he wished, without mentioning names; and he said, with considerable emotion, 'My dear young friend, a love like yours will probably be as happy as it ought to be; but if it turn out otherwise, you will at least not have to reproach yourself with dishonouring it by double-dealing. Others perhaps would condemn your absorption in it more than I do; but I take it for granted that the object is worthy, and that it will hinder you from the performance of no manly duty. For the rest, it may save you from many pernicious vanities, especially in the sphere of life in which you are destined to move: for young people are sufficiently disposed to admire and to indulge each other; and older ones too, in that quarter; and as more licence is indulged than allowed, the kindest natures, from thoughtlessness, sometimes find themselves guilty of the faults of the worst; and honourable men become hampered with ties, which they can neither wish undone when they look upon some faces, nor help regretting, when they think of the unhappiness they have caused others.'

"I was surprised some time after the disclosure of this secret to hear the Marquis of Ormond spoken of as a man, who with a very open countenance, was very close in his thoughts, and supposed to honour nobody with his confidence; but besides that this was not true (for he was very unreserved with his children, and with one or two other friends), it is the part of the greatest politicians to know when to throw themselves open.

"You will see, by and by, my dear Esher, how it was, that his lordship permitted me to make mention of this secret. The place, the time, my disclosure of it in this paper, must have already made you guess who was concerned in it. You are right. It was Miss Randolph. I was introduced to her and her supposed father that same evening, as a friend of the Marquis; and it was lucky that I was so, for the disclosure proved of use.

“ ‘I will now tell you,’ said the Marquis, as he proceeded to Mr. Randolph’s to introduce me, ‘for what reason I have made you a partaker of my anxieties. I thought to have spoken to my old acquaintance Mr. Evelyn, who lives at Wootton, and is a very worthy man: but there is something in your turn of discourse, which looks more experienced than his, notwithstanding his years; and to say the truth, whether it is owing to the loyal reverence with which he treats us all, or to the very perfection of his virtue, (and yet it cannot be that either, for I should not mind confessing myself to a saint,) I would rather be guilty of a weakness in your eyes than in his. In short, I was exceedingly puzzled what to do, and was thinking, when you overtook me, of applying to an acquaintance of my good friend Mr. Randolph, a gallant young man, who would have been glad to make such a step towards the court. However, all is best as it is. To come then to the point, my dear Sir Philip, you must be prepared, if occasion should demand it, to play the knight-errant a little for me, and protect the fair and young. Something occurred last night which makes me uneasy, and has been the occasion of my stopping another day or two from London. You think we have all the solitude here to ourselves; but you are mistaken; there is a bit of the town among us, and one of the gayest and most vicious of all: two scoundrels, whom a father or brother would more dread to see prowling about his premises than a couple of tigers.’

“ ‘I should not wonder,’ said I, ‘if they were the same I observed this morning about the lanes by Mickleham Park: one of them a stoutish man, with a high forehead and insolent face; the other a taller, thinner, and better looking man, much of a gentleman, and with rather a graceful, perhaps a girlish countenance, small-faced and small-chinned, but with a fine eye.’

“ ‘The very men,’ said Ormond: ‘he of the high forehead and insolent face, is said to be a Mr. Dalton, a disgrace to a worthy family in these parts; and he of the small chin and fine eye, is no less a personage than his Grace the Duke of Buckingham, who, under the pretence of visiting Dalton, is trying how he shall introduce himself to a lady who will not see him. Perhaps you have heard of her,—Lady Vavasour, a great beauty, whose husband died the other day, in a fit of



courtly despair at being a republican? Indeed it must have been her house by which you saw him prowling.' (I thought it kind and delicate of the Marquis to speak of Lady Vavasour in this unconscious way, for I suspected he had guessed my secret, which turned out to be the truth.) 'They were talking the other night,' continued his lordship, 'at his Majesty's table, of the extraordinary beauty of that lady, and the folly of her lord; and Buckingham swore that he would be the first man to make the young widow smile again. Lady Vavasour appears to be a woman of sense: but these fellows are very unscrupulous. Dalton is mad with the honour of the visit, and Buckingham is mad always; so I hope her friends will have a care. It is hardly wise in so young and beautiful a woman to live so much alone as I hear she does; for servants, however faithful, are apt to give way at the sight of rank; and if Buckingham, in his impudent style, with a purse in one hand and a great deal of address in all that he does, persists in trying to force his way through the gates, I hardly know what is to hinder him.'

'How!' cried I, unable to repress my emotion; 'does your lordship think it possible that he can insult Lady Vavasour? Perhaps the villain is tampering with the gate-keeper this very moment.'

'No, no,' said the Marquis; 'the hour is a little too late. There is a fashion in things, which your high-bred rascals observe, though they observe nothing else. Besides, Buckingham will go smoothly to work, where a countess is concerned. He might pick a quarrel with the Earl, if the poor man were alive, and he had courage enough to do it, which I doubt; but then he would pretend it was on the lady's account. As to himself, he has vanity and accomplishments; and when once introduced, would pique himself on making his way. I have no doubt he would even contrive to be his own introducer, and do it very well, if the lady were less peremptory in her exclusions; nor would I answer for it, that he does not still contrive some mode of getting in. What say you? Shall we be knights-errant of the proper sort, Sir Philip, and baffle him? or shall I, as the older and steadier man, muster up a little impudence myself, and contrive to warn her?'

'My dear lord,' cried I, in a fit of gratitude, — 'I was thinking of something to that very effect; but you are so kind,

and have honoured me so much by your present commission, that I will not scruple, for the sake of this lady, to trouble you with a secret of my own, however little it may redound ultimately to the credit of my endeavours.'

"I here disclosed to his lordship the direction of my attachment to Lady Vavasour, and the total ignorance of it on her part; apologising, at the conclusion of my narrative, for not having waited till his lordship had finished his own story, which I guessed to contain nothing further than a wish that I should keep an eye on the Duke and his companion, for the same reason which induced me to hope his lordship's interference in behalf of another lady.

"'You are right,' said Ormond. 'What I have said to you about love and its devotedness, I say still; and, for my part, I have the best hopes for you, let her ladyship be as clever and beautiful as she may.' (Here the Marquis was pleased to make use of some very encouraging expressions.) 'And now, as I guessed your secret, let me tell you in plain terms, that you have no doubt guessed mine, and that the young lady for whom I solicit your brotherly interest, has the warmest of all claims upon me, except what the law can give her. I profess however only to be a distant relation. Mr. Randolph is the son of an old and faithful servant of my father's, and inherits the good qualities of his family. I believe he has told for me the only lie he ever told in his life:—I wish, as a statesman and a man of gallantry (for such I have unfortunately been in my time, though not to the extent of these deliberate and unfeeling scoundrels), I heartily wish, my dear Sir Philip, that I could say as much for myself. Ah! my friend, these are the things — I mean falsehoods of any sort — that take from us the solidest comforts in life, and would lead us to think everything as hollow as themselves, if we did not retain virtue enough to believe in virtue. And yet — however, I will not run into dangerous exceptions. Falsehoods, even on patriotic motives, do a mischief to us, by diminishing our belief in the utility of the best principles; how much more when they are told for private and individual purposes! Good God! Talk of restorations and golden days! I have many reasons for rejoicing that affairs have gone as they do; but if you had as much knowledge as I have of courts and politics, you would sometimes wish that you could wipe out the whole past history

of mankind, like a false sum upon a slate, and begin over again with a true and simple arithmetic. But, as you say, these times may come. I dare not observe at present how sacredly that expression may be translated. To action, my friend, to action; and let us merge our sighs for what cannot be helped, into endeavours to make the best of it. You and I, Sir Philip, have become acquainted under some of those extraordinary circumstances which stand people instead of a long friendship. We are now intimate, and prepared to judge and abide by one another like men. I talk as if I were no older than you; for my heart, politician as I am, has not grown old yet; and when you visit London again, you shall know a younger and a better Ormond, who is all that his father ought to have been.—Mr. Randolph's gate is before us.—Now shall I be ashamed when I look upon the face of this little girl, not at anything I have spoken of, but at having been ashamed of it, and at her not knowing who I am! So perilous it is, to let the most inconsiderate of our faults give rise to the exercise of some of our best feelings. She sees us at the window, and will let us in! 'Tis a good and most kind-hearted girl, full of confidence; but this is the very danger. Buckingham spoke to her last night, and I have no doubt will be here again before he sleeps; so that what you have to do for me may become necessary before we part. I wish him to see, that she has another and a younger protector than Mr. Randolph, and one who has the bearing of a higher quality.'

“While the Marquis was concluding, I felt my blood boil at the profligate impudence of this fellow Buckingham, thus daring to invade the privacy of one female, and at the same time meditating attacks on another. I was introduced to Mr. Randolph and the young lady (whose gentle and affectionate manners I need not describe). Ormond whispered the old gentleman, on coming away; and when the door was closed upon us, he requested me to give a glance down a lane which ran to the water's side. The principal garden gate of Mr. Randolph's house, which nearly faced Leatherhead church, opened upon the road; but there was another which looked upon the lane just mentioned; and the Marquis said, that Buckingham (for he had no doubt it was he) had given Miss Randolph to understand, that he should be there about that time, to inform her of something very necessary to her welfare; something,

said Buckingham, which 'the good old gentleman' was neither acquainted with himself, nor for a very particular reason could be so. 'Now,' said Ormond, 'you see the accursed trouble which is produced upon us by our faults, sometimes in the most humiliating shapes. I do not believe that this scoundrel knows anything of what I have told you,—his words most probably imply nothing but a profligate jest; and yet, as I cannot be perfectly certain of it, it is even in his power to make me apprehensive. But this is nothing to my fears for the poor girl. You see the gentleness of her nature. Her candour is equal to it; nor have I any fear that she would contribute to her misfortunes by a fault of her own. It is her very goodness for which I tremble. These mild, warm-hearted, inexperienced girls, bred up in solitude, are the very creatures to become the prey of such fellows as Buckingham. I wish I could have contrived her breeding otherwise, but — Do you see anybody?'

"By this time we were both of us down the lane, and in advancing beyond a turning of it, I had seen, surely enough, Buckingham himself talking with the servant girl. I drew back, and told the Marquis, who guessed I had seen something by my face.

"'Confound the fools!' said Ormond; 'I know them. For a stiver and a chuck under the chin they would sell an angel.'

"I looked again. Dalton was walking away with the girl to the water's side; and two men, apparently watermen, were advancing.

"'Nay then,' said the Marquis, 'there is no time to be lost. This is more sudden than I looked for. The villain is for carrying her off. Go on, dear Sir Philip; and if the sight of a stranger does not scare the rascal at once, I shall care not to be recognised.'

"I went down the lane; passed the men at the gate, who looked doubtfully at one another; and entering it, saw Buckingham addressing Miss Randolph at a window. The dear girl, as kind-hearted as she was innocent, was begging him, for his own sake, to go away and trouble her no more, when I startled him by a tap on the shoulder.

"'May I request the favour, sir,' said I, 'of knowing what you do on these premises?'

“ ‘ Good sir, said Buckingham, ‘ may I request the like ? ’ ”

“ ‘ I am a friend of the young lady’s.’ ”

“ ‘ So am I.’ ”

“ ‘ But I have her father’s warrant for protecting her.’ ”

“ ‘ So have I.’ ”

“ ‘ You are acquainted then with Mr. Randolph ? ’ ”

“ ‘ I have not the honour of knowing the old gentleman ; but I mean to have. I was requesting to be introduced.’ ”

“ ‘ How then can you say you have his warrant for protecting his daughter ? ’ ”

“ ‘ Every gentleman has it, Sir Catechist ; every gentleman is bound to protect a lady ; so be good enough to perform your errand in doors, and meanwhile I will conclude what I have to say.’ ”

“ By this time I had ascertained from Buckingham’s manner as well as his words, that he was not aware of the Marquis’s interest in the young lady. I was therefore willing to keep Ormond out of sight, though it was with the greatest difficulty I could restrain myself from making some allusion to the attempts at Mickleham Park. But I had the lady still to take care of, and my own credit. The Duke and I might see each other in society, and the Marquis would not expect me to meet him with a face of dishonour.

“ ‘ I do not move,’ said I, ‘ from this spot, till you do : and I would have you take it as a favour, that I let you go quietly.’ ”

“ ‘ Do you know who I am ? ’ said Buckingham, in a tone of indignation.

“ ‘ Yes,’ said I ; ‘ you are an eavesdropper.’ ”

“ ‘ Upon my soul,’ returned he, ‘ ’tis a very pretty, and a very modest appellation : and who pray may you be ? ’ ”

“ ‘ I am a gentleman.’ ”

“ ‘ Modest again,’ cried the Duke, ‘ by all that’s mighty ! By G—d I have a very great mind to——’ ”

“ ‘ Excuse me,’ said I, ‘ you have a very little mind. But the young lady is alarmed ; let us quit the place, and talk outside the gate.’ ”

“ I made a farewell gesture to Miss Randolph, to signify that all would go well ; and she closed the window.

“ ‘ *Au revoir*, charming Miss Randolph,’ said the Duke : ‘ fear nothing. Your friend and I are admirably well agreed,

—d—n his linen-draper's impertinence ; for, of course, my friend,' continued he, as he moved towards the gate, ' you are a linen-draper, and jealous !'

“ ‘ I am sorry,’ said I, as I closed the gate behind us, ‘ that I cannot oblige the Duke of Buckingham by stating, that I am of a rank unfit to trouble his spleen ; but though of a quality far inferior to his, I am a gentleman, and ready to prove myself one. I am Sir Philip Herne.

“ ‘ You are an impertinent fool, whoever you are,’ said the Duke, drawing his sword with me, and exchanging a pass or two. The lane was very private, and we might have hurt ourselves enough ; but I have reason to think, that his servants, the pretended watermen, understood they were to interfere. They did so with some roughness, seizing hold of my arms, and endeavouring to trip me up. I was very angry, and forgetting myself, so far as to lift my voice against them, the Marquis made his appearance in an instant, crying out, ‘ Villains !’ and coming upon them with his sword. He said he thought they were going to assassinate me ; for certain adventures abroad had given him the worst opinion of Buckingham.

“ ‘ The men desisted immediately, gazing with astonishment at this sudden apparition of the Lord Steward of the Household.

“ ‘ Ormond made haste to have the first word :—‘ Am I never to meet the Duke of Buckingham,’ said he, ‘ but I find him in a skulking brawl ?’

“ ‘ Truly the gentleman is obliged to your lordship, said Buckingham. ‘ Am I never to meet the Marquis of Ormond, but he is to overpower me with his very wonderful virtues and his more astonishing apparition ? But your lordship is willing to relieve me on the present occasion : my sense of inferiority may be excused for not feeling so much as usual, when I find his Excellence of Ormond indulging similar tastes with myself, lurking in villages, and growing jealous of rustic loves.’

“ ‘ ‘ A truce to your folly,’ said Ormond, ‘ and begone with your bully-rooks. You know, Buckingham, I care not for you ; but I care for his Majesty's welfare ; I care for the royal cause and the disgrace and peril it may suffer, if these unworthy practices are noised abroad. Sir Philip Herne will endeavour to forget them, as well as myself, if nothing further is attempted

against this innocent girl,—the daughter of my father's steward ; but I warn you how you disturb her again.'

“ ‘ Oh, my lord,’ said the Duke, bowing, as he wound his handkerchief round a scratch, or pretended scratch in his arm ; — ‘ I shall have due veneration for the daughter of your father's steward, depend on it, especially now that I know how interesting she is to your father's son. But your lordship should have been candid with me and given me warning sooner. It is not in me to spoil sport, nor even to pretend that I don't love it. That is an industry, and inwardness, and perfection of gusto, which I confess is above my careless habits ; and which I leave, not without admiration, to the stately and the pious.’

“ He withdrew as he spoke, with his watermen ; we on our sides turning the other way, and feeling all the contempt which he affected. A deep blush, however, covered the face of Ormond ; and for some time he was too angry to speak.

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## CHAPTER V.

“ THERE had been no witness of our dispute. The time was late, for village hours ; and the passage to the water's side in that part of Leatherhead was so removed from the main street, that we might have been louder without exciting attention. After pacing awhile in the moonlight, we returned to Mr. Randolph's, where I left the Marquis for the night. It was with difficulty he restrained himself from embracing his daughter, and calling her by that name ; and in fact, after some discourse with her supposed father, when I had gone away, he avowed himself. I knew it the moment I saw them. There was an exaltation in the looks of the gentle girl, that announced both delight and pride ; and on her father's looking at me with a smile, and calling her to him, she flew and kissed his hands, with tears of affection. [You see, Esher, how well she kept his secret.] Mr. Randolph was a plain, good man, old enough to be her grandfather ; and as such I have no doubt she continued to love him.

“ I now told the Marquis, that after what I had seen of the

Duke of Buckingham, I thought myself privileged, as an acquaintance, to break through the forms at Mickleham Park, and warn the Countess against him, in person: but I said I should feel every doubt removed as to the propriety of so doing, if his lordship would condescend to be introduced by me, both as a witness to the outrage on one lady, and a man of honour interested in the tranquillity of another.

“His lordship, after a little reflection, said he would accompany me with pleasure. To confess the truth, he said; the Countess had almost slipped his memory till that moment; but as soon as he called her to mind, he saw the propriety of my waiting on her myself; and as to his going with me, besides his being very well able to take such a liberty on account of his age, and perhaps his rank, he observed, that, on the same accounts, his intimacy might be one of the properest and even one of the most requisite things in the world for a young and beautiful woman so circumstanced; and he owned that he had now a further reason for wishing it, because her ladyship might choose to become a friend to Miss Randolph. ‘Not to mention,’ concluded he, ‘that I partake of the usual curiosity of courts, and am willing enough to have the first glance at the lady myself.’

“Behold me then moving happily and honourably, on a bright summer’s day, by the side of my noble friend, towards the mansion that contained the jewel of my heart. We were on horseback, the Marquis having brought a confidential servant with him; and he now kept no arm over his star, resolved to let Buckingham see, in case we met him, that he was prepared for all publicity. I wrote a note at the lodge, addressed to Miss Vavasour, as briefly as I could, stating the reason which induced us to trespass on their retirement; ‘having both,’ I said, ‘witnessed an outrage the preceding day, which seemed to render it doubly imperative on us to put her ladyship’s friends on their guard, even had not one of us been already honoured with an acquaintance, which he took the liberty of being anxious to extend to a noble friend; one whose countenance might be deemed an honour as well as a protection, even by Lady Vavasour.’

“We were admitted, instantly, the servants looking with delight at the return of visitors, and his lordship’s star seeming to betoken a share for them in the universal jubilee. ‘Will



there be much ceremony of ushers and footmen, now?' Lord Ormond asked me as we approached the hall-door; 'or will her ladyship be visible at once?' 'She will be visible at once,' I replied;—'what she thinks it right to do, she does entirely, and off-hand.' His lordship smiled. 'This *cynosure* of yours, as your rebellious friend calls it, is either a very decisive or a very delightful person,' said he: 'perhaps a little of both, eh? only the delightfulness highly predominates?' He had just ended speaking, when the servant, who led the way, opened the door of the well-remembered sitting-room, and announcing our names, we found the lady before us. A deep curtesy acknowledged the presence of the Marquis. Lady Vavasour then held out her hand to me, and said, 'Welcome to England, Sir Philip; truly welcome indeed at this moment; for if you had been studying my wishes, you could not have done anything more accordant with them, perhaps more necessary to my comfort, than thus procuring me the countenance of so great a visitor.' Another curtesy completed the admiration of the Marquis.

'I could only bow down upon her hand without speaking. Any lady, madam, under your circumstances,' observed the Marquis, 'would warrant, I trust, a little interruption on the part of an old acquaintance, and a paternal personage like myself; but I must tell you, that court rumour is for once as correct as the report of your friends, and that the only doubt I have any longer, is, whether the Duke of Buckingham is quite so inexcusable as I thought him. Pardon me,' continued he, observing her about to speak, and fearful she might take him for a common-place flatterer; 'your ladyship may set me down for a courtier too, if you please; but you must know that I have the reputation of being an honest one; and furthermore, I am mistaken in your ladyship, if you are not one of those who know when to put the most cheerful face upon the most trying circumstances.'

'Lady Vavasour was sensibly touched at the delicate encouragement implied in this speech, which saved all parties a great deal of trouble. She answered in the best manner possible. Miss Vavasour, respecting whom his lordship had shown a curiosity highly creditable to his feelings, was visiting some distant relation; but the ladies had long felt the want of a protector; and the result was, that Ormond had permission,

with many acknowledgments, to introduce to Lady Vavasour some of the most reputable families of rank, that formed a link between the royal and republican parties; such as the Earl of Sandwich's, Lord Manchester's (the Lord Chamberlain), &c. Lady Fauconberg was almost the only acquaintance, besides one or two of the De Tormys, whom she retained at present; and she, though Cromwell's daughter, was as little averse as herself from knowing the best of all parties. As for me, it was understood that I should be on the footing of an old friend; so much so, that I hardly knew whether I had reason to congratulate myself on so easy an attainment of my privileges. In the course of a few days I had the pleasure of seeing Lady Fauconberg herself, looking as noble and as like Cromwell as ever, though with the handsomeness of a woman. Talking with her one day of the late extraordinary events, private and public, she said, 'My lord and I did all we could to persuade the poor man (Lord Vavasour) that things must go as they have done; but he was one of that numerous and ridiculous body, who take themselves for wits and men of the world, and are as great clowns as the fellows that open the gates for them. Lady Vavasour must not be suffered to think anything more about him. As for my dear father, (for he is not a man to be called poor, dead or alive,) it was his opinion, depend upon it, that affairs could happen no otherwise, when he was gone. Henry (her second brother), perhaps, might have done something; but to what purpose? When a great man is gone, great measures alone can succeed him. It will be sufficient, if neither weak measures nor weak men can rule as they have done; and that I think is pretty clear, by what we see already. Kings must behave themselves, or they are no safer now than other men. My father gave the world a push forward, which all the delicate fingers in Christendom will not be able to fiddle back.'

“To return a moment to the day of our first visit. Lord Ormond spoke in raptures of the Countess, as we came away down the avenue. 'I have never seen a lovelier creature,' said he; 'and her manners are as perfect as if she had been bred in the first court in Christendom; nay, more so, for there is always something in the highest court manner which is superior to the matter; whereas here, truth and grace are on a level. She does not love you, at present, Sir Philip, or she would not

talk to you with such perfect ease, notwithstanding her graces ; but I'll be sworn she will before long ; she is too good-hearted ; — to say nothing of what might put you to the blush. Besides, I am much mistaken if she is not well aware of your love for her ; and though everybody loves admiration, I do not think a woman of her good taste would allow herself to encourage an acquaintance of that sort, with such perfect good will, if she were not inclined to let love grow upon her.'

“ ‘ My lord,’ I replied, ‘ you make me so happy, that I do not even feel indignation at the sight of our two friends there, whom I observe riding on the other side of the wall.’

“ It was Buckingham and Dalton. They came up on their road, just as we issued from the gate. I forgot to mention, that the Countess had been told, several times, of the Duke's endeavours to make his way to her. They had lately begun to cause her uneasiness, and she was casting how to put a stop to them, when our visit relieved her. Dalton, as if with an irrepressible impulse of respect, but colouring violently, took off his hat, which the Marquis acknowledging, the Duke at the same moment seized the opportunity of lifting his own. In an instant we were all hareheaded, perhaps without anybody's wishing it, but Mr. Dalton. Nobody said a word, and we passed on.

“ ‘ The Duke has not forgotten,’ said I, ‘ though he seems to think that the common forms of courtesy may be renewed.’

“ ‘ He never will forget,’ said Ormond, ‘ unless I do him twenty good offices with the King, none of which he deserves, and which certainly I shall not do him.’

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## CHAPTER VI.

“ LOVE makes one a little shabby. Among the reasons which I had for being pleased at Ormond's acquaintance with Lady Vavasour, I could not conceal from myself the consciousness of a hope that he would speak well of me to her. And he did so. Her ladyship, in her frank manner, told me of it ; adding, that she heard nothing which surprised her, ‘ only she now understood what it was to like a problem in Euclid.’

“ ‘ A problem in Euclid ! ’

“ ‘ Yes : I now see the delight of proving a thing which we have taken for granted.’

“ Lady Vavasour, though she no longer excluded herself, and also talked of taking a house in London, lingered still in her favourite bowers. And she saw few people. All the world was still in the metropolis. Perhaps one reason why she chose to remain in a house which might have been thought melancholy, was, that London would have reminded her of the cause of her husband’s death ; whereas she could walk on any part of her grounds but the dog-kennel, and not be reminded of his company. You will know too soon, why it is that I still allow myself to speak of him in this manner. At present let me forget him, and think of the brightest spot in my existence.

“ I took a house at Ashted, and visited Lady Vavasour in common with two or three families. She would have had plenty of suitors, indeed she had several passionate ones in a short time. One or two, I believe loved her for her merits, as well as for her beauty and fortune. But she had the art above any woman I know, of throwing a damp upon expectation, equally positive and unhumiliating. The more clownish lovers, or those who thought to succeed by an air of confident gallantry, she got rid of with equal felicity, her wit leaving them nothing to say ; and if I sometimes doubted whether the mild and feminine sweetness which her manner never lost sight of, did not hazard some diminution under these vindications of her independence, I was allowed by degrees to associate the vivacity of her decisions with something so flattering to myself, that I could fain have seen her a little more abrupt. I should only have considered it as an exception, that more exquisitely proved the rule. In a word, after a year and a half’s acquaintance, I saw, that without hazarding a denial which would have distressed her, I might say I loved. ‘ And will you not say so too, Margaret ? ’ I asked. ‘ Will you not utter the three most delightful of all words ? Will you not say, ‘ I love you ? ’

“ ‘ Sweet soul ! it was her natural ingenuousness that made her hesitate. She had permitted me, however, to say it ; she held herself bound to be mine : she knew of no love greater than what she felt, nay, not so great ; and though not looking in my eyes as I did in hers, the beauteous words were uttered.

They too much intoxicated me to allow of any thought at the time, but of their celestial flattery.

“Next to Mickleham Park, the sweetest ground on earth is the way which I used to ride on horse-back every day between Mickleham and Ashtead, over the Downs. Ashtead also was a lovely spot, a gentle intermixture of wood and cottage, varied with those hedge-row fields with paths over them, which are the charm of English landscape. It would have seemed wrong to reside in any place that was not beautiful, while occupied with her image. There is an old church there in the park, of a kind which I particularly admire, small, gothic, embosomed in wood. The deer came up to it, as if they knew of its sabbath doctrines; and the graves thus lying in a park as well as church-yard, look at once solitary and neighbourly. It seems as if elegance opened its bosom to humility. The morning after I had drunk in with my ears those delicious words I speak of, I was standing between the church and the park-gate, looking at a little dell, when the clock of Ashtead House struck eleven. The same hour had struck at Mickleham the preceding day, just after the words had been uttered. I was observing, in a tone of inquiry, ‘How many times could I not hear you say the same thing over again?’ when Margaret lifted her finger instead of her eyes, and said, with an enchanting allusion, ‘The church shall answer for me.’ I never afterwards heard a clock strike eleven but I thought of her reply; and I never hear it now, but the last sound of the bell lingers and trembles in my ear, like a departing hope. I have a morbid inclination to listen to the next hour; and when the twelfth note arrives, my heart says to me, ‘Ay, that is the present time: eleven is dead and gone.’

“I wished to have been at Mickleham instead of Ashtead that morning, and heard eleven strike again from the same clock; but Miss Randolph, who had been taken under the Countess’s protection, and was a frequent visitor, was expected over night to remain a week or two, and Lady Vavasour said that she wished to avoid immediate observation. This was another instinctive movement of her sincerity. Exquisite as her address was in general, she found herself wanting in it under the new avowal; and moments which made me feel more triumphant and full of power than I ever had done, were to her, perplexities to be put off. I did not see them in this

light at the time. I felt, it is true, that the love was not so great on her side as my own ; but I had been so in the habit of taking her word, that it never entered my head to imagine she could beguile even herself. I could only feel grateful for the happiness accorded me ; and hope, that the warmth of my love would excite hers, in time, to an equal flame.

“ I was happy when alone ; happy when thinking ; happy when not thinking ; but to be with her was heaven itself. The presence of a beloved object is surely of itself a paradise. Those who are not at times satisfied with it, know not what it is thoroughly to love. Love, which can excite our imagination beyond all the provocatives of libertinisin, can also put it into a state of calmness, equal to the spiritual sufficiency of angels. We are so grateful for the pleasure afforded us, that although there is a pleasure still beyond, this also is heaven ; and not to be blest in this, would show that we did not deserve the other. I have sometimes looked at her cheek and—libertines might laugh,—but the very turn of it, though an object of the senses, has appeared to me a thing spiritual and of the heart.

“ As I rode over Mickleham Downs, of a morning, I smiled to see the hares start out of the bushes. Reflection was necessary to make me remember, that every thing was not as happy or confident as myself. It was the only uneasy reflection I had. I had no room for it, when I beheld the little church among the trees, as plump as an abbot ; still less, when on looking down towards a particular spot, I said, ‘ There lurks the little bridge over the Mole, where she owned she loved me, as we stood looking at the gliding water.’ The house was not visible from that upland. A woody hill was between. You looked at it from one of the opposite slopes. In an instant I wound among the green lanes, gave my horse his rein over his neck, and was in the parlour with the painted window. This window had been preserved at Mickleham House during the troubles ; and as it was not thought fit to put it up again in the church, the minister connived at its gracing a room in her ladyship’s house. She put it in the apartment which had been most frequented by Lord Vavasour,—I believe to make a difference. His lordship’s name was never mentioned. The bay trees had grown and were flourishing, but no allusion was made to the bough I had taken with me. I

thought however that Margaret never spoke sweetlier to me, than when by any chance the bay trees were mentioned. Sometimes we rode out together, oftener walked, and she allowed me to read to her. She was as fond of Shakspeare as myself. Perhaps she knows more of him than I do, for I have latterly been unable to read him. Sweet as he is, and turning everything to grace and intellect, he reminds me too much of the sorrows, or at least the agitations and bustle of mankind; and I have so many agitating thoughts of my own, that I want repose.

“I was not yet publicly acknowledged as the suitor of Lady Vavasour, but I was understood to be such. The Marquis, now Duke of Ormond, who unfortunately left England to be Lord Lieutenant of the sister country a few months before her ladyship declared herself, had congratulated me on the certainty of my prospects; the delightful words themselves were then uttered; and Lady Fauconberg, in her summary style, went so far one day as to ask her when she intended to be married. Longing as I did to call her my own, and beginning to think that circumstances required it as a matter of gracefulness, if not of necessity, I had nevertheless been so accustomed to associate the ideas of propriety and beauty with everything that she did, or that she left undone, and was so unwilling to appear to exercise the least authority on her sense of what was right, much more to imply a doubt of its perfection, that I persuaded myself she only delayed the time, that she might learn to love me the more, and so come to my arms with a perfect heart. I pressed her indeed from time to time, and put my request in such a light that she professed herself under an obligation to me. She said she would hasten the time when she should have as little right, as inclination, to differ with me on any subject. I did not like this word ‘obligation,’ and this other word ‘right;’ but to see her, and hear her talk, and, above all, the prospect of her being mine thus put more decidedly before me, did away with all misgivings. I believe I had too much vanity after all. I expected too easily to reconcile her to her determination.

“I have before observed, that Lady Vavasour had lived much alone, and been accustomed to have her own way, to a degree very unusual with women at her time of life. She was accordingly unacquainted with some of the usages of the world;

but her inexperience sat so charmingly upon her, and gave such additional beauty to her native grace and cleverness, that nobody wished her to have known better. At least I thought so. The Duke of Ormond has since confessed to me, the only time I allowed myself to write to him on the subject, that he had looked forward to my union with her as the means of giving her the only stability in which he suspected her to be deficient. 'She always appeared,' said he, 'to speak her mind; but I question—a little bit—if she always knew it.' Painful flattery to me! More painful doubt of her! Alas! there is no doubt, that love could make her all perfect, though it was not for me to inspire it.

"About this time,—the summer of the year sixty-three,—there came from London a new visitor, introduced by our neighbour Mr. Eyles; to wit, no less a person than Mr. Dalton himself. He turned out superior to what I thought him, upon acquaintance; perfectly well-behaved, and had in particular a very agreeable mode of arguing. But recollecting what I did of him, I could not like his society for Lady Vavasour. I received his advances with a discontent so little concealed, that our neighbour, a very worthy man, thought proper to take some pains to reconcile me. He made a great step at once, by telling me, that Dalton had renounced the Duke of Buckingham's company for more than a year. The poor man, he said, was a reformed rake; and was now visiting the best families he could get acquainted with, in order to wean himself from his town inclinations. 'He confesses,' said Mr. Eyles, 'that they sometimes pull him back very hard; but he sets his teeth, and is resolved to be a man. He affects nothing of this openly,' continued our friend, 'for he retains one quality, which is the best his old associates possess; namely, a scorn of hypocrisy. He would not be thought too good before his time. But if you talk a little more confidently with him you will soon fetch him out. He has too much sense to pretend anything one way more than another; and, to use his own words, he is 'too lazy to lie.'

"I liked this account, particularly the close of it, and soon found means to hear Mr. Dalton confirm it. I was charmed with his candour, his wit, the easiness and cheerfulness of his manners, and the melancholy which he confessed he had too much of in private. He resented it, in the airy style of the



town, as a thing unbefitting a gentleman; and said, that if he had forseen his wine would have made such a fool of him, he would have forsworn it long ago. He expressed an ill opinion of human nature, which I thought argued ill for his reformation: but he said, that although he regarded virtue as only the highest part of what was graceful and prudent, yet he thought it so much so as to make any reasonable man ashamed of 'being vicious; that is, a fool. Drinking makes us sick,' said he, 'and following all women makes us care in reality for none: so I am determined to be a drunken dog no longer, nor to spoil my taste for love and beauty; in other words, as your friend Shakspeare says, Sir Philip, I have "a reverend care of my health," and am grown virtuous enough to know, that virtue is a very cunning and profitable thing.'

"If there was any danger in this mode of thinking, there seemed at least, as our neighbour said, no hypocrisy. I took a liking to my new acquaintance, and was pleased to find, that although he would vindicate all his other companions round, some of whom were the greatest rakes at court, he confessed he could not put up with Buckingham. He did not deny his wit; but he said it was joined to an insolence of pretension, and a destitution of all faith in everything else, that was absolutely intolerable and even stupid. Lady Vavasour had been talking of the beauty of the story of Ruth. Buckingham, he said, would not scruple to make a comparison between Ruth and Lucy Walters. And yet he could believe preposterously enough, when he had a mind. He believed that Lady Vavasour was like any other pretty widow, to be won with a good confidence. And he believed, furthermore, that he could get into Mickleham Park. 'You see,' concluded Dalton with a shrug, 'how he has succeeded! For my part I have done with him since our last quarrel.'

"'May I ask what it was?'

"'Do not, pray. There was a poor girl—nay the subject is too shocking'—and Dalton rose, with a movement of impatience, and went to the window.

"'I beg your pardon, Sir Philip,' said he, 'I have been used to too many of these things; but I am, at present, as you see, in a very unphilosophical state of health; and Buckingham's rascality, to say the truth, was enough to make a devil

sick: 'Let us pitch his name into the Lethe, where he ought to pray that he may be sent.'

"Dalton (who now told me that he was no kinsman to the family of the same name in the neighbourhood,—so little can we trust the reports made by the best men) had a small sporting seat at Fetcham, and used to ride frequently over to Mickleham, where he amused the ladies with anecdotes of the court. Miss Vavasour, in her youth, had been a good deal at the court of Charles I., and was pleased to have news of her old sphere. Dalton's anecdotes, though they implied a good deal, were very decorous. He said he did not like to see women ignorant of anything. Their virtue in that case was not to be discerned from their ignorance; which he thought a dangerous condition of their goodness; but when goodness and knowledge went together, as in the instance of Lady Vavasour, the man must be as great a fool not to respect the virtue, as he would be to wish his own comfort undone.'

"These sentiments relieved me from the fears I should otherwise have still entertained for Margaret, in her acquaintance with such a man. I was not easy, when I heard him express the opinion he entertained of human nature in general. It reminded me of Lord Vavasour, and seemed doubly perilous in one whose understanding was far superior to his lordship's. Above all, I still retained a suspicion, that if Lady Vavasour's mind was susceptible of injury, it was in the tendency that might have been given it to scepticism of that sort. But Dalton was so unaffectedly candid, he treated us all with so much propriety and good tact, and when he found this opinion disagreeable to me, paid me so flattering a deference in keeping it to himself, while yet he maintained his honesty in not expressing a different one, that my respect for him increased daily. I confess I was a little jealous, when I saw the impression he made on the ladies. Margaret and I, by a sort of tacit agreement, used to avoid the subjects discussed by Lord Vavasour,—the nature of the human disposition among them; but I could not help observing, from a sentence which would escape her occasionally, that she was too much inclined to be of his opinion; and this alarmed me, when I heard Dalton speak to the same effect in her company. I fancied there was even a sort of triumph in her eyes, as she gave a glance at me; as much as to say, 'You see what your clever man

thinks:’ but Dalton relieved me in the manner I just mentioned; and, as he must have been nearly double my age, and always spoke of her as an angel whom he *should* have loved in the days of his innocence, though it was difficult to recall such feelings by dint of regretting them,—I soon regarded his presence as a sort of courtly testimony to the superiority of real love. I was afraid I was sometimes ungenerous enough to like what would otherwise have disturbed me, namely, a little flattery which Margaret would now and then pay me at his expense. I did not see, that the more she did this, the more she proved the insufficiency of love for the occupation of her thoughts. Alas! must I confess that even my love was not perfect? May I not hope, that it was the consciousness of not being beloved as much as I loved, that made me sensible of the weakness? But to own it, I was sometimes not indisposed to think that Dalton himself was jealous, in spite of himself. I could not but observe, one day, as I came in the room when he had called, that he sighed, as he bade me welcome, and cast his eyes on the ground. He was taking leave. Lady Vavasour seemed doubly kind to me that day, and hardly civil to him. I asked her what poor Dalton had been guilty of. ‘Do you pity him?’ inquired Margaret. I said I could not pretend that I did; I was too full of my happiness. ‘If you pity him,’ said she, provokingly, ‘I will send and ask him to join us, that you may give him comfort.’ I protested against being so liberal of my precious moments; and the discourse turned into a channel too delightful to admit any thoughts but its own.

“Fearfully was my vanity punished in the course of a day or two. I was now looking forward to my marriage. I went in and out of the house rather like the master than the visitor; and nobody, from Miss Vavasour down to the humblest retainer, seemed to regret it. Even Dalton, who came seldomer than before, and was as cautious on some points as he was open and careless on most, did not hesitate to congratulate me under the title of the ‘happiest man in England.’ Such, alas! did I assuredly think myself. Riches were nothing. Neither did I want them. But such youth and beauty as Margaret’s, so full of health, hilarity, and grace, would have been treasures in any man’s eyes: and though her charming sincere face did not look at me so often as I wished, nor her lips utter a

twentieth part of the kind things which love has a right to utter, in women as well as men, yet she was very kind, and very affectionate ; and all the little things which she did say, were a thousand times as precious to me as they would have been from any other woman, not only because I was in love, but because of the very truth that made them no greater.

“ I had come over one morning from Ashstead, to accompany Margaret in a ride, and sent in my name to let her know of my arrival, when after waiting a little, I heard her singing up stairs. She was of an extremely cheerful temper, but not accustomed to vent her spirits in this manner. I could not but hail it as an evidence that she was that morning more than usually disposed to enjoy my society, perhaps inclined to love me better and better ; and in the gaiety of this fancy, I walked up and down the hall, accompanying, in an under breath, her voice with my own. The old steward crossed the hall to go up stairs. ‘ My lady is main happy, sir,’ said he. ‘ She is, thank God, Mr. Bennett. You do not seem very melancholy, yourself.’ ‘ I sir ! we are all happiness ; as happy as the day is long. Ah ! these are happy times.’ ‘ May you live, dear Bennett,’ said I, ‘ to a hundred, to say so. Will you make interest with your lady to hasten a little ?’ The old gentleman smiled, and shook his head, as much as to say, there is no need of that. However, he bowed, to signify that he would do what I told him ; and Mrs. Lettice, a brisk waiting-maid, arriving as he was about to ascend the stairs, danced before him, crying out, ‘ Oh dear, sir, let me carry the message.’ The message was carried by both, for I saw Bennett was resolved not to give up his part of the duty ; but Lady Vavasour still not coming, I went up myself, and seeing her dressing-room door a-jar, was about to tap at it, when I heard her say, ‘ Dear me, how tiresome ! You have told me so twenty times ; cannot the man wait a little longer ?’

“ A common lover might be surprised to know how painfully these words affected me ; I should say, startled and shocked. And doubtless there are multitudes, who would think little of them. But that is because they think little of love itself, or of their mistress. I was no common lover, nor did I love on common grounds. Lady Vavasour’s fortune, as I have said before, was nothing to me ; her title was nothing ; even her beauty was nothing, compared with her truth and

sweetness. I did not despise those worldly goods ; but they entered into no sort of comparison with her other pretensions ; so that when the sense of her sincerity threatened to fail me, everything seemed to fail. Compassion might remain towards me : but I did not wish, a twentieth part so much, to be pitied by her, as to love herself. It was not that I was too proud for compassion, Love is very humble : and I would willingly have held any kindness at her hands, so that I might be sure I did not mistake it ; so that I might be sure the bestower was what I took her to be, and that my own sincerity appeared to be some kind of payment for the delight afforded me by hers. This little speech, overheard by accident, convinced me, that small as my own pretensions with her had been, compared with what I could have desired, I had still overrated them ; but what was far worse, it convinced me, that my suspicions of her diminished sincerity were too true, and that it must remain for some person more truly beloved than myself, to restore her to that perfection of nature, which had given her so charming, and as it seemed, so unspoilable a face. ‘ And to commit in this manner,’ thought I, ‘ her own dignity and mine ! and in the eyes of a chambermaid !’

“ ‘ And yet,’ I asked, (willing to deceive myself ; willing to think ill of myself in her favour ; willing to do anything, rather than forego the bewitching sweets of love and hope), ‘ am I not too precise in this ? Was it anything but the petulance of her spirits ? the same gaiety that impelled her to sing ? Am I not bound to be explicit with her about the fault, if fault it be ? Or if I am too humble, or too fond, or too conscious of the deficiency of my pretensions, ought she to suffer in my estimation for that ? Will not all be right, when I can talk to her with the unrestrained affection of a husband ?’

“ I was turning these thoughts in my mind, and had renewed my walk up and down the hall, not knowing what to conclude, except that I loved her to distraction, and could not bear the idea of rebuking her, when she came down, radiant and blushing. Blushing ! Why, thought I, should she do that ; and how presumptuous and ungrateful it makes me feel !

“ I know not whether she perceived me looking pale and disturbed—I felt sure she did not know that I overheard her ;

for I thought her incapable of a deliberate deception ; but she said, with a frankness that fell on my heart like the dew of heaven — ‘ Dear Sir Philip, do you know I have been very naughty? I have been impatient with you for making me hasten, and I am sure it was to hasten nothing but my good. Will you forgive me?’

“ Her waiting-woman was behind her, and heard the apology. How delicate this, and how kind! All my suspicions fled before that blushing face, and those dancing eyes. I kissed her hand with transport, and asked her to forgive me for aspiring to so much truth and goodness.

“ Nevertheless, it was too true that she had practised a deception, which she persuaded herself was innocent. It came out by accident, that the waiting-woman had perceived me going away. She then spoke of it herself; and added, that she would have told me, had she thought it would have been pleasant.

“ ‘ Could anything be more pleasant to me, said I, ‘ than truth from that truth-telling face!’

“ ‘ And am I not a truth-teller?’ inquired she, colouring with the first look of resentment I had observed.

“ ‘ If you are not, your face is the greatest *untruth*-teller I ever saw in my life,’ answered I; ‘ but it could not be what it is, if truth were not a habit of the mind that looks out of it.’

“ And it was so; but not as it had been once. Circumstances had now compelled me to cease looking for the old delightful singleness, in every word and action. I was prepared for the contrary; and yet it affected me like a dreadful surprise to find it. I now observed, that one thing was sometimes spoken, when another was meant; needless excuses were framed for avoiding or delaying visits; things were said to people’s faces, not always compatible with what was said behind their backs. If Dalton told stories of tricks and stratagems at court, or among his grave Presbyterian friends, his wit was repaid with a laugh which surprised himself; and Lady V. seemed at length to have thrown off her very consciousness on this point, to such an extent, that when about to inform me of something relating to our mutual prospects, and which she wished to mention without delay as a thing that would please me, she would give Miss Randolph, in order to

get her out of the way, some pretended commission into another room, or recommendation to do something on her own account. This, too, the dear little girl must have seen through, as well as myself; for young ladies in their teens are much sharper, than ladies who have got over their teens give them credit for; especially when a love-matter is going forward. I was not only vexed, therefore, on all our accounts; I wondered at it. I began to fancy, that there was less of unconsciousness and more of will in it, than I had supposed. At length I had reason to believe, that if on some occasions the very will produced the unconsciousness, on others it was determined to let me see, that my opinion on the subject was considered frivolous and excessive. I was to take for granted, that nobody who *knew the world* acted with that superfluous nicety.

“ I now regretted more than ever the absence of the Duke of Ormond. The high respect Lady Vavasour entertained for him, and the truth which he described himself as exacting from all about him, could not have failed to render her more considerate in behalf of her once favourite quality. I had been once or twice to London, and had the honour of being introduced to his Grace's sons, Lords Ossory and Arran; but their father, out of delicacy, not liking to introduce the unmarried son to my rich and beautiful friend, delayed making her acquainted with the other; a nicety, which I could not help being as glad of at the time, as I afterwards with shame and remorse regretted it. For what might not the society of such a man as Ossory have effected? Lady Fauconberg, though on the most intimate and even affectionate terms, did not see her fair friend often enough to make her aware of the defect she was encouraging; and with regard to others, Lady Vavasour still lived much alone, and often saw nobody, but myself and one or two neighbours, for many weeks. As to Mr. Dalton, though he agreed with me as to the high value I set upon truth, even on the smallest occasions, he confessed he was not sufficiently cured of his old habits to help thinking that I over-strained the matter; and Lady Vavasour used to cry out to me so triumphantly, at these admissions, that I was glad to hear him talk of leaving us for some time, to go and look after an estate. But alas, the mischief was done, and not by him. Yes: so dangerous is an ill companion to the best and cleverest persons, during youth, that what I had hardly

dared to think of as a remote possibility, had turned out to be too true ; — the coarse and common-minded Lord Vavasour had not failed in giving the most charming of women a doubt of the wisdom of her first candour, and a suspicion that everybody, without exception, was more or less worldly and untrue. The private histories of their acquaintance furnished too many grounds for triumphant reference. Lady Vavasour scarcely beheld anybody, who was not a cheat or a liar of some sort, sometimes under the most virtuous aspect ; her understanding became piqued to be as superior to credulity as her husband's ; and she finished (as all such fools make their victims finish), first by ranking her husband among the cheats and knaves he described ; and, secondly, by having a will of her own in opposition to his, and making any excuse to him, which she thought consistent with innocence. She did not quarrel with him : among her other discoveries, she soon detected the inferiority of his understanding ; and she found herself so superior in this respect, that she never pursued an argument far enough to be provoked. But in ceasing to be free from insincerity, in condescending to make little disingenuous excuses, and otherwise practise the artifices of which he accused others, she had unwittingly stumbled on the best proof of his assertion ; and from that moment had some reason to conclude, that the loveliest appearances were not to be trusted.

“ Let me hasten over the dark and fatal period that ensued. We had now got so far removed from the paradisaical state in which I fancied myself wrapped for life, that we had frequent disputes, if disputes they could be called, — I mean in a bad sense ; for all the anger was on one side, and all the sorrow and anxiety on the other. Margaret sometimes wept at the close of them, and held out that irresistible or rather most welcome and beloved hand, with an acknowledgment that she had gone too far. I urged her more than ever not to delay our union. I could not help still flattering myself, that I should be able to bring her round to her first happiness ; and as to loving her less, I fancied sometimes I loved her even more ; to find her in the wrong seemed to put her more on a level with me ; nay, to subject her to a compassion fonder than love itself ; and when she melted into tears, and her hair about her eyes and forehead expressed a disordered repentance, I was almost startled at the gust of passion which impelled me



to clasp her in my arms, and to entreat her to be what she pleased, so that my love gave her a moment of delight. And yet I discovered, on reflection, that if I loved her more in one sense of the word, or rather was more alive if possible to the transport of it; it was, perhaps, because my love for her (surprised and shocked as I was to think so) suffered some diminution in the other. How? To love her less! to have less respect for her understanding! her soul! — this, thought I, is the greatest blow to me of all: and yet I found there was a greater: for my next reflection was that she had *no* love for myself. No: the recollection of our debates would still so much disturb her, especially when I urged her respecting our union, and she still found so much reason for delay, that my eyes were at length opened. She denied it, but only in such a manner that I was more strongly convinced. I did not reproach her. What right had I to do so? If she had never loved me, so much the more generous in her to persuade herself she had; so much the more generous to try if she could not. I thanked her. I delighted to be under an obligation to her, and to fancy that in taking pity on myself, she partook of my feelings, and had a sensation with me in common. I would have added, ‘For your own sake, Margaret, I give you up; for you could not be happy with one you did not love.’ But from day to day, I delayed this terrible self-sacrifice. Chance at length rendered it unavoidable.

“She said to me one day, ‘How can you love me still, and as much as ever, if you say that the quality for which you first loved me, *is* diminished?’

“‘I love,’ said I, ‘the memory of its perfection. I love all that it will be again, if you will but let it; and I love in you the former and the future perfection, the dear image which a divinity inhabits whenever you please, — which it always does inhabit, though it chooses to play with my distress. The divinities of old, in their superiority to human kind, sometimes appeared a little cruel.’

“‘Ay, now you flatter. Is that truth?’

“‘You know all the truth that is in it, and how much there may be wanting. You know when I speak in lightness or in seriousness, in mirth or in sorrow: you know *me* thoroughly, and you are not more certain of anything than that I love you.’

“ ‘ Perhaps I am not quite certain of that,’ said Margaret, a tear starting in her eye, but more in pride than sorrow.

“ ‘ But you ought to be, dearest creature, and you would be, if you were quite certain of yourself.’

“ ‘ Ay; those are your teasing exceptions. Will you promise me, now, Sir Philip, to be very good, if I promise you to fix this worshipful day which you are always speaking of; and will you undertake, once for all, when we are married, never to let me hear a word more about them?’

“ ‘ No, dearest Margaret: I shall love you too fondly, and be too anxious that you should be yourself. Neither truth nor love will allow me to say, that I should not be grieved if I saw you untrue to your loveliness: and let me add, that you would not respect your husband, nor be able to love me better than you do, if I were capable of making such a promise.’

“ ‘ Can you pretend, Sir Philip, that you do not already love me less? Answer me distinctly that question. If you do, I cannot consent to go on thus, failing every day in your eyes: and if you do not, allow me to ask, on what is your love founded? or why you should be so exacting with regard to a quality, real or pretended, which has no connection with the amount of your love?’

“ There was great pride and subtlety in this question, and it forced me to wake up to a sense of the immediate state of my feelings. I answered, that when I thought of the good to be done to her, of the interest I took in her welfare, in her daily happiness, in every movement of her very person, I could not but think that my love was greater for her than ever; but inasmuch as she forced me to admire her something less, to take with less adoring implicitness every syllable she uttered —

“ But I will not proceed — I cannot. Suffice it to say, that she condescended to renew the argument, and to dispute the extent to which she was said to carry her insincerity; and nothing would content her but she must appeal for the truth of the charge to Mr. Dalton, who was to be there that day on his leave taking. I begged and prayed her not to do this; but she said, that the more an openness of conduct became her, the more proof she was resolved to give me of her capability of it. I showed her several modes of proving it, all unexceptionable and delightful, and such as I should witness with transport, but not this. However, she was bent upon it.

The appeal was made. Dalton, to her consternation, pronounced laughingly but peremptorily against her; not, I thought, without a needless particularity in his examples, for which I could have hated him. And yet I could not but respect his sincerity, nor could she. Dear, wilful Margaret! We quarrelled that evening (if I must use the vile word) more warily than before: she went so far as to insinuate, that I had not shown quite so much spirit as I ought to have done, in not resenting the levity of Mr. Dalton, — a levity which she, however, had challenged, by laughing first; and this charge (which I thought hard measure from a woman, to a heart so transparent as mine) exciting me to some anger in my turn, she pronounced it to be an ‘indelicacy’ to hear of love any more, under such terms of living. It were better to part at once, and she now proposed it. She wished it. She had long thought it ought to be. As to myself, I could not stand that word ‘indelicacy,’ even though I had stood all the rest.

“ ‘Is it even so?’ said I, ‘and must we part indeed?’ I felt that I was as pale as death, in asking the question.

“ Margaret hardly looked less pale. (My heart never ceases to thank her for it.) ‘I should not expect such a question from Sir Philip Herne,’ said she, ‘after what he himself acknowledges would be unfitting, if I so think it.’

“ ‘It is too true,’ I replied: ‘I cease to give you trouble; to love you I cannot cease. One word more in all quietness. The least intimation from Lady Vavasour, in sickness, in trouble, or in any difficulty, should misfortunes reach her, will bring her friend at any time to her side, though he be at the other end of the world;—and, oh Margaret! for even now I cannot give up all hope, indulge me, at the end of—what shall I say?—of half a year, if that be not too short a time, with receiving one letter from me; and if that contains nothing that should hinder my returning to offer you my services, if you should again think my opinion of any value, and be inclined to doubt whether it was best that I should have gone away—allow me to return;—nay, speak not against it, if it be only in charity: and so, in all respectful calmness, with no bitterness, with no complaint, with no pretence to any right to complain, and with what I fear does me little good in your eyes, with no pride (for do not I love?) your friend

bids you farewell. Should you ever fancy, out of any tenderness of recollection, that you may have done amiss towards me, and circumstances prevent you from saying so, remember, I acquit you of every thing with regard to myself. Love is not in your power, any more than indifference is in mine; and whatever I may suffer, I shall regard as that portion of calamity which is the lot of most of us in this world, and which I should have suffered in some other shape, if not in this. May all blessings attend you!

“While I was speaking, we had been moving slowly towards the door of the apartment. We had now reached it. I could not keep her waiting; my hand was on the lock: I gave one more look at that beloved face, formerly so cheerful and straightforward, now pale, silent, and downcast; and snatching her hand to my lips for the last time, was out of her presence the next moment. I have never since beheld her. I wrote the letter at the end of the half year. No answer came. This was about six months ago. I went down to Mickleham, and contrived to see Bennett, the steward, who would fain have forced me in doors: but his lady was tranquil, lived much alone as before, and never alluded to past times. I could not trespass upon her. He brought Miss Randolph to me, who came running, the dear girl! with delight in her eyes, thinking I was restored to her lovely friend. But she had nothing to tell me, that warranted my going in. The letter was of such a nature, that if it remained unnoticed, there was nothing to hope. My chief object in going to Mickleham, was to ascertain whether she had received it. This I now did, beyond a doubt; for Ellen (Miss Randolph) was present when she received it. Mr. Bennett, to whom it was enclosed, took it in; and laid it before her with a trembling hand. Said Lady Vavasour, ‘I hope you are not ill, Mr. Bennett, that you tremble so? You should not trouble yourself with bringing letters; you should give them to Jervis.’ ‘God bless your ladyship,’ said Bennett, ‘it is no trouble to me to bring you a letter, much less this one; and forgive me, madam, for saying it—I am an old man, but I hope it will be no trouble to you to receive it. *Everybody* in the house, I believe, once loved the writer of it. God forgive me, madam; I beg ten thousand pardons if I offend.’ ‘You do not offend, Bennett,’ said her ladyship, very gently, yet turning pale; ‘but—’ She

looked as much as to say that she only could judge of what was a secret to everybody but herself. The old man understood her, and again apologised, saying, he knew he had no right to speak, and he would observe his place. Lady Vavasour took the letter up stairs with her, but said not a word on the subject. Mr. Dalton called next day on her, and was loud in my praises; not however to the satisfaction of dear Ellen, who said she could not help thinking, that if he was a true friend, he could have advocated my cause to better purpose; for the Countess, somehow or other, had a wonderful opinion of his judgment. Here she said something in dispraise of his 'smooth hard countenance,' and his 'great big forehead;' which made me remind her, that I had a great big forehead myself. 'So you have,' said she, in a true girlish style, 'but that's a very different thing. I am not quarrelling with the bigness of it, but the ill look; in short, I don't know what I am quarrelling with, except that I don't like the man, for all he calls me "fair, good, and young;" I sometimes think he is laughing at me, so I am resolved to be even with his long eyes, and laugh a little at him.'

"I mention the particulars of this discourse, for reasons which will appear presently. I believe the first ground of Miss Randolph's dislike of Dalton, originated in some allusions he had made to a certain person, who occasioned the illness she fell into about a year and a half before he knew us. I have spoken of this illness in the beginning of my narrative. Like other illnesses, when they act upon intelligent youth, it sharpened her perceptions, while the blame which she attributed to herself made her quicker to discern faults. For she had betrayed the secret in her fever, and a foolish servant had not known how to keep it. However, she had no secrets from Lady Vavasour, nor did she expect or wish to have any from me; so that we both felt towards her like an elder brother and sister. The Countess was sorry that Esher had not found his way to Mickleham Park, which she thought might have fixed him; and she was at one time disposed to be angry with his desertion (as she called it) of her protégé; but she afterwards, for an obvious reason, desisted from saying anything to his disadvantage. Doubtless, she felt but too clearly, that where real love has not fixed itself, care ought to be taken not to fix the person that loves.

“ I still lingered in the neighbourhood of Mickleham, unable to quit the spot, and trying to hope, in despite of hopelessness, when I was finally driven away, by a circumstance that rendered it impossible for me to remain. Ardently as I loved, I still retained pride enough to wish not to be thought secret and designing by Lady Vavasour, and therefore I had exacted a solemn promise from Bennett and Miss Randolph, as well as from Dalton, who often came to see me, not to let her know where I was. I had also become too conscious to myself, that I did not so totally love her, as I had loved; did not so entirely respect her image, and all which it might have enclosed, in the place of my own self-consideration. I never ceased to wish to call her my own; never lost an infinite desire to see her restored to all the perfections of her nature; but the constant sense of the very want of this restoration had at length made me too much aware of it, not only as implying the wish on my part, but the imperfection on hers. You will think this discovery brought some relief to me; and so it did, in one sense; but in another, you cannot conceive how it added to the bitterness of my sorrow. We love, in proportion as we feel gratitude for the qualities that delight or make us love; and this is the reason why there is a pleasure in the most hopeless attachment, provided the love be real; for the qualities, or grounds of our love, are always in the object of it, even though there be no result to ourselves beyond the perception we have of them. But when these qualities are found to be less than we look for, we feel as if a prop were stricken from under us. We are fixed, perhaps, from habit, as well as self-will; we have the same propensity to love what remained, but a new and startling regret is mixed with it; and we can only soften it at our expense, by thinking that we had no right to expect so much, or to behave as if we had done so. God knows how often I made this charge against myself. But then that divine countenance, clear and open as the heavens. Could any one have expected less from it? Would it have been what it still remained, but for its first and native habit?

“ I was returning one night from my usual melancholy ramble, and from watching on a mound near the park till I saw a light in her bed-room window, when I heard an outcry as of men attacking a traveller. Several pistol-shots followed it. I hastened to the spot, and found Dalton struggling with

four or five ruffians, who seemed bent upon murdering him. I knew him by his voice. They had got him on the ground, and with horrid oaths bade him 'remember York Castle.' The assistance I afforded him was so unexpected, or the ruffians were so contented with a belief that he had fallen dead, that although they violently opposed me for an instant, and gave me a slight wound or two in return for those I must have inflicted on them, they turned speedily in a body, and fled. The first words Dalton uttered, were an oath as vehement as any of theirs, and an execration against Buckingham, whom he vowed he would go and pistol in the King's presence. He then made his acknowledgments to me, and fainted with loss of blood in the arms of his servant. We helped him into a cottage, and I fetched a surgeon from Dorking, who saw him to sleep, and said he would do very well. He had one wound in the shoulder, and another at the side of the neck; but neither of an alarming description. The next day I called, and found that Lady Vavasour had just been to see him. 'How many wounds,' thought I, 'would I not undergo for a chance so blessed !'

"Dalton told me, that he had no doubt Buckingham was at the bottom of the villany. The Duke, he said, had been highly offended with him for quitting his society, and speaking of him in no measured terms; and what made the assault the more grievous, was the consciousness of his having in some measure deserved it, though not at the Duke's hands. York Castle, he said, of which the men spoke, was the scene of one of Buckingham's outrages, in which he enlisted Dalton unawares. 'I have done too many damned things in my time,' said Dalton, 'but I never deliberately attempted such violence as that.' Buckingham, it seems, whose chief estate lay in the north, resolved to carry off a farmer's daughter; he took a party of friends to the spot, after they had been drinking, and the girl coming to the castle walls by appointment, they found themselves implicated in the enormity. They carried off the poor girl surely enough, but they had been watched. Buckingham, with his carriages and horses, had not gone to so great a distance, but he was traced next day, and shot at. He sent the poor soul back to the cottage, and the whole party left the country; but their offence, it seems, was not forgotten, 'bitterly,' said Dalton, 'as I have repented it.' How the

men came there, he knew not, unless they were soldiers. He thought he discovered the dragoon belt under their cloaks; and there was a regiment quartered in the neighbourhood.

“ Much as I respected the candour of Dalton, and thought allowance should be made for a course of life which he had abandoned, and into which an evil education had led him, I should have felt uneasy at the continuance of a man of his character and cast of mind in the intimacy of Lady Vavasour; but he relieved me greatly by announcing his intention of ceasing his visits to that part of the country. He said ‘ he had an estate in the west of England, which had long required his looking after, though, to say the truth, he had lingered in the neighbourhood of my fair friend out of a love of her conversation, which would hardly have been warrantable had he been younger, and at all likely to make an impression on her; but he called her my fair friend to show what an interest he still thought I retained in her heart; nor had he a doubt that she would relent after a while. But I must take matters patiently, and, above all, not seem to press myself on her attention. A little too much pride, and a great deal of obstinacy, he said, were her faults. If she had been more perfect, she would have been too much of an angel. As it was, my best policy was to leave her to herself, and allow her time to regret me, which he undertook to prophesy she would. In the course of a few months I could easily gather from Bennett and Miss Randolph how matters went on, and take my own steps accordingly.

“ I did not like the word, ‘ policy,’ in this discourse; I cannot say I liked any part of it. I felt irritated, humiliated—I knew not what; and yet I could not find fault with the advice. I had nothing to offer against it; which was perhaps the reason why I felt as I did; or perhaps the discussion of such a subject by such a man might have chagrined me, or I might have been angry with myself for having the vanity to think that I had a right to be angry. However, I believe one great reason was, that Dalton had not told me whether he had said any thing or not respecting the part I had in the late affair. I could not conceal from myself that I was willing to make a merit of it in her eyes; and yet there was such small reason for doing so,—in fact none at all, (for I had done nothing but what any gentleman was bound to do for anybody,



and what he could not omit doing for the sake of his own self-respect), that I was at once angry with Dalton for saying nothing about it, and with myself for wishing him to do otherwise. At length, with a faltering pretence of ease, — even now I blush to think of it, — I ventured to ask whether anything *had* been said.

“ ‘Why there,’ answered Dalton, ‘is the vexation. I do not wonder at your desire to know : but these women I believe grow tired of being angels. They love to play the devil a little by way of variety. I did not like to tell you, my dear Sir Philip ; I have not the patience, and that is the truth, to think of it ; she ought to have been kinder — I’ll be d — d if she ought’nt — but extremes meet you know ; and when the worst comes to the worst, things will mend.’

“ I begged, with great earnestness, to know what it was, — what Lady Vavasour had said : and I observed, that it might be better for me, as I should then know how to act, once for all.

“ Dalton then told me, with great concern, that although he had thought it my best policy not to wound the self-love of the Countess by putting myself in her way, yet on an occasion like that which had just taken place, a third person was to be forgiven if common feelings of gratitude had not allowed him to be silent. Indeed, he said, how was it possible for him to hold his tongue ? and who could have thought that such an occasion would not have formed an exception in my favour ? yet to say the truth, when he mentioned the service I had rendered him, and enlarged upon it a little, as he could not help doing : — ‘ In short,’ said he, ‘ my dear Sir Philip, I am using a great many words because I hate to come to the point ; but the truth of the matter is, that Lady Vavasour is still so piqued with your abominable candour, that she is not pleased to hear you spoken of. When I told her of the assistance you afforded me, she said she had never thought you otherwise than a gentleman, but on my pressing it upon her, and seizing the opportunity (forgive me) of urging it as delicately as I could in your favour, she drew herself up with an air of offence ; said she had already allowed herself a freedom in coming to see me, of which her aunt had doubted the propriety : and concluded with requesting me to leave her to her own thoughts upon the subject.’

“ Dalton announced his intention of quitting the neighbour-

hood in a day or two. The night after my discourse with him, I stood from midnight till dawn, gazing on Margaret's window (let me call her by that name once more); and then shutting up my sorrows, my hopes, and my recollections as well as I could in a heart which seemed to be withered, I turned my face from it for ever, and next day was in the bustle of London.

“ My noble friend the Duke of Ormond had introduced me, not only to his sons Ossory and Arran, to Lord Hyde and others, but to the King and the Duke of York, both of whom were pleased to receive me with many flattering recollections of their unexpected feasting at Rouen. I therefore found myself an inmate of the first distinction at court; a strange alteration, but it was good for me. Lord Ossory, whom his father described as being all that he ought to have been, and Lord Arran gayer, but very amiable, who says he is a little too much of what his father never was, condescended to become my particular acquaintances; I might have said friends, had there not been something in both of them which prevented my troubling them with a detail of my history. Lord Ossory, it is true, is a lover of romances, and realizes the virtues which they dream of; he even acknowledges himself to be in love with his wife, (a stretch of heroism not more singular at court; than the respect he maintains notwithstanding it); but somehow I feared that he would have thought me weak. Perhaps because I was so. Lord Arran, I thought, would have laughed at me, and said I did not understand ‘the women.’ However, I have such a disposition to be confiding where I have a regard, that to account for my apparent insensibility to the many charming creatures I met with, I confessed that I could not get rid of an attachment which had not proved fortunate; and nothing could be more considerate towards me in consequence, than the behaviour of both of them. Lord Arran's in particular affected me, because it was least expected. But in addition to the reasons I have given for being silent, I doubted whether I had a right to mention the name of Lady Vavasour, or even to commit so far the dignity of my own suffering; and nothing would have induced me to do it now, but for reasons which will appear presently.

“ I will here mention, while I think of it, that the Duke of Buckingham came up to me one day at Court, with an air of

the most respectful and conciliating courtesy, and said that although he had been guilty of many foolish things in the course of his life, there was not one which he regretted more than his very unwarrantable encounter with a gentleman of the disposition, &c. &c. of Sir Philip Herne. If I thought him pardonable, he hoped I would act as if I did so, and allow him to cultivate my friendship.—I thought there were many sillier things in the course of his life which he had reason to repent of; but this was not to be said to a Duke, and condescending: I could only take his compliment as he meant it; and so from that time, during the short season I was in the habit of meeting him at one or two houses, he showed a face as if nothing had happened to disturb either of us. He is a marvellous person, with a prodigious flow of spirits. I begin to think his spirits are more in fault than he, and that it is even lucky he is no worse, considering he was a Duke when he was a year old, and is not a bit older, for aught that I can see, now that he is eight-and-thirty. I did not say a word of Dalton, nor did he.

“I had been in town but a short time, when there came up a talk of war with the Dutch. Father Waring, whom you are to understand I never lost sight of (indeed I was in the habit of communicating with him at regular intervals, though out of tenderness to a misfortune of his which resembled it, I never spoke to him of my own), was much in the confidence of the Duke of York; and as the Duke condescended to take a particular interest in me as the representative of a Catholic family, and would often express his wonder at my quitting a faith, the professors of which I had known so well how to appreciate and defend, his Highness, passing from one subject to another, would then speak of the approaching war. At length he announced his intention of offering a glorious opportunity to the young gentry and nobility of acquiring a reputation in arms. I requested to be enrolled among the volunteers, and his Highness was pleased to say I should accompany him in his own vessel. There were two reasons for this partiality. The Duke was fond of discoursing on questions of religion, into which everybody would not enter so willingly as myself; and he had gone so far with his practical comments on the toleration which he advocated, as not only to be willing to have two chaplains on board his ship—one of the episcopal

church for government's sake, and one of the Presbyterian persuasion for the crew—but he had chosen to take under his protection and carry to sea with him in disguise a priest of the order of St. Loyola, who begged not to be forced to leave him. You remember my speaking of this person before. The sanguinary laws against the Papists still exist; but since the King's return, the courage they had begun to resume under the Protectorate had thrown off all their remaining doubts, and they openly looked forward not only to indulgences but favour. There was an attempt on the part of the Chancellor, about two years ago, to counteract these expectations; but Sir Harry Bennett, Clifford, and others, were too much for him. I need not tell you the suspicions that are abroad respecting one royal personage. The King is supposed not to care much for any religion; but if he has a preference, he is thought to like Popery the best. The professors of it abided stoutly by his father; it is the religion of his mother; was that of his maternal ancestors, and indeed of his paternal, till of late years; but perhaps it has several recommendations, above all others, in a royal eye: it is indulgent, it is showy, and it controuls the multitude. At least that is what has hitherto been thought of it. I suspect, however (and I have good reasons for doing so), that it is beginning to partake of the Christian freedom of other faiths. Nay, I have a fancy, in which I love to indulge, that in the course of a century or two Papists will be as inclined to throw off the husks and thorns of their creed, and bring out the flowers of it, as much as any other believers. I confess I am Papist enough to think, that with its music, and its paintings, and its sweet-smelling odours, it would make a handsomer flower than any. Perhaps this is what the King likes best in it, for you know his reputation; and the Presbyterians accuse us of being of a sensual faith. As to the Duke, I believe he admires the severer part of it, quite as well as any other. His life, like his brother's, is free enough; but I do not think either of them care for mere pleasure as much as is thought. The King gives way to it in a great measure because he is indolent and social; the Duke takes it somehow as a matter of course, because he is a prince and a gentleman. If our neighbour, the Most Christian King, were somewhat less of a man of pleasure, as well as a Papist, I fancy his Highness would less pique himself on his Catholic inconsistencies of sin-

ning and repentance. He is sometimes fairly angry with me for not being of the faith of my ancestors. I tell him he is not so himself; but he says he was not brought up in it, as I was. I then explain to him for the hundredth time (for his understanding is not good by nature, and sometimes he chuses to have it less so) in what manner I really was brought up; but he gets angry again, and says there is a difference, for circumstances rendered his own education not a little of the same cast; and it is from these humours, as well as from his encouragement of particular persons, and his warmth in behalf of a toleration which he seems so little inclined to by nature, that people draw the most peremptory conclusions respecting his being already a Papist. You know the gallant Clifford, who is said to have been so full of business during the fight, and who declared he should not know what to do with such a poor thing as peace, after tasting the pleasures of that fiery zest! There is no doubt that he is a Catholic. The Jesuit I speak of, gave him absolution before the fight.

“All this, however, is in confidence. And now, my dear Esher, I will tell you why I have troubled you with so many communications respecting myself and others. Indeed you now know as much of my whole life as I do myself, and still more, no doubt, of the nature of the biographer. We had not been more than a day at sea, when, from something that the Duke let fall, I had reason to suspect that Dalton was not altogether the person he seemed to be. I guess that he too is a Catholic; and I am sure he gave out to me, that he was not. Clifford knows him; and I observed a smile of a peculiar sort on his face, when his name was mentioned. Do you know, that when this suspicion fell upon me, my blood seemed to turn round in my veins. I wished that instant to be out of the vessel, and at Mickleham, and thrilled from head to foot with impatience. Somebody said, that an officer had news of his being married. Was it possible that it could be to——! I could not quit the vessel. I had no grounds to go upon, sufficient to warrant a risk of my becoming infamous even in behalf of her comfort; so I strove to think I had no grounds for the belief. With what difficulty I resolved upon this effort, and maintained it, I will not attempt to describe; but as soon as our business at sea is over, I shall, if I survive, request permission to go on shore, with a licence of returning or not to

sea, as it may happen ; and I shall then as instantly set out for the neighbourhood of the most beloved of women (still, oh, *how* beloved !), and secure to my heart, I trust, the knowledge of her being safe and well. In the course of a week, letters shall be directed to you both at Whitehall and on board the vessel, in case you may not be certain of your movements ; and should you not receive any, I beg the greatest of earthly favours, for which I will thank you in another world, that you yourself will go down to the neighbourhood, will make inquiry at court and elsewhere ; in short, will do everything which can enter your gallant and kind heart, for the sake not only of one who hoped to show his love for you, but of a woman whose real nature is worthy of all that can be done for her. I have told you all about myself, from my childhood upwards, that you might know me thoroughly, my weakness as well as my strength, and modify any of your conclusions or actions accordingly,—but always pray let it be in favour of the person I speak of.

“ And oh ! my dear friend, whether anything has befallen her or not—(as indeed in my cooler moments I cannot think it has)—but whether it has or not, and whatever becomes of me, pray let me anticipate, as I do (and it is the greatest comfort I have), that you will still keep an eye on her, and do your best to preserve her from harm. May I add—nay, I must do so, for it is only on such grounds that Lord Ormond wished his secret to be disclosed to *one other person*,—that Miss Randolph may want a protector, if I am gone : I trust you will contrive to be that protector, if you are nothing more ; though I cannot help thinking you will be. At all events, if, out of delicacy, you do not disclose yourself to Miss R., you can easily get introduced to Lady Vavasour : and yet, indeed—without the other—in short, I know not well what to say, or to think ; but you will do your best for us all. I dare not say any more ;—but—at any price, be a friend to her ; and on no account, as you value my last words, ever think of revenging upon her any trouble you may know she has caused me, by showing her these pages, or letting her into the secret of what I have suffered. If ever you are forced to speak of me, talk of the cheerful manner in which I used to converse, and say how contented the Duke and others used to think me. I may write incoherently, but I mean, that I would rather have endured all I have, and twenty

times more, sooner than not have had that sweet face to think of. I left a packet with Lord Ossory for his noble father, to whom, in case anything should happen to me (for I sometimes feel as if my heart would burst), I beg you to add the assurances of my last esteem and gratitude. *He* will attend to what I wish also; but he has so many public cares, that a younger and less occupied man, like you, has come upon me like a blessing from heaven. And so God bless you, and all, prays your affectionate friend,

“ P. H.”

*ESHER resumes.*

OH, my friend, my noble, kind-hearted friend, considerate for everybody but thyself, where art thou? No news for two weeks: none for nearly the whole of a third! I go to seek thee. Everything is right at Mickleham. I have undoubted intelligence of it, or I should have set out before. Is it possible, that the noblest of men has found a grave, in common with the thousands suffering under this awful visitation!\*

This memorandum is put at the bottom of the manuscript of Sir Philip Herne, in order he may know, in case he opens it without me, that he had a grateful and affectionate friend in

R. E.

\* The great Plague, which had broken out just before the naval expedition, and was now raging.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.





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VOLUME THE THIRD.

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## CHAPTER I.

TILL the time had elapsed by which I ought to have received news of my friend, my sanguine temper had induced me to make myself very easy respecting him. I persuaded myself that Lady Vavasour could not but love him, especially since he had been one of the naval conquerors. I concluded that he would make his appearance at Mickleham, settle every thing to his heart's content, come to Whitehall with the news, and then — what of Miss Randolph?

Had Miss Randolph still any regard for me? Would it give her pleasure to see me? Did I love her or not? and did not the very question show that I had no business to ask it? Miss Randolph had turned out to be a duke's daughter; but then she was a natural daughter. How far did the one consideration lead me to think I felt a renewal of my love? and how far did not the other incline me to doubt it? Who was her mother? Lord Ossory, son and heir of the duke himself, had married the daughter of a natural son, a son of the Prince of Orange. This was a bar upon a lofty scutcheon, though to be sure the illegitimacy was once removed, and the grandfather was a prince. But, on the other hand, Ossory was the son of an English Duke; and the Eshers, though an old family, could hardly quarrel with their representative for thinking it as warrantable on his part to marry the natural daughter of so great a peer, as it was in a Duke's son to ally himself to a princely but Dutch illegitimacy. The Duke himself was, by style and title, a "high and mighty prince." But then again, who was the lady's mother?

My good friend Esher, said I, assuredly thou art not in love, or thou wouldst not trouble thyself about the lady's mother.

But prudence, decency, example, the giving countenance to things ill.

Oh, thou art a sage personage, and of a most didactic habit of life. We are all so at court.

The lady has been ill for thee; think of that — has been nigh unto death's door. This is a "love in a book," as Lady Vavasour would call it. Thine old romances could hardly have produced anything more flattering within the limits of probability.

True; but she got well again: she is both handsome and plump; I have just had advices of it. In fine, for out it must, she has another lover!

Yes, in the course of my meditations on this subject, into which I fell profoundly when I had read my friend's manuscript, it struck me that I ought, on every account, to inquire into the welfare of the ladies at Mickleham. I did so. Lord Manchester had just been down on a visit. I contrived to make him talk of it; and he gave me the best intelligence. I could have wished a brick-bat chucked in his highly respectable and somewhat venerable face for every sentence he uttered. "Lady Vavasour was never so well in her life. She was as handsome — as handsome — there was no describing it, — and the life of all the parties that were so happy as to be invited; which were very small and select. Miss Randolph was very handsome, and had grown quite a buxom beauty. She had a declared lover, one Mr. O'Rourke, a fine young gentleman, and a friend of the Duke of Ormond's. And old Mr. Bennett was very well; he was really a fine-looking old man, so venerable with his silver locks. Miss Vavasour too, she was very well, — remarkably well." — "A most respectable woman, I believe, my lord." — "Oh, very respectable, highly so; highly esteemed — very." And his lordship, in the energy of his approbation, growled, and shook his elderly and respectable cheeks. His lordship was a man who had been of the most opposite parties, and was highly respected by all. I had a great mind to ask how the dog was, and the park gates. "I made up my mind to enjoy myself extremely, till news should arrive of Sir Philip, and not to care anything for a girl who was so ungrateful as to forsake a false lover. The interest which my friend wished to create for her in my heart had touched me more, and disposed me to be more in love than

ever ; nor could I think of the "fine young gentleman, a friend of the Duke of Ormond's," without considerable impatience and a longing to contest his victory. But at present nothing remained but to keep the secret with which Sir Philip had entrusted me, and endure my mortified vanity as I could. I took a lesson from his Majesty, and called on several ladies one after the other, who returned my compliments with so much sweetness, and seemed so inclined to pity me if I told my story, that I rallied and became excellent company. In fact, I did tell it to Miss Warmestre, Sir Philip's confidential matters apart ; and I had the pleasure of seeing her become livelier than ever. I did not ask after the stranger, of whom Lady Castlemain told me ; but perhaps it was lucky that I did not forget him.

The court removed to Hampton, to get out of the way of the Plague. This calamity broke out just as we were going to sea, and was now giving frightful proofs of its increase. Thousands died in London every week. Must I confess that, by one universal consent, we seemed to have resolved to say nothing about it ? Nay, if we thought about it, we determined to be only the more thoughtless ; and for some weeks I did not suffer the word to pass my lips. We looked up to the sky, wandered and laughed among the alleys green ; and Hampton might have been taken for an odd kind of a bit of heaven privileged from the miseries of earth.

All the day a turf or a soft carpet was under my feet, sunshine, or trees, or painted ceilings over my head ; music was in my ears, beauty all around me ; and the king, by making me sit down with him at supper, had completed my pretensions as a courtier. What was better, I was made a page of the presence ; and there was a talk of sending me to France with Lord Buckhurst, on a message to the French court.

The king heard more of the plague than anybody. He thought it his duty to speak of it ; and one or two persons, dissatisfied with their share of our pleasures, took it in their head to vex him by speaking of it too much. One of these gentlemen having mentioned the state of London with an affectation of woe that sat very ill upon him, Lady Castlemain was provoked to utter her mind on the subject. "I wonder, sir," said she, addressing the King, "that your Majesty does not *forbid* the mention of this horrid plague. If

one could do any good, it would be another thing; but as that is impossible, where is the use of being teased with such dismal accounts?"

"My lords and ladies," cried his Majesty, playfully, "and you, gentlemen and ladies of our honourable household, henceforward there is no plague: we abolish it. So you are therefore to hear no more dismal accounts. God help the poor people nevertheless," added the King, with great seriousness; "I wish we could shut up our knowledge as well as our ears."

"Do not be afraid," said Bab May; "it will be for their good. It will tame their proud spirits, and teach them to set better store by their kind Prince."

A silence ensued, which everybody seemed afraid of interrupting. Montagu broke it by asking Miss Stewart if she rode as much as usual; and the King seized the opportunity of turning the conversation.

We were all out in the garden that day, some of us wandering about, the others collected round the King in the beautiful glade where the great summer-house stands.

Let me see;—besides the whole court, the Duke's as well as the King's, and the principal ministers, and the whole honourable body of the maids,—the Count de Grammont was there, M. de Comminges, and the Duke de Verneuil, natural brother of the Queen Dowager, an old hunting gentleman. There were also Mrs. Rich and my Lady Manners, Mademoiselles de la Grange and Dumenil; Madame de Saint Cricq, Donna Olivia What's-her-name, the walnut-tree woman\*; Miss Jones, whose wit stood her instead of beauty; Miss Taafe, who talked the prettiest Irish in the world, just as if she was out of breath; little Miss Carden, with a cast in her eye, on which everybody took pity on account of its roguery; and a certain Miss Cozens, daughter of a church dignitary, who had the health and spirits of a dairy-maid, and the elegance of a court angel,—if there is such a thing. It was delightful weather. The scent of May came to us from a neighbouring field; and his Majesty and the ladies were amusing themselves with basins of the gold and silver fish, then lately brought

\* Who this person was I cannot discover; most probably one of the Portuguese companions of the Queen. The designation of "the walnut-tree woman" I must acknowledge to be an equal mystery. — *Edit.*

among us. The ladies took little pieces of bread, with which they invited the fish to run their noses against the glass; and many pretty things were said of the way in which they gaped and turned themselves in vain. His Majesty was allowed to be the best hand at beguiling the fish. They left all the courtiers to go to him; whether by contrivance, did not appear. Grammont lost a purse to him, but he said he would have his revenge at night. We thought he meant at cards; for he had invited a party of us to supper, and his Majesty was graciously pleased to attend. But he meant on the fish; for the revenge consisted in his having ordered a course of these rarities, which must have cost him a prodigious sum. He was always doing something of this sort, which got him a great deal of credit. The more money he spent, the more he seemed to gain. He had the reputation of being an unfair player; but he selected his victims so well, was so cautious and generous with the knowing, and made such a form of calling none to a severe reckoning but such as wanted address to dispute it, and would rather pay anything than look foolish, that, although he was a younger brother, poor, and an exile, he lived among us like a prince. He distributed his favours on all sides, and was in special favour with the King, who had indeed good reasons to like him, for he refused his pensions; lost him his money, and entertained him with a perpetual round of jests. Only the ladies were not as grateful as he could wish. They accepted his presents and his perfumes, but disconcerted him, when he became serious, by telling him he was joking. In truth, they had no reliance on the Chevalier; for, besides being revengeful, he would sacrifice anything to a jest; and he really had not the art of convincing women that he was in earnest. This made him savage with all who had, and was the secret of his enmity to Harry Jermyn.

Somebody gave one of these supper parties almost every night; and the King was almost always present. The Queen was as noisy as anybody, and would come frolicking with some of the blessed maids. Lady Castlemain and she were now sworn friends. Her Majesty would have the spleen for a day or so, and the tears would be in her eyes at something; but a little hard-heartedness from the King, and the good offices of her ladyship, brought matters about; and then there was a ball, at which the Queen and the Duchess of Bucking-

ham furiously thumped the floor; and nothing would satisfy poor Katherine but Castlemain must take ices from her hand, and be crammed with cakes.

In the morning we loitered as aforesaid, or had a water party, or magnanimously shot hares and sparrows; and Miss Stewart had a silver gun, which popped as harmlessly as need be. Also we shot at butts, and we bowled much. Then somebody sat to Lely for a picture, and his room was crowded with beauties. Lely was a high fellow, who affected to imitate Vandyke and Rubens in his style of living as well as his pictures; but as he was by nature a bit of a clown, he overdid it: so his draperies ran over with tawdriness, and his living into city show. However, it was a fine sight to see the flower of the court assembled in his large room. His dinners were gross; but, with his mahl-stick in his hand, he was not to be despised; so the fair setters languished before him with their half-shut eyes, as if he was a sultan. He made an impudent portrait of Castlemain as Britannia, with a helmet on and a storm about her ears; which was done to make amends for Miss Stewart's figuring in the same character on the coin. But I must say his picture of Miss Taafe was as good as if a bridegroom had done it. He seemed to have said, "Stop a moment, my dear, before you finish your dressing; I will take you in that attitude." The omnipotence of unresisting beauty was in it.

We rode out at all hours of the day, whole crowds of us. A fashion had come up for the ladies to ride in men's hats and cravats, with a coat ending in skirts. It was not pretty, but it was new; and when a lady had got her hat and coat on, she was induced to be a little freer in her speech, and venture upon the oath next above the one she usually allowed herself: which was thought attractive. Our best swearer, beyond all question, was Lady Castlemain, who surprised me more and more with the extent of her accomplishments. The Queen, who was always learning English and never getting on, either pretended or really did not know the force of the extraordinary adjurations which the King put into her mouth. His Majesty had a pastime of making her say one thing and meaning another. He would teach her the most innocent English words, the sounds of which expressed words not so harmless in other languages; and it was his delight to make her say this new

kind of catechism till Katherine suddenly reddened up to her eyes, aimed at him with her handkerchief, and cried out, amidst the convulsions of the bye-standers, "Bad-a man!"

In the evening, we generally assembled in the great music room, where the tables were laid for cards, and Francesco and others sang to their lutes. The tables glittered with gold, the voices ascended to the sky, and those were not the least entertained who attended neither to the one nor the other. The Duke of York, who rode all the morning, seemed to do nothing but walk about the room all the evening at the heels of some lady. He was so heavy, so close, and so obstinate, that I was going to make a simile that would not have been quite so proper. Sometimes however, if the lady sat down, he slept. The Duchess, who took after her father, swallowed her objections by the help of a great appetite for beef and lobster, to say nothing of ale. She cared no more for her shape than the Chancellor. Montagu reckoned, one evening, that she sent her gentleman to the sideboard five times before supper, for *pain-de-botarge*. It was said that she was in love with her Master of the Horse, Harry Sidney; and she might have been so; but she was too prudent to run the risk of undoing her honours, and foregoing the chance of being Queen of England. Buckingham generally went about, in these evening assemblies, laughing and making laugh. His "loves," precious little souls, did not lie so much in the court as out of it. The boldest were afraid of his incontinence of speech and the extreme brevity of his attachments. He seemed to think that his star and garter, and a bon-mot, gave him privileges of inconstancy such as royalty never pretended to; nor did he alter this opinion till he met with his match in the person of my Lady Shrewsbury, who daring him to do his worst by her own example, produced in him a passion as for another self. The Duke, besides his wit, had a great deal of sound sense in everything but what related to his conduct; yet he was inferior in genius to Lord Rochester; who, though a greater buffoon than he, and not able, or perhaps willing, to talk so fluently on any grave argument, had bursts of short and comprehensive eloquence that exhibited a wonderful prematureness of knowledge, and surpassed anything said by the other. He was a great deal younger, had a slender body and a constitution which he ill used to the last degree; and was always

offending and being pardoned by the King, who treated him like a pet schoolboy. He had now however gone to sea to console himself for the loss of Miss Mallet, and emulate those who had obtained so much glory in the first battle. I remember, the first time I saw him afterwards, he had just succeeded in reconciling the lady's friends to his addresses; and there was he, making her and old Lord Hawley laugh at all their acquaintances for some pretended absurdity or other, himself blushing all the while as much as the lady, as if in hecatics with his animal spirits, and she staring like a weasel, and stuffing her handkerchief into her mouth. He was a greater laugher and mimic than Buckingham himself, though in a lower tone; had a greater address, when he chose it; and always appeared like a young fellow who had come up to the ladies from a dinner party, his head overflowing with wit and wine.

“Grammont, Buckingham, and he, Sedley and Buckhurst, were the delight of the court, and the dread of each other. It was not only Grammont's wit that availed him, and his high flowing style of life, but his French, which besides being perfect of the kind, had the advantage over one's native tongue. French being the common language of the court. Those who could speak it, found it assist their pretensions to wit, especially such as had none at all: and those who could not, affected to understand it. Miss Stewart talked nothing else. She *Mon-Dieu'd* it at such a rate, that when the rumour was at its height respecting the King's inclination to marry her, Rochester, joking upon his Majesty's taxation-necessities, said he ought to chance the motto of his arms to *Droit et Mon Dieu!* This lady still divided the attention of the courtiers. Lady Castlemain reigned: she was ‘*the*’ lady, as Ormond and Hyde used to call her; but the flood of courtiers rolled to and fro between her and Miss Stewart, as the achievements of either lady at cards or dancing attracted them. Castlemain affected to let them go; and was repaid for her liberality by their shrugs and grimaces when they returned. The cue with her ladyship was to undervalue the other's brains; with Miss Stewart to speak of her royal blood, and the triumph of refined beauty over unpolished. As to French, it was the custom, whenever a prude was introduced among us, if she gave herself airs, to find out whether she was mistress of it or not.



If not, Brisacier, D'Enées, or some other fool, was set upon her, to talk all sorts of nonsense, to which she would listen with a pleased countenance, making frequent acknowledgments of his wit, and always taking care to bow and smile at the worst places. Rochester or somebody else then went up, and took similar freedoms in English, at which the lady showing offence, contrition was expressed in form; and the gallant withdrew with a remark, that equal liberties of speech were certainly not to be allowed to every one, and that D'Enées, he saw, was the happy man.

Sometimes the evening party was in the Queen's room, sometimes in the Duchess's, at others in Lady Castlemain's, or Miss Stewart's; and the lesser goddesses had their assemblies. Different subjects of discourse prevailed in different parties; though gallantry and raillery predominated in all. I think there was more talk about dress at Miss Stewart's, than anywhere else. It was there I invented my *pensées*, which it cost Grammont three weeks of meditation to equal. He was known to take people into corners, and ask them whether such and such a knot was better than Esher's. Dishes and wines were much discussed at Miss Wells's, the Duchess not choosing to countenance the topic; but Miss Price, having eyes which were said to abound with meaning above everybody's, the visitors in her apartments seemed to think themselves obliged to have more meaning in their words, even than at Lady Castlemain's. I used to wonder, for my part, whether a syllable would remain to express a simple idea; or how the parties, next day, could ask for a bodkin or an apple.

Miss Price's eyes were certainly fine. She did not think it necessary to go to sleep with them as others did. She was justly of opinion, that anybody could go to sleep, but that it was not everybody who could look so cleverly when awake. They were of the description of eyes that are said to look through you, but full of good will withal; extremely earnest and consoling. Miss Howard's contested the victory, in point of earnestness, but you were more afraid of them. Lady Shrewsbury, besides a flushed, doughy face, which always looked as if she had just got up, had sharp brilliant eyes like beads, which had no expression when you looked close. I thought them anything but handsome. Castlemain's were haughty and lamping, not so handsome as her mouth, which however was a

little too pouting. I once saw her eating a great stick of barley-sugar, and never could get it out of my head afterwards. She always seemed to me to be finishing it under the rose, like a girl that has taken sweetmeats to church. However, the lips were as beautiful, as health, plumpness, and smiling outline could make them. They were so red, that when the sun shone upon them, they absolutely seemed to sparkle like cherries. Her nose was of the handsomest order of the *retroussé*, like Miss Hamilton's. Madame de Buillon has just such another. Miss Hamilton's eyes were more sensible; so were Miss Fielding's; but the former was a little too much of the Minerva, nor could I think her so handsome in any respect as her family made her out; and Miss Fielding had too large a nose, with a leg (they said) to match. However, I could rather have dared both nose and leg, than loved twenty handsomer nobodies; for she had a mouth full of wit and good nature. I really believe Grammont was jealous of her. Unquestionably he was afraid. He once ventured to say something in dispraise of the superfluous feature in her face, when she rallied him with so much humour, that he was out of countenance for an hour afterwards; a singular catastrophe for him. Unluckily she pushed her triumph too far, and gave him an opportunity to recover. She was caricaturing him behind his back, and making everybody round them die with laughing, when suddenly detecting her, he affected to draw his sword, as if upon a man; then dashed back the hilt, exclaiming, "But the eyes are a woman's." He afterwards thought proper to say some flattering things both upon eyes and mouth; and Miss Fielding, from hating him, was thought to be inclined to love. I suspect there was nothing in it. Grammont would have boasted of a much less conquest. Women, conscious of any great defect, are, to be sure, more susceptible than others, of praise; but there was always something short of real refinement in the boasted address of the Chevalier. Grammont should not have praised a woman's eyes after abusing her nose. He should have reconciled her by some allusion, which should have been none, to the defect itself; or shown, by a delicate undervaluing of it, that it was not in the way. There was the same want of tact in his intercourse with the whole sex. He rallied the sex in general, and then thought to be acceptable to the select few. This may do with ill-

tempered, censorious women, who conscious of a great deal of demerit, are for decrying everybody; but neither the good-natured nor the handsome will like it. Every pretty woman regards herself as the representative of her sex, and as supporting the honours of it in her person. And she is right. Even the censorious part of the sex, if the truth were known, do not like to hear women abused, *as* women. How can they, since they are women themselves? None like it but such as have given up all pretensions to be regarded as belonging to woman-kind, like that fellow Christina of Sweden.\*

After all, there were no eyes at court more charming than Miss Reynell's, whom D'Olonne used to admire so much. And her cousin, Jane Killebrew, had almost as fine ones. But the former, looking out in that poetical manner, with a mixture of earnestness and retirement, between her dishevelled locks was the very picture, Killebrew said, of the heroine of one of Shakespeare's plays. Miss Price had only half the look. Little Reynell would have done for Imogen or Viola. Such faces carried it hollow in the court of Charles the First; and if things go on as seriously as they have begun, I fancy they will again; but our merry monarch, then reigning, loved a bolder look. However, he had a notion, which I take to be a just one, that the quieter faces contained all that the others did, with something besides. But, as he plainly said, he disliked trouble. Constancy was what he greatly desired; I mean, on the lady's part; but he was willing to shut his eyes, provided he saved time at first, and worship afterwards. He was as fond of carping at a sentimental lover as at a bishop. Of all the faces that came to court, I have heard Lord Dorset say (who was a judge), that next to Miss Bagot's, † who had a charming gipsy face, blushing through the brown, none pleased him better than that of the Countess of Ossory. It was not beautiful; it was not striking; but it grew upon you with daily sweetness. There was also an arch look at the corner of the eyes and mouth, which in so good a wife was reckoned provoking. I remember the King said one day when he had been drinking, "Take my word for it, those virtuous women are the d.\* \* st—" I will not complete the sentence, but without meaning to lessen the virtue, the phrase in the

\* *Coquin* is the phrase in the original. *Ce coquin-la de cinc.* — Edit.

† Lady Falmouth.

royal mouth was the highest of panegyries. "Ossory," continued he, "was going up the staircase the other day, and met his wife; and I saw her give him such a welcome, by G—d, and kiss his hand with such a transport of thanks in it; that if all the women of the Grand Turk had been melted into one, they could not have done it better. The worst of it is," said his Majesty, "that although she is as impregnable as the devil, — (at least everybody says so, for I never venture upon Ormond's goods, as my brother did) she is no prude, — makes none of the cursed faces of Middleton and those fools, at the least thing one says; but carries all off with such an air of goodness and toleration, — ay, and a twinkle in her eye to boot, as though she could laugh if she chose — that one absolutely longs to beat her, for being so perfect."

Whether everybody will agree with the royal idea of perfection, is to be doubted. Perhaps his Majesty saw more in the face of this charming woman, than she was conscious of; perhaps less, for she may have been laughing at, instead of with him. I am sure his pleasantry must have been in one of its very best moods, if the expression of her countenance was anything like what he took it for.

Our entertainments were varied by a theatre, which had been set up in a field at the end of the great flower garden. Nelly came down with Mr. Hart and others, and was the life of the company. Lady Castlemain and Miss Warmestre, as well as herself, were considerate enough to keep the secret of my early love to themselves; but I did not forget it. I always felt a tender regard for my giddy friend, who used to shake her tresses in my face; and she had the like for me, though in all innocence. It was said that she was to marry Mr. Hart; and it is extraordinary how well she contrived to make friends and fellow-gigglers of everybody, great and small, and yet give them a sense of her regard for engagements. The fact was, she hated lying, and was good-hearted. Had she been born anywhere but in Lewkner's Lane, she might have been a companion for Lady Ossory: — and yet I know not; something of her sincerity may have been owing to the plainness of her breeding, however alarming it was in other respects. It must be confessed, that she never got over some parts of it. With a charming face and person (for she was a little Venus in both respects) she put on her clothes as if she had tossed

them over her ; and her new companions, the players, had probably only revived a tendency, to which she must have had daily encouragement in her infancy, — I mean (with all due respects to the courts of their most serious Majesties, King James II, and Louis XIV) she swore. I never heard her swear during her residence with her former namesake, Miss Warmestre ; but it is certain she either added or restored the accomplishment to her list, behind the scenes. Mr. Pepys rolled his eyes in dismay, when he spoke of it. I forgot to mention, that when I took the letter of poor Dick Smith to Mr. Hart's house, in order to give it her, she was from home, nursing her mother ; so I left it in his hands. Hart did not conceal her behaviour on receiving it. She wept floods of tears, went into a sort of mourning, and told everybody the story of the poor boy who had given her stockings in the chilblains. She even told the King that she liked the royal visage the better for resembling the link-boy's ; and his Majesty, who loves a fit of tears while he is about it, was pleased to weep at her weeping, and tell her she was a "right hearted honest girl." Next day, she made him laugh ready to burst his sides, at some mimicry ; and then turned grave about poor Dick ; and so between tears and laughter, they became familiar friends, and she was called the King's little actress. Killebrew said, that Castlemain was the larger one. He called them comedy and tragedy. Miss Stewart was dance, and Miss Wells and others the fiddles. Why her ladyship was called tragedy, will be seen anon. Notwithstanding the King's kindness to Nelly, there was believed to be no harm in it. Nelly was too sincere to pretend otherwise, had it been so ; and his Majesty affected to treat her like a child, especially in the presence of Lady Castlemain ; who, to encourage him in his virtue, affected, on her side, to be delighted with his paternity towards this new daughter. She felt differently afterwards ; but to show the footing on which my quondam cousin lived with his Majesty at that time, one story will suffice. The little actress, who was as agile off the stage as upon it, where she danced to admiration, had got up in a tree one morning, to eat cherries. It was in an orchard which the King had given the actors, on condition of their supplying him every week with a cherry tart, which Nelly was to bring to him on a lawn, before the summer house, dancing all the way. She

had struck out a fancy of that sort in a dance at the end of a comedy, where she brought a casket to an Indian prince; and with this performance his Majesty had been wonderfully pleased. The homage of the tart had been exhibited once at Hampton, and with great applause; the little jade twirling about, putting a world of grace into her movements, and bringing the pasty aloft in her hands, as if it had been a thing to worship.

The King had heated himself a little with shooting; and, casting his eyes towards the orchard, he had a mind for some of the cherries. Lord Buckhurst accordingly went forward to get some. His lordship had his gun in his hand; Miss Stewart was by, with her silver popper; and a little party had gathered together, as soon as his Majesty had done shooting. Buckhurst had proceeded half way, when the King called out to him, to see what bird that was in one of the trees; and whether he could not bring it him. "But mind," said his Majesty, "if you shoot it, you must try and not hurt the feathers." The end of Nelly's gown was hanging on the tree, and his Majesty took her for a peacock.

Buckhurst comes up. He discerns the peacock to be a lady, and takes it for one of the merry body of the maids. "Ho! my pretty bird," quoth he, "you are the King's property, and must come down. Who is it? which of all our fair doves, or falcons gentle?"

Nelly was hiding her face, and laughing. She knew Buckhurst well. He was a frequenter of the play-house; and furthermore he had been much struck with her conduct towards the memory of poor Dick, so that it was thought he would fain have consoled himself with her company for the coyness of Lord Falmouth's widow.

"Oh, my Lord," said Nelly, putting her rosy face between the boughs, "do you catch birds as the Irishman did, by shaking the tree? I shall fly away."

"Ay," said Buckhurst, "but I have my gun."

"Lord! and must you shoot?" returned Nelly; "what men you must be!"

"The whole court are here," said his lordship. "Miss Stewart, with her terrible silver, and all; so you see there is no chance. The prettier the dove, the worse for you."

"But I have not got my tart."

“Never mind; you are a singing bird, sweet Nelly, and we will be content this time with the song without the dance. Or, now I think of it, you shall be the tart yourself—singing birds make good pies. How should you like to be in a pasty, with the toes of your slippers peeping out at the top.”

“I have a great mind to pelt you all with cherries,” quoth the stage Venus; “I’ll begin with you as a sample.”

“Pelt away. The cherries the birds peck are the sweetest.”

The little woodlark and her fowler were in the midst of these pretty speeches, the substance of which was afterwards gathered from the parties, (for it is astonishing how much was made of this adventure, and with how much discourse it furnished our stately souls,) when somebody was heard coming up. It was Tom Vernon, come to say that the King was impatient. Nelly, who had visited the orchard to pluck fruit, not only for herself, but her friends, (Mr. Hart intending a general feast that day,) had had a great hamper brought thither, capacious as the generosity of her intentions. “My Lord,” said she, “being a singing bird, I must have a cage; and being stouter than singing birds in ordinary, I will try your prowess, for you shall carry me.” “Nothing can be better,” replied the gallant, “unless the cage were away, and I had the bird to myself.” So down comes Nelly into the basket, and his Lordship and Tom Vernon take her up, and set out for the open field. Nelly said such merry things all the way, that it was with difficulty they acted the part of proper sportsmen who had bagged their game.

The King wondered to see his chamberlain and page coming with a great hamper. He waited with impatience till it could be set before him, fully expecting to see some extraordinary lame bird that had got into the orchard, and been caught so easily

“’Tis a woodlark,” cried Buckhurst, “the finest your Majesty ever saw.”

“A woodlark, and in a hamper!” quoth the King; “Ods-fish, man, you have made love to so many goldsmiths’ wives, you have become a cockney. You don’t know a lark from a peacock.”

“If it’s a peacock,” returned Buckhurst, “I’ll be a citizen’s wife myself.”

As he spoke, the hamper was set down, and the lid thrown

open, and the King stooping with great earnestness to see what it contained, Nelly took his face in her hand, and shook it. A laugh ensued, in which his Majesty joined, not without some confusion. The little actress perceived it, and said, "Pardon me, Sir, but I am intoxicated."

"How, Nelly," cried the King, "intoxicated, and so soon in the morning!"

Nelly could not help laughing at the gravity with which this was uttered, and the possibility it implied; for drinking was none of her faults, though greater ladies were accused of it. But she repressed her merriment in an instant.

"Sir," said she, "I am always intoxicated, or I should not behave as I do," (and then dropping a curtesy into the hamper, and holding some of her cherries in her hand, in the prettiest manner in the world)—"it is with your Majesty's goodness."

"Faith little one," said the King, "you are both merry and wise; and I know not two better things." He graciously assisted her in getting out of her cage, took some of the cherries, and dismissed her with one of his most fatherly pinches on the cheek.

"I tell you what, George," said the King, turning to Buckingham; "your old friends, the republicans were right so far; there is a natural breeding as well as wit. This little girl shows it, for all her slovenly gown, and the oaths they tell me of."

"With submission, sir," observed Sedley, "is not the wit itself the breeding?"

"Assisted, perhaps, by goodnature," said Buckhurst.

"And a good stock of confidence," quoth his Grace.

"Very well remarked on all hands," observed the King; "and as Lauderdale would say, 'vara caractereestical o' the remainkers.'"

Buckingham ironically bowed his thanks. The King and he were a little uneasy on account of some business of Ossory's, and his Grace hated to be told of his old friends, particularly at such times, the Duke of Ormond and his sons having been clear of all connection with the republicans. The rest could not help looking as pleased as his Grace looked otherwise; for, with all his powers of entertainment, he was more feared than loved at court. Out of doors he was highly popular.



For my part I was never more delighted than at such times, for I had acquired a perfect dislike of him since the perusal of Sir Philip's manuscript. I wished I had had a right to quarrel with him on account of Miss Randolph; and it was with little patience I heard him accuse my other mistress of a quality, which he possessed beyond anybody.

As it was inconvenient to Buckingham to be out of favour, he speedily cleared up his countenance; and knowing that nothing would sooner recover his Majesty's goodwill than a jest, he did the most impudent thing the next evening that I had ever seen. The Chancellor had taken occasion of the calamity that was now wasting the city of London, to lecture the King on his way of life, which he said was "a tempting of Providence, ungrateful towards it, after having restored him, and for aught he knew, a main cause of the evils poured out upon his kingdom." These charges, though the King always listened to Clarendon's lectures with benignity, and was willing to admit that there was more truth in them than there ought to be, (perhaps to neutralize their effect, and stop the Chancellor's mouth,) his Majesty thought, at such a moment, very hard. He replied, with some warmth, "that every one had his faults; that luxury and enormity did not lie wholly on the side of gallantry; that it was paying an ill compliment to heaven, to suppose that it would slay thousands of harmless people for the fault of one man, or for one fault more than another; and that, for aught he knew, it was more angry with pride and stomach in a man (laying an emphasis on that equivocal term), than with faults of any other description; nay, he had good reason, from authority too sacred to be lightly mentioned, to be sure of it." The Chancellor, according to his custom, begged his Majesty's pardon, if he had said anything unbecoming the most humble and dutiful of his subjects. "He did not pretend that he was without faults, though he could not consider them, either with reference to their nature, or to his own humble condition, as of the least importance, compared with the single fault of carelessness in his Majesty, to which his Majesty's very virtues, perhaps, too much inclined him; but as he thought no trouble too great to undergo for his Majesty's service, as might be seen by his coming so often from Twickenham, in that crippled state, when he ought rather to be in his bed,—so no unkind words,

even from the lips of which he stood most in awe, and from which he certainly had not looked for the condescension of a personal affront, (and here he grew very red) should hinder him from discharging those duties of zeal and affection, which had commenced in his Majesty's infancy, with the approbation of his blessed father, and could have no excuse for ceasing till it pleased God and his Majesty to put an end to a situation, for which he was more fitted by the honesty of his nature, than the address of it."

"And so he went on," said the King, (for the matter was discussed as usual at the supper-table) "winding his speeches about me, till—you know the foolish way I have of taking pity on everybody; and so I felt ashamed of being angry with his goodness and his gout any longer; and so he gave me a great big volume of his writing to look over; and he is to come to-morrow, to know my opinion of it."

"We'll read a page of it a-piece," said Arlington, "and let your Majesty know the heads of it."

"Do, prythee," returned the King; "but don't play me a trick, Harry, as you did upon the Tangier papers, and make me quote something to him he never said. All the fat will be in the fire else,"

"Elegant!" said Buckingham aside; "but as true as the gospel, and a marvellous happy metaphor. Clarendon frying! Methinks I hear the sound of twenty kitchens.—And so, sir, your Majesty forgave him!"

"Yes," answered Charles, "I did. There's nothing uncommon in that, I fear."

"Clearly not, sir," said Buckingham maliciously; "'tis what you always do."

"Always do!" re-echoed his Majesty: "I would not have you think I do it on account of the man's strength, but of his weakness. 'Tis painful to see a hobbling old man, a wise and an honest servant withal, almost lying before one's feet, and not forgive him: but I own 'tis a little tiresome."

"If he contented himself with lying before your Majesty's feet," said Buckingham, "it would not be amiss; but to lie behind your back, may be considered not quite so pardonable."

Some relations were then given of angry and disrespectful sayings of Clarendon, concerning the royal way of life, which his Majesty was obliged to pretend that he disbelieved. Buckingham artfully admitted, that there was probably a good

deal of exaggeration in the reports; and then, with double cunning, proceeded to throw doubts on some parts of them, which Charles knew to be true. What particularly chagrined the King, was the intimation that Clarendon affected a mastery over all his movements; that the royal will, according to the Chancellor's showing, was unable to effect anything, even to the postponement of a meeting, or the security of a party on the water, if the "cancellarian will," (as Buckingham called it) chose to determine otherwise; in short, that Charles was still a boy, and Clarendon his pedagogue. The Chancellor was represented as giving ludicrous descriptions of him, under the title of 'the great boy, hankering after the maids;'—"and all this folly," concluded Buckingham in a tone of indignation, "comes from an enormous old fellow who is not averse to pleasure, but past it; nay, who takes out as much as he can, in swilling and gormandizing; and if Merry St. Andrew says true, preaches secresy to my lady's maid in so edifying a manner, that she repeats the sermon to all the puritans of her acquaintance. Then the man has a very plethora of house and land, hankers most indecently after fees, lays his hand on every waif he can think of, be it the King's or church's; yet gobbles and reddens like a turkey-cock, if you touch a stick in his premises, though it be for the King's service, and the King's own; as witness the fright he gave to fat little Pepys about the oaks; but if you come before him for a seal to your warrant, be it for lord or lady, ho! my masters! who so scrupulous as he! Hey? What? an estate given away, and I have only four! A gift to a charming woman, and no respect to my gorbellied hypocrisy? Lord in heaven! could not the King do as I do? Drink and be d—d to him, and give nothing to anybody? 'Nobody' is the phrase vulgar, but we are not of that breeding. Oh Master Kingston, sir, these be 'flesh-quakes,' as my friend Ben Jonson has it, enough to try the stoutest of us; so vacate, my masters; we would endure our agony in private. Here Molly, *atque facetum*; has my Lady retired? Yes, my Lord. Have the footmen gone to prayers? My Lord, they have. Is that drunken fellow, Dixon, surely in bed? He is, my Lord. Then bring us our sack-posset."

By this time the King was rolling in his chair, and another blow given to the approaching downfall of the Chancellor.

The next evening Clarendon makes his appearance according to appointment. There had been many determinations at the supper table to affront him ; and, bold as he was, he might reasonably have been startled to see the numerous assemblage of wits and courtiers who made a sort of avenue for him towards the King's closet. They received him on his appearance with an excess of silence. Arlington, with his sour smile and his cunning eyes, pressed his hand upon his heart, as he made his bow. Ashley bowed down to the ground. Buckingham behaved easily and gracefully, as if with real respect. The greater number of us were partly interested, and partly cowed by his appearance. I, for one, though I did not like him, thought him treated harshly, considering his long service and his good intentions ; and could not help feeling something like veneration at the sight of his grey hairs and feeble step, however accompanied with pride and swelling. As to himself, he addressed some indifferent words to an acquaintance or two as he entered, and then bowing sternly on either side, seemed prepared to meet any affront that might be hazarded, with all his ire and dignity. Clifford changed colour, and looked as if he could have bearded him the more ; but nobody ventured. The bows for the most part were made with real courtesy, and the bravadoes of the overnight vanished before the aspect of a man of eloquence and authority, who was grandfather to the young princes, and had over-awed a court from its infancy. Above all, Buckingham's manner was looked upon as a desertion of the cause ; and we were prepared to lay it to the account of a want of courage, of which he was already suspected. But he reedemed it in a way, that seemed to render it only the more bold and insulting.

The ante-room was one of the largest in the palace ; the door of the King's closet stood open at the further end (the weather being very hot) ; and Buckingham had placed himself at the very farthest point from the closet, to wit, close to the entrance, as if purposely to receive the Chancellor with respect. His lordship, proceeding stoutly and painfully with his gout, had, however, no sooner commenced his passage, and was returning our bows, than we perceived Buckingham behind him, imitating his manner with an extravagance so impudent, and yet so grounded in truth, that it was with difficulty we refrained from laughing out loud. The proud eye and puffed

cheeks of Clarendon, the general *width* of his manner, if I may so call it; his extremely grave acknowledgments (as if giving us no more credit for our courtesy than we deserved); the leaden weight of the feet, as if scraped along, instead of lifted; and the occasional nod to a friend (extremely ludicrous and sullen), presented a *double* of the gouty and angry Chancellor, as exact as if Nokes had done it; and the caricature being thus preceded by the original in person, unwillingly and yet in dudgeon, the effect was alarming to those who saw them both coming. Some of them in their efforts to resist laughter were forced to turn away; and none but those whom they had passed, and who were rolling and gaping with their efforts, dared to look towards the King; who, for his part, seeing what was approaching, was fain to get behind the door.

Clarendon observing those who turned away, guessed at what was going on. He reddened like scarlet, but was wise enough not to take any notice. However, on entering the King's closet, after paying his respects to his Majesty, he addressed him in these words \* : —

“Before entering, sir, upon the business which has brought me here with this gentleman, Mr. Coventry, I humbly crave your Majesty's patience in behalf of an old servant of your government, and an extreme and passionate well-wisher to your royal person, while I say a word or two in his behalf.” His lordship was much agitated.

“Certainly, my Lord,” said the King, glad to have his thoughts diverted from Buckingham's mimicry; “certainly, — who is it? You know you have only to speak; — I mean, an old servant, in whose favour you think fit to interest yourself — a — hum — Who is it, good my Lord?”

“Sir, this old servant, old and nighly worn out, but never, I will be bold to say, more worthy of your Majesty's protection (and I speak of him in this gentleman's presence the rather because he is an impartial witness, not too much inclined in the person's favour, and may be considered as an honourable representation of publicity without the indecorum of it) — is myself. Nay, sir, in God's name, and in the name of humanity, which I know it is not in the nobleness of your nature to resist, I beg you a moment to hear me. — Sir, it is an unhap-

\* What follows here, like the close of Cromwell's speech in the second volume, is given by the MS. in English. — *Edit.*

piness of the situation which I have the honour of holding under your Majesty, and of the conscience which it exacts above all others, that I often suppose myself under the necessity of offering to your Majesty my poor advice and opinion relative to matters which it would be an impertinence to touch upon under any circumstances of less duty or compulsion: and perhaps it is my further misfortune, as it must of necessity be that of all conscientious servants in a like office, who are not exempt from the common frailties of mankind (which is what I never pretended to be), that in the honest and trembling fervour of my zeal (for I could not disguise, if I would, that I speak of what is near my heart with a certain heat and emotion), I may exaggerate or even mistake some points on which your Majesty is kind enough to hear me speak, and so upon the matter fall justly under correction; which I call on your Majesty to testify I have ever received with a willingness and a submission, becoming a dutiful subject, and at least proportionate to the extent of my fault. But, sir, there is one thing of which I earnestly entreat, and implore, and I may even say demand your Majesty to be persuaded (for love makes it an honour to the highest to have justice demanded of them, as a thing which it is not in their natures to deny); and that is, that whatsoever I think it my duty to say at any time, touching your Majesty's other servants and advisers, more especially if it be in the way of objection, or heat, or scornfulness, I say it before their faces, and not behind their backs: and I call upon your Majesty to bear witness that I do so, having too often indeed given occasion to your Majesty's just rebuke, for being so far transported by my natural openness into a forgetfulness of every thing but my love to your welfare; and assuredly it is an indiscretion of which I should never have been guilty, had I been guilty otherwise, or confined myself to the safe malice of backbiters and mimics, than whom (saving your Majesty's princely willingness to construe every thing for the best) I do not know a more accursed generation; all which being the case, and my heat and openness being as well known as their secrecy and malignancy, I do hope and trust, and implore your Majesty to allow me to expect, that if I can do so much justice to them, it shall at least never be suspected of me that I can condescend to their cowardly audacity, or take those liberties with your Majesty's person and

proceedings, which, as they are guilty of themselves, so I have too good reason to know, they are abundantly willing to charge upon others."

Mr. Coventry said, that all this was spoken with a heat, vehemence, and a sort of tempest of sincerity, which would have been irresistible to any man, much more to the easy prince who stood before his old servant. Charles, greatly confused, in vain attempted to stop the torrent by murmurs of doubt and re-assurance; and at the close of it, he could think of nothing but putting an end to his own and the Chancellor's uneasiness. He told him, "he believed every word he uttered, as he always did; that he never fancied he said a word behind any one's back, which he would not say, even if he had not, to his face; and that, as he (the King) made a point of hearing nothing to his 'friend and instructor's' prejudice (!) — for so he must ever call him, — so he begged him to consider, that tale-bearers were not always to be trusted, even against those whose tongues were not so honest as his own. In fine, all parties (his Majesty was sure) would be the better for believing as little harm of one another as possible; and if idle men sometimes took liberties with their betters, out of a notion that they were not enough regarded, it was the business of the prince to show that such liberties were taken in vain; and he would do it, and that forthwith; of which his lordship should presently carry away testimony."

And the King, not having time to break it, was as good as his word; for the conference upon which the Chancellor came, was no sooner ended, than the door being thrown open, his Majesty came forth with him, helping him along in his gout, like a son, Clarendon deprecating so much goodness, and his Majesty persisting in it with a cordiality which put all the courtiers on their reverence, adding, out loud, that "he could do no less for one who had supported so many real burdens for him." Next day Charles was ashamed to look Buckingham in the face; and this triumph of Clarendon's was the worse for him in the end.

The Chancellor, though he expected assiduous court to be paid to himself, seldom went anywhere from home. He alleged his gout and multiplicity of business as the reasons; and they would have been good excuses for any other man: but unquestionably both pride and luxury were among his detainers,

though he did not choose to think so. He might have been as luxurious and as lame as he pleased, if he had not been proud. The more gout the better, if he had but returned visits a little oftener. Gout was what everybody looked forward to who did not walk, as the King did, or ride, like the Duke. But it is not to be denied, that Clarendon was puffed up with pride as well as canary, and that he sat in his gouty chair as if it had been the throne of the realms. To venture within a mile of his toe or his pretensions, was an offence anti-papal. Everybody was to give way to him as patiently as a pack of suitors in Chancery ; and while he refused a vote or a seal, for any other person's convenience, with a conscientiousness that would have been provoking in any minister, considering the nature of the court, he resented the least inquiry into his gains, or doubt of his motives, with a bluster that undoubtedly looked more like the ostentation of innocence than the truth of it. From the gusts of his anger nobody was secure, not even the King in council. He had reason to refer to them as proofs of his candour, and he was enough aware of the impression they must make, to follow them up with apologies to those above him. But catch him who could at an apology to an inferior ! And then these inferiors, though perhaps truly such compared with the height of his own power and genius, were often men of importance and ability : yet he would not scruple, in the King's presence, to pour on them a storm of vituperation, calling them "fellows and pretenders," and wondering at their "impudence," though the offence, which he especially undertook to be enraged at, was the freedom they ventured upon in the royal presence ! All this showed him to be a man of so much more will than self-knowledge, and so filled with humours which he confounded with virtues, that all classes of men began to doubt which was which, and to give him no credit for differing with the greatest enormities, seeing that he did it with as enormous a blindness of his own. He complained that his rivals, after depriving him of all real share in the government, attributed to him the most odious of their own measures ; but on the other hand, they referred to his pride and luxury and the little ceremony with which he treated every one, as proofs positive of his despotic propensities : and the republicans joined in the testimony with all the bitterness of men whom he had opposed and scorned.



from the beginning. In short, the republicans hated him for his being a monarchy man ; the monarchy men, for his talking of law ; the Cromwellites, for his calling Cromwell " a mechanical fellow ;" the Presbyterians, for his being Episcopalian ; the Episcopalians, for his compounding with the Presbyterians ; the placemen, for his meddling ; the saints, for his luxury ; the sinners, for his lectures of them ; and all men, for his pride. The King speedily found all this inconvenient as well as offensive ; and the humiliation his Majesty felt at the submissions into which the Chancellor's eloquence was continually beguiling him, had no mean hand in hastening his downfall.

For my own part, I once had such personal testimony of the Chancellor's haughty and irritable manners, that I was inclined to agree with any thing said against him ; yet, seeing him thus treated by Buckingham and others, and meeting him a day or two afterwards at Lord Ossory's, he talked so agreeably, was so pleasant with the ladies and the children, and addressed in particular to myself so eloquent a regret of his own youthful time of life, interspersing it with anecdotes of Ben Jonson and Suckling, and painting such masterly portraits of other celebrated men of his acquaintance, that I could have heard him talk for a week, and let him reign for ever. He ended with inquiring after Sir Philip Herne, whom he had met at Lord Ossory's, and of whom he understood that I " had the honour to be the friend ; for," said he, " by all that I hear of him, he is a man that Lord Falkland himself would have loved." This eulogy on Sir Philip, and the address with which he appeared not to ascribe to me any merit of my own, while he implied it in the highest degree, gave him a complete conquest over the page of the presence. From that moment I became one of his warmest advocates. It was only after a lapse of years and on looking back with a more experienced eye, that I came to think of him with my present impartiality.

Lord Ossory's family and the Hamiltons were much together, living almost in the same house at Whitehall. It was there Sir Philip saw Clarendon, who would be carried in his sedan to visit the Duke of Ormond's son when he went nowhere else. It was there also he saw Grammont, who was paying his addresses to Miss Hamilton ; and herein lies the secret of the dislike which the Chevalier took to my friend.

Miss Hamilton did not like Grammont enough; and she liked Sir Philip too well. It is true she married the Frenchman: but it was out of perversity. Grammont, at the period of his marriage, was reckoned the most brilliant man in the court circle. Miss Hamilton was accounted the most discerning of the ladies. Their mutual vanity was piqued:—his, to make a conquest of her, which could only be done in the most honourable manner; and hers, to show that she could have him if she would. She accordingly kept him waiting so long, and seemed in the meanwhile so much inclined to waive her fastidiousness in favour of Herne, that it is reported the Chevalier only married her at last by dint of a memorandum from the point of her brother's sword. Miss Hamilton had sense and penetration; nor do I believe she would have married the Chevalier, if her honour had not been concerned in it. I have heard that when he vexed her after their marriage with one of his shabby infidelities, and had the impudence to revenge her complaints of it by taunting her with marrying a man who had been so unsuccessful with her equals, she was provoked to say that the most amiable man in England had possessed her heart, though she had not had the good fortune to touch his.

Respecting the man thus truly designated I was now becoming extremely anxious. I had waited to hear from him a whole fortnight beyond the time he mentioned; the plague had increased to such an extent that the court, afraid of remaining any longer at Hampton, were about to remove to Salisbury; and as Sir Philip intended, when he left the vessel, to go to his agent in the city—a house in the very thick of it,—I made up my mind to show that I deserved his friendship by going thither to look after him.

On my asking leave of absence, his Majesty demurred. He said he had designed to send me into France with Lord Buckhurst, on a message of compliment to the French King, and that, in connection with that object as well as to show his sense of my behaviour on board his brother's ship in the late battle; and the general regard they both had for me, he had resolved to make me a baronet.

I almost started at the sound of the word, which highly flattered my vanity; but I felt as if I had drawn my sword in a new cause, and was not to put it up again. I therefore represented to his Majesty, with all gratitude and humility,

that, although my family was old, I possessed but a small patrimony, insufficient, I thought, to support the honour of which he was pleased to suppose me worthy; and that, with regard to the message into France, as he did not intend to despatch it for a month or six weeks, I trusted that nothing but death would hinder me from being back by that time, if his Majesty still thought fit to honour me with his gracious intentions.

The King said that, "as to money, poor Berkeley, of whom I sometimes reminded him, (and his Majesty truly added that he could not say a kinder thing of me, for he had a surprising regard for that nobleman,) had not a foot of land when he made him an earl, and Harry Bennett had almost as little, for he called himself Arlington after no greater territory than a farm. A King's servants grew rich if they were deserving; and it would go hard if, between us, we could not support the lustre of the Bloody Hand."

This "between us" flattered me so much, that I had nothing to reply in objection. In fact, though I thought it became me to hesitate, I should have been sorry to have been taken at my word; so I was preparing to receive my honour with due grace, when his Majesty told me, that, in short, he had set his mind upon it; "for," said he, "I have been forced to make Clifford a baronet, 'and t'other man,' and I am resolved to have a baronet or two of my own, especially as I make no more Lords: so you see, Ralph, you will oblige me in it as well as yourself."

I now wished I had not contested the point at all, since I was to be a set off against "t'other man;" and yet I should have been sorry not to have been made use of: so ungracious sometimes is the graciousness of kings, and so little disposed to be vain the vanity of their servants. Niceness, indeed, is not the fault of vanity at any time. What is the reason that we are so willing to have merits imputed to us, and to wear honours, which at bottom are none at all? I have heard Sir Philip vindicate the propensity, on grounds far from dishonourable to human nature, though few of the persons vindicated would suspect they had them. He said, "that the proudest and most ambitious of mankind,—nay even the most arbitrary,—had a principle of social regard in their errors; and that the same principle, well understood, would be the sal-

vation of humanity. We are all of such consequence to one another, that, in some mode or other, we endeavour to make ourselves conscious of it. It is an instinct so strong, that it leads us to attract regard by a title or a ribbon when we can do it in no better way."

I recollected this observation of Sir Philip's, and ceased to blush. But my friend, as it turned out, furnished me with a still pleasanter feeling connected with my new honours; at least my friendship did, and it could not have done it but for such a man. The King, perceiving me bent upon leave of absence, was anxious to know what took me away, concluding it was a lady. I told him the secret: upon which, he cried, with fervour, "Gad so!" A true friend, and at court! poor Berkeley was just such another. Ralph, you shall be a baronet, if only for this! Sir What-d'ye-call-him, in the story, was not a better friend; and I am resolved to give a title to a disinterested virtue, and on that very score. So you are to lay it to the account of your friend, and not of my cursed caballers."

"When I come back then, sir, perhaps your Majesty——"

"No, not when you come back: you shall have it now: anybody can be rewarded after a good deed; you shall have your reward first, Ralph, 'and bear a charmed life. We will send you into the plague as mothers send their midshipmen to war, with a pocket full of encouragement. So God speed you; and mind that we are not forced to keep your virtue at a distance, when you come back, with snuff and vinegar. Don't bring the plague on us with your friendship. Besides, Buckhurst will be waiting."

I could not help fancying that there was more in this bestowal of a title on me than appeared: but perhaps there was not. If there was, my Lord Churchill, or the Duchess of Cleveland, might be able to tell the secret. At all events, neither the secret nor the title was of my seeking. I should say nothing about the matter, were it not for an inconvenient habit of candour which my friend helped to fix upon me. There were plenty of persons who had a better claim than I had; but then, as the King said, if he once began with showing his gratitude on the right and left of him, there would be no end of it: titles would be as "plenty as blackberries." To give a baronetcy to a young fellow like myself, was extending no undue encouragement. The King's will and pleasure was

reason enough, had there been no embassy on foot; and a secretary of embassy to the French court had surely a right to such a feather in his cap. In fine, as Killigrew told me, I was at once pleased that I had got the title, and vexed to think that it was not unequivocally owing to my virtues; "which," said he, "is the fault of your Puritan nurture. It gave you a conscientious vanity" (an odd phrase) "of which you have never got rid."

However, I was of a stock that would have warranted far higher titles, had it remained rich enough to support them; so in a day or two, with an order on the King's casket for a thousand pounds (a marvellous sum), which convinced me the lady had something to do with it, and a world of praise from the lady herself for my heroism, which really seemed to put a new light in her eyes, I left court on my adventure.

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## CHAPTER II.

BEFORE I went into the city, I thought it my duty to make inquiries in every quarter where news of Sir Philip might have been heard. I did so, but in vain. I found out the residence of Mr. Waring, who was in the habit of hearing from him regularly, but the expected intelligence had not arrived the last time, and Mr. Waring himself had been absent from home for some days, probably on the like search. I therefore proceeded without further delay to the agent's.

My course took me down Holborn, and so into Aldersgate. I had yet seen nothing of the infected places, except what the commencement of my journey had shown me on the borders of them. This was startling enough, for grass was growing in some of the most frequented thoroughfares, and an awful silence prevailed, interrupted only by dimly heard outcries, which I took for the noise of some mob at a distance. I had heard of the red crosses marked on the doors, and the inscriptions of "Lord, have mercy upon us;" but the sight of them was much more appalling than the fancy. An occasional shop was open, and passengers now and then appeared, who seemed to avoid each other. I understood this well, for I had heard

the most frightful stories of deaths caused by the simplest contact ; and though my physician had told me to indulge my natural cheerfulness as much as possible, on account of its being one of the best of preservatives, I could not help giving way to those who passed me. I had furthermore, by his advice, armed myself with aromatics, and had vinegar enough about me to make me feel very abominable.

On entering Holborn, I was surprised to see all the people walking in the middle of the streets. They had done so, in fact, in the other streets, but the narrowness of the latter had hindered me from noticing it. The silence was still remarkable, broken only by those remote sounding cries of which I have spoken, by the noise of a few coaches, and the sound of a church bell, as if it were some rainy Sunday evening. It was noon, however : not a drop of rain had fallen for weeks : the air was sultry to the last degree ; and the fires that were burning here and there, though lit on purpose, and of use in purifying it, added to the sense of oppressiveness. Yet the people had their coats buttoned up, and their necks muffled, as if they feared every breath of the atmosphere.

I had heard of a man who went about crying, " Yet forty days, and London will be destroyed ;" and of another, who, half naked, and never stopping to answer questions, hurried unceasingly through the streets, looking frightfully before him, and exclaiming, " O the Great and the Dreadful God !" I saw nothing of this ; nor were the looks of the passengers, as far as I noticed, different from what they usually appeared in that careful part of the town : only they were more silent ; and now and then the general attention was directed to the bustle at some door, where a person in sick clothes was brought out to be taken into a coach. But nobody stopped. I saw one of these persons go by in a coach, for I could not help looking in. It was a woman, as pale as the sheet that wrapped her. She had her mouth open, and cast a dull glazed look at me ; but I quickly turned my eyes. The stream of passengers was now and then painfully interrupted by some one in liquor, not always a man ; nor was it possible to know whether the drunken person was afflicted or merely brutal. One of these, a woman, after reeling everybody out of the way, fell with such weight on the ground, that I instinctively ran to pick her up ; when the rest cried out to me not to touch her,

and presently there was a call of "Cart! Cart!" Upon which the cart made its appearance, that took people of this sort to the pest-house. It is supposed, that many persons got dreadfully punished in this way for their intoxication; for the cart itself was enough to infect them. The sickness exhibited itself, sometimes in the universal languor of the frame, sometimes in raging fevers, and often in boils and blains, which caused the sufferer the acutest agony. It was brought from Holland by infected goods; and detained by dirt and by narrow streets. Those stood the best chance of escaping, who kept themselves cleanest, and were of the liveliest temper.

But what I had seen in this great open thoroughfare, however awful for its silent multitude, all avoiding the houses, was nothing to what I encountered in a lane, turning from Newgate street, into Little Britain. The riotous taverns and public houses, of which I had been told, I did not witness anywhere, though doubtless they existed. I fancied, by the noise, that I might have passed one upon Snowhill; but there was none of that riot and swearing at open windows, which in this desperate situation of things, it was both too shocking to think of and too easy to believe. The worst noise I heard, after the outcry for the cart, was one of violent lamentation and shrieking in a house shut up, with a watchman standing before it. The people however took no notice; the watchman took none; and I passed on with the rest, feeling, for the first time, what it was to grow disregardful of misery, or to force myself to be so, by reason of its very excess. This was surely dreadful enough; and yet, to me, it was little to what I am about to mention.

The lane into which I turned, was one of the most silent. The houses were all shut up, and yet I did not observe a single watcher at the doors. (Watchers were people stationed at sick houses to see that nobody went out.) By this I concluded, that the inmates were all dead, which very much astonished me. I thought it strange, that death should have proceeded in so regular a manner with a whole street. By what I heard afterwards, I concluded, that the greater number of the inhabitants had quitted their business, and fled into the country: while the watchers, being few in number, and not overlooked, had most probably, at the time of my passing, gone to take their refreshment, perhaps had abandoned their posts altogether; or

gone-in doors and taken possession without leave; for numbers of such stories were told of them. Be this as it may, a great mortality had taken place in that street, and death was still in it. I was walking on the shady side of the way, to avoid the terrible dead heat (for there seemed a mortality in the very sunshine), when I heard great cries on the sudden, in a house a little beyond, on the other side of the way, and (the door being, I suppose, already open) I saw a figure, like a man in his grave-clothes, burst forth, with his family at his heels, crying "Father! Father!" He fled up the lane, brandishing his arms and clothes, and I lost sight of them in the turning. I was pondering on this spectacle, when I observed a man coming towards me, on my own side, very quiet, though dejected, who passed me without noticing what he had seen. I was not sure that I had come the way I had been directed, and turning about just as he had passed me, I asked him the name of the street. He looked right in my eyes, with one of those sudden and equivocal smiles which drunken men sometimes put on, though nothing could be staidier than his movements, and said, "Don't you know the name of this street? This is Hell street." In my confusion at this answer, I was beginning to move off without a word, as we do when deranged people address us, when he burst into peals of laughter, so loud and reiterated, as to bring two or three people to the windows, but they said nothing, and almost as instantly withdrew. I was then moving on, when he called to me in a rational, and very moving tone, "Sir, sir — I say." I could not help turning round, upon which he came nearer, and said, with tears in his eyes, "Every one dead, sir; six in the family with their mother; I have seen them all put into the pit." "You afflict me, sir," said I, "beyond measure; I feel heartily for your troubles." He looked stupefied, and as he was beginning to smile again, and (to say the truth) I felt both horror and fear, I again moved off, gradually increasing the rapidity of my progress. On reaching the turning of the way, where it rounded off, I could not resist a desire to look back, when I saw him standing in the middle of the street, thrusting his right hand violently into the air, and making signs for me with the other to return. I hastened to get out of his sight.

I know not how those who were more concerned in these miseries than I was could have borne even the recollection of



them, if it had not been for the eventual good done to the city, both by this great calamity and the one that followed it. To be sure, time does wonders, and great calamities, by the very weight of their blow, harden and deaden us into an endurance of them : otherwise, if I, a mere chance passenger, young and in good health, was so affected as I was by lighting on one or two of these spectacles, how could the thousands of families who lost relations every week in the most frightful manner, recover the ordinary tone of existence, and go on, bartering and feeding, on the spots where such agonies were undergone ! Thousands died quietly, but thousands also died violently. I mean raving. Many pitched themselves from windows, or went and plunged into the river ; many, it is thought, were tumbled into the frightful pits before they were dead ; and there were stories, for which the callousness induced by the sight of misery obtained credit, of old nurses and others, who caused or hastened the deaths of many by suffocation, in order to possess themselves of their goods. If the plague, as some think likely, should never again return to our widened streets and cleaner habits, the blessing will turn out to have been worth the purchase ; and really mankind have so little reflection as a body, and are so insensible to ordinary warnings, however repeated, that some desolating and dreadful wretchedness seems occasionally necessary, to give them a proper sense of the desirableness of alteration. It is almost a pity on this account, that no lives were lost in the great fire. The fire seems to have come, merely to finish what the plague demanded, and secure us wider and healthier streets ; but nobody's life having been the worse for it, at least by burning, people go on, having their children roasted, and their wives found mangled among smoking ruins, purely, as it should seem, from want of being able to put two ideas together ; that of a fire now, and a fire at some other time. I suppose nothing under a second conflagration will sufficiently scorch their powers of reflection : and even that will probably not do it without an act of parliament. If an earthquake takes place under an inconsiderate government, we see, by all history, that nothing is done to prevent a repetition of its effects. Men build over it again, and their grandchildren perish in the ruins.

If human nature, owing probably as much to the ignorance

as well as to the wickedness of the parties, sometimes put on a very ugly aspect during this calamity of the plague, it had the best effect of adversity in brightening it and rendering it beautiful at others. As I have noticed some examples of the former, and mentioned a very distressing incident that came under my own observation, I shall here record an adventure; better than any in my old friends the romances; for if not quite so romantic, it was true. I have heard of others, some of them more touching, such as mothers voluntarily shutting themselves up from their children to die alone, brides refusing a visit from the bridegroom, and many accounts of friends and faithful servants, who behaved in a similar way to the heroine of my story; but as I could speak of those only from general report, I select the following, as being nearer to my own experience, for it was told me by a kinsman of one of the parties, a very respectable gentleman in an office under the Commander-in-Chief.\*

A young merchant in the city was seized with the symptoms of the disorder, just as the day had been fixed, which was to unite him with his mistress. Some difficulties had been thrown in the way of the union by a crabbed guardian; and many hours had not elapsed from their removal, and everything been settled (which the lover hastened to see done with the greatest impatience), when the terrible spots appeared, that were to cut him off from communion with the uninfected. It is supposed, that the obstacles in the first instance, and the hurry afterwards, threw his blood into a ferment, which exasperated the attack. He wished to make light of the matter, and to go about his ordinary concerns; but the strangeness of his sensations, and the thought of the peril that he might bring to his mistress, soon made him give up this pretension. He said, that his horror at first inclined him to cry aloud, to tear his hair, and dash himself against the wall of the room; but the thoughts of her again controlled him, and he resolved to go through every thing as patiently as might be, lest he should add to his chances of losing her. He sent her a message to that effect, bidding her be of good heart; and then, in a passion of tears, which he resolved should be his last, but which, he said, seemed to give him a

\* *Le Général* is the phrase in the MS. It was the designation at that time to express the officer mentioned in the text. — *Edit.*

wonderful kind of humble support; betook himself to his prayers, and so to his bed.

He was soon left alone with none but an old nurse to attend him; but as he did not sleep, and the good woman, observing him tranquil, slept a great deal, he thought next day he might as well rise and go into the garden for a little air.

The garden, though in the city, was a very prettily one, and, as it abutted on some grounds, belonging on one side to a church, and on the other to a field where they shot at butts, was removed both from sight and noise, and might be called even solitary. He found himself alarmingly weak; and the air, instead of relieving, seemed to bring the weight of an oven with it; but there was grass and roses; and he thought it would add to the grace of his memory with her he loved, if he died in so sweet a spot, rather than in the house. Besides, he could not bear to think of dying, in what he hoped would have been his bridal bed. These reflections made him again shed tears in spite of himself, and he lay down on a bench under a tree, wishing he could melt away in that tender despair.

The young gentleman guessed that he had lain in this way a good hour, during which he had a sleep that a little refreshed him, when he heard himself called by his name. He thought it was the nurse, and looked towards the house, but saw nobody. The name was repeated twice, the last time with the addition of an epithet of tenderness, which he knew could come from no such person. His heart began to beat; and his ear guiding him truly to the voice, which he now recognised, he saw, on the top of the wall nearly opposite him, and under a tree which overhung it from the outside, his beloved mistress, holding with one hand on a bough, and with the other supporting herself in the posture of one who intended to come down. "Oh, Richard!" said she, "what a blessing to find you here, and nobody to hinder me! I have cheated them, and slunk away,—my love! my life!"

Our lover said, these last little words had a wonderful effect on him. With all her tenderness, his betrothed bride had never yet indulged it so far as to utter such "conjugal" words, (that was his phrase). He said, they seemed to give her a right to join him; and they filled him with such love and

gratitude, that the very languor of his illness became confounded with a bewitching pleasure.

He confessed, that the dread of her being infected, though it still recurred to him, was much fainter than before. However, he the more thought it was his duty to urge it, and did so. But the lady had no such dread. She had come on purpose to brave it. In vain he spoke as loudly as he could, and rose up and began to drag his steps towards her; in vain he made signs to her not to descend. "Dearest Richard," said she, "if you cannot help me down, it is but an easy jump, and do you think any thing will induce me to go back? I am come to nurse you and make you happy."

"You will die," said the lover in a faint voice, now arrived within hearing, and still making signs of refusal.

"Oh no: Heaven will bless us," cried she: "I will *not* go back, mark me; I will not indeed; I cannot, much less now I have seen you, and in that sick gown. But I see you cannot help me down. You are unable. Therefore I come."

With these words she made the jump, and the next minute was supporting him in her arms. She put her arms round him, and took his repelling hand into hers, and raising herself kissed him on the mouth, saying "Now I belong to you. Let me seat you on the bench, and get you some drink. I am your wife now, and your dear servant, and your nurse."

Their eyes were filled with tears, and the lover could only lift his head towards heaven, as much as to say, that "they should at all events live there." Not being able to reach the bench, he sat down in a thicket of roses. The young lady went to get him some drink, and returned with the news that she had waked the astonished nurse, and sent her to tell her guardian where she was. Nobody expected him to venture to come and fetch her, and he did not.

He told the gentleman who had these particulars from him, that this behaviour of his betrothed bride, put him in a state so new and transporting, that he conceived an alteration of his blood must have taken place, very speedily after her return from the house: for though he could hardly bear his delight, he began manifestly to get better within an hour afterwards. The lady never received the infection. Their friends said she would, and that two would die instead of one. The physician prophesied otherwise. Neither the lover nor his mistress,

however, would quit their retreat, till all doubt of the possibility of infecting others was more than done away.

In the course of six weeks, they were man and wife: and my acquaintance told me, not as many days ago, that they were still living, and a pattern of love and esteem.

If I had known this story at the time, it would have been a consolation to me in my search for Sir Philip, which was in vain. His agent, whose house was luckily among the uninfected, had heard nothing of him; and as it was unlikely he had been in London at all, if he had not been there, and a search over the metropolis appeared a thing equally useless and impossible, I retraced my melancholy steps, more perplexed than ever at his disappearance.

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### CHAPTER III.

As I had leave of absence from court for a certain time, I did not choose to make my appearance before the King, till I had turned over in my mind all the possible modes of discovering my absent friend, or rather of accounting for his absence. I imagined him fallen ill, though not of the plague; but then why did he not let me know? It must have been some sudden and dreadful illness, that could have been sufficient to reduce him to such a silence. Had he been enticed away by some story of distress? This was not only possible, but, considering his turn of mind, and his great tendency to confide as well as to do good, highly probable; but then who should have enticed him, and for what? And, above all, why should they keep him so long?

The more I reflected, the less reason could I see for coming to any conclusion. The plague still appeared the likeliest cause of detention; but if it had seized him at all, it must have done so very suddenly, and at the moment of his going on shore. Should I not make inquiries thereabouts? I mean, at the Nore, and in that quarter? I did so. I took a boat down the river, inquired of the watermen at the stairs, and the seafaring people on shore. I went, I believe, to every house in Sheerness; and then took the nearest road to London, making

inquiries by the way. Nobody had heard any thing. No gentleman had fallen sick. There were cases of infection among the natives, and strangers were supposed to have brought it; but the latter, like most of those who suffered everywhere, were poor. It was remarkable indeed how almost universally the gentry escaped; another argument which the physicians naturally adduced to shew the saving qualities, in such a calamity, of easiness of mind and a good blood.

Having thus again searched to no purpose, I quarrelled with fortune and fate, and every thing else, that seemed to oppose the welfare of my excellent friend, not excepting the lady at Mickleham Park. It then struck me, that he might have fallen ill on her account, and in her neighbourhood; in which case, it was equally probable, that her visitors would know nothing of it, and she would know every thing. I wondered I had not thought of this before, and resolved instantly to go thither and introduce myself, and be very impudently particular. She will see, at any rate, thought I, what he perhaps is too delicate to tell her; that he still loves her; and if she is at all doubtful whether to do him justice or not, his new situation may determine her. Besides, if any thing has happened to him, it is my duty to keep an eye on the welfare of this unobservant woman, whom he did the honour to think so highly of. He has bequeathed to me an interest in her.

But Miss Randolph! I should have to encounter the chance of seeing her, if Mr. O'Rourke had not carried her off. It was most probable we should meet. And why not? Alas! it is easy to find fault with others; but should I not have been more ready to renew my acquaintance with the charming girl, certainly the tenderest and most feminine, whom it had been my lot to meet with, had I not been in fault myself? Had I not been a sort of male Vavasour myself, only without the merits? Nay, as for that matter, I had loved the truth once as well as the Countess, and probably still loved it better. I had at least known how to appreciate the friend whom she rejected. I was resolved then to face her, and blurt all out, except what Sir Philip had enjoined me to keep secret, and if it should appear that Miss Randolph had still a regard for me, and had not yet been bespoken by this Mr. O'Rourke, I would shew her haughty friend, what it was to be grateful and penitent. It would be necessary to put all my address in requisition.

tion ; but that was a pleasure. My genius lay that way. In a word, I endeavoured to console myself for many painful and perplexing thoughts by dint of the coxcomby that was still in me ; and a very consoling thing, I fear, it is. I really did not know how much actual tenderness and conscience I possessed, — unless it be a coxcomby in me, still, to say so.

I had supped one night with a party at Lady Castlemain's lodgings, where there was a great deal of riotous wit ; and rose in the morning feverish and unrefreshed. There had luckily been a hard rain in the night. The dust was laid, the trees and hedges sparkled with rain drops ; and as I rode along, I seemed to quench myself in the freshness of the morning.

Having been up in spite of my debauch at an early hour, (indeed the later I go to bed, the earlier I can rise, I suppose from restlessness,) I arrived betimes among the groves of Mickleham. The healthy quiet of the place, varied only by the songs of the birds, went to my heart. I thought there was more real vivacity in it than in all that I had witnessed overnight ; and the looks of the peasant girls had a bud in them, compared with which Castlemain would have cut a poor figure that morning. Upon entering the park gate, the first object I saw, in the path leading to the house, was a lady with a book in her hand.

Her back was towards me : her step graceful and slow. Could it be Miss Randolph ? No : the lady was taller by a head. It must be the Countess herself. Whoever it was, how superior did she seem to all the fair rakes of the court, thus walking abroad, like Aurora, and intent upon a book ! But if it was the Countess, how could she be this sort of woman, and give up Sir Philip Herne ? As I was to see Lady Vavasour, at all events, and perhaps was not to see Miss Randolph, which might be as well, I resolved to make no delay, as was my first intention, but follow her ; and trust to my stars for an introduction. I did so, admiring at every step her fine figure and the unaffected elegance of her walk. If she had not been so tall, I could have thought it Miss Randolph, from a certain air in the carriage ; and yet the air was completer somehow than it used to be. With all its unaffectedness, there was a greater look of high breeding in it ; and the figure, without taking leave of the proper slenderness of waist, and temperate elegance throughout, was more buxom, — plumper, and

more womanly. You are a charming creature, thought I, whoever you are; — if you are the owner of the mansion I hate you for being so lovely. The lady hearing my steps on the gravel just behind her turned round. It was Miss Randolph!

She drew back a step or two, and, with the most charming expression of countenance, in which there was delight as well as astonishment, exclaimed “Mr. Esher!” — The next moment she turned pale, and murmured something indicative of a more reserved welcome.

My first impulse was to clasp the dear creature in my arms. This, however, I thought would be carrying my modesty too far. My next feeling was a vile suspicion, brought by my court habits, that she was enjoying her triumph over me. It struck me, that she was married, and that she was glad to see me, because it would let me know how little she cared for the sight. Her change of countenance recovered me; and concluding that I retained my power over her heart, I felt my address return, which had been rapidly giving way.

Truth saves a world of trouble. I had begun life with a gallant love of sincerity; my friend had confirmed me in it; and I was resolved, as usual, to pour forth just what I thought.

“Pardon me,” said I, “dear Miss Randolph (if I may still call you so), for coming thus abruptly upon you. Anxiety for a friend has led me to the residence of Lady Vavasour, though I knew I should probably meet a dearer one, who may still perhaps hear without offence that she is more lovely than ever, and that I feel a deep regret, which will be better understood by her than I can express it; because, though I have been a giddy foolish fellow who did not know his own good, I feel my punishment most heartily; and because I cannot be so presumptuous as to think of troubling her with my presence in future, if on any account it should give her more pain than pleasure. I have come to speak to Lady Vavasour of Sir Philip Herne, and taken the same opportunity of knowing whether any hopes remained to myself. Pardon me for alluding to a happiness I once flattered myself with possessing. If another has shown himself wiser, — if Miss Randolph is no longer Miss Randolph; I mean in name (for nothing I am sure could alter the sweetness of her nature), or if — which is most probable — I have long ceased to be any thing to her but an



idiot who became acquainted with an angel, and behaved as if he had never seen her, it is but a word or look, or a waive of the hand, and you will never behold him more."

The dear girl wished to say something, but was unable. She put her hand over her eyes, in agitation; and as she drew back a pace or two at the same time, I thought my doom was to be pronounced. She removed her hand, and I saw that her eyes were in tears. She smiled as she did it, and fetching her breath with difficulty, but all in the most artless, charming manner conceivable, asked me if Sir Philip Herne was the friend I spoke of, and how he was.

I said I was proud to be able to answer in the affirmative to her first question, especially as Sir Philip had as great a regard for herself, as I perceived she had for my friend. As to the rest, I stated the melancholy uncertainty under which his silence had put me, and the reason why I had come to Mickleham to ask news of him, before I made my inquiries elsewhere.

"Oh, I am glad of this!" cried Miss Randolph, now weeping plentifully, in pretty contradiction to her words: — "All will go well surely, now that he is once again spoken of. He will be found, and we shall all be happy! I mean — will you not walk in?"

"You do not bid me go then, dear Ellen? Forgive me, if I venture too far, in calling you so; but when I see you the same charming, ingenuous girl as ever, I know not how to regulate my words, except by the truth. May I ask you if you are still Miss Randolph?"

"Miss Randolph, Mr. Esher! who should I be?"

"I understand there was a happy person, Mr. O'Rourke, a friend of the Duke of Ormond's, who —"

A delightful colour came over her cheeks, at the top of which her eyes sparkled in a manner for which I had not formerly given them credit. "Mr. O'Rourke," said she, smiling, "is, I believe, as happy as health and good spirits can make him. He is now crossing the Irish sea."

I believe it was a little perversity that made me add — "And returns shortly to claim his bride? Is it not so?"

"I am aware of no such lady," said my charmer, and her countenance fell.

I could no longer profess to misunderstand her, for a mo-

ment; and yet I did not feel quite secure. There is something in the customs of the male part of the world, that renders them wonderfully exacting of the female. I believe I was ashamed to be outdone in love and merit, and felt a shabby desire to triumph; nay, even to revenge myself by a petulance. A better shame succeeded, and I said, with real humility, "If the friendship of Sir Philip Herne, and the most penitent love and admiration —"

I had scarcely proceeded thus far, when her hand was laid in mine. One mutual pressure and one look from her eyes, were sufficient to explain all. The next minute I found myself with transport walking arm in arm with her towards the house, and saying a hundred things in a breath. I should not have been able to say enough of my shame and regret at having for a moment ceased to think of her, if the very excuse would not have implied something unhandsome and foppish. My feelings were better expressed by a grateful admiration. By way of some apology, however, for admiring her again so heartily, after so long a negligence, I told her that she had realized all that she promised to be, and that I did not know a beauty at court that was to be compared with her. She answered me with some words, at once so modest, so frank, and so affectionate, that I dare not repeat their exquisite flattery. Hers had indeed been a first love; nor was I ever so vain as not to think it owing far more to the sweetness of her nature than to anything in mine. I could only trust that I did not altogether disgrace her preference, and I resolved from that moment to study how I might deserve it. The qualities with which she had gifted me during our first acquaintance, it was now my business to endeavour to realize. If I believed that I possessed the germs of them, the opinion was to be excused by the flattery of her love; and luckily for my encouragement, she was as sensible as she was handsome. We talked of old times, of the court, of the country; of Sir Philip Herne, of the sea fight; and the dear girl wept to think of the danger we had been in. She confessed that she thought I must have been in it, but that she did not dare to inquire. In fine, I told her of the new honour just conferred upon me; — and on recollecting this moment, I retract what I said at the end of the last chapter; for titles have one merit, if they have no other. They are good to bestow on the object one loves.

After turning into half a dozen walks, instead of pursuing the path to the house, and looking into all the favourite haunts of my mistress, we consulted respecting the position of Sir Philip and Lady Vavasour. I received a remarkable account of her ladyship, indeed of everything. Lord Manchester had been mistaken throughout. In the first place, Mr. O'Rourke had been no declared lover of Miss Randolph, nor any lover at all. He was old enough to be her father, — young perhaps in the eyes of the venerable Earl, and with the usual lively manners of an Irish gentleman; but he was at Mickleham but for a short time, and spoke of nothing graver than a message he had brought from the Duke of Ormond. I seized this opportunity of letting Miss Randolph know the honour my friend had done me, in making me the depositary of the secret of her birth. I observed to her, how well he understood the nature of my feelings towards her; and how sure he had made himself, that I should seek to regain my happiness. I said I need not add, that the deposit was a sacred one with me, and that nothing would have induced him to make it, but a certainty that I should do all the good in my power to those who were dear to him.

“Dear Sir Philip!” cried Ellen, with her eyes full of tears — “I could walk over the world to find him — if you would go with me.”

“And you could have gone without me, sweet Ellen, like a fair page in a tragedy, if you had not set your kind wits to make so much of me, before you knew him.”

“’Tis generously said,” replied she, “only I could have said it better. But find him we will and must, somehow: and Lady Vavasour must love him, even in pity to herself. Oh! that wretched Dalton! what a world of mischief he has made! But had Sir Philip re-appeared, all must have gone well.”

She now proceeded with her explanations. She could only account for Lord Manchester's supposition of the courtship of Mr. O'Rourke, by attributing it to the talk of his valets and the servants. Mr. O'Rourke, being a confidential servant of the Duke of Ormond's, treated her with much respect, and was sometimes alone with her; and as nobody but the Countess and Miss Vavasour knew of his being a messenger, it was perhaps naturally enough concluded, that his intentions were more particular. “But as for the quiet,” said Miss Randolph,

“ which his Lordship spoke of, and in which he seems to have represented us as having lived ever since Sir Philip went away, his report is truly marvellous, for he came upon us at the close of an extraordinary event, and heard all about it. I can only conclude, that Mr. Dalton, among his other secrets, has one for compelling people to be silent; for, now I recollect, he met his lordship on his road to us, and conversed with him.”

“ What was this event?” I asked. “ You raise my curiosity in the highest degree.”

“ You know Dalton, and the footing on which he was with us,” resumed Miss Randolph; “ Sir Philip has told you all he knew about it. But Sir Philip did not know, nor indeed did anybody, till the secret broke among us like an earthquake; that Dalton was the most artful and perfidious of men. His very candour was artifice. He deceived the liberal and open nature of Sir Philip by pretending to no more virtue than he described the generality of mankind as possessing; but he took care to conceal that he was worse than the basest. He deceived him the more, because he sometimes ventured upon making him uneasy by encouraging dear Lady Vavasour in the false opinions that had grown upon her; thus preparing the way for his own designs, while he undermined the interest of Sir Philip, and all the while inducing the latter to take his impudence for sincerity! Oh, that odious man! I am sometimes at a loss which to think his worst quality, his impudence or his deceit; but I really think the former has the advantage. I have read of men as deceiving, but a creature so unblushingly shameless I should never have supposed to exist, had I not seen it.”

“ Dear Ellen!” cried I, interrupting her, “ I did not think you could speak so vehemently; nor till I saw your face again (pardon me), was I quite certain that you could speak so well. Why, how quiet you used to be; three or four words only at a time, and those of the gentlest!”

“ But they were sincere,” said Ellen, “ were they not?”

“ That indeed they were; you have proved it, to my shame and my delight.”

“ I should have talked at that time as I do now, if I had been able. I cannot love the good and the sincere as I do; and not speak somewhat sharply of this very hateful disturber.

Besides, he presumed upon the gentleness you alluded to, thinking, I suppose, that because I—because it seems—I—”

The subject of my charmer’s illness was here involuntarily brought up, a recollection at once the most flattering and the most painful to myself. I now loved too well to think of it with a vain satisfaction. Every sentence she uttered discovered an union of sweetness and firmness, such as I had not been accustomed to look for in woman; and though she confessed to me that she would have loved another if she could, and that she might have done so before long, had she met (as she was pleased to say) with any body that resembled me, the ingenuousness and good sense of the confession made me love her the more. Must I own, in order to be as candid myself, that when the return of her health was first mentioned, and when I saw her, during its mention, looking so full of it, and so blooming, I felt a movement of dissatisfaction at witnessing this instance of the power of youth and a good constitution over the withering effects of my infidelity?—Oh courts! Oh *venez-à-moi!* Oh solitary education, what harm had you not done me!—I cast out of me with disdain this most selfish evidence of the most selfish part of me, and would have laughed to think what a fool I was at that instant, if feelings of the deepest gratitude and love had not quickly come in their stead. We again said a hundred things to one another, too delightful to be recorded; and now resting ourselves on one of the park benches, my dear one resumed her narrative.

Though Lady Vavasour’s disbelief in truth and sincerity, which, in gradually affecting her own mode of conduct, had become the great stumbling-block between her and Sir Philip, had been thus increased by the management of Dalton, the latter drew a very false, and as it should seem a very absurd conclusion, for so shrewd a person,—that the error was all to turn to his own account. Sir Philip was to be loved less and less, because sincerity was a romance, and he to become more and more agreeable; because he was manifestly not to be depended upon. “But I have learnt a great deal by the help of this man,” said Miss Randolph, “and so far have reason to thank him. I have learnt, that none are, to all real intents and purposes, so vain and foolish, as those who think the whole world made up of folly and vanity.” And she was right. There is one wide

part of human nature, of which they assuredly know nothing. Dalton was not aware, that those who have been used to what he called romance, never heartily give it up, or take kindly to such as think they have undermined it. He might sow discord between the Countess and her lover; but in order to take his place, he must have brought the other's virtues in aid of his own worldliness, which was impossible. So he made love in vain; for it seems he did make love, and during the whole period of his acquaintance too, though for the most part in an under way, and by the most insidious approaches. "When he had succeeded in producing the rupture with Sir Philip, he ventured," pursued Miss Randolph, "upon a plain avowal. He met with a refusal couched in no very gratifying terms; for Lady Vavasour, though she had never been really in love, had entertained a greater regard for Sir Philip than she fancied, and she was too irritated at her own treatment of him to be pleased with a new lover like Dalton. The rejection mortified Dalton, though it did not make him desist; and when Sir Philip was induced to send by him that unhappy message —"

"What message?" cried I.

"He said," answered Miss Randolph; "that Sir Philip, with every wish for her happiness, took leave of her for ever."

"There was no such message. The scoundrel! It was an invention of his own."

"I thought so," resumed Ellen; — "I said so: I repeatedly said so: for Lady Vavasour had long encouraged me to use the freedom of a sister."

"And what made you so sure?"

"I knew it," said the dear girl with a blush as beautiful as her heart, "because he loved too well."

"Do you know, dearest creature, that you talk very ill in saying so? Are you aware of the consequences?"

"How?"

"Why I shall kiss you in the open daylight, in spite of all the decorums, before the trees here, and the birds, and the deer. There is a fawn already at gaze in expectation of it."

Miss Randolph said nothing, but as I have spared my self-love many exquisite gratifications during this narrative, I shall not scruple to affirm, that she pressed my hand as she looked at me, and that her look seemed to say, "I will kiss you with

all my heart, by and by." It was like, and yet it was very unlike, one of Miss Price's looks. — But to proceed.

This was not the whole message, according to Mr. Dalton. There was a longer portion which he was coy in relating. Nothing, he said, but her ladyship's repeated request could have induced him to deliver it. It was this: — that, having confided, on his receipt of the former part of the message, the secret of his own affections to Sir Philip, the latter sincerely thought, from the agreement of their opinions, that the Countess would have been happier with the said Dalton, than she would have been with himself.

Dalton here overshot his mark. He could be cunning beyond measure in playing upon the weaknesses of others, where himself was out of the question, but when his own vanity interfered, he made horrible impudent mistakes. Miss Randolph, the moment she heard this latter portion of the message, pronounced it "more impossible" than the other. Lady Vavasour, believing the one, was inclined, out of anger, to put faith in the other; but it only made her angry with two persons instead of one. Dalton hoped, that it would pique her to like him better. He fancied she would marry him out of resentment; but between anger at finding him persevere, and doubt of his veracity, she put a stop to his pretensions with an air of astonishment, that was more provoking than scorn. He then attempted to run away with her.

Yes: this fine quiet course of life, so confidently described by Lord Manchester, had been diversified with an attempt at carrying off the lady of the mansion, frightening Miss Vavasour into fits, and meditating a piece of treachery against Miss Randolph, which it made my blood boil to think of! The Duke of Buckingham had been there, and would fain have done her the honour of taking her into Yorkshire! And most of these placid circumstances, if not all of them, my Lord of Manchester was acquainted with! But we shall see, that Dalton was possessed of the most extraordinary preservatives; and the Duke condescended to partake of them.

The attempt on the Countess was the most impudent thing in the world. There are extremes of impudence which baffle suspicion; and the Countess, in the first instance, was beguiled by one of these gallantries of nonchalance. Dalton bribed the coachman of a lady of quality in the neighbourhood

(I forget her name) to lend him her carriage for an evening. It was a lady known at Mickleham Park; and one whom he visited on the strength of his reception there. With this coach he has the face to come at dusk, with an agitated story of the lady's being taken dangerously ill in her lord's absence, and of her anxiety to see the Countess, in order to deposit a secret with her of the utmost importance. The lady's woman would have come with him, he said, but she could not leave her mistress, so he had bade the coachman and footman get ready the carriage, and they had come in a desperation of haste, presuming upon Lady Vavasour's goodness, and knowing she would not stand upon ceremony in an emergency so distressing. Miss Vavasour or Miss Randolph, he said, would doubtless have the goodness to accompany her; and she would pardon him, if, under the circumstances, he went with them.

Lady Vavasour did not hesitate a moment. To be sure, Miss Vavasour and Miss Randolph were, unluckily, both out of the way (Dalton knew it well); but on such an occasion, common-places were to give way. Her own maid-servant would be enough. Dalton summoned the girl himself, gave her the orders in a breathless haste, led the Countess towards the carriage, her ladyship throwing over herself a mantle as she went, and in an instant he was beside her in the coach, driving towards Leatherhead. The dying lady's house was on the road to Kingston. But the maid! Where is she? Dalton uttered an oath at the "dilatory fool," begging her ladyship's pardon, and concluding with a laugh that he supposed she had halted to set her cap. "What signifies a poor lady's death," said he, "compared with the footman's opinion of Mistress Bridget!"

He then complimented the Countess on her being able to dispense with a female attendant. Other women, he said, on the least movement of their spirits, must have some one to weep to, to rail at, to order hither and thither; but she was the united strength and collected sweetness of her sex. Having made this pretty speech, he begged pardon for seeming to mix up his own feelings with an admiration which would have been excited in anybody: and so, turning the discourse to the dying lady, contrived to get rid of the subject of the maid-servant, and appeared to have determined equally to waive any recurrence to his own.



Notwithstanding, however, what he had said of the firmness of Lady Vavasour, the suddenness of the occasion had discomposed her a little; and it furnished him a pretext for offering her a glass of wine. He had hastily stuffed a bottle and glass, he said, which her own butler had given him, into one of the coach-pockets, foreseeing that she might not be the worse for it. He was afraid the bottle had been shaken, and that she would taste the crust: "Nay," said he (taking it out), "you will taste something worse, I fear; for the rogue has given us one of his own bottles by mistake; the best part of its contents have gone into the butler's decanter." Lady Vavasour good-humouredly said, that she could do very well without it; but he expressed so much regret, and contrived so ingeniously to render acquiescence a matter of delicacy towards himself, that, being grateful for his own delicacy towards her, and thinking he was doing a good-natured action, she took the glass to oblige him. It was so bitter, that not to hurt his feelings, she would not say what difficulty she had in swallowing it.

By this time they were beyond Leatherhead, and had turned into the Kingston road. Dalton complained of the "lumbering old family coach, and asked her Ladyship if she had any objection to shorten the time, by getting into a posting-carriage. At the same instant, begging her pardon, he put his head out of the window, and exchanging a word or two with the coachman, told her, that by the greatest good luck, such a conveyance was at hand; and that the man said, a traveller had just got out. The Countess could see no objection. On the contrary, she was desirous of being as quick as possible, only hoping that the coachman or footman could go with them, as having the most certain knowledge of the house. Dalton said they should both go. The coach could easily be left till the next morning.

The man accordingly drew up to the road side. The coach-door was opened, the steps let down, Dalton got out, and was preparing to hand forth the Countess, when she was surprised at hearing a strange voice observe, "This is the very coach, Thomas, depend upon it." At the same time a gentleman on horseback advanced, as if to interrogate the driver; between whom and the said Thomas his servant, the following dialogue was going on.

“ And who are you, pray, that I may not ask you a civil question ? ”

“ Who am I ? Why isn't my name Wilson ? ”

“ No, it isn't. 'Tis Ryan.”

“ The devil ! You seem to know a great deal more about me than I do myself. And where, pray, did you learn that my name is Ryan ? ”

“ At the Castle-gate, county Dublin, where you narrowly escaped hanging, you firebrand.”

“ Oh, I narrowly escaped hanging, did I ? and how did you find that out ? ”

“ By the brogue in your false mouth. Come, now, Dermot, what are ye at ? And what's become of that devil incarnate, the Major ? ”

Lady Vavasour had instinctively halted at hearing this curious conversation.

“ Mr. Dalton,” said she, “ this is not my lady's coachman.”

“ 'Tis a new one,” said Dalton, laughing, “ and a great knave, if this fellow says right. The sooner we get out of his hands the better ; but we must tell her ladyship's household what sort of vagabond they have got among them. Come, madam, be pleased to make haste.”

Dalton, notwithstanding his laughter, could not conceal that he was angry. The Countess, naturally confiding, forgot, however, in the supposed urgency of the occasion, the suspicion in which himself had encouraged her ; and she was again preparing to descend, when the stranger cried out, “ Stop, madam ! ”

“ What now ? ” said Dalton, in a tone as if a new person had come up, unconnected with the other. His readiness of invention was still lively. “ 'Tis the poor madman,” continued he, in a whisper, — “ the mad gentleman of Dorking. Take no notice, dear Lady Vavasour, but get into the chaise as fast as you can. 'Tis frightful to think what these people will say to women.”

The suspicions of the Countess were now fairly roused. Dalton's cunning had failed, where it always did — in not giving credit to others for elevation of sentiment ; or rather, in not understanding it. “ No,” said she, “ Mr. Dalton, if the stranger is mad, I shall think it my duty to stop and see what can be done for him, let him say what he will.” (How

Sir Philip would have loved her for that speech! (How he *did* love her for being capable of it!) “I will hear,” continued she, “what the gentleman has to say.”

“Allow me to ask,” said the gentleman, “whether I have the honour of speaking to Lady Vavasour?”

“Lady Vavasour is before you,” answered the Countess.

“Judge, Madam, of the pleasure I feel,” returned the stranger, “when I tell you that it is to your ladyship’s house my journey is directed, and that I have the honour of being the bearer of a message from the Duke of Ormond. Meanwhile, Madam, you are deceived. There is treachery with somebody; and I am much mistaken, if—”

At this part of the stranger’s address, Dalton, who had been unable to suppress his agitation, and had uttered a murmur of desperation, suddenly seized his arm, and drew him aside. Their conversation was loud and vehement.

“Do not stir, madam, from the coach,” cried Mr. O’Rourke (for it was he). “Do not stir. Thomas, shut up the door; and if the fellow offers to drive, shoot him.”

At this moment Dalton uttered a horrible oath, and a pistol went off. It was followed by another. Lady Vavasour said, she could not account for a wonderful calmness, and even pleasure, which she felt during this extraordinary adventure. Every thing passed before her, as if she had been a spectator at a theatre. She was perfect mistress of her senses—was aware there was treachery, perhaps danger; and the behaviour of Dalton suddenly enlightened her as to the whole nature of the man she had been trusting. Yet her feeling of security and pleasure was invincible. She sat back in the coach, certain of a good ending to the drama, and disposed to comment upon it, when it was over, with an admiration of its novelty. “It struck me,” said Miss Randolph, at this part of her narrative (for the present summary of the adventure is made up of her account and Mr. O’Rourke’s), “that the pleasure she spoke of, might have been owing to a sudden sense of the worth and tenderness of Sir Philip Herne, as contrasted with the conduct of the man who had helped to undermine him; but I was mistaken, as you will see presently.”

Her ladyship, in spite of her calmness, was startled by the re-appearance of Dalton at the coach door. He was on horseback, and addressed her with undisguised vehemence.

“Lady Vavasour,” said he, “listen to the last words you will hear from me ; that is to say, if you are as wise as you are confident. If not, you will hear worse. I have exchanged shots with this meddling fool, and taught him to remember his interference. My intentions were honourable. They have been crossed, like every effort of my life, by James Butler and his myrmidons. Now, mark — if a syllable is breathed about me, I am in possession of secrets — and this O’Rourke knows I am — which I will blazen on a hill-top, and in every house, till he, and his King, and friends of yours who little expect it, shall be unable to show their faces for shame and *peril*.”

With these words, he put spurs to his horse, and we have not heard of him since.

“Pray,” said I, “is this man, who speaks of the Duke of Ormond as James Butler, a man of what Herne calls a *weltering* countenance, lax and flushed? And has he a very high forehead, with sharp grey eyes?”

“His countenance,” answered Miss Randolph, “is what you describe it, but was thought handsome by many. His forehead is so high, that I used to think it a deformity. It was like one forehead piled on another.”

“Like Sir Philip Herne’s,” said I, smiling.

“Like Sir Philip Herne’s!” echoed Miss Randolph, in amazement. “True, Sir Philip’s, now I think of it, is, I believe, as high; but then how handsome his eyes and hair made it! Sir Philip’s seemed all candour, and Dalton’s all impudence.”

“I begin to be almost certain,” returned I, “that I have seen this man before. And his way of uttering his words — was it not over-smooth and particular?”

“No: on the contrary, it was gay and unceremonious.”

“What! was he always so? He did not always then call the Duke of Ormond after this puritanical fashion of ‘James Butler?’”

“No: and Lady Vavasour was struck with the remarkable manner in which he uttered the name, when he took his leave. She said, he seemed to be cutting out the words, rather than speaking them. I have heard him talk in that way, once or twice, when he had drank more wine than usual; and at those times, I think, instead of becoming louder and gayer,

he would get low-voiced and serious, and utter things he was not accustomed to."

"He is certainly the man I have seen. The more I think of it—of times and circumstances—the more I am persuaded that I have known him in connection with the Duke of Buckingham."

"Indeed! then you will be persuaded more and more, when you hear what I was about to tell you."

Mr. O'Rourke's wound was not so great as Dalton fancied. Indeed it was slight enough, and just furnished an excuse to pretend it was worse; for Dalton had whispered something in his ear that precluded all intention of a hue and cry, and O'Rourke gave himself up to his servant, as if faint with loss of blood, purely to allow the other time to make off. He contented himself with telling him, in return for his whisper, that his threats would go for nothing, if he offered to stay another hour in the neighbourhood, or if he committed the least further violence on Lady Vavasour; and while resting on his servant's shoulder, he kept an eye on the coach, knowing what Dalton was going to say, but watching in case he exceeded his tacit permission to that effect. As to the chaise, the pretended coachman and footman must have settled that, for they quitted their former post, and went off with it the instant their master fired his pistol. Mr. O'Rourke said, that when Dalton drew out his pistol, he presented him another; but, whether intentionally or in his hurry, fired his own before his antagonist could draw the trigger: and owing to the dark, and to the violent movement of Dalton, the shot, when returned, was little better than a random one.

Mr. O'Rourke's wound was in his arm. Lady Vavasour, treating him like a proper knight errant, took off her scarf, and bound it over the place. She would have had him come into the coach, which his servant undertook to drive, but he said it was better he should remain outside in case of further alarm; and so, joining Thomas's horse to the others, and the coach being turned about, her new conductors proceeded to restore her ladyship to the home she was to have been taken away from.

The Countess said, that Dalton had scarcely done speaking, when she felt herself becoming as unaccountably sleepy, as she

had been 'happy. While tying up O'Rourke's arm, she could hardly keep her eyes open; and when they arrived at Mickleham, she was in such a stupor of sleep, that they were obliged to carry her into the house as if she had been dead. Some of the foolish servants ran up stairs to Miss Vavasour, and, in spite of Mr. O'Rourke's assurances to the contrary, told her that she was brought home a corpse; which so frightened the poor lady, that she fell into convulsions. Miss Randolph was dreadfully alarmed, but retained better possession of her senses; yet she knew not what to make of this extraordinary lethargy, till Miss Vavasour, on recovering, discerned what it was. Dalton, in the glass of wine, had given her opium. This discovery explained at once the whole villany of his intentions; and the extent of Lady Vavasour's escape. His object was to subject her so completely to his power, that she would have been glad to marry him. At least, this was his expectation. He would have found himself deceived in it; but the consequences would still have been too dreadful to think of. Miss Randolph could not well speak of this part of the enormity. Indeed, she appeared not very well to comprehend it; but O'Rourke, with whom I became afterwards acquainted, said, that when Miss Vavasour made the discovery of the opium, a drug with which she herself turned out to be acquainted in her own person (so many helps for sorrow are resorted to, which nobody suspects); and when he told her what Dalton had said in his ear, and she saw before her the villany that had been designed, and the villany that was still threatened; she never beheld such a picture of feminine despair;—something so extremely agonized, and yet so invincibly gentle. Miss Vavasour had been very handsome, and was still remarkable for the touching sweetness of her manners.

The Countess remained in this stupor nearly the whole night. Next morning, from her exaltation of spirits, she fell into an extreme state of dejection. "Not a word more than I have told you respecting Dalton," said Miss Randolph; "was uttered from that moment by anybody, nor was his name mentioned. It seems clear to me, that he knew whose daughter I was; but that could not be his only secret. The King was mentioned as a party concerned; and I suspect, even dear Miss Vavasour is not without her terrors of this hateful man."

“And after all, how did O'Rourke become acquainted with the design of carrying off Lady Vavasour?”

“By the merest, yet most natural chance in the world. He happened to stop at an inn on the Kingston-road, where a horseman was telling the people of a bustle he had seen at Lady Vavasour's gate. The horseman said he had asked one of the servants what was the matter, and had been told that Lady So-and-so had sent for the Countess in a great hurry, having been seized with a mortal illness. Another man pronounced this to be impossible; ‘for,’ said he, ‘I have just come from her ladyship's with a parcel for the Leatherhead carrier, and she was never better in her life. Besides, the coachman is at home, and it is not sickness that keeps him either, for he has been treating all the servants to drink, and me with 'em.’ Now here was suspicion enough for anybody; and Mr. O'Rourke was the more alive to it, because, from a description of Dalton which I wrote to my father, the Duke said he knew something of the man; and part of O'Rourke's very business at Mickleham Park was to observe him narrowly, and act as he thought fit in consequence. It was supposed at Mickleham, that O'Rourke no sooner heard the voice of the pretended coachman, who in that manner betrayed himself to his servant, than he knew who the master was; and this turned out to be the fact, as we shall see. Indeed, Dalton had shown he knew O'Rourke, by mentioning his name when he took leave at the coach-door.”

It was thought that Lady Vavasour's dejection would leave her, when the effects of the opium went off; but though it altered its character, and was borne with a sweetness of temper superior even to what she exhibited before, it had never ceased from that moment.

“Depend upon it,” said I, “she loves Sir Philip.”

“No,” said Miss Randolph. “Dalton's attempt had scarcely taken place, when Lord Manchester came down with accounts of the great fight at sea, and the gallant behaviour of the volunteers. When Sir Philip's name was mentioned, the Countess changed colour, but said nothing; nor has his name escaped her lips ever since they parted, with the exception of one instance.”

“And when was that?”

“The day after she refused Dalton. It was Sir Philip's

birth-day. She was sad and silent after dinner; and I could not help thinking she was pondering on the difference between the two men. She was also still more sisterly towards me than usual,—sitting for an hour together with my hand in hers; and I thought I saw the tears in her eyes. The impulse to speak was irresistible. ‘Dear Margaret,’ I said, ‘will you be angry with me if I am very sincere?’—‘Why should you think I could?’ she observed, colouring.—‘Because, though sincerity is always right, it may not be always right to utter it.’—‘Say on, sweet one,’ said the Countess, affectionately, and at the same time pinched my cheek, and kissed me. ‘I think,’ resumed I, with hesitation—‘I think—but perhaps it is because I hope—in short, may I say anything? May I mention any name I please?’—‘I know what name you are going to mention,’ answered the Countess. I know not how she looked, as she said this, for I did not dare to look in her face. ‘’Tis his birth-day,’ said I, turning down my eyes, and kissing the hand that held mine.—‘Well,’ said she, in a kind, but steady voice.—‘You know,’ continued I, ‘how fond he was of drinking healths of absent friends on their birth-days. If you would not think me unkind—or—presumptuous, I would drink his;’ and so saying, what must I do, but fall a weeping. I longed to do one friend a service, but was afraid of hurting another. The Countess folded me in her arms, and I felt a tear on my neck. ‘Presumptuous!’ said she, in a fond and faltering voice: ‘How can my dear Ellen couple two such words as herself and presumptuous; and to me, too, above all women, who am her sister, and her friend, grateful for enjoying her love!’ And she said more of this nature, which made me hope everything for Sir Philip. How was I disappointed, when she added:—‘But women do not always bestow their love on the most deserving; and so it is more honour to Ellen than to me, that she loves me as heartily as she does. Nay, must it not be so? Well, well, then there must be a mystery in it somehow, for love her I must, and ought; and love me she will, whether I deserve it or no: but as to him she speaks of, there is a difference. It is necessary, for a thousand reasons, that both parties should be worthy: and observe me, Ellen; let what I say sink deeply into your mind; not in order to dispute it with me, which would humble me more than I can express, and effect nothing of what you



desire; for in saying it I wish to be understood as entreating, — nay, as expecting (forgive me for saying so) that his name shall not be again mentioned between us. Yes; forgive me for using the word expect; think ill of me, if you please, for saying it, and yet do not do so. Lay it to the account of feelings which your loving and unspoiled heart is acquainted with; but hark one word, and then silence between us till tomorrow:—*I am not worthy of him.*”

On hearing Miss Randolph repeat these words, I could not help rising from my seat with an exclamation. “She loves him,” cried I, “she loves him! and your loving and unspoiled heart does not see it.”

“The moment I heard these words,” said Miss Randolph, “I thought so too, in spite of what she had been saying; and as I uttered something between an exclamation and a moan (for she still held me to her bosom all the while, and her head was over mine), she seemed to think it necessary to prevent any answer into which my surprise might betray me; for she added, with a dreadful damp to all my hopes — ‘It is not for his sake I say it, but my own.’ She then raised my head, and kissing my weeping eyes over and over again, went up stairs to her own room.”

“She loves him!” I repeated; “’tis as clear as noon-day. And how has she behaved since?”

“In a way that would make me think as you do, if she took any steps to make Sir Philip aware of it. You know the dislike he had to little tricks and manœuvres; such as sending children out of the room upon false pretences; making untrue apologies for not seeing people, or visiting; expressing opinions really not one’s own, for the sake of an argument or a jest; and otherwise hurting what he used to call the crystal beauty of her nature, and the cause of truth. Well; from the moment of Dalton’s attempt, she did nothing of all this — not an atom. I believe she had continued the practice in one or two respects, rather out of a dread of giving up the argument, than any wish to continue it; but from the date of her dejection, she has been as scrupulous as one of these new people they call Quakers. She is also less decided in her general tone. ‘It seems to me,’ and ‘it appears,’ and ‘perhaps,’ are now among her commonest phrases. She wished, the other day, to say something to me privately respecting her aunt, and

it happened that the very child was present who first occasioned Sir Philip to find fault with her. 'Mary, my love,' said the Countess, 'come here and give me a kiss: I wish to say something to Miss Randolph, which must only be heard by those who are concerned in it; so take this kiss and this peach, and run into the garden with them!' I fancied I saw Sir Philip's eyes looking at her, and longed to tell her so; but she always contrives, in such an ingenious manner, by the mere tone of her conduct, to keep me to my tacit agreement, that I had not the courage. She then told me, that her aunt's feelings, always too delicate for her health, had been so wrought upon by the late adventure, that, strange as it might appear, my very attentiveness towards her was more than at present she could bear; and therefore,' said the Countess, smiling through her tears, 'you must be kind enough to be a little inhuman, and not seem to care for her quite so much.'

"Miss Vavasour was always fond of you," said I, inquiringly.

"She has been to me like the kindest of mothers," answered Miss Randolph, "and I am sure—"

My charmer here broke off in a tender confusion, struck with the thought that she had never known who her mother was. She was perplexed between the filial love she felt for Miss Vavasour, and the reflection that it might have been placed elsewhere but for a cruel mystery. I took the opportunity of kissing her hand with a respectfulness which I felt at the bottom of my heart. She thanked me for it with eyes swimming with love and tears; and after a little pause we resumed.

"My dearest Ellen," said I, "again and again I repeat, that the Countess loves Sir Philip, as surely as he loves her: and I'll now tell you the reason why you do not see it. The truth is, you are too good. Nay, do not interrupt me, or I will punish you with saying twenty times as much. What I mean is, that of us two, you have hitherto been the superior, (for you must know that in future I am resolved not to be outdone in merit); but such having been the case, you cannot know what it is to be loved, and at the same time to feel oneself not so worthy as the lover. The more admirable the loving person, the more humiliated we feel at the instinct, which tells us that we are loved without deserving it. Excess of esteem may even sometimes have an effect in preventing love, by ex-

aggerating this barrier of inequality ; unless where it is accompanied by such a total forgetfulness of self, that we love purely because of the admirable qualities of the object, without any reference to our own deserts ; but this is perhaps impossible where we are loved also, especially if we have pride ; and especially above all, if, besides pride, we possess real merit, and are in circumstances which give us importance in the eyes of the world. Now all this is the case with Lady Vavasour. She was first a bit of a spoiled child, — very charming, no doubt, and as candid as Sir Philip would have her ; though partly so perhaps, because she did not think it worth her while to be otherwise.”

“ Ah, you have never seen her,” observed Miss Randolph : — “ once look on her face, and you will think nothing but what is good of her.”

“ I don't know that,” said I ; “ I have seen one face, which has absorbed my good opinion of all others. However, I can believe something of the kind, after what you and Sir Philip have said of it. — Well : our heiress then fell into the hands of Lord Vavasour, who persuaded her that he knew the world, but could not persuade her that the knowledge required any particular sharpness of sight : so she joined his false knowledge to her real natural intelligence, which made an unlucky compound. When she became acquainted with Sir Philip Herne, she met with a mind, the candour of which resembled her own as it used to be, and was the exalted counterpart of it in point of understanding. Her acquired defects, as well as her virtues, assisted in preventing her from loving him ; but she could not help admiring him. At length her husband died, and she consented to construe her regard into love ; but it was not love. The candour of Sir Philip, in differing with her opinions, and showing the ill effect they had upon the transparency of her character, piqued her to differ with him in turn. The greater her sense of his understanding, the sharper the pique. She warmed the dispute into an offence, rather than give up the point ; — all, observe, because she did not love ; and now she is ashamed of it, and full of regret, and resolved to become secretly what he would approve of, because she does love. Yes, my sweet friend, I see it all as plainly as the hill before us ; and so do you, by your looks.”

Miss Randolph, with a new joy in her face, acknowledged

that I had convinced her. She was for flying directly to her friend, and telling her that "a friend of *all*" was anxious to speak with her. "But," said I, "you forget that Sir Philip is missing, and that a new anxiety is in store for her. I came, I confess, with very little hope of obtaining news of him at Mickleham Park, but I thought it my duty to inquire. What other feelings I had, I need not say. My intentions with respect to Lady Vavasour were to ask her if she knew anything of my friend, on the supposition that he might have made a communication to her, though to nobody else; but I resolved on making the inquiry, chiefly that I might see whether she yet loved him or not, and so getting the chance of better news for himself, as soon as he should be found."

Miss Randolph could not conceive it possible that he should not be found, and that speedily. I did not tell her what strange stories were to be heard at court, respecting the sudden disappearances of people; what had been said, in particular, on that point, respecting a ruffian whom they called Captain Bill. But this reflection reminded me of asking what she had to tell us of the Duke. I then learnt that his Grace had made his appearance at the Park within a week after the flight of Dalton; that with great address he got Lord Manchester to introduce him to Lady Vavasour, as a man anxious to vindicate himself in the eyes of goodness and beauty from the aspersions with which he understood Mr. Dalton had been pleased to bespatter him; that he said it was true he had had, long since, the dishonour of knowing Mr. Dalton, or rather of admitting him to his society, for he believed him to be a mere adventurer; but that he had heartily repented of this folly, as well as of a great many others, especially as a calumny of Dalton's had induced him on one occasion to offend her Ladyship's charming friend Miss Randolph, which was a relapse into juvenile absurdities, of which he was now too old, and he trusted, too wise, to be guilty again; and finally, that, he had the honour of bearing his Majesty's expressions of regard and respect for the character of Lady Vavasour, and a hope that she would not long continue to deny his Majesty's court the nobility as well as beauty of her presence.

His Grace followed up his introduction with two or three more visits, in which Miss Randolph said he made himself so agreeable, or rather so delightful, with the variety of his com-

pliments and the unceasing gaiety of his wit, that Lady Vavasour's dejection appeared to be suspended whenever he was present; and she began to suspect, indeed, that she was hardly worthy of Sir Philip. As to herself, she could not help being amused to the highest degree by such an overflow of spirits and of fancy; and she *hoped* he had become as good as he was pleasant; but she could never get out of her head the scene at the garden door which Sir Philip had described to her; "and after all," said she, "there was something about him which did not deceive me."

"What was that?"

"I saw he did not really value the truth. He made a mighty show of it, — too mighty; but whenever he touched upon points on which he thought we liked to have truth set aside, or falsehood glossed over, he betrayed himself. He little thought what was going on among us, and what worship we paid to a divinity not in his creed."

"Then how came you to think, that Lady Vavasour was admiring him more than she did?"

"'Twas only because I was not quite so aware of her feelings as I was afterwards. I asked her one day if she did not think the Duke of Buckingham very pleasant. 'Yes,' she said, in her natural tone, but with a sigh; 'Don't you?' 'I do,' answered I, — 'but —' — 'But what?' — 'I do not quite believe everything he says?' — 'Quite believe, my dear!' said the countess; 'I don't believe one half of it, nor a third.' And so saying she blushed, though I could not see for what."

"She blushed," said I, "because she thought she was exhibiting something of her former excess of doubt, and for fear you should not see that it was warranted by the occasion. And there was love too in the blush, — love for Sir Philip, and shame to think that the Duke had been sitting where he ought to be."

"How blind was I not to see it!" cried Miss Randolph.

"Well: let us hasten to get rid of this foolish witty Duke, and think of Sir Philip. His Grace, seeing us amused, thought proper to let us more and more into the secrets of the court.

By degrees, from ridiculing, he fell to pitying the life there: and then out of charity defended it. In short, he threw such a gloss over it, that according to him, as human nature must have its imperfections somehow, under all circumstances, it

was the lot of all elegance and good breeding to come inevitably to the same way of life; and therefore, as he did us the honour of thinking us elegant and well-bred in spite of our rustic solitude, he — what shall I say? — And the lovely speaker here fell into some confusion.

“How!” said I, “he did not dare to insult the hospitality of women?”

“No, no,” said Miss Randolph; “he did nothing which I suppose a courtier does not think himself warranted in doing. I have heard him call it ‘making love.’ I am sure it is a very bad imitation of — I mean, — that is to say, it is surely as different from love, as falsehood from truth.”

“And did he make his love, as he calls it, to both?”

“He did; and drew a promise of secrecy from both, under a pretence of remorse, and of a wish not to be thought more ill of than could be helped. Unluckily, he extracted the same promise from my lady’s woman, who was too well-bred to keep it; and so all came out. The Countess laughed at first, and then shed tears. ‘My dear,’ said she, ‘it is not for this buffoon with a star at his breast, that I shed tears. It is for my own pride. Not that I believed him for a moment, or thought he knew anything either about love or remorse; — I did it to get rid of him at the time; but I am humiliated in having my attention thus forced upon people, when I am ill. I would be left alone. How must we get rid of him? I cannot laugh at him; I cannot be indignant with him. This task of being mistress of a house is one I should long ago have been more tired of than I am, if there had been any such manly offices to perform; and my aunt’s illness has shown me, that I am less fitted to sustain it than ever; she too has sustained it more by dint of being twice as unable as myself than anything else. She can now hardly whisper to a servant.’”

“I asked, not without dread,” continued Miss Randolph, “if I should say anything to the Duke; for I felt as if I could say or do anything, however frightened, rather than see her plagued with such a guest. The Countess looked at me with a smile, and said, ‘You! Nay, I believe you could do anything for your friend; but the task is fitted for none of us. *Such a set of masters of a house! Good heavens!*’”

“We never thought,” pursued Ellen, “of applying to Lord Mauchester, so much had we been accustomed to consider him

as gentle and inoffensive as ourselves. It was finally agreed, however, that as we never saw one without the other, and as his Lordship had announced his intention of leaving us next day, the Duke should never again be invited to quit his Epsom lodgings when he came down with that intention. He used to stay awhile at a house next door to the inn there. Lord Manchester would leave him there and come on, and then the ceremony was to dispatch a servant with a message of invitation. We thought in the first instance, that we must resent the Duke's behaviour, perhaps" (and here she smiled) "because he included Mrs. Bridget in his infidelities; but a little reflection served to show that the less we said the better: we resolved first to let him see that we disapproved his conduct: but, after all, the task did not turn out quite so easy."

"I hope," said I, alarmed at this, "that he did not presume to—"

"Nay, my dear friend," interrupted Ellen, "you need not trouble yourself to resent anything. Who do you think became our champion, after all?"

"Who, pray? I shall envy him."

"Sir Philip's venerable friend, Mr. Bennett, the steward. The Duke took leave of us next day with Lord Manchester, but unexpectedly returned without him, alleging that he had found himself giddy. We suspected, that in the course of conversation on the road, he had discovered our sense of his behaviour, and was resolved to brave it out. Perhaps he was willing to be without his Lordship in the house. He came suddenly upon Lady Vavasour and myself, as we were talking of him: said that a little wine would soon make him well; and,—you know his way of doing the strangest things, with an air that would sit well upon him if he were a better man,—fairly sat down to his bottle an hour before dinner, contriving to make us wait on him; and saying a thousand gallant things upon the superiority of noble minds to common places, and the dignity of serving one's inferiors. We then dined. He drank during dinner and after it; and on our quitting the room for the garden, contrived to follow me into the library, where, under pretence of being in an exstasy of love and *remorse*, he knelt down and passionately kissed my hands. The strangeness of the thing alarmed me so, that I cried out. He desisted immediately; and I own I could hardly forbear

laughing, when he said it was an odd way of receiving a penitent, and wondered whether confessors in the Romish church shrieked at the sight of people coming to kneel to them. As I wished to make light of my terrors, I tried to laugh too, and said that penitents did not kneel in that manner, and ill-treat their confessor's hands; but my attempt at pleasantry was ill-timed. He presumed upon it, and grew so unequivocally and unhandsomely alarming, that I cried out again, and was rushing towards the door, when in came Mr. Bennett. The Duke made some laughing remark, that would have done very well on a better occasion, but I was equally frightened and angry, and rushed into Mr. Bennett's arms for protection. To say the truth, I was, nevertheless, in such possession of my senses, that I determined on doing a piece of service to Lady Vavasour as well as myself; and secretly resolved that this behaviour of his Grace should be a bar to his future intimacy in the house. Accordingly, I would not stay to listen either to his laughter or his gravity, or his plea of being intoxicated; for in that he finally entrenched himself. Perhaps he had drunk wine enough on purpose. I know not what Bennett said. The old gentleman had a wonderful awe of birth and rank, and must have been in a strange dilemma, between his respect for his Grace's quality, and his indignation at his conduct. All I know is, that he manfully expressed his astonishment, and was not to be seduced into quitting his hold of me, for the Duke now professed to be wakened up from his intoxication, called the most sacred names to witness that he had intended nothing disrespectful, and would fain have sent Bennett away for my Lady's woman. We neither did, nor chose to believe him, and Lady Vavasour would not see him again; so he quitted the house, with a courteousness, and an air of grief, that I believe half won over Mr. Bennett to believe in him. He would not have believed, had he seen the billet he left."

"What did it say?" I inquired, — too melancholy at the recital to make any remark upon it. I felt, that if it had not been for my volatility, no protector would have been wanting at Mickleham.

"You must know," said Miss Randolph, "that Lady Vavasour, finding the Duke persist in endeavouring to make his peace, wrote him a note, in which she said, that his Grace



had forced her to be too sensible that there were none but females in the house ; and that she should be sorry to be compelled to apply to Lord Fauconberg, or the Duke of Ormond, to know what steps were to be taken for their security. The Duke wrote an answer of bantering deprecation, couched, indeed, in terms of great deference towards the Countess, and protesting that his ‘ little lively friend,’ as he called me, was under a mistake. But his mortification and resentment were ill concealed. The billet concluded with saying, that her Ladyship need not have threatened him with Lord Fauconberg, when there was a ‘ female,’ like my Lady Fauconberg, who would have done quite as well ; and that as to the ‘ good Duke of Ormond (those were his words), no man understood better than his Grace, the distinction between gallantries, which the best women excused, and those which enjoyed no such privilege.’ He trusted that an early visit to England on the part of his Grace, would enable him to show how innocent he was, by anticipating her Ladyship’s explanations ; and that in that case he did not despair of being brought down to Mickleham in the Duke of Ormond’s hand, like a good boy, as a fit subject of pardon for the young lady, in whose welfare his Grace took so natural an interest.’

“ Thus,” concluded Miss Randolph, “ this pattern of court gallantry revenges himself on two females ; precludes their application to anybody in self-defence ; and threatens them through the sides of those who would have been their defenders ; for you see, it is clear enough that he is in possession of my father’s secret.”

“ I see it plainly enough,” said I, “ and the more I think of it, the more I see a thousand other things, that clear up mysteries of my own. But the mansion is in sight. We will forget this Buckingham for the present, and think of nobler people. Your Countess, of whom I begin to entertain the same opinion as Sir Philip, is infallibly in love with my friend ; there is no doubt of it ; you yourself have ceased to have any ; nor would you ever have doubted, if you had not been as free from pride, as you are from every other unloving quality.”

“ The Countess has no unloving qualities, believe me,” said the dear girl. “ She is generous to the last degree, delicate, cordial, the idol of her aunt and the servants, and has ever been so kind and confiding to myself, in short, is so made

to love and be loved, that I could have wept upon her hands, and begged and prayed her to love Sir Philip: nay, I should have believed that she loved him, since she became so very particular in showing her renouncement of what he disliked, had she not expressly given me to understand, that it was on her own account, not his. You remember her words!"

"I do," returned I; "but she only meant, that she did not desire him to be told of it. She was resolved first to prove herself worthy, by some worthy and painful probation; and then, I believe, we could not do her a better service than by letting him know. I am sure this is her feeling of the matter. I was enabled to see it, when you did not, purely because I had need, on my own part, of raising myself to an equality with the object of my love. You had no such necessity, and could only wonder that she did not send, and let the man that loved her know of his good fortune. I begin to excuse the impulses of Buckingham. Such a charming mixture of innocence and wisdom, of knowledge, and the want of it, would be chased like a nymph through the galleries of all the courts in Christendom."

"Mercy on me!" cried Ellen, with a pretty air of alarm, "I shall fancy them all behind us. What a want of something to love you must have at court."

"An odd speech," said I, "considering what a different opinion is held at court; and yet it looks very like the truth; now I think of it. I fancied I had been in love myself there; once or twice, but when I again saw the face I am looking upon, I found I had not been faithless."

"Ah, my dear friend!" said Miss Randolph, "I always told the Countess that you had the best heart in the world; and that it was only my vanity that told me it ought to have been mine."

"But I must deny myself the pleasure of relapsing into these records, so tempting to my own vanity, — nay, let me say, to my best pride, and my love of all that is lovely.

"I conclude," resumed I, after a while, "that the worthy Master Dalton said nothing to Lady Vavasour of the attempt that was made on his life, and the assistance Herne afforded him?"

Miss Randolph had never heard a word of it. She was certain that no such thing had been mentioned. On the cen-

trary, Dalton was always undervaluing the gallantry of men of a reflective turn of mind, and by implication that of the man whom he pretended to love. Dalton left the country at the time, on the plea of looking after an estate; and his wound he attributed to an accident with a fowling-piece.

We agreed that Miss Randolph should go first to Lady Vavasour, and announce my arrival. "She will be very glad of it," said the dear girl, "if only on my account; and you will love her for the way in which she receives you. You will see in a moment how it was that Sir Philip loved her?"

"But if she now loves him in turn," said I, "what will she feel at his being missing?"

"Are you really uneasy on that score?" answered Ellen, stopping and looking earnestly in my face. "Forgive me for thinking that although he is missing, you were not quite so anxious about it as I now see you are. I fancied that you made the worst of it, and seized the opportunity of awakening an interest in his favour."

My charmer blushed, and I smiled at these words. But my smile, I flatter myself, was a proper one, and explained itself. "Innocent and forgiving as you are, dearest Ellen, you have not forgotten that I have been living in a court."

"Pardon me," she returned: "the first thing for which I was inclined to regard you was your sincerity."

"And you maintained your faith in it," said I, "with a goodness, for which I can never be grateful enough. Notwithstanding however all your faith and your goodness, you must have had misgivings;—nay, they were too just; the court did for me what you suspect; but remember that I have had two wonderful pieces of good fortune in my time, and that one of them was to become the friend of Sir Philip Herne. I cannot be his friend, much less speak of him, and under such charming circumstances, and swerve an atom from the truth."

We paused here, with anxiety, to consider what was best to be done. The deliberations of two persons so well agreed, did not last long. The truth was to be told in everything. Sir Philip's name was to be mentioned to Lady Vavasour, as that of an old acquaintance of all parties, in search of whom I thought it my duty to leave no chance untried, however remote. It was to be stated under what circumstances he dis-

closed to me his history, how anxiously he bequeathed to me an interest, which I could no longer keep silent, in the welfare of Lady Vavasour; and how certain I felt, from his description of her, that she would at all events pardon the zeal which had led me to her house. By this time we were in the house itself. Miss Randolph hesitated a moment, and turned pale.

“You go then to seek him, at all events,” said she, “in case Lady Vavasour has heard nothing?”

“Should I deserve you,” said I, “if I did not?”

The dear creature pressed the hand with which I had taken hers, and with a smile glimmering through her tears, said, “Thank you, and God bless you!”

With these words she hastened up stairs.

I thought I had loved her as well as it was possible to love, before, but at that moment a light broke in upon me. I wondered how I could have lived away from her so long; and found my proposed adventure more heroic than I took it for.

My friendship, however, for Sir Philip seemed at the same instant to become stronger than ever; and concluding Lady Vavasour to have at length returned his passion, I waited her appearance with a heart full of pity and respect.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

It was a long time before the door opened; and when it did, it was Miss Randolph that made her appearance. She had been weeping, and was still trembling. “Lady Vavasour,” said she, “has been greatly agitated. You are right, my dear friend; she loves Sir Philip. She owned it in a flood of tears, so passionate as to alarm me, writhing me against her heart, and throwing forth little cries of despair so wretched that I never heard such melancholy sounds in my life.”

The dear girl gave way to a flood of tears herself and I had the tender pleasure of consoling her. She said, that she should accuse herself of being too easily consoled, of being too happy in my presence, if the distress did not concern us all; “but thank God,” she added, “we are all willing to meet it. Lady Vavasour talks of going to find him herself. She says she

ought to walk barefoot to London, and seek him through the plague! By this, judge of what she has been concealing."

Miss Randolph owned that Lady Vavasour had frightened her at first by the vehemence of her self-accusations, and the view she took of Sir Philip's danger. The tenderness of his heart, her Ladyship said, was such, that if his silence had not been of the most compulsory sort, he would not have failed an hour in keeping his promise to write. "However, after her first paroxysms of grief, she cleared up," concluded Miss Randolph; "begged my pardon for thinking in so melancholy a manner; said she owed it to Sir Philip and his friend to act in the best way, which was the calmest; and from this moment we should have nothing to complain of her, not even of her complaints for the past. She is now as tranquil as usual, though her face, in the course of a few minutes, seems absolutely to bear the impression of weeks of suffering. She kissed and congratulated me with one of her beautiful smiles upon your arrival; but would you believe it? Sir Philip, you know, said she was proud, and that Dalton called her confident. Well: she told me in a voice almost inarticulate with emotion, that she had 'an awe of Sir Philip's friend.' She asked whether you were the same person I had formerly described to her, as being so kind, and making others so much at ease with themselves?"

"'Tis still pride," said I, "but beautiful and departing. As for me, you might have told the Countess, dear Ellen, that I have an awe of her, or something like it. At least I had, till I thought her in love. Sir Philip worshipped her so, that she always took an exalted station in my fancy, in spite of the resentment I wished to feel against her. But surely, she judges of me, by your flattering help, as of a person anything but alarming."

"She understands you well," replied Miss Randolph, "and sent me to say so, and to thank you for being here. When I return up stairs, she will come down. She bade me say exactly what I pleased, and hopes we all understand one another, and are prepared to be equally explicit. With all her 'awe,' she says she shall feel an inexpressible delight mixed with the anguish of seeing you. 'I have devoted myself to his friend's memory,' said she, 'ever since I was wakened up to a true sense of the difference between him, and these makers of false-

hoods ; and should he ever wish again to seek me, as I would now seek him, perhaps some day or other I may even yet dare to be found by him.' I guess by this singular speech, that she has some design which she has not yet explained : but, at all events, love him she does, most fervently ; and therefore, in the name of God, we will hope the best. My dear friend, I will now go up, and you may expect her."

Miss Randolph went, and I was again left alone. Sir Philip had described the Countess of Vavasour as taller than women in general ; and in spite of what he said to the contrary, I had pictured her to myself as too tall. Instead of the frank, cordial, and lovely aspect he had described, I had also conceived her to possess a face, beautiful indeed, but haughty, large of feature, and with eyes more piercing than agreeable. The bloom he spoke of, I had confounded with something glaring and insensible, a health which she ought not to have had ; and her figure, I could not help thinking, must be hard and unfeminine. His portrait of her I attributed to love ; and Miss Randolph's had come too late to do away the impression of my own fancy. In short, I imagined her striking, intelligent, proud, and something almost the reverse of attractive ; an heiress and a Countess, with all the dignity that such titles could confer upon her ; and little more but youth and her sex.

Miss Randolph had told me that she had taken the liberty of waiving all ceremony on my part, and begged her ladyship not to appear for some hours, or unaccompanied by herself, if it would save any pain to her feelings ; but she said, the Countess preferred coming alone, probably because there was pain to be encountered. "I am now convinced," said Ellen, "that her heart and soul are wrapt up in Sir Philip, and that she would undergo martyrdoms for his sake."

The door was opened gently, almost inaudibly, (Miss Randolph afterwards informed me that she did it herself,) and a young lady stood before me in black, who made a profound curtsy. This was to show respect to Ellen's lover, and to Sir Philip's friend. Perhaps there were other feelings in it, not unconnected with herself, or even with her rank. If so, it was like resuming her dignity in order to subject it ; for her manner was the most touching, and had the least pride in it, of any ceremoniousness I ever beheld. It seemed to say, "there has been something in me worthy of Sir Philip's re-

gard, perhaps there is something still : at any rate, there is respect for his friend, and there is sorrow."

My acknowledgment of this honour was as profound. I wished to have put into it, if I could, all the sympathy with which she struck me. She then met me as I advanced, and taking one of my hands in both hers, said in a low but distinct voice, "Sir Ralph Esher is welcome indeed, both to those to whom he brings happiness, and —" Her eyes filled with tears ; but she smiled, and motioned me to a seat.

I said that "the honour which was done me by the confidence of so many excellent persons, must be my excuse for venturing to express a hope, that nothing but happiness to all parties would be the result of this day's meeting."

She pressed her hand upon her heart, with affecting earnestness, and said in the same low tone of voice, but not so distinctly, "Miss Randolph has prepared me to find in Sir Ralph Esher a very kind friend."

"I could cut my hand off for this woman," thought I ; — "I wonder no longer at Sir Philip." The Countess of Vavasour was at that time about six-and-twenty. She was no taller than Miss Randolph, that is to say, not a bit taller than she ought to have been, nor above a reasonable man's shoulder. Her face was pale ; the outline of it, and of her whole person, beautifully feminine ; nor had her figure fallen away, though she had lost her colour. Her voice was low, not only on that occasion, but always ; and her step so inaudible, that when you saw her in different parts of the room, she seemed as if she had glided thither on some orb of beauty. I did not observe in her face that exceeding openness, which Sir Philip had described, perhaps because her spirit had retreated inwards, had lost its unconsciousness, and acquired greater power of observation ; but nothing could be more sincere than her way of speaking. There was something secret in her eye, though otherwise it was as fine as could be ; and her mouth had a rich loveliness, which I had as little looked for as the charming voice. Her eyes were a very dark blue, and her hair chestnut. Upon the whole, the court would have found her wanting. She seemed too liable to be absorbed in reflection ; and they would have been afraid of her searching eyes. But if a woman had been made on purpose, I thought she could not have better suited Sir Philip.

The Countess begged me to tell her what my opinion was of the silence of Sir Philip ; at what precise time he had promised to write to me ; to what part of London I thought he had gone, upon his departure from the vessel ; and why he was so unusually reserved as to the object he had in view. Having once mentioned the name of Sir Philip, she spoke, I observed, more freely. In the course of my replies, she rose from her chair, partly in agitation, partly out of an increasing good-will towards Sir Philip's friend, and came and sat in the chair next me. I said I had no doubt he had gone to his agent's, whose house was in the heart of the district now most infected with the plague. The reason why he had been silent both as to the place, and the cause of his going there, I had as little doubt, was, that his object had been to inquire after her ladyship's welfare ; and that he did not wish her to be distressed with the memory of it, in case anything happened to him, and she came to the knowledge of what had caused it.

It shot across me, as I uttered these words, that I was doing the very thing I described him as wishing not to be done. I hastened to say so, and to beg her pardon for it, observing that my anticipation of his happiness, since I had the pleasure of coming to Mickleham, had been so much greater than my fears, that I could not help talking to her as I would to myself.

Lady Vavasour wept. " If the pain were greater," said she, " even than it is, I should think you did me a kindness in not withholding it. I suffer for his sake, and endeavour to think that I am acquiring a right to do so. You could not say any noble thing of him, but what I should picture to myself already. Besides, I know he was best pleased, when he was doing the most generous actions. As to those for whom he performed them, it was not to be expected they could always be worthy. But they may give him their tears."

" Oh, madam," cried I, " only let him be told that you have spoken thus, and we shall all be happy. And he will be told, and we shall be so. I feel it, as surely as I do the coming of to-morrow."

" I will endeavour to hope it too," said the Countess : " I weep thus, partly that he may know of my weeping, and there is pleasure in that, and in telling you so. I confess it is one



that I have not known a long time, nor could I give way to it at such a moment, if my hope were not greater even than my fear. Yet fear is present, and hope is away."

"Let us hope, madam, that we shall find him without delay. And we may find him as well in a week as in a year."

"Not so, if he has not written for weeks," returned her ladyship. "Yet it is not that which I speak of. I must not tell you all I think and feel."

"Recollect, dear Lady Vavasour, we were to be explicit with each other by agreement. You must not flatter me with deeming me worthy of your candour, and then withhold it."

"I deem you worthy of every thing," replied the Countess, "knowing you to be Sir Philip's friend; but it is myself — I — that is to say — Pray refuse me not your entire candour, though I may seem to withhold mine. If I have some thoughts in me which I cannot express, I at least tell you so. I do not pretend to keep to my agreement the best. I am not yet qualified to do so; but you shall know when I am; *all* shall know, if they wish it."

"If they wish it!" I exclaimed. Some words of Miss Randolph's came into my mind; and it struck me that the Countess had some intention which it pained her to conceal, while she thought it her duty to do so. "You do not doubt, madam, that the sentiments of Sir Philip are the same as when you last saw him? If you do, allow me to say, that I can speak for him as positively as if he were here. I believe there would be only one difference — caused by what he would have had the happiness to see."

Lady Vavasour looked at me with calm eyes. Her tears had been dried up. "'Tis not love only," said she, "that is necessary to Sir Philip."

"Pardon me," I replied, "I think it is, when it comes from Lady Vavasour. Nothing could be wanting, whatever the modesty of love might induce her to think. You have not ceased, madam, I fear to be proud."

"I should think I had not," returned the Countess, "if I said that I had learnt to be humble. I have only ceased to be foolish. Miss Randolph tells me, that you know the whole history of Sir Philip. Indeed, he could not have bequeathed an interest in me to your care, had he not been just, and told

you the truth ; nor was it possible he could have been otherwise."

I tacitly intimated that she was right.

"Let me say then to the friend of Sir Philip," continued she — "and let that appellation be my excuse for saying it, (and surely he will not think me wanting in explicitness now,) that Sir Philip owned to myself, like the lover of truth he was, that his esteem for me had diminished."

Her voice, as she spoke this, sunk almost to a whisper.

"Never for your nature, dear Lady, only for — whatever it was — that induced you to depart from it. Methinks it is very daring in a light courtier like myself to speak so, and to a nature, half of whose good qualities would, I am sure, outweigh all mine. Let the appellation you have just given me, be my excuse as well as your ladyship's. Believe me, Sir Philip's love, his esteem, and his happiness, would all be at their height, if he could behold you as I do this moment."

"He would know that I loved him," said she, "but how is he to know with what sincerity, with what zeal, with what scorn of that — you will not think me indelicate, sir," — her pale face suddenly flashing to crimson.

"Indelicate! dearest Lady Vavasour! I repeat the word, only to show you how inapplicable I hold it to anything you can say."

She rose from her seat with uncontrollable agitation, and stepping to the fire-place, which was near us, leaned her head upon her arms against the mantelpiece. Her whole frame shook as she wept in silence ; and the tears came into my eyes, not only at her suffering, but to think what Sir Philip would have given to see her, and to turn her face to his own.

She dried up her tears, and said, "You will see no more of this ; but I cannot forget that if your friend had had this house to come to, as he ought to have had, he would, in all probability, now have been here. I have been too much occupied with thoughts of myself. It is no longer for me to consider whether his pleasure would be real or not, at the sight of me, or what may be the degree of esteem in which I am held. I believe that his noble nature cannot cease altogether to love the being that has once interested him, if she has not become quite unworthy ; and so believing, I must take every means of endeavouring to let him know it. In a word,

Sir Ralph Esher, while you are seeking in one part, I must seek in another ; and I mention it, that we may arrange the means of informing one another of our movements."

" And Miss Vavasour and Miss Randolph ? "

" They will be well pleased to go with me. Change and variety of scene will do my aunt good ; and Miss Randolph will, I hope, be reconciled to the necessity by the novelty. But I shall send first, and ask her father's permission. You will not think I am trifling, when I add that I ask yours."

I expressed my gratitude. The Countess's delicacy reminded me, that it would be a proper delicacy on my part, to ask formal permission to pay my addresses to her charge. I did so ; and furthermore begged leave to commission her ladyship with a message on my part to the Duke, requesting his sanction of them, and informing him that I was " the one person " whom Sir Philip Herne, in the chance that something might befall him, and the knowledge of the interest I had previously taken in Miss Randolph, had chosen to honour with the secret of the lady's birth.

The Countess avowed her satisfaction in seeing a cavalier of the volatile court of Charles the Second thus fixed by the beauty and merits of her friend, and said, that on every account she should lose not a moment in writing.

The settlement of this point consoled me for the drawback which my pleasure had received in finding that Miss Randolph was not to be left at Mickleham. I was delighted to see the zeal of Lady Vavasour. I was also going away myself, and so far was not sorry to find that my mistress was to be a traveller too. But then we were to go different roads, and my journey would probably be ended before theirs. What a transport would it not have been to steal true-love holidays from court, and have Mickleham Park and Miss Randolph to myself ! On no account could such an arrangement have been made. I turned my attention to my lost friend, reproaching myself for not thinking of him as much as before, and equally resolved to leave nothing untried for his discovery, and to hope that he would soon re-unite us all.

But where to seek him ? None of us dared to own to each other — hardly to ourselves — that it was possible he had fallen ill in some obscure corner of the metropolis. Whenever we bordered upon the mention of it, our silence and looks too

plainly showed what we dared not utter. I little thought what Lady Vavasour would determine upon that night. After introducing me to Miss Vavasour, she passed the remainder of the day with that lady, leaving me to enjoy some hours of delightful consolation with Miss Randolph. The next morning at breakfast she was missing. She had gone to London, to do what I had left undone.

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## CHAPTER V.

I NEED not say how we were surprised next morning at finding Lady Vavasour gone; that is to say, Miss Randolph and myself; for she had told her aunt of her intention during the night, and had received not only her permission, but approbation and encouragement. With a gentleness that amounted to an appearance of timidity, and even weakness, that lady, it seems, had a wonderful degree of enthusiasm, and was remarkable for exhorting those she loved to let nothing stand in the way of acting up to a sense of duty. She had been a good deal agitated when I first saw her. I saw her again after supper, when she appeared as if nothing had happened, with the exception of looking a little paler. She must have been very handsome when young. Her face, though her cheeks were sunk, retained its delicacy of outline; and her figure, though deprived of all the flowing beauty which survived it in the picture by Vandyke, still showed in its carriage and general movements, in spite of the wrapping shawl, the gracefulness that marks the lady *par excellence*. Sickness appeared to have rendered her rather thoughtful than melancholy. She was fairer than her niece, but resembled her in the eyes and smile. The latter was of that touching description, which seems to say, "However unhappy one may be, it is still pleasant to see another pleased."

I had the honour of a most gracious welcome from this lady. She looked at me longer, and more earnestly than, according to Miss Randolph, she had ever done at a stranger before, and I believe she saw that I was conscious of it. At

all events I blushed, and she hastened to relieve me of my doubts, by saying something very kind. I guessed what was the cause of her scrutiny. She wished to see whether I deserved to be the lover of Miss Randolph. However, she was impressed in my favour by the friendship between me and Sir Philip Herne, for whom she had always shown a cordial regard. Miss Randolph had observed, that her behaviour to herself was that of a mother, which she attributed to their being together so often, and to her having nursed Miss Vavasour during two long illnesses. She said, that at the termination of the first of these, which took place soon after the Countess had invited her to take up her abode with them, Miss Vavasour was so affected with her attentions (though to herself they appeared nothing beyond those of common gratitude), that the physician said he had never seen any thing like it, since the death of a relative of Mr. Crashaw's, who was attacked by hydrophobia, and who absolutely expired of insupportable love for his children. He attributed both cases to excessive delicacy in the previous state of the frame, acted upon by an unusual tenderness of heart.

But to return to the Countess:—Miss Randolph, on rising in the morning, received a letter through Miss Vavasour's hands, addressed to her and *to me*. I need not say how this generosity touched me. It was as follows:—

“ Dear Friends,

“ (For so the friend of Sir Philip Herne will allow me to call him),— You will pardon me for not having been as explicit in words as I am on paper, or rather for not having been so sure, as I ought to have been, of the duty I have resolved on. But I present to myself the best of men sick and alone, perhaps attended by people worse than usual; and I dare not forego the remotest chance of being near him. I thought and re-thought, many times: I paced my chamber half the night, and communicated at midnight with my dear aunt. At one time it struck me that I had no right to take this task upon myself; at others, that Sir Philip would think the best of it, whether I had or not: at others, that if I were still necessary to his happiness, I had no right to hazard my own life or health. That reflection, in particular, cost me many tears, and cut my very heart; for it seemed as if I had no choice between

leaving him unsought, and rendering myself liable to the most terrible charge of vanity and self-seeking.

“ But at the end of these and all other reflections the images still returned, of the best of men sick and helpless, perhaps dying for want of a friend ; nay, calling upon the poor wretched friend that knew him so long *without* knowing him ; and then, dear friends, I always felt as if I could not stay an instant longer in the house ; and so I hope all will forgive me if I am away ; for I tremble so with impatience I cannot wait for daylight, since my aunt herself urges me to my duty. She says I never shall forgive myself if I do not go, nor ever be able to look upon *his* face, as a woman that deserves to be his wife ought to look. So, again and again, think the best of me : and if I should die and he come back, tell him to find some one who will know how to value him better than I did, and that I hope to pray for them both in heaven. Only don't say this if it would make him unhappy.

“ My aunt has told the servants that I am going to London on account of a dear friend (Mr. Bennet has been told who). They will guess the truth ; and so let them. God bless Sir Ralph Esher. I thank him — thank him. He, such a friend as he is, will pardon a loving and repenting woman, for thinking that she could discover any thing that might be of service, where he left off. I hope you will receive a letter from me almost without delay, in which I shall be able to tell you more. I go first to my lawyer, and to Dr. Scarborough ; so you see I mean to think of you, and be prudent as well as anxious. I would not take Sir Ralph away. What right had I ? or how could I so interfere with the golden moments of love ? He will keep the house happy till I return, with his wit and sweet thoughts ; which I hope he will exercise on purpose, and for all our sakes. I am already more cheerful, doing my duty ; and I hope we shall all be so. If you are melancholy, Ellen, there is a face in the house will reproach you with its unapproachfulness ; — and this you must not suffer. But you will not be. Is not the blessing of love upon you, and shall it not even yet bless

“ The restored MARGARET ? ”

I believe Miss Randolph wept for an hour over this letter ; but the end with us all was to make the best of our privation,

for everybody's sake. The Countess had not said what she meant to do, though it appeared afterwards she had determined it. It was no less than to suggest to Mr. Waring the raising a hue and cry after his friend on the public walls, and to knock, in her own person, at the door of every plague hospital in London. I felt abashed that I had not done both myself; but love may be allowed to be greater than friendship, and I confess that neither of these measures had entered my imagination. I was agitated enough during my search to be confused, and think little. Love had struck into the heart of the Countess the thoughtfulness as well as zeal of the martyr.

My first impulse was to follow her, but I could do no more than she proposed doing, perhaps not so much; certainly not if Sir Philip was sick, and she succeeded in reaching his bed-side; and Miss Vavasour put a stop to my doubts, by telling me that they not only all expected me to stay, but that the house, to say the truth, had long wanted somebody in it who knew the world, and could protect them against unwelcome visitors. Lady Vavasour, she said, owing to the peculiar circumstances of her widowhood, and of Sir Philip's courtship, had long lived too much like a lady "in a book;" and I will not scruple to express a hope, added she with a charming tear in her eyes, that such times will soon be over, and that this house will repossess its master.

We passed the whole of that day all together. Miss Vavasour, whom I regarded the more the more I knew her, paid me the compliment of understanding my wishes on that subject, and allowing me to subject my impatience for a private walk with Miss Randolph to my sympathy with the common anxiety. And I was amply repaid for what I lost by the calm and approving look of affection which the charming girl did not refuse from time to time to bestow upon me.

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## CHAPTER VI.

We were sitting in the evening in the same spot that we had occupied since dinner, Miss Vavasour very pale and tranquil, Miss Randolph reproaching herself with not being unhappier

than she was, and myself dividing my thoughts between her and Sir Philip, when I suddenly changed colour, and exclaimed, "Good God! what have I forgotten?"

"You are ill, Sir Ralph!" said Miss Vavasour, anxiously.

"Only a painful thought, madam, and of a nature you would not guess. I am sorry to say I must endeavour to lessen it by going to town."

Ellen looked all anxiety and curiosity.

"You take me," I continued, looking from one to the other, "for a good friend, and one who has at least come to man's estate. What will you say, when I tell you that I have left no direction at home for letters to be sent after me; and that, for aught I know to the contrary, there may be this instant a communication waiting me from Sir Philip?"

"You did not know, perhaps," said Miss Vavasour, smiling, but at the same evidently seized with distress on behalf of the Countess, "where you might of a certainty be directed to. At least you had not thought proper to reckon upon it."

"That is true, I replied, "and it is kindly remembered. But the thought should have struck me before. Let me hasten to make amends. Perhaps, even now, I shall be in time to save Lady Vavasour her perilous circuit."

Assistance was afforded me without delay; my horse was brought out, my servant mounted, and with the kindest reassurance from both ladies that they should rejoice to see me return, and felt for my fault no more than if it had been their own, I set out full gallop for London.

"No, nor less," said I, as I was leaving the room.

"No, nor less, if you will have it so," returned Miss Vavasour, looking with affectionate kindness upon me. Ellen gave my hand the strongest pressure it had received from her yet. "We have all our faults," said the dear aunt with tears in her eyes. "What better can we do than be candid and repair them. God bless you, Sir Ralph; you have given us new hope, and we shall endeavour to make the most of it; be assured."

My heart was too full to allow me to speak. I could only bow upon both their hands, kiss them, and depart. In less than an hour I was at Merton, and in less than half an hour more entered Kennington, where Lady Vavasour was to leave



her coach. It was to return next day in case she remained in town.

I was preparing to look upon it with what philosophy I might (for I was resolved to water my horses at the same inn, that I might know she had travelled safely), when I thought I saw the very coach leaving the inn yard, and coming towards me. The livery of the coachman was the same, and there were six horses for speed. The outriders had not been taken with her.

The carriage set off at so hard a rate, that I thought it lucky I had determined not to let it pass me without looking in. But the coachman knew me. In an instant I was inside, holding the trembling hand of the Countess, who was unable to speak. I briefly told her what had brought me on the road. She expressed her thanks by a look, which seemed to say my anxiety was needless; and then made signs to me to bid the coachman drive slower, that her voice might be heard. "I think it necessary to say," observed the Countess, trying, but with little success, to speak calmly, "that the more we have to do, the more I shall endeavour to behave myself, and not give you trouble. I have a paper respecting Sir Philip."

While she was uttering these words, her hands were occupied in detaching, as well as they could, from inside her stomacher, the document in question, which she at length drew forth. It was a leaf which appeared to have been torn with violence out of a ledger, and bore the following alarming words in Sir Philip's hand writing, addressed to his agent:—

" Off Sandown Castle.

" I have been seized, God knows why, and taken on board a brigantine, which—Swedish vessel, but——English privateer. Cap. pretends mistake, which rectify as speedily as —— but ca: alter course. Watched —— cannot learn name of the vessel; but —— Return to France——Tell Mr. Esher not to ——

" P. H."

I endeavoured by my composure to second the efforts of the Countess, who, while I was reading, seemed not to know which way to look.

“Your opinion of what we have to do,” said I, “is excellent. Let us be of good heart, and surely here is something to begin with. Here is life, and here is a mistake.”

“Are you sure of it?” whispered Lady Vavasour.

“Of the life, do you mean? Surely this is a proof of it.”

Seeing her look in a very peculiar manner at the paper, and as if she did not dare to utter what she meant, I observed for the first time, that the ink was red. An involuntary change of countenance betrayed my alarm; but luckily, the outside of the paper was scored with red lines used in account-books. I looked at it, and said, “There is nothing I see, on the outside, but the merchant’s ink. It was fortunate he could get that, otherwise he must have had recourse to the pen of the surgeon, and pricked his finger. However, that is no matter. Dear Lady Vavasour, I begin to see into this business. Sir Philip has been trepanned by some of those scoundrels who dishonour the flags of nations at war, and prowl about like the pirates of Algiers. Their allegation of a mistake is most likely a pretence. Sir Philip’s generosity led him to carry a good deal of property about his person. This was well known aboard the Royal Charles, and some of the crew, depend upon it, have given the intelligence of the privateer. Now it is not for the interest of these men to settle things in a hurry. Sir Philip was watched and prevented from writing. He contrived, however, to slip this hasty document into the hands of some boatman or other stranger; he has learnt, perhaps, from the same man, that the privateer, wherever it may go in the meantime, is bound for the coast of France. She will most probably make the most of Sir Philip’s jewels, and then land him on the coast of France.”

“Unhurt?”

“No doubt of it. Pray endeavour not only to seem to think so, but to do it. These fellows are bad enough, but it is not their interest to do more than rob and plunder. They pretend to be regular, lawful fighters, and under that pretence commit all the unlawfulness they can, consistent with smuggling on a large scale; but they stop short of provoking inquiries for blood. They carry the stranger into a neutral or friendly town; pretend some right of prize, if they are of another nation, or some mistake, if they are not; and the business ends by one of those sacrifices of money, which, as in the case of the law, the payer becomes almost as willing to

look to as the exactor, because he despairs of redress, and is anxious to go about his affairs. And how lucky it is," concluded I, "that as we should go, at all events, in search of our friend, the scene of our inquiry lies so close at hand! We can all go, thank God, together. I can easily get his Majesty's and Lord Buckhurst's permission to join the latter in Paris, instead of attending him on his road; and there will be plenty of time in the interval to look about us."

With this explanation of the matter (which luckily came from me with the more force, inasmuch as I had faith in what I said), I succeeded in strengthening the touching endurance of the Countess, and the prospect of immediate action assisted it further. I could see that the alarming colour of the ink agitated her extremely; but I remembered Sir Philip's observing, that nobody but those who had gone through great sorrows, knew how valuable is the least help to a pleasant thought; and I now had an opportunity of seeing it; for Lady Vavasour not only kept her agitation to herself,—avoiding indeed, the least mention of Sir Philip, where she could help it—but endeavouring to occupy us both by pointing out to my attention the different places and country seats, by which we passed. I observed, however, as she occasionally pointed out a mansion, that her hand never ceased shaking throughout the journey.

On arriving at the door, Miss Vavasour was at the window, and poor Ellen came running out, expecting to find Sir Philip; for in looking out of the carriage window, and waving my hand to them, I had smiled. I did it, to imply that nothing had occurred of a calamitous nature to ourselves, and to prepare them to make the best of what was to be done; but Miss Randolph, young, sanguine, and ready to believe that all other happiness was to follow upon and complete her own, had made up her mind that her troubles were over. I hastened to say that we had some news, and better than we looked for; but this did not hinder her from being greatly alarmed, when she felt the Countess tremble as she kissed her in silence. She concluded that we had discovered Sir Philip; that he was ill of the plague, and that we were not allowed to go near him. I made a brief explanation to the ladies. Miss Vavasour took her niece to her heart, and said, with her usual gratitude for a comfort, "Thank heaven, you have come back to us! We shall now act together, and that is a great blessing?"

## CHAPTER VII.

I NEED not say that we lost no time in crossing the channel. The permission to join Lord Buckhurst at Paris, was easily obtained ; and in the course of a few days, I was busy on the French coast, inquiring at houses, and making friends with smugglers. All the ladies accompanied me wherever a carriage could go ; but Lady Vavasour never quitted my side. If blessings could have helped her, we should soon have made an end ; for what with her beauty and generosity, and the unaffected way in which she reconciled to themselves the inconveniences of their squalid cabins, they seemed not to know whether they should think her a lady or angel. They guessed her secret, however. At another time I should have smiled at the national instinct — indestructible under the rudest mode of life — which discovered invariably that she was in search of a lover or a husband. The inquiries were in general made by myself ; but, whether the Countess spoke or not, the eye, male or female, was sure to glance at her, and pronounce what was sometimes whispered to her companion. The smugglers at first, were very shy, though rarely disposed to be uncivil. The companionableness of “the lady,” soon made them see there was no harm in us. I plainly told them the whole truth, short of her concern in it, which they saw well enough ; and though they sometimes gave us answers, singularly, and, as it should seem, wilfully, distressing for so kind a people, we had the melancholy satisfaction of ascertaining that they really knew very little about the matter. It was in the great trading towns we found we had to inquire.

I will pass over a very melancholy time, by saying, that we inquired to no purpose, both in France and Holland, not by reason of any difficulties owing to the war, for money opened to us every source of information : but we knew not the name of the vessel ; and though our agents made guesses at several, chiefly Dutchmen, which were likely enough to contain our lost friend, yet nothing was known of any one answering his description, nor indeed of any body so remaining in durance. The last person who paid ransom at Flushing, was indeed an English gentleman, but that was before the date of the adven-

ture, and he had long gone home. Lady Vavasour bore her grief as became her, though I could observe that her cheek gradually became thinner. She resolved, while I went to Paris, to settle in a mansion on the coast between France and Holland, so as to have the quickest information of vessels on either side. I saw the ladies fixed with her, and longing, on every account, to make a speedy end of our message to the French king, hastened to join Lord Buckhurst in Paris. At the end of another fortnight I was in England, wondering to find my anxiety so much appeased by these rapid changes of place. Louis's court made our's appear like a parcel of "hail fellows well met," which vexed me, and I tried hard to him dull; which Buckhurst swore that he was. Besides there was a talk of certain monies to be paid to a friend of ours, which made him look like a footman, and which I can never bear to think of.\*

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## CHAPTER VIII.

THE court was then at Oxford, having been driven from Salisbury by some of its retainers, who brought the plague with them from London. As I was obliged to pay my respects to his Majesty before I went anywhere else, I was unable to make my first visit to Sir Philip's agent; but I obtained a letter from him through the office of the Commander-in-chief. There was no intelligence of our friend, nor had any news found its way to Mickleham Park. As to Mr. Waring, he had not been heard of since he left London in August. The imprudence of the Catholics, emboldened by having the Royal Family and the favourites on their side, had again brought them into trouble with those whom it was not convenient for the festive poverty of the court to disoblige; and it was supposed, that it would be even necessary to make a show of renewing some of the old persecutions. Father Waring might, or might not, I thought, be withheld from appearing by these circumstances.

\* This must be an allusion to Charles's becoming a pensioner to the French king. It is the only notice of it in these Memoirs, though the most important and disgraceful event of his reign; but we see what occasioned the author's silence.—*Edit.*

His judgment might be against his party, but his affection would be with them. He was out of favour with the Duke for warning him against too violent a show of his love of Popery, which he had done from the first moment of the return of the Royal Family, when his Highness paid him particular attention, and invited him to give his opinion. From delicacy, therefore, as well as from other feelings, he would now think it incumbent upon him to suffer in company with his brethren. I found afterwards, that he was at once suffering for his party and searching for his friend.

The plague had been decreasing as the winter advanced. At length a heavy fall of snow seemed entirely to quench it, though multitudes still died in consequence of the long series of afflictions. The court itself returned to Whitehall, in February, which was not sooner than any timid gentleman might be seen thereabouts; and yet such had been the dread inspired among the gentry, that scarcely a coach was to be seen in the streets, but what came in its train.

Lady Vavasour had begged that I would consider myself master of Mickleham Park during her absence, and Miss Randolph hoped I should visit it frequently. I used it therefore as if it had been a country-house of my own, and never failed to be struck by the transition from noise to tranquillity, and *vice versa*, which my journey to and from town presented. Gay as the court had always been, I think I never knew it so much so as at that time. The plague seemed to have acted upon it like a fright, which, though it was too frightened to speak of at the time, it had felt severely, and was resolved to be revenged upon in due season. Accordingly, lords and ladies, men and maids of honour, King, Duke, and every one else (except the poor Queen, who had had a second miscarriage), were like a parcel of children come home for the holidays. Business had accumulated like debt; but it was all thrust off upon Monk, Coventry, and Hyde, who paid dearly for their love of power in the abuse plentifully lavished upon them for every thing which the favourites made to go wrong; and as if this were not enough they abused one another. The King, it is true, did what he could to expedite money matters, by making acquaintance with Members of Parliament, and taking them into corners by the button; but in this he had an eye to his pleasures, and to the diminution of business itself. To be sure, he lost as much by

it as he gained, for he was obliged to make promises which he could not fulfil; and then he was afraid to see peoples' faces; and men that loved and would have died for him in May, came to hate him by September. He was also obliged to lie a good deal, which became inconvenient to more persons than himself. I remember his telling me once, when he wanted a rich old country gentleman to do him a service, that he intended to make him a baron. The old gentleman was an acquaintance of mine; so to make him happy, and to quicken his good offices, I did as I saw the King wished me to do, and announced to him his good fortune. When the service was performed, the good man was inconsiderate enough to thank his Majesty beforehand. The King put on a grave face, and said he had never expressed any such intention. As ill-luck would have it, I happened to come upon them at the moment, and the poor gentleman had the innocence to appeal to me as his authority. I said, with as much impudence as I could muster up, and not without a wish to give his Majesty a rap on his sacred knuckles (for I never became a finished courtier, or I should have been a Viscount by this time), that I had been under a great mistake, and that his Majesty certainly never had any such intention.

"But you told me he had expressed it," said the honest-hearted gentleman.

"I did so," said I, gaily, "but it was a misconception on my part. I confounded one intention of his Majesty's with another, and am quite certain that he never designed any such thing."

My old friend went about, telling everybody how ill I had used him; and the King thought proper not to look on me for two or three days.

To give an instance, however, of this monarch's good humour, and of his placability when in the wrong (an excellent quality, for anybody may be placable when in the right), I shall carry this story to the end. Seeing him suffer under his alienation (for he believed what I said, and liked to talk with me,) I cut my chin a little on the fourth day, and went dabbling it in his presence.

"The barber has cut your chin, Mr. Esher," said his Majesty.

"Pardon me, sir, I cut it myself."

“How did you do that, Ralph?”

“I was in despair, sir, at your Majesty’s not directing a word to me for these three days; so I cut my chin, being sure that your Majesty would be kind enough to make your present inquiry.”

The King laughed, and was excellent friends with me directly. “’Tis a wise despair, Ralph,” said he, “that cuts its chin instead of its throat.”

“Ah, sir,” I replied, “suicides ought to consider, more than they do, the feelings of those for whom they suffer. I know your Majesty would have me stop short of my throat, so instead of *sui* I became a *mentumicide*.”

“The idea is judicious,” returned the King, “though I doubt the compound is hardly warrantable; for you have not been the death of your chin. I wish Pownall would cut his, and give a piece to the Viscount.\* Touching your suicides, I suspect they are as often sulky and stupid as anything else. They hope to vex somebody. I remember a little girl in the Low Countries, not more than twelve years old, who went and threw herself into the canal, because her sister refused to give her sugar with her bread and butter. She vowed she would make her repent the refusal, and this was her way of doing it.”

His Majesty was a very shrewd as well as lively observer. I know not whether kings can be good judges of suicide, but the principle of vexing somebody goes a great way. I can easily believe that there are people, who if they were prevented by circumstances or scruples from cutting your throat, will cut their own rather than not cause you distress. It is a kind of malignant appeal to your pity,—a bequeathing of their memory to you on any terms. According to Sir Philip’s mode of thinking, there would be a compliment in it, nay, even a perverted sociability, a resentment for not being more in your thoughts while living. I confess I should be inclined to look upon it in a worse light. I should doubt the love that could be all retrospect for itself, and bad prospect for me. But then it would not think of all this. It is in too great a hurry. Let me at all events treat the opinions of my friend with reverence, for generosity and hope were ever sure to be with him.

\* Who these gentlemen were does not appear.



The sanguineness of my temper kept me in a constant expectation of my friend's return, though we now counted his absence by months instead of weeks. At the end of a year we concluded the vessel had taken a long voyage before its intended revisit to the coast of France, on the limits of which Lady Vavasour still continued. The proclamation had produced no notice; Sir Philip was known to few at court except the Duke of Ormond and his family. The latter made such inquiries of me from time to time, as showed what a hold he had taken of their hearts; and Miss Hamilton used to watch my face when she saw me among them, till somebody asked the usual question. As to the Duke of Ormond, I was tantalized by perpetual expectations of his arrival, and disappointments. The interests of Ireland, a country that seemed placed by the side of the larger one for nothing but bad behaviour on either side, like an ill-assorted parent and child, incessantly required his presence; and the cabals of his enemies at court, particularly of Buckingham, as incessantly seemed to demand his appearance there, for the very sake of the country he governed. He preferred, as usual, his undoubted to his probable duty; and put his visits off, to my unspeakable impatience. I would have found some occasion to go over to Ireland myself; but delicacy withheld me; for the truth was, I was as good a friend of the King, as I was an ill courtier; and my income was yet so small, that not choosing to treat Miss Randolph on a footing less than that of any other young lady, and understanding that her father intended to do as much as lay in his power for the husband he should approve, it became me on no account to press a matter, which was nevertheless very near my heart. As a man of birth, and one who had prospects under government, I had pretensions which in the course of a few years might have warranted my paying my addresses to anybody. I delighted to think this, both as a compliment to my mistress, and as a set-off to the pride of the Duke of Ormond, whose delay sometimes piqued me a little. I thought I saw in it an indifference, perhaps a disinclination; and fancied, that if he had liked the match, he might have done what he could for it at a distance, as well as in England. I found afterwards, that having been made acquainted with my former levity towards Miss Randolph, he wished to make a further trial of my attachment. He need not have been afraid.

Absence, and the effect her letters had upon me, would have proved to me that I really loved, had I not known it by the delight I took in her presence. I longed to grow rich for her by my own means, and sometimes regretted that the charm of Sir Philip's friendship had encouraged in me a nicety of conscience, inconvenient to a rising statesman. At other times, I had a passionate desire to be a soldier. I thought, that besides carrying me by a short road to glory and riches it would be a help to the discovery of my friend: but a little reflection, aided by the melancholy stories of gentlemen volunteers, their jaundices, their deaths, and, above all, the lingering disease of their tailors' bills, put an end to that fancy; especially as I might leave one part of the world, which was the centre of news, only to be fixed in another where I could hear nothing. Miss Randolph's letters described Lady Vavasour as very quiet and amiable,—seldom saying any thing of Sir Philip, but evidently in a constant state of anxiety, and unable to help showing it in her countenance at the least approach of any one to the house. She had planted her daily chair at a window commanding the avenue; and the commonest visitor could not make his appearance, not excepting the gardener coming to his work, but she watched till she ascertained whether he brought any news. Miss Vavasour was almost always with her; nor had there been a time when the three ladies appeared to be so much wrapped up in one another, or pursued their task of reading and working with a spirit of more resolute sympathy; I mean with a greater endeavour to make the best of their position.

I was pondering on these things one night as I was sitting in the parlour at Mickleham, looking at a beautiful moon, and delaying to go to bed, when Bennett came in and told me that there was a dreadful fire in London. One of the tradesmen had brought news of a dreadful fire the day before; but as every fire was dreadful, and I had seen the good people of London run away from a cow, crying out, a "mad bull," I had thought nothing of it, and was prepared to think as little of the new one. The old gentleman, however, assuring me that both fires were one and the same, that it had burnt a whole night and day, and was visible as far as Epsom, I thought it time to see into the truth of the matter. I ordered my horse, and promising to bring back a correct account, purely

to satisfy the house that there was no such thing (for some of the domestics had kindred in London), I set off at a round gallop, looking towards the north, as if I could already discern what I had doubted. Nobody was stirring at Leatherhead; but at Epsom, sure enough, there was a great commotion, all the people being at their doors, and vowing they saw the fire; which, however, I could not discern. That there was a fire, however, and a dreadful one, was but too certain, from accounts brought into the town both by travellers and the inhabitants; so, with the natural curiosity which draws us on and on upon much less occasions, especially on a road, I pushed forward, and soon had pretty clear indications of a terrible fire indeed. I began to consider what the King might think of it, and whether he would not desire to have his active servants about him. At Morden the light was so strong, that it was difficult to persuade one's-self the fire was not much nearer; and at Tooting you would have sworn it was at the next village. The night was, nevertheless, a very fine one, with a brilliant moon.\* Not a soul seemed in bed in the villages, though it was ten o'clock. There was a talk of the French, as if they had caused it. By degrees, I began to meet carts laden with goods; and on entering the borders of Southwark, the expectation of the scene was rendered truly awful, there was such a number of people abroad, yet such a gazing silence. Now and then one person called to another; but the sound seemed as if in bravado, or brutish. An old man, in a meeting of cross-roads, was haranguing the people in the style of former years, telling them of God's judgments, and asserting that this was the pouring out of that other vial of wrath, which had been typified by the Fiery Sword,—a spectacle supposed to have been seen in the sky at the close of the year sixty-four. The plague was thought to have been announced by a comet.

Very different from this quieter scene, was the one that presented itself, on my getting through the last street, and reaching the water-side. The comet itself seemed to have come to earth, and to be burning and waving in one's face, the whole city being its countenance, and its hair flowing towards

\* Evelyn, speaking of this night, says that it was "light as day for ten miles round about, after a dreadful manner."—*Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 391, second edit. 4to. Sir Ralph does not seem to make the light so strong, though he does not absolutely say it was otherwise. Perhaps Evelyn speaks of a later hour. The flares appear to have become visible afterwards to the distance of forty miles.—*Edit.*

Whitehall in a volume of fiery smoke. The river was of a bloodish colour like the flame, and the sky over head was like the top of a pandemonium. From the Tower to St. Paul's there was one mass of fire and devastation, the heat striking in your eyes, and the air being filled with burning sparkles, and with the cries of people flying, or removing goods on the river. Ever and anon distant houses fell in, with a sort of gigantic shuffling noise, very terrible. I saw a steeple give way, like some ghastly idol, its long white head toppling, and going sideways, as if it were drunk. A poor girl near me, who paced a few yards up and down, holding her sides as if with agony, turned and hid her eyes at this spectacle, crying out, "Oh, the poor people! oh, the mothers and babies!" She was one of the lowest of an unfortunate class of females. She thought, as I did, that there must be a dreadful loss of lives; but it was the most miraculous circumstance of that miraculous time, that the fire killed nobody, except some women and infirm persons with fright.

I took boat, and got to Whitehall, where I found the King in a more serious and stirring humour than ever I saw him. Mr. Pepys, begging God to forgive him for having an appetite at such a crisis, and interrupting his laughter at the supper they gave him, with tears of pity and terror, had brought word to his Majesty that the whole city would be destroyed, if some of the houses were not blown up. The King accordingly not only despatched myself and many others to assist, but went in person with his brother, and did a world of good. I never saw him look so grim, or say so many kind things. Wherever he went he gave the people a new life, for they seemed dead with fright. Those who had not fled (which they did by thousands into the fields where they slept all night), seemed only to have been prevented from doing so, by not knowing what steps to take. The Lord Mayor, a very different one from his predecessor, who showed a great deal of courage during the plague, went about like a mad cook with his handkerchief, perspiring, and lamenting himself; and nobody would have taken the citizens for the same men who settled my court friends at the battle of Naseby. The court, however, for that matter, was as frightened as the city, with the exception of the King and one or two others; so terrible is a new face of danger, unless there is some peculiar reason for meeting it.

The sight indeed of the interior of the burning city was more perilous, though not so awful, as its appearance outside. Many streets consisted of nothing but avenues between heaps of roaring ruins ; the sound of the fire being nothing less than that of hundreds of furnaces, mixed up with splittings, rattlings, and thunderous falls ; and the flame blowing frightfully one way, with a wind like a tempest. The pavement was hot under one's feet ; and if you did not proceed with caution, the fire singed your hair. All the water that could be got seemed like a ridiculous dabbling in a basin, while the world was burning around you. The blowing up of the houses marked out by the King was the ultimate salvation of some of the streets that remained ; but as a whole, the city might be looked upon as destroyed. I observed the King, as he sat on his horse at the beginning of Cheapside, and cast his eyes up that noble thoroughfare : and certainly I had never seen such an expression in his countenance before. Some said that he now began to see the arm of heaven in these visitations, and that he resolved to bethink himself from that time and lead a new life. I know not how that was. The new life certainly was not led ; but his thoughts were very solemn : perhaps they would have been more so, had not a madman pretended to show him the arm of heaven literally stretched over the city, "like unto the arm of a blacksmith ;" and had not another afterwards (who got hung for it) pretended that he had helped to set the city on fire, and that the Papists had employed him. The poor wretch was himself a Papist, and numbers believed in him. Others said the French did it ; others the Dutch ; and others the old Republicans ; particularly as the 3rd of September, that is to say, the day on which it did not break out, was the anniversary of Cromwell's victory of Dunbar. Many thought that all these, Papists and Protestants, had made up a plot ; but the opinion that secretly obtained most ground, was, that it was a punishment for the sin of gluttony ; the greatest argument, next to the looks and consciences of the aldermen, being the appalling fact that the fire began at Pudding lane, and ended at Pie corner. The fire raged four days and nights ; and on the fifth of September London, from the Tower to Fleet Street, was as if a volcano had burst in the midst of it, and destroyed it, the very ruins being calcined, and nothing remaining in the most populous

part, to show the inhabitants where they had lived, except a church here and there, or an old statue. I looked into it three days afterwards, when the air was still so hot, that it was impossible to breathe; and the pavement absolutely scorched the soles of my shoes.

The loss of property by the fire was of course far greater than that by the plague, and yet assuredly it was not felt a thousandth part so much, even in the city; for money, even with the lovers of it, is not so great a thing, after all, as their old habits and affections. The wits at court never chose to say much about the plague; but the fire, after the fright was over, was a standing joke. And the beneficial consequences to the city itself soon became manifest, in the widening and better building of the streets, an improvement which came in aid of the cleanliness that was resorted to against the plague; so that instead of a judgment against the King and his government, Rochester said, in his profane way, that heaven never showed a judgment of a better sort.

The poets called that year the *Annus Mirabilis*. Mr. Dryden wrote some verses on it, in which all his wonders consisted of the fire, and the fight at sea. But the fight was not more wonderful than that of the preceding year, described in these pages, except that Rochester behaved well in it; and the fire, though vast and overwhelming, never impressed me throughout with the depth of awe, occasioned by the presence of that death in the streets, the "Lord have mercy" upon the doors, the stories I heard of pest-carts and pits, and the spectacles I saw of that madman as if in his grave-clothes, and the other who accosted me. Mr. Dryden should have added to his list of wonders the belief given to lying Dick Talbot, when he swore he would kill the Duke of Ormond; and the pulling of wigs between the most noble the Marquis of Dorchester, and the high and mighty prince George, Duke of Buckingham.

In my mind, the next year should have been recorded as more wonderful; for it not only contained the flight, imprisonment, and restoration, to favour of the said Duke, the real rage of the King at Miss Stewart's marriage, the downfall of Clarendon, and "the death of the ever young and immortal old Cowley" (as Rochester called him), but I saw the Dutch fairly up the river, burning our ships in our very teeth; and furthermore, I saw, *hisce oculis*, the whole court in a quiver

of consternation at the news, already fancying them at Whitehall-stairs, and wanting to go to York out of the way! I mention no names, but the thing is true, and it was all but universal; I mean, throughout those bold and patriotic precincts. The citizens were finely laughed at during the fire, for running away by whole streets full, at the cry of the "French are coming;" but they might have turned the tables upon us with interest, if they had seen —— and ——, asking with pale faces what was to be done, and —— helping the ladies to pack up. "And the women!" said Killigrew, "what in the name of God had *they* to fear." "Nothing in the name of God," said I; "but you will allow there was something in the name of Dutchmen."

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## CHAPTER IX.

As I had a story of the plague, so I have one of the fire, not so pleasing perhaps to happy lovers, but surely as strange. Sir Christopher Wren told it me, when he came to court upon the business of the new churches. It concerns a personage, known for many years in one of the streets of the city by the name of Dirty Levens, an appellation under which nobody would have suspected a romance to lie hid. He was a man of great wealth and respectability in his trade, which was that of a cloth merchant; and, though careless in his appearance, and indifferent to the regards of the frequenters of his shop, was remarkable for the softness of his address to women.

This person, who for many years together had been seen occasionally at the door of his shop, looking like any thing but a gallant, and for nearly as many more totally disappeared from it, having never stirred from some upper apartments at the back of the house, was suddenly seen after the fire, dressed (for him) as if he meant to be a bridegroom in his old age, and courteously receiving the thanks of all whom he had assisted during the calamity; which were not a few. In the hurry of his assistance, scarcely anybody had recognized him; but when he had the good fortune (for so it seemed) to have his house burnt down, and a great part of his property destroyed,

he seemed to rise from the dead with the new street, and everybody wondered to behold him.

It seems, that at the age of forty, Mr Levens was about to lead to the altar a beautiful woman, whom he had courted for a dozen years. She had been pursued with ill intentions by a nobleman, who unfortunately made an impression on her heart. A discovery of his designs revolted her, but not without affliction; and though her father turned him away from the door, yet the old gentleman was so impressed with a love of rank, that he behaved coldly to the new lover, weakly avowing his inclination for a lord, and hoping that another, and better than the last, would do justice to his daughter. This naturally threw a great deal of delicacy and diffidence into the approaches of the young merchant. His visits were rare and short; but he was of a temper which difficulties made zealous; and his passion increased by the very means which his father took to destroy it. One visit from him was as good as a thousand from a common lover. In two years he seemed to have known his mistress twenty. In the course of two or three more, he avowed his love, which had long been plain enough, and which the mother encouraged; nor had the heart, which he valued the more, the more he knew it, remained insensible. The father, however, would not give his consent. The mother, touched by an assiduity which flattered not only herself and her daughter, but the whole sex, (of whose praises, with a sort of honest cunning, Mr. Levens was not sparing,) grew more zealous in his behalf, in proportion to her husband's objections; the dispute grew into a family quarrel; and for the space of the next five or six years, the merchant scarcely saw his mistress; "at least," said he, "not in the ordinary way; but she was almost always before my imagination. I rose with her in the morning; went to bed, saying a prayer for her, as if her hand was in mine; and I loved the very name of woman for her sake." By this we may see, that notwithstanding his being a tradesman, Mr. Levens was a proper enthusiast in love, and knew how to express the passion. Indeed he was a very intelligent man, though a little shy and wanting in address on ordinary occasions. He was fond of books and music; and the way in which Sir Christopher became acquainted with him, was a meeting of the wardens of his parish, respecting a new church, when he delivered some opinions on architecture which



surprised the builder, and made the rest of the company doubt whether his solitude had not been owing to the excess of his learning. He made a selection of some of the most beautiful passages of Italian poetry with his own hand, having learnt the language on purpose to read Petrarch.

At the expiration of the six years, the father died; and he so died, that the mother and daughter could not only admit the visits of their constant friend without uneasiness, but a tender conscience would have been violated in doing otherwise; for the old gentleman had expressed his regret at leaving his daughter without a protector, and with the selfishness common to such minds in their most affectionate moments, had exacted from her a promise that she would marry her lover as soon as possible, and nobody else. It must be added, that his finances had grown worse and worse, in consequence of his living in a style to warrant the addresses of a nobleman; while, on the other hand, the cloth of Mr. Levens had turned into so much cloth of gold.

The mother, with her still blooming daughter, a beautiful woman of eight and twenty, now came to London, for the purpose of seeing her married to Mr. Levens. Twelve years had elapsed since our enamoured merchant first saw his mistress: he was now forty; and a momentary regret would cross him that he had not been able to marry ten years sooner; but then he reflected that he should begin life as it were again; that he should have a double youth; and that had he been more fortunate earlier, he could not have known how long a charming woman would have waited for him.

The wedding day was fixed: no friends were invited: they were to be feasted a week or two afterwards: for the present, every thing was to be kept snug and quiet. Mr. Levens hardly knew that anybody existed but his mistress, not even her mother. How was he to have eyes for his friends? And then the secrecy was more becoming. The weather, after long rain, was suddenly beautiful; the lady, who had never been in town before, was shown all the sights in London and Westminster; happy days were spent in making her acquainted with every thing familiar to himself, as if they were not to have a thought but in common; and on the morning of the happiest day of all, the sun arose in the splendour so beautifully described in the Psalm, "coming forth out of his chamber like a bridegroom, and rejoicing to run his course."

Two hours after breakfast, Mr. Levens was waiting for his mistress, in a room with which she had declared herself highly pleased. He expressed his fears that she would find the city houses dull, after those of the country. "I did it," said he, "partly because I thought so, and partly that she might contradict me, and show me how she preferred my dull house to her garden and her fine prospect." And he told her so. She laughed, and said, that "this room had a garden too, for there was an elm tree, which it looked upon; and as to prospect, they should there pass their days together, which was the happiest prospect she desired, in this world or the next.

The door of this apartment was opened at the time he expected, and the mother came in alone. She smiled, but looked pale and anxious. She informed him, "that her daughter had been taken ill in the night with a fever. It was a sharp attack, and the physician had been sent for; but all would no doubt be well in a few days, as her child was of a good constitution, and had never been ill before." Alas! this good constitution probably gave way under the sudden blow, sooner than would have been the case with a less hardy one. In a word, the young lady had been seized with one of those sudden colds and fevers too common with visitors of the metropolis who have not been there before, and who make sudden changes in hours and clothing. With all her sweetness and good sense, she was not without a portion of the vanity natural to one of her face and person (Mr. Levens called it a wish to please), and she had imprudently adopted a style of dress she had been unused to. The mother made some remonstrances, but acquiesced at sight of the improvement it made in her appearance. In a few days she saw her daughter consigned to the grave.

From that day, our unfortunate citizen, from one of the neatest and most conversable of men, became one of the slovenliest and the most reserved. He never said a word of his betrothed bride; nor did people in general see any change in the expression of his face, which was naturally contemplative. But every one remarked how careless he had become in his dress — how uncombed his hair was — how squalid his hands and face. At length he acquired the title of Dirty Levens: nor did he seem to care for it. The boys would sometimes salute him with it, as he stood casting an indifferent eye on

the passengers at his door; but his indifference became none the less. His windows partook of the dirt. People said it would hurt his business; but as he was observed to have more custom than ever, others said he did it to attract attention. The rumour of this charge came to his ears. He looked quiet at it, and said nothing; but it was noticed from that time, that he suffered his windows to be cleaned, and that he himself disappeared from his doorway.

This latter change was owing to an old servant, who being of a scrupulous cleanliness, and seeing her master so unlike his former self, had often wished to let him know that she did not think it became him. Affection and reverence had hitherto kept her silent, as well as somewhat of fear, for she had never seen him so moved with anger as when he found the room dusted, the day it had been re-opened after the funeral. He permitted it to be dusted thenceforward, as well as the other rooms, but not a particle in it was to be moved. The furniture all stood in the same places: two chairs, in one of which she had sat, were near the table; and on the table were some decanters and glasses, which looked for twenty years as if they had awaited her coming.

At the period I am speaking of, a violent wind blew open the casement, and threw down one of these glasses. Mr. Levens saw it when he next went into the room, and sternly inquired of the old woman, why she had dared to move any thing in that room. The woman, struck dumb at his manner, pointed to the window, which reminded him of the storm that had taken place in the night. He softened directly, and, for the first time since his calamity, alluded to his loss.

“I would have it the same for ever,” said he, “as she left it—the same as myself.”

“Ah, sir,” said the old woman, “the room is the same, but not you.”

“How so, Martha? I hope I am not unkind. You must forgive me on this occasion.”

“You are unkind to nobody but yourself,” said the old servant, shaking her head.

“I am not unkind to myself,” mildly answered Mr. Levens. “I am kind: I do not wish to distress myself; I wish for nothing but to be the same as I was, and to remain so, till I

join her. I am older, it is true ; but I was not very young then."

"But those hands, sir, and that dress. Forgive me, dear Mr. Richard" (for so she called him from a youth), "but I always fear for your health, and God does not love dirt."

"Does he not?" said Mr. Levens, smiling: "Why, do you know what this dirt, as you call it, is? 'Tis the stuff of which the earth is made—of which we are all made—except the blessed angels; and what care I for this hand, except that she touched it! 'Tis the same hand, Martha, that she touched. I grudged the first drop of water I put to it."

"You may grudge the blessed water, sir; but it is not the same hand."

"Not the same hand?"

"No, sir: your bridegroom's hand was as clean and white as any lord's in the land, and so was my young lady's. I think I see it now, and yours laid upon it on that table, for I remember you pressed it in that manner, when she praised the room. Then your hand was your own hand; but now!—I would not swear that if she was to see it, she——"

"Hold, Martha, say not a word more: and say not a word when you see me again. You will not be the less in the right for it, nor shall I cease to think so."

Next morning Mr. Levens appeared at breakfast, an altered man, as far as hands and face went. Martha said nothing, and he did not look at her. She hoped he would now go abroad, and live and be merry like the rest of the world; for though he suffered her to have as many visitors as she pleased, and had himself a regular party of friends every week, who played music, and discoursed of what was going on, new inventions in philosophy and the arts, he had hitherto altered not one of his other habits, nor ever gone out of the house but for an evening walk, which he always took in one spot. But he disappointed her, for he now discontinued even that. He no longer appeared, even in the shop. He confined himself entirely to the floor containing the apartment above-mentioned, and to the little garden containing the elm-tree; having no better reason, he said, in the first instance, than a foolish shame at what his neighbours would say of the change in his appearance. Gradually, however, he got a dislike of going out, on its own account, and then an absolute dread of it; the addi-

tional delicacy of health produced by this mode of life, increasing the evil which ought to have been conquered for its sake. In this way he lived for ten years more ; his business going on well by means of his foreman, who was taken by strangers for himself, and he all the while inhabiting an imaginary world, in which the strangest thoughts that could come were those of the former common places about him ; so that he said, when the King was restored, it appeared not at all astonishing to himself, though it amazed his friends ; nor, if adventures a thousand times more marvellous had taken place, would they have seemed to him half so bewildering, as the idea of the street out of doors which he had known from a boy, and of a parcel of people going to and fro upon business, common to the men in his own warehouse. Whatever of a common everyday nature presented itself to his mind, was painful, and seemed new. All that was strange, was a relief, and reconciled the world to his fancy.

“ I felt this,” said Mr. Levens, “ without exactly knowing why, till the light suddenly broke in upon me, together with this dreadful fire. The cry of fire, and the sight of it close upon me, put me at first into despair for my room. I then thought of my old servant, and having seen her in safety, I thought of others. It occurred to me like a flash of lightning that the beloved person whose memory I worshipped, would wish me to be of use to my fellow-creatures. I wondered I had never thought of it before. I begged her pardon and her assistance in a brief prayer (for love had made me a sort of Catholic), and, after helping my foreman to look to the safety of our own premises, I flew among my neighbours, taking a box from this, and a parcel from that, plunging into rooms, and removing furniture ; in short, busying myself, as if I would make up for the idleness of twenty years. Nobody, for my activity, could have suspected who I was, even if anybody, in that dreadful emergency, could have thought of inquiring. It was with more anguish than I can express, that I saw my house consumed. My heart failed me, in spite of my new efforts ; and, seated in a little bed-room at Lambeth, to which place I had helped a sick neighbour, I was casting in my mind in what corner to take refuge, when word was brought me that London was no more !—that thousands of houses were burnt as well as my own ;—that my own street and all the others

around it were a heap of undistinguishable ruins; and that millions of men, including my oldest acquaintances, would have to begin life anew.

“On the announcement of this calamity (and you,” concluded Mr. Levens, addressing Sir Christopher, “will judge me charitably when I say it,) I rose up like a new man. If the world was new to so many others, it might be new to me; and I found it so. There was a new face of things, which no longer made me sick at heart and in fancy. The church alone had escaped a destruction which involved every other building dear to my eyes; and that too assisted me, for my thought of her was what it is now, and ever will be (it is the same as my hopes of heaven); and there the church stood as I did, containing in its heart the same treasure in an altered world,—altered in every respect, but that I was an altered man; I mean, that I had recommenced my pilgrimage in a way that she would have approved. I no longer refused to speak of her, at least to a man whose mind it is an honour to be unreserved with, like yours;” (for I must repeat what he said on that head, observed Wren, out of justice to himself,) “and when I lay my head at night on my pillow, I please myself with thinking, that I am so much the nearer heaven,—not doubtfully as before, when I doubted the very existence of happiness—but with the decent confidence, which in all cases seems the reward of exertion.”

Sir Christopher admitted Mr. Levens to his friendship; and thirteen years afterwards, at the age of seventy-four, saw his earthly remains deposited by the side of her, the companionship of whose memory, notwithstanding the living death it had caused him in the interval, seemed to have gifted him, in his old age, with the hopefulness and activity of youth.

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## CHAPTER X.

AFTER the fire, a monument was set up, with a great lie upon it; to wit, that the disaster had been caused by the Papists. At least it was a great assumption, and unproved. There was, however, as great a truth in the sculpture; namely, the dis-

satisfaction in his Majesty's countenance; and the priests and jesuits were banished, equally to his discontent. However, Miss Stewart let him present her with a pair of stockings.

Before the year was out, the talk was stronger than ever, that this lady was to carry every thing before her, and be queen. In the course of the new *Annus Mirabilis*, it turned out, that she preferred carrying a little Earl before her, for she married the Duke of Richmond. "Without speaking a word to any one," said Friar Talbot, "she bade adieu to the court." The King took it greatly to heart, thinking himself not only robbed, but cheated. To say the truth, he was in a most unsophisticate rage, and inclined to quarrel with all of us. Clarendon suffered the most: nay, some think, that ultimately he was the only one that suffered at all; for the Duke of Richmond and the King were observed, not long after, to be as loving over their wine, as if nothing had happened. The Chancellor had been going down a long time; but this accident precipitated him. Charles thought him at the bottom of it; which was likely enough; though he protested that he knew no more of it than his Majesty. Be this as it may, his enemies seized the opportunity, and down he went. His subsequent flight is well known. I saw him when he came to give up the seals. Castlemain came in her undress into the balcony, to see him return; and did not scruple, in his hearing, to laugh and make merry on his gout. Arlington and Bab May were at her side. The old man looked up, his face turning to its wonted colour, and said (I thought with great dignity), "Madam, you will be old yourself."

I was told afterwards, that her ladyship said, though not loud enough for him to hear, "She might be as old as any one else, but that she should take care not to make a brute of herself with eating; nor should she tell a parcel of lies with a pious face."

Her triumph at that period was complete; her rival was got rid of; her enemy lost his place; and her cousin and rival favourite, the Duke of Buckingham, after risking his head (at least he would have done so under any other prince), was restored to favour through her intervention. Nevertheless, in the course of a few weeks, I saw her at the play, looking as melancholy as a cat (for she could never hide her feelings), because the King was looking at Moll Davis. Moll had just

been dancing a saraband, and her ladyship thought, that the saraband being over, the King might as well look another way. Somebody had brought her word, that Miss Davis had a fine coach waiting for her at the playhouse-door, and that everybody took off their hats when she came out of it.

The vagaries of the Duke of Buckingham had come to their crisis that year. Having accustomed himself to every indulgence that the human mind can think of, he had acquired the will of a sovereign without the power; and a foolish fellow, with whom he dabbled in astrology, persuaded him that the discontents against Charles might raise him to the throne. My old friend, Mr. Braythwaite, who had a kinsman in his service, and who, under the guise of being his spy, turned out to be a spy upon his Grace, showed his usual generosity towards the persons he condescended to cheat. He betrayed him in so handsome a manner to the King, that his Majesty saw how the matter stood at once, and what a great baby he had about him, in the person of this witty Duke. Charles thought it high time, however, to put an end to absurdities, which might force him to cut off the head of his old acquaintance; not to mention, that in some unfortunate astrological moment, the two sovereigns, the real and the pretended, might be put into an awkward position before the public, and be compelled, in self-defence, to expose the respective habits that led the one to be so forgiving, and the other so presumptuous.

For years past, Buckingham had been in the habit of talking in a very lax manner of Charles. The King had often reproached him with it; but with the acuteness and knowledge of mankind that never forsook him, even when he was most playing the fool, his Grace used partly to deny it, and partly to defend himself on the plea, that the more he loved the King, the more impatient he grew sometimes when his Majesty was unkind to him; for none, he said, spoke so ill of one another in their passion, as those who were the most loving out of it. They could least bear the unkindness that led to the enormity. If the King readily admitted the excuse, the Duke was all gratitude and agreeableness; if he hesitated, some impudent allusion was made to the quarrels of royal friends, or their mistresses; always, however, in a tone of unwilling desperation, and of an impatience to be forgiven



and made penitent. At all events, the King was sure to forgive, if for no reason but indolence, and a wish not to disturb his supper. Buckingham then seized the opportunity of saying a world of pleasant and adoring things; and it was noticed, that the good-humoured prince was never so gay, either with him or Castlemain, as after a quarrel. Times altered in that respect at last.

Castlemain and Buckingham were far from being always good friends. There was not such bitter enmity between them, as was supposed. They cared too little for one another, and were too fond of their ease and gaiety. But there had been little love between them from childhood. They were nearly related enough to put into their quarrels something of the exacting injustice of ties without affection. Buckingham, in right of his father, thought himself hereditary favourite of the monarchy; and Castlemain thought, with some justice, that she was the monarchy itself. He tried to get a power over her, of a new and tenderer sort; but great as was the licence which she allowed herself, and small the merits to which she could be indulgent, nobody was more peremptory than her ladyship in vindicating the dignity of disinclination. Buckingham got hold of some of her letters. She laughed at him. He got hold of some of Charles's, and the King was frightened.

Nothing convinced Buckingham with more certainty that the King was finally resolved to punish him for his delinquencies, than the fact of his Majesty's having got over his fear of the publication of these letters. He began to think that the King had discovered some of his own, of a nature still more alarming; and this was true. Buckingham could distress the King — could make him ridiculous — perhaps could seriously endanger his interest; but the King had that in his possession, which would have made the Duke unable to exist in the country. In the midst of his cantings with the Puritans, his laughter with the republican wits, his tampering with the astrologers, and his encouragements (more serious than all) of a disaffected body of seamen, ill paid, and ready to invade the King's kitchen for hunger — (for, with all the naval splendour of this reign, and the King's real turn for its encouragement, it was the old seamen of Cromwell that gained us our victories, while they received nothing from us but praise and bad pay)

— the discovery of the correspondence alluded to, fell upon the Duke like a clap of thunder. It was followed by an order for his arrest. He immediately made the most submissive protestations in writing; but as he was horribly frightened, and attempted to bargain for a security, which the King refused to grant, our astrological monarch was forced to hide himself for months, being absolutely so much reduced at last for want of a corner, that he was fain to turn to account his old practice of sleeping by day, which he would do in the obscurest lodgings, and then wander forth by night to seek another. At length this course of life appearing but a sorry kind of lingering death to a personage of his Grace's habits, and the King affording him some glimpses of reconciliation, he surrendered himself and was taken to the Tower, earnestly entreating, though in vain, that he might first be admitted to his Majesty's presence. He knew that if he had but five minutes' talk with him, it was all over with his indignation. He might have made himself easy, however, if he could. The moment of his surrender was the signal for Charles to indulge his easy disposition. A show was made of an examination; letters of little importance were brought forward, of which Buckingham was enabled to make light. His Grace clasped his Majesty's knees; Castlemain permitted him to kiss her hand; and, instead of going to the scaffold, his Grace took his seat at the council. Next evening, he was making the King die at the play with mimicking old Lady Danvers who sat opposite.

I had most of these particulars from my worthy friend before mentioned, Mr. Braythwaite, who now maketh his re-appearance on the *tapis*, and who had a great hand in settling more than one history recorded in these pages. I can talk more comfortably of that period now, than I could have done at the time; but the interval still makes such an impression on my memory, in spite of the animal spirits with which I got through it, that I willingly say nothing of the greater troubles of Lady Vavasour. It was now two years and upwards, since we had heard no tidings of our beloved friend. The Countess still continued abroad. I paid her a visit in the autumn of sixty-seven, and had the pleasure of a week's almost incessant talk with dear Ellen, who was lovelier than ever, and made me very impatient to see the Duke of Ormond. Next year, his Grace came into England. But as this year was of great importance to us all, I shall commence it with a new chapter.

## CHAPTER XI.

BUCKINGHAM, on the strength of his new virtue and his old sins, kept a most flowing Christmas at Wallingford House. I had observed, for a long time, that he seemed to know the reasons I had for disliking him; for though always friendly and affable, much more so indeed than my countenance gave him encouragement to be, he continued, as much as he could, to avoid both speaking to me and seeing me. However, he included me in a select entertainment which he announced for January, and invited me in person, after the following style:—

“How is it, my dear Sir Ralph, I never see you now? All the world is to be happy, now that the King is his own master; and old friends must needs come together, if none else. You must sup with me to-morrow in the old room. There will be Buckhurst, and Etherege, and Rochester, and St. Andrew, whom you desired to know, and Dryden who promises to replace the loss of Mr. Cowley.”

There is something in the penitential endeavours of a man of this sort, or the appearance of them, which makes one consent to his wishes, out of the very shame of having the advantage of him. I endeavoured to look pleased, as indeed I could not help being with some of the names.

“Your Grace’s bill of fare is, as usual, of the most attractive description.”—“And you the same good fellow, as of old,” returned he, with the quickness of lightning. “Well, Ralph, I shall expect you,”—hastening away, as if somebody called him; and then Lord Shaftesbury and others coming by, he slackened his departure, as if on purpose to do me honour, making me a bow betwixt old familiarity and high regard. He then said aloud, with all his gracefulness, “You will find the wit worth your tasting.”

Upon the whole, I did not like to accept this invitation, but I comforted myself with thinking of the pleasure I should receive from the company of Etherege and Dryden. However, the meeting did not take place; for on the day appointed, the famous duel occurred between the Duke penitent and the husband of that bugle-eyed devil, Lady Shrewsbury, who is said to have held the Duke’s horse in the disguise of a page, while

he ran the poor man through the body. Something worse was told of their behaviour afterwards ; which I believe also. He or she would do any thing for a variety. She came with him one night into the pit of the King's theatre in boy's clothes, and made love to an orange-girl. She had got a wig on, of a different colour from her own hair, and pretended not to know anybody ; but she was recognised. People thought this was carrying a joke too far.

Buckingham told me he should appoint a new day for the party ; but he never did. I was glad of it. I got acquainted with Mr. Dryden afterwards in a much pleasanter manner, in his own sphere, among the wits and others, in Russell-street. I have dined with several of them at great tables, where they never appeared to advantage. Either the host did not know how to treat them ; or they were too anxious to shine ; or they affected an indifference to their value, and wished to be confounded with fine gentlemen ; or there were too many of them together, and so they were afraid to speak, lest another should excel ; or one of the lowest of their fraternity was present, who was most welcome on that account, and gave himself airs ; or something else was sure to occur, which made them uneasy, and showed them to a disadvantage, both as wits and gentlemen. If the great man was a wit himself, he could not forget that he was a lord ; if he was not a wit, he talked as much as if he was, or showed his guests off like a parcel of wild fowl ; and in neither case could he forget his superiority, or enable them comfortably to forget theirs. Sir Philip said there was a natural enmity between wits and lords, and that some day they would find it out. I mentioned several lords who were wits themselves, and of the first order. " We consider them so now," said he, " but the next age will put the Mistery before them. I allow the wit you speak of ; but if wit and title meet in the same person, the two things are then at enmity with each other. The one is something by itself, the other is nothing ; and so there is a natural hostility between them, even in the same person ; just as there is between a man's truth and his falsehood. Besides, the titled wit can never be sure how much homage you pay to his title instead of his wit ; and as he does not choose to miss it on either account, his followers will never be sure of him. He is not sure of himself."

These observations were remarkably exemplified in the instances of Dryden, and Rochester, and Mulgrave, and Buckingham himself. Dryden has since been acknowledged to be the greatest man of them all: yet he was alternately courted and trampled upon by all three; and surely nothing could have been louder and more contemptuous than their laughter, had anybody attempted to persuade them that they could not write better, if they set their wits to it. Mulgrave\* thinks to this day, that nothing but a princely love of his ease hinders him from being the greatest author in Europe. I remember Rochester's telling me, that there was more wit in the world than I suspected; and that our known authors would not be the first on the list, if every nobleman chose to write that could. I said, I did not believe it; for that genius of a high order was a thing irrepressible, and would have its way, which I said was his own case. I did not add that he would have shown himself a still higher genius than he was, if his powers had been in proportion. How many men of rank enjoy a reputation for wit, till they write; and what poor hands they turn out! A man indeed may be wittier *vivâ voce*, than on paper; and it is not impossible that a great genius may live among us, unknown even to himself, for want of something to fetch him out. But in the one case, the wit is most likely of a nature not good enough to last, or it would instinctively take a shape fit for duration; and in the other, the modesty must be equal to the genius, which it probably never is but in the very highest and rarest cases. Above all, there is no period during which too low an estimate of existing wit is so little likely to be made, as when authorship is in fashion. The probability is, that wit becoming a sort of cant, and everybody pretending to it, and using one another's phrases, the estimate will be a great deal too high, and fops take themselves for wits, who speak as they dress, after the patterns that are furnished them.

Notwithstanding his duel with Lord Shrewsbury, Buckingham was now all for peace and harmony. He complained of the Earl himself, for insisting upon fighting him; alleging that he was a man of "an unchristian spirit," (I suppose for not returning good for evil). He artfully endeavoured to give a new turn to the disinclination which he had shown on former occasions to encounters of that sort, and would have us believe

\* Sheffield, afterwards Duke of Buckinghamshire.—*Edit.*

that it arose from an any thing but want of spirit or skill. Indeed, in the present instance, he had shown no deficiency in either. The encouragements of his christian mistress appear to have supplied him with the one; and of the other, a lamentable proof was given, not only by the passage of his sword through the Earl's body, but by the death of the poor man a few weeks afterwards. Buckingham was ostentatious of his regret; but what, said he, could he do? The man sought his life, purely because he was not happy with the Countess, nor would let any one else be so: and as to the lady, he was now, "in common decency," bound to take care of her. So, in common decency, he carried her into all companies that would admit her, which were more numerous than they would be now. I saw her one day talking with blushing Lady Ossory, and next with poor Nell, whom I thought almost as much polluted by the contact as the chaste Emilia. Ossory did not like it; but the King had contrived to bring the parties together. His Majesty had taken up the same text as his favourite, everywhere preaching peace and kindness, and bringing together the most discordant natures. Since Clarendon was got rid of, and the King had paid a visit to the Duchess of Richmond, there was to be no more quarrelling, and no more business. Clifford and Arlington were to keep the latter out of sight, assisted by Lauderdale and Shaftesbury; and Buckingham was to see that they did so. The King walked about, chatted, played at bowls, at tennis, at duck-feeding, &c.; and in the evening, there were cards and music, or the theatre. On Tuesday, walking about, playing at tennis, or at bowls; in the evening, cards, theatre, or music: and so on to the end of the chapter: with racing, boating, and coursing, in due season; for his Majesty did not value the chase, like his brother. It is to be understood, that a supper, with a select party, usually consisting of the same persons, invariably closed the evening; and though the pleasures above mentioned constituted the ostensible business of life, a hundred streams of gallantry ran under it all, crossing each other in a thousand directions; now making a pretty murmur, now dashing about with fury; now hiding in the shades, and now sparkling with triumphant bosom in the daylight. If all the world had been as well off, or had had as little concern in the matter as the King seemed to think he had, or if the parties themselves had entertained

a better opinion of one another, and not confounded loving and being loved, with cheating and being cheated, the case might have approximated a little more to that golden age which novices and the tailors thought it. But the King, though nobody denied him any thing but money, got the hardest lines in his face of any man in his kingdom : and my Lady Castlemain, though nobody denied her any thing but belief, flew into transports of grief and passion, which made the ears of the antechambers tingle. How different from the person I once knew her ! That is to say, how ignorant I was at that time, and how much disagreeable knowledge I had acquired !

There was one day in particular, which I shall never forget, because it forced me somehow to have a different opinion of her and the King for ever afterwards. The marvels of that day began at noon, with a great crash in the Blue Parlour. It was the breakfast table, which her ladyship kicked over. Presently after, we heard the doors thrown open, one after the other, and then her divine voice, lifting itself up as loudly as possible, and threatening to fire his Majesty's house, and dash out the brains of his little dukes ! We all stood aghast : I mean, Harry Killigrew, Buckhurst, and I, who were talking in the antechamber. The door opens, and his Majesty puts out his face, very pale. " Pr'ythee, Buckhurst," said he, " step this way." Buckhurst went, stopped a full hour, and returned shrugging his shoulders. He found her, beating a tattoo with her foot, and glowing like a devil. Buckhurst did not say what passed, but there was a draft next day on the privy purse for thirty thousand pounds, and that same evening his Majesty got drunker than ever I saw him. He was very irritable till he got to his second bottle, which I had never known him before ; damned a score of people by name, particularly Monk, who, he said, would have been the greatest scoundrel in England, if he had not been the greatest fool ; and above all, damned " virtue," which in the head of the church was thought a little scandalous. He said he had heard a great deal about virtue, but that " he would be d—d if he ever met with it in the whole course of his life, beginning with the swearing martyr, who loved a girl as well as anybody, and ending with Bridgeman, who was a cowardly impostor." The " swearing martyr" was his father ! Clifford, who had shown symptoms of uneasiness ever since his majesty began in this strain, got

up to lead us away at the latter part of it; but the King would not suffer it. He swore he meant nothing but to amuse us; and his charity returned with such excess at bottle the third, that the Duke of York coming in nearly as drunk as he, and falling on his knees (for they had quarrelled, and not spoken for a month), our gracious Sovereign fell down upon his own; and so they hugged and slobbered one another, while Bab May shed tears of delight! The King, however, I must say, looked more owlish than affectionate during the operation.

Next day I lamented this scene to Buckhurst. "The worst of it is," said Buckhurst, "that he has no heart." This startled me. "No heart!" cried I. "Not a jot," exclaimed Buckhurst: "you would have discovered it, as I have done, had you not fancied yourself obliged by him. I know more than one honest man who has ruined himself in his service, and could never get a penny out of him, though he has staked thousands at night for months together. Yesterday I ventured to be importunate for one of these men; and he had the face to ask me, 'Why the man had been such a fool as to ruin himself for another?' There was no answering this, so I bowed and despised him." From the day I had this conversation with Buckhurst, I found myself compelled to be much of his opinion. And yet I have heard my Lord Dorset\* find excuses for him.

In the midst of these pleasant occurrences, the Duke of Ormond came over from his Irish government, and made a wonderful sensation among us. The first time I saw him was under circumstances too curious to be omitted. The King had been told of a beautiful country girl who brought flowers to market, and was said to have a singular resemblance to Lady Castlemain. It happened in April, that there was a run of fine weather, and his Majesty resolved to cross over one morning from the Mall to the street through which the girl passed, and judge of the likeness for himself. News of his intention was brought to Castlemain, who resolved to go and judge too, especially as Harry Jermyn had expressed his admiration of that union of rusticity with grace for which the girl was said to be remarkable. Her ladyship expected that Harry would be among the judges; which, as she had a regard for him at that time, she thought might bring him out in the morning a little

\* Buckhurst himself, under his older title. — *Edit.*



too early. Accordingly, in her decided way, she made no more ado, but got a basket, dressed herself in the fashion of a market woman, and pretending to have come with her flowers, took her way up the street in question, as if returning home. As the devil would have it, she saw before her the King, Shepherd, Harry Jermyn, and myself, the first evidently without his star, as the passengers took no notice of him; and the girl at that minute passing her from behind, the Countess joined her, under pretence of asking the protection of her company, "as she was a new hand at the trade." The girl, who resembled her still more than was suspected, did not seem to relish her acquaintance. She made various perplexing inquiries, as to who she was, and what person employed her; and the Countess pretending to be as deaf as a post, and returning the most impossible answers, the jealousy of the other was increased to a pitch of dislike, that made her glow like a turkey-cock; so that what with indignation on one side, and alarm on the other, they were in a fine flustered condition when they came by the royal party. "Two of them!" cried Shepherd, "by all that's rosy! Stop, my dear, we'll buy your cheeks of you, as you've sold your flowers." Jermyn, who pronounced the likeness amazing, began to make one of his politer speeches to the girl, and the King was bidding her not to be frightened, when she cried out, "Shatn't then, shatn't, you nasty black twoad. Ought to be shamed, so t'ought, to talk o' thick theare fashion to poor maidens." Her voice suddenly dropped as Charles put a guinea in her hand; but as she continued sullen, and made as little show of returning his love as his money, he was about to whisper her companion, when Jermyn drew him off. His Majesty looked more than disconcerted; for some apprentice boys, who had stopped their work to look on, now broke out into exclamations of astonishment at the likeness of "the sisters." "What, are there two of you? What's your name, little double-devil?" We should have succeeded in getting through this trouble, as the fellows could not leave their doors, had it not been for a lame sailor, who thrust himself among us. "For the lord's sake, noble captains, one penny for charity; noble commander, cast your eye on the remains of my precious limb," (showing a stump in a dangling sleeve):—"a splinter, your honours, on the glorious 3rd of June; paid before my time and never after it, as God's my

judge; not a stiver to put in a pretty girl's placket. Pray, my Lady Duchess (for you're too handsome to be an orange-wench) one kiss of your cherry lips to bless the gentlemen's money!" While the fellow was uttering this and a great deal more of his jargon, he so thrust his sleeve in our faces with one arm, and his hat among us with the other, persisting in spite of the money we threw in it, and contriving to implicate us with the two women, that a crowd assembled. "A Duchess! A Duchess!" cried some: "Egad, they say she gave him a guinea!" Charles now began to be alarmed. Several men had got hold of Castlemain, and were forcibly looking in her face, when I twisted her away, and pushed her into a door by a shop. "'Tis a court-lady," said one: "a fine madam, to be masking it at this time of a morning!" "No, no!" said I, seeing the King much distressed, and resolved at all events to divert the attention of the crowd, who seemed as if they would lay regular siege to the house, "'tis a discarded servant of the Queen's, who has recognised his Majesty, and was plaguing him." I said this aloud, that he might hear me, and added, taking off my hat, "I know the King well enough; I have followed him in his morning's walk from the Mall." All hats were off in a moment, accompanied with exclamations of "The King! God bless him!" and "God bless your Majesty!" The King rallied his looks immediately, and congratulated his loyal subjects on the fine weather which had led him among them. Jermyn and Shepherd put on their court looks, drawing up on either side of him, like the lion and unicorn; and we were all about to move on, longing for a short cut back to St. James's, when, as the devil would have it, there came a grand equipage by us, with six or eight horses, and running footmen.

"'Tis Ormond," said the lame sailor to me in a whisper, whom I now recognised for the Earl of Rochester: "I leave you in good hands." So saying, his lordship, who had earned a wager he laid overnight, vanished among the crowd; and I collected myself as well as I could for this new surprise.

"'Tis Ormond, sure enough," said the King to Shepherd, in a tone of exceeding vexation: "he has seen the girls and the mob, but nothing will stop him. He'll make the show complete, out of his d—d sense of propriety."

It may be imagined with what eagerness I looked at the coach. It stopped as the Duke bowed from the inside; and

the door being opened, out stepped his Grace, and stood with his hat in the air, to let us pass in due form. The King, partly not knowing what to do, but always unable to see the Duke without manifesting his respect for him, graciously beckoned him to the pavement, and after a few phrases of welcome, they parted in high form; the Lord Lieutenant not even glancing a look at the rest of us; and his Majesty, between outward smiles, and internal cursing, puckering his face as if he had met the east wind, and blushing like a black dog.

As I knew that Ormond would lose no time in waiting formally upon the King, I waited till he had done so, and then hastened to be introduced to him. His Grace had already made his inquiries, and received me with a cordiality I should hardly have expected from one of his stately manners, notwithstanding what Sir Philip had said of him. His manners, indeed, when he was pleased, would have been pronounced a great deal more cordial than stately, though he was always highly the nobleman. I could not but think, however, that there was a good deal of pride at the heart of them, and that he never quite got rid of an air of condescension. I took notice that he blushed when he saw me. One of the first points on which he entered, was the antiquity of my family; and the satisfaction he expressed at it, leading us into a new fervour on both sides, during which I said something of the honour done me by his alliance; he blushed again, and said, with a kind of pang in the utterance, "The honour, in this instance, is done to the young lady." I was piqued at his not calling her his daughter. I was less satisfied on my side, than he was on his. I took her part against him, let her mother, thought I, be who she might; and I felt at that moment as if I would fain have been his son, and have seen her a parson's daughter, on purpose that I might have married her, and vexed this unfatherly pride.

Some praises of her, though forced from him by mine restored him a little to my good graces; and the pardon was complete when he proceeded to tell me, that he had news of Sir Philip, and that he was safe and well! I felt as if I could have jumped up and embraced him. He was much pleased at the enthusiasm I expressed.

"To tell you the truth," said he smiling, "I formed a higher opinion from one ardent word written of you by that

excellent young man, than from all the testimonies of the ladies, however much I respect both their testimonies and themselves."

"And *not* to tell you the truth," thought I, "I think you might treat them as well as my friend would have done, and not make such invidious distinctions. 'Ardent word' is excellent: but 'excellent young man,' in your mouth, would tell against him, if I did not know him as well as I do."

These impressions must have been strong, for they passed through my mind with the rapidity of lightning. I forgot them, when his Grace proceeded to enter into particulars concerning my friend. A vessel bound to England from the Canaries had gone expressly out of its way, up the Irish Channel, to give a letter to the Duke from Sir Philip, which contained an account of all which my friend himself knew of the adventure. It contained remembrances for myself, and an announcement of something he had for me which he hoped I should consider better than a dozen letters. Sir Philip it seems, had scarcely quitted the ship at the Nore, which he did at twilight, the instant he found that the Duke of York was not going to sea again, when he was seized by a set of fellows whom he took for a press-gang. In the surprise of the moment, he was gagged, pinioned, and carried in a boat to a schooner, which without delay set sail down the Channel, the Captain having secured him below.

He had not been in this state twenty-four hours, when, after exhausting in vain every conjecture respecting his seizure (for he soon perceived that he was not pressed), he cast his eyes upon a packet of songs and Gazettes, such as captains of vessels take with them to sea. He eagerly opened it, both to occupy his thoughts, and to see if the court news could furnish him with any means of guessing how matters went on at Mickleham. The first one he entered upon contained an account of the presentation at court of "Mr. Dalton's bride, the charming Countess of Vavasour, at which almost all the great lords were present, except the Duke of Buckingham." The paper fell from his hands. He said, that in the extremity of an anguish too great for his reason, he felt relieved at the thought of being out of the way of Dalton and of all the world. The ocean seemed bearing him to some distant island, fit to conceal him for ever; and he almost looked upon his misfortune as a

blessing of Providence. Among the songs and fugitive pieces, were some verses addressed to the "worthy and ingenious Mr. Dalton, on his marriage," and an epithalamium with the signature of Dryden.

I stared at the Duke of Ormond, overcome with amazement.

"You see how it was done?" said Ormond.

"I do not remember," said I, "any talk of such things in a Gazette."

"Surely not," cried the Duke; "it was forged."

"Forged!"

"Yes; Gazette, epithalamium, and all. The packet was laid in the cabin on purpose, the number of the Gazette forged, and the verses too.\* Buckingham can write as well as Dryden, when malice inspires him."

"Your Grace believes then ——"

"I beg your pardon," said Ormond, who liked a regular official narrative; "you shall hear."

His Grace proceeded to inform me of particulars, which together with the journal I saw afterwards, supplied me with the retrospect which is here concentrated.

Soon perceiving that he was not pressed, and that he was kept from intercourse with the men, Sir Philip so conducted himself, that he was not only relieved from his bonds, but the Captain, from being surly and disposed to abuse, picked his way into a kind of shame-faced familiarity, declaring there must have been "some mistake." This familiarity degenerated into one of a grosser sort, in which the man undertook to jest with him on his quiet, and to pretend that the situation was one that he liked. Sir Philip suppressed his vexation, and talking further with the man, so wrought upon him, with that admirable way that he had, of fetching out every one's understanding, and putting the human being up to the best height of which it was capable, that he was served throughout the rest of the voyage with as much respect and kindness as seemed possible, though he could never get an explanation. He was suffered to come on deck, on promise of his not speaking to the men out of the Captain's hearing, and of returning below at the least intimation of a request to that purpose. The request

\* The modern reader will not be surprised at this trick, when he recollects the forgery of a French newspaper in our own times, to serve a purpose on 'Change.  
— Edit.

was soon made ; and for the latter half of the voyage he was begged to content himself below, the Captain plainly avowing that his men were disposed to be riotous, and that they gave him a great deal of trouble. One day he came down, and confessed that he was almost inclined to ask his prisoner to talk with them ; for which purpose he owned, what the gentleman, he said, must have known without his telling him ; namely, that the plea of a "mistake," was all nothing, and that he had been trepanned on board to suit the views of that "damned villain ;" whose name he would nevertheless not disclose. At the same time, though with a request that he would say nothing of what he had owned, he made a formal introduction of his mate ; a smooth rascal (Sir Philip said), the greatest liar he ever met with, and as vain as if all the wonderful things he told of himself were true. With this man, whose natural understanding was inferior to that of the Captain's, but who had an address which rendered certain designs he entertained on the vessel very dangerous, if it had not been for his lying, he had more trouble than with the others. Yet even he did not remain uninfluenced ; and the Captain said, at the conclusion of the voyage, that for aught he knew, his prisoner had been the salvation of the vessel.

I know well how Sir Philip had managed all this. I had heard him talk with captains and with common sailors ; and the impression he made upon all persons was the same, if he entered with any interest into their concerns. Great suffering had combined with his natural capacity to render him the most unassuming as well as intelligent of men : he really was what he seemed — a man who saw beyond the claims of wit and even virtue (considered as a thing formal), and valued the common capabilities of humanity above every other consideration. He said he had been forced to behold so many strange faces of thought, and to feel so strongly and so weakly in his own nature, what the impulses were that led persons of less reflection into the most blameable actions, that if nothing else would have induced him to make common cause with mankind, and set up no claims or merits but what all might possess, self-love would have done it. Egotism itself had ended in making him no egotist. He saw himself and all mankind alternately in each other ; and said he could have ended in being a rascal, out of sheer impartiality, if he believed rascality itself to be

what it is supposed, or any thing else (in clever men) but a spleen and a stopping short, out of a physical impatience and want of refinement. He had a singular notion, which some would have mistaken for a concession to the doctrine of original sin, that a great deal of our virtue and vice was born with us, interwoven with our very frames, and modified by their greater or less coarseness, or the nature of our blood: but then he had causes for it, founded in other matters modified by laws and education; and he thought very little of the few thousands of years of which we know any thing, and to which that "experience" is confined, which is used as such an argument against human change. He spread out a sheet of paper one day, as I was talking with him in the lieutenant's cabin, made a dot on it with his pen, and said, "*That* is the experience of mankind." "The white then," said I, "is our inexperience — is time past or future, or what we don't know?" "No," returned he, "if all the paper in the world were put together, the white would not be enough for the inexperience, and yet the dot would be the true representation of the other. *All space* is the white; and the dot is all history." — "Sir Philip," said Lord Dorset, one day, "thinks gigantically. Sheffield and others seem profound thinkers, and really do say very clever things; but they hav'nt the heart, even if they had the will, to entertain a good opinion of human nature, and to hope the best of it. They fancy it would lower their pretensions. Sir Philip thinks of himself, neither as high nor low, but as a fellow-creature, ready to take all chances with humanity. I love him. I agree with him over the wine, and differ with him next morning: but that is my fault, not his." His lordship then made use of the following splendid image, which he called a bounce of Irish inspiration generated between his own conceits and my friend's enthusiasm. "If thought were light, and our planet visible by it, and space were time, the next ages would see us coming by a little ray, made up of such minds as Sir Philip Herne's." "Such a man," said Lady Arlington, "is too great to love. I only wonder Lady Vavasour changed her mind about him." — I told her how the servants and children loved him, and how he would romp and laugh like a child by the hour. She said she should be afraid of him. "It was like the laughter of a goblin." — I related what old Lady M. said, in her excessive

style; "that they might call Sir Philip an angel if they pleased, but that he had the art of saying more devilish impudent things, with a tender face, when he was but a lad, than all the court put together." "The murder's out;" said the fair Arlington, "there is nothing like tenderness for your meeting of extremes."

To return to my narrative. On coming in sight of the Canaries, where the Captain said he should rid himself of the worst part of his crew, he told Sir Philip, after the first bout of drinking which he had indulged in since he left England, that all which he had said during the voyage appeared to him as a dream; that if it had not been for Tom Vickers, and Leonard, and the Little Devil, and his wife and children, perhaps he might have had some thoughts of trying his hand at a better trade; but how stood the case? Life was life, and some were sharks, and some were gudgeons; and gudgeons were sharks after their fashion. However, he (Sir Philip) was a noble gentleman, who knew how to make allowances, and scorned to say he had no diamonds; and he had shown his gratitude to him by landing him at the Canaries, instead of taking him all the way to Jamaica, which was the thing he ought to have done by his bond. He named no names, and he looked to the gentleman's making "no ungentee use of no hints." He secured my promise to that effect (said Sir Philip), making me give my solemn promise that I would refer to some other authority for my suspicions. "It will be easy to find it," said the man, "when you set to work; but mark what I say: Buck or Buccaneer—hit the Buck, and the blood will follow. If I save these diamonds from drink and the Little Devil, mayhap I may see Old England no more; if they go the way of all flesh, why I've said nothing that the King could hang me for, and if he could, mayhap I would'nt let him. That's bold, is'nt it? But a secret's a secret. I was told you were the damnedest scoundrel that ever was. I did not much believe it; that's as it happens; but it helps one to do an ugly job the better. How stands the case? You are the heartiest cock of a saint I ever came nigh: talk, d——n me, like an angel, and yet are an honest fellow; make one, somehow, rational like, without being drunk. So mind—Buck or Buccaneer—hit the Buck, and—you know the rest:—Sangué, as the Portuguese says. I hate to name names; but you're enough to



corrupt a saint. 'Twas M'Ginnis that smoked him. The Major—did I say the Major?—well, let it pass, for they say he's a Colonel:—well;—he called out of the cliff at Scarborough one day, like the damned son of——thunder as he is, as if he had us all under hatches, instead of our being in danger of scudding away without him, for the officers you see were coming, and they'd have found us in a pretty rig: says M'Ginnis, who was a bit of a cousin on the wrong side of the blanket, though he did'nt care to let Big-chops see that he knew him,—says M'Ginnis, says he, 'The voice of my brothers'—eh—you twig me—'crieth from the ground.' I name no names; but Lord! you might read it in his looks. Oh, if you had but the sending of him to the Plantations, how happy should I be to serve you! D——n me if I'd take any of his moidores in part payment for accommodation,—for he's a hell of a tongue either way, that's certain, though he does not talk as you do. Oh! you have it out and out, in diamonds as well as gab: so here you are at the Canaries, and part-payment may see you, for aught I care, in the twinkling of a cutlass."

I transcribe the detail of this jargon from the packet which afterwards reached me. Sir Philip, for obvious reasons, had been as minute as possible in his account both to the Duke and myself, but it was not to be expected that his Grace should relate it all. I was surprised to hear him repeat as much of it as he did; but besides the wine we had been taking, I found afterwards that notwithstanding his dignity, and the nickname of "Charley's Schoolmaster," which Buckingham had given him, he was not without something of the universality of a soldier, and could talk of many things which I had not expected out of his normal lips. To be sure, these were all after-dinner occasions, and next day I thought he did not much like to remember them.

The moment he uttered the word Buck, a light flashed upon me; but I was puzzled, as Sir Philip was, with the allusions to the other words.

"Your Grace," said I, interrupting him, "suspects as I do, from the look you give me."

"I do not suspect," said Ormond, "I am sure. Nor had Sir Philip any doubts of Buckingham, though he was mystified with the rest. The moment I heard of our friend's disap

pearance, I recollected Buckingham's visits to Lady Vavasour, and knew that he was at the bottom of it. I will tell you what made me certain. Much as you know of this unworthy nobleman, twice as much could be told of him. You never heard of the offer he made about the Queen not long ago, when his Majesty was so infatuated with this insipid Duchess of Richmond?"

"I never did. I remember the King's drawing himself up in a remarkable manner, after they had whispered together, and his bidding the Duke go and recollect himself behind the Queen's chair, where Buckingham obsequiously waited the remainder of the evening; but we did not know what to make of it."

"He offered to carry her off to the Plantations!"

"Is it possible?"

"Oh, anything is possible with a Buckingham, or must be thought to be so."

"But what was he to say to her? How could he manage it? How could it have been hushed up?"

"The questions are natural. Everybody in the secret has asked them, but himself! But how are we to look for reason in a shatter-brain? Buckingham trusted to his wit, to get him out of the scrape. It will get him to the block some day."

"I cannot conceive what step he would have taken after his first. Why, every prince in Europe would demand an account of it."

"Every prince in Europe!" cried the Duke in some heat; "every prince in Europe would be glad to see the court of England go mad. They like, I believe, to be bullied by a plebeian government. At least, they hate us for having ousted the man that frightened them; and it is a stupid maxim among them, as they will see some day, that the folly of one court is the wisdom of another. Perhaps that impudent woman Lady Shrewsbury was at the bottom of it. If his Majesty had consented to see his wife carried off by a privateer, he would have found some excuse for marrying Miss Stewart; and then Buckingham would have divorced his wife, and married my Lord's; and so they would all have got married, and drunk, and damned together.—God forgive a loyal subject for saying so," added Ormond, recollecting him-

self, "but what one hears every day makes the blood fly up into one's cheeks, and forces oaths out of one's mouth."

His Grace fell into some passionate remarks on Buckingham's late duel, the new amours with actresses, &c., but suddenly checked himself, looking at me in a hard and dry manner, which I treated with a nonchalance that I thought became me.

"But what does your Grace conceive," said I, "is meant by the allusion of this privateer, buccaneer, or whatever he was, to blood or bloodshed? Blood would seem to be a name. Then Major or Colonel? There is a man I have long suspected; but his name is Sandford. I take him to be the same man who calls himself Dalton; and from what is known of Dalton's attempt on Lady Vavasour, there can be little doubt that he is concerned in this outrage on the man she loved. He probably saw that she still loved him, and that Sir Philip's return would be the ruin of his imposture; and so resolved to keep him out of the way. But then Buckingham is implicated? How is that? Was the pretended feud between him and Dalton only a league in disguise? and is Dalton, and Sandford, and the sanguinary unknown (whatever his name is) one and the same person?"

"Blood is the person," said Ormond: "Blood is his name, and blood is his nature. Sandford, the name under which you seem to have known him, was his hiding name, when he fled from the laws in Ireland. You have heard the particulars of the attempt on Lady Vavasour, and the fortunate arrival of Mr. O'Rourke. O'Rourke knew him the moment he heard him speak. I will tell you the man's history in a few words. Dick Talbot says he is the son of a blacksmith, and I believe it; for though Dick is a liar, I remember the first time I saw this Blood, which was in the year 40, just before I was commander-in-chief; in the absence of my Lord Strafford, he was sent to me with a message from Sir Edward Trevor, in which he conducted himself with so much impertinence, that I was fain to express a hope that Sir Edward would send me a person another time, who was a gentleman by blood, as well as commission. He was then a cornet of horse. He turned as red as fire, and said, in a very presumptuous manner, that he was "Blood himself." It was thus that I learnt his name. I sent him back to his employer with a desire that he should

be reprimanded; and never heard of him but once afterwards till the year 63, when he was concerned in the plot against Dublin Castle. The Declaration for taking up arms to restore religion upon the footing of the Solemn League and Covenant was of his writing. He fled from place to place in Ireland, England, and France; joined the rebels in Scotland, and was afterwards concerned in an affray with the sheriff's men in Yorkshire, where he rescued some of his old comrades from the gallows, not without bloodshed, which he no more values than water. Since then (I blush to say) he has been a good deal with the Duke of Bucks; and between you and me, Sir Ralph, he has got possession of some unhappy secrets, which he has the insolence to mix up with intimations that — But what must be borne, must be."

His Grace here evinced a good deal of emotion, which I did no good to by exclaiming, "Your Grace knew it was Blood, then, when you met him riding by Mickleham Park with Buckingham,—the day that Sir Philip was there?"

"I did," said the Duke hastily, "I did; but for the reasons I have just mentioned—In short, I never suspected that even he could carry his impudence so far as he has done. The Countess and he are beings so widely dissimilar, that I should have as soon thought a devil could have had matrimonial designs on an angel."

"'Tis too often the case, I fear," said I, not dropping the subject; for if Ormond was perplexed, I was irritated.

His Grace hastily went on. "Some say the man was a renegade from the royal cause; for he got lands, ay, and lordships too, under letters patent from the late King; but, I believe, the Puritans got them for him. It was at the time of the fall of the great man who governed Ireland before me. Well: these lands, like others belonging to better and richer men (for it was but a beggarly territory they had given him, and he had no excuse, as others had, of the old Irish blood) became forfeit to the Crown; for which, instead of considering himself lucky in escaping the gallows, he pretends to consider me responsible, and from time to time does not scruple to send me threatening letters, in case nothing is done for him! The man is mad with impudence. The reason for his calling himself Sandford, I cannot guess, unless it was out of revenge against a Captain of that name, who turned evidence. Per-

haps the more impudent the mask, the less suspicion he thinks it will rouse ; for nothing equals him that way. His Captaincy was a very modest assumption. His real rank was Lieutenant. But, as he says he should have been a Colonel by this time, he is now Colonel Blood, whenever he is not Dalton or Beaton. At one time he was Colonel Sarney. Sarney and Beaton are the names of the townships the Puritans gave him. The last time I heard of him, he was a Quaker ! Wherever he is, his calling is to do the most impudent thing in the world ; but his gambling (for luckily he has that element of ruin in him) would have settled him in a jail before this, if it had not been for the unhappy man who is again at the head of his Majesty's councils. What will be the end of these, God only knows ; but I tell you plainly, Sir Ralph, that as long as there are such councillors, and such agents to work their purposes, an honest man had need of all the consciousness of his integrity to walk boldly in noon day, much more to show them the countenance they deserve. For my part, I shall not bate an inch of it."

I took the liberty of making his Grace some compliments on the latter part of his speech, and then observed that he seemed to have very particular information of the movements of the would-be Colonel. The Duke shrugged his shoulders, and replied, that in the imperfect state of things in this world, men in the administration of government were sometimes forced to have more particular sources of information than they could wish ; and then, with a smile, he mentioned the name of Braythwaite, who, he said, had given him full, and he believed true accounts, of some very good as well as very ill men, not omitting the young gentleman he had the pleasure of discoursing with.

I behaved as well as I could under the impression that his Grace was well acquainted with my former treatment of Miss Randolph, and I believe he saw what was in my thoughts, for he added hastily,—“ I confess I was not prepared to find such an ingenuous nature at court. We all have our faults. Fortunate it is, when they are such as we need not scruple to confess. The virtues with which they are accompanied are sure to outweigh them.”

It may be imagined I was not slow to express my gratitude for this character of me. As we had both of us been wrong, we now seemed inclined to think as well of each other as we

could, and the Duke grew upon my good opinion, though he kept a sort of distance between us, to which I was not accustomed, and which, to say the truth, I hardly thought warrantable towards a person of so ancient a family ; for, as I had no title to speak of, I was all for birth and antiquity. I had lamented a thousand times that the King and some others did not maintain a greater stateliness and reserve ; yet now that I tasted of it from his Irish representative, it was not at all to my liking. It made me call to mind how unpleasant it was in Clarendon. The truth was, his Majesty had spoiled me with the rest ; nor could I bring myself to like Ormond as I should, purely perhaps on that account.

The discourse then returned to Sir Philip. If there had been a doubt as to the perpetration of my friend's seizure, Braythwaite's communications would have removed it. Sir Philip was to be got out of the way, to give a final chance both to Blood and his employer ; to Blood, for a forcible marriage with Lady Vavasour ; and to Buckingham, for a better termination to his scenes with Miss Randolph, than he had met with at the garden wall. The plot of the forged papers was admirably managed, for nothing of the kind had been heard of ; and Sir Philip, as anybody else would have been, was thoroughly deceived. Instead, therefore, of taking measures to return to England, he no sooner arrived at the Canaries, than he betook himself to the remotest part of the island, and would have turned hermit, perhaps, if he had not lit upon a house inhabited by a widow lady and her niece, who, happening to nurse him in a severe illness, detained him with them till their own return. By accidental news from a wine-merchant, who served Lord Manchester, he learnt that Lady Vavasour was not married ; and then, for the first time, though without alluding to the circumstances, he wrote to the Duke of Ormond, and let him know where he was. The Duke, the instant he received my friend's letter, dispatched a schooner to the Canaries, on purpose to bring him away ; and nothing seemed requisite to complete the delightful prospects before us, but that Buckingham and his agent should be brought to account, and the victors terminate the tragi-comedy with a double marriage. But two formidable objections started to this happy anticipation ;—the one of a very provoking description, the other most appalling. The Duke said, that it might seem to be an easy

matter to bring Buckingham to account. Sir Philip would go to him, tax him with his offence, demand satisfaction, or expose him. Well: what would Buckingham answer? He would deny the thing *in toto*. He would protest that he knew nothing about it; that he had long had reason to see through the character of Blood, who was the last man in the world he should protect; and that if he could catch hold of the infamous privateer and tarpaulin who dared to implicate him in such transactions, he would have him hung up *in terrorem* by the river's side. He would then throw some ingenious difficulties in the way of suspecting even Blood himself; and finish by waiving his right to complain of Sir Philip, on his own account, by the reason of the damnable trouble he had undergone, with which no man could more heartily condole than himself. "I know a similar case," said the Duke, "in which he acted precisely in this fashion, though Blood was a party concerned. Braythwaite informed me of the whole of it; and the complainant was a distant kinsman of my own. Yet he could get no redress. Buckingham denied everything; nay, he made a favour of taking no steps to resent the charge. The agents could not be met with; and the business, though staring with certainty, was obliged to be let drop."

I thought to myself, that Sir Philip was not a man to be put off in this fashion, if he chose to push the inquiry as a matter of duty; but, feeling anxious to be informed of the Duke's other mystery, which he seemed to have kept to the last, as if it were a tragic secret indeed, I asked, with some emotion, what reason there was to suppose that the marriage with Lady Vavasour could not take place?

"Simply this," said Ormond, with a look of vexation, "that our friend is under promise of marriage to another lady."

"Is it possible!" cried I. "Surely, my Lord Duke, this is a point on which you must be deceived. Sir Philip is not one of those ordinary men, who—"

"Pardon me, Sir Ralph," interrupted the Duke, "I see all which you would say, and acknowledge it; but Sir Philip unfortunately does not know what you and I know. He is not aware of the change in Lady Vavasour's feelings towards him; and it is now too late to inform him. Nay, his friends, if they have any value for his peace, must studiously keep the secret. The young lady, in the house of whose aunt he lived,

nursed him in his long illness. She fell sick in her turn, I suspect of love for her patient ; and he is to marry her as soon as he arrives in England. I cannot help thinking, nevertheless, that he comes back, purely because he has discovered that Lady Vavasour is unmarried, though he may have no plans in consequence ; and the young lady is recommended the voyage for her health. The main reason alleged for it is, that the aunt is coming upon matters of business."

Here, thought I, is dreadful news for my friends ! I was so affected, that for a moment I could not speak. When I recovered, I asked the Duke, how it was that Sir Philip was not married already ? He said, the lady remained too ill. It was expected the voyage would re-establish her health.

The Duke abruptly turned the conversation. He saw how I was affected : he had nothing further to tell me on the subject ; and he justly concluded that nothing would tend to divert my thoughts more agreeably, than the prospect of my union with Miss Randolph. What he said, however, was not a little startling.

I have before intimated, that my paternal inheritance was sufficient to support me as a gentleman, but not to maintain a wife and family in the station the world would look for. I had formed twenty projects for increasing my fortune, but in vain. There was no war. I had no previous connection with the King's household ; I mean, when he was in France. I had no interest among the new men, or Presbyterians, who did not like to be forsaken, though they forsook one another. The King had repeatedly promised to take care of me ; and the title with which he had graced my secretaryship of embassy, was to be considered an earnest of something solid : but nothing came. The profuseness of Castlemain, and his own negligence, kept him as poor as myself. Every gift, or possibility of gift—every office, reversion, or hope of it, was snatched out of his hands by persons less delicate, or such as could not be denied. Even in order to raise money, it was necessary to give it.

I listened, therefore, with no small anxiety to the communication which the Duke of Ormond seemed preparing to make me. To say the truth, I would fain have dispensed with being obliged to him. I was not sorry to marry the natural daughter of so great a man, even on his own account : and I loved



her so, that I would have married her, let her have been whose daughter she might. But I felt that I brought him at least as much as he gave ; or rather, that I should be considered by people of family as conferring the honour ; and he could not conceal from me, with all his pride, that he thought so too. His pride, indeed, forced this conviction upon him ; for the more he valued himself on the purity of his descent, the more he respected the like qualification in others. With all his affability to people in general, his feelings were so strong that way, that you might note a decided difference in the mode with which he received men of old families, and the comparative, though still friendly nonchalance of his behaviour to those of smaller pretensions. In the one, he seemed to recognise something of the reflection of his own dignity. The others sometimes mistook his greater freedom for a greater good-will ; but they were deceived, as in this matter they always are. There was great pride, not to say something worse, in the very respectfulness with which he treated the King. But more of this presently. Upon the whole, this was the quality that offended me in him. It was evidently more mixed up than he was aware, with his best feelings ; and when we are alive to a fault in another, which is in a constant state of exhibition, while the exhibitor is laying claim to a merit that is opposed to it, we are more apt to refuse him our good will, than if he had no merits at all. We hate to see him endeavouring to beguile us, and pretending not to have his share of imperfection ; for these people somehow never make a concession that does not redound to their honour. If they do, the fault was something that arose out of the ebullitions of youth, or an immaturity of judgment : or their concessions are so general, that you may see how sorely they would resent any charge in particular. To be sure they can prostrate themselves heartily before heaven ; but that is because heaven is the only thing they admit to be above them ; and because they have a certain misgiving, that the greater the power, the less it is to be offended with impunity.

The Duke said, “ that as I was to marry the young lady, which, under all the circumstances, he could not help considering as an honour done at least as much to him as to myself, perhaps he ought to say a great deal more so, he felt himself bound to tell me plainly who she was, — who was her

mother." The solemnity with which he spoke, made me listen with double anxiety. Indeed my heart, as the phrase is, leaped into my mouth at these words; for, besides entertaining a natural curiosity on the point, my own pride was concerned. I felt, that nothing could undo my love for her; but I was more than willing to discover, that she was not the daughter of a chambermaid or a rustic. I believe if Ormond had known my thoughts, he would have smiled a little scornfully. His first words relieved my apprehensions. She was the daughter of a lady (he told me) of high rank, unmarried, of a very gay humour, and (truth forced him to say) of a levity which it would not become him to allude to, on an occasion less painful than the present. She had been pleased to think too well of him,

(I have no doubt of it, thought I)

—under very peculiar circumstances; that is to say, he had had the pleasure of rendering a service to a brother of hers, which the lively imagination both of the gentleman and the lady magnified into something extraordinary; and the wine flowing profusely one summer's evening at her father's house, where, to say the truth, the manners were at all times free enough, he, (the Duke,) who was then, though married; too liable to be carried away by the soldier-like habits, in which he had been brought up; — "in short, Sir Ralph, the lady was a little too kind, and I fear you will think me not a little ungrateful; but right is right, and I am sorry to be compelled to add, that for reasons which you can better guess, than I can explain, I never felt certain that the lady was my property. I know what you would say: — yes, Lady Isabella (you shall know her other name by and by,) recommended the child to me, as my own, by letter, and on her death-bed too; but I have good reason to know, that her Ladyship was the same careless laughing creature to the last: and among all the gallants that surrounded her, I had no right to suppose, that she had given an exclusive preference to me, or that her good nature, as she would have called it, would not have led her to screen a poorer one at my expence. I really blush, Sir Ralph," hastily continued the Duke, "to express a doubt of this kind. I blush to speak of the matter at all; or to seem to throw a slur on the memory of a lady, much more of one who showed a regard for me; but I have lived long enough to know, that there are graver things

for a human being to consider than the pleasures or the preferences of this life, and that we cannot pick and choose what we shall think, especially when experience comes to discourse with youth, and family interests demand a perfect candour."

I requested to know what particular object his Grace had in making me acquainted with his doubts relative to the young lady's birth. I said with some warmth, "that I should have married her, with his leave, had she been the daughter of the lowest female retainer in his household. As it was, I was rather too much pleased perhaps, which he might attribute to my court education; and as to fortune, I looked to nothing more than was proper for a young lady of her breeding and accomplishments, and if it were the least possible of the kind; (which was perhaps not less than I had a right to look for,) I should only regard it as giving me the greater opportunity of showing the solidity of my affection."

He pressed my hand with a smile of real regard, and said, "I will be as plain with you on one point as another. The doubt, of which I have never been able to get rid, has produced in me, I must own, an unwillingness to see more of the young lady than I could help. I received nevertheless such good accounts of her sense and disposition, from the worthy man to whose charge I had entrusted her, that at length I thought it my duty to encourage in myself a belief in my relationship; and on the happy return of his Majesty to his dominions I went into Surrey for the purpose of acknowledging her as my daughter, in case the accounts were true. It is but justice both to you and myself to say, that they were more than realised; and though I saw no likeness in her countenance either to myself or her mother, or indeed to anybody I know, my heart could not but warm towards a lovely human creature situated as she was, and evincing the most touching gratitude to one whose gratuitous benefactions (as she thought them) were perhaps no more than what a father owed her. I acknowledged her accordingly, and had the pleasure of giving her great happiness. But now comes the difficulty: You know, Sir Ralph, how I am situated in this extraordinary court, where a man of any decency of behaviour is thought to be a reproach and a stumbling block. The Duke of Buckingham has contrived to bring me over from my government in Ireland, to answer to the most ridiculous charges of profusion

and mismanagement. He dares even to insinuate, that my accounts are incorrect. He does not say so himself: he comes open-armed to me with his nauseous welcome; but I know what he is doing all the rest of the day. He wants to have the government himself. He wishes to play King the second, as he cannot play King the first; and he would really play it. He would perform the part like a child, and make a fool of himself, perhaps a victim; for, considering he is a wit, it is astonishing what a real fool he is; what a practical simpleton; what a credulous and headlong baby. He pretended the other day, when he was lending himself to the beggarly advices of his astrologers, that he was studying chemistry, and distilling waters. Very likely he was; but one of them was the *elixir vitæ*; and in some devil's ashes or other, he was to see the figure of himself, rising like a king. To day an atheist, tomorrow a puritan, the next day a fiddler, he is never anything truly but a libertine and a mountebank. But he is very dangerous; and if it were not that the King has certain private — Well, no matter: Buckingham will not succeed; he will not be Lord Lieutenant, nor shall I be ruined: I am too strong for him; but I shall have some trouble in repelling his attacks; it will take me some time; and meanwhile — you will understand what I say — it will be very necessary that I afford his creatures no handle for new insinuations; no ground of insolence and annoyance upon which — (and here the Duke gave one of his proud blushes) — upon which, Sir Ralph, I do not feel perfectly secure of being able to repel them. We all have our faults: I never pretended to be without mine: I am free to confess to anybody, as I do to them, that I have had my gallantries in my time; and the wits and good fellows know, that I can still drink, on occasion, a little more than I ought. But as the decent liberality of expence, in which I have thought fit to do honour to his Majesty's government in Ireland — (and surely no king ought to be otherwise represented) — has been charged upon me as profusion, and this scoundrel Blood has got a diabolical trick of charging people with vices at random, in the belief (naturally generated by his own wickedness), that some of his accusations will stick, it is highly desirable, not only for my own interests, but for those of virtue herself, that one of the few honest men at court should not be thought worse than he is. Understand me well, Sir Ralph.

When these matters are settled, Miss Randolph is yours, together with a handsome portion out of the lands consigned to me in Ireland; but till then, which perhaps will take six months or a year, you will be kind enough to do a further violence to your passion. I trust, at the end, you will not find yourself unrewarded. Certainly you shall not be the first to discover a new vice in me."

The Duke spoke this with so much cordiality, at the same time pressing me on the hand, and looking in my eyes with a sort of anticipation of his thanks, that I felt myself bound to make his high spirit as easy as possible under these committals of himself, and therefore returned as cordial an acknowledgment. I was, indeed, very well pleased to hear of a portion of land, wherever situated; but suddenly a thought occurred to me, and I expressed it.

"His Grace, I presumed, meant to acknowledge Miss Randolph openly as his daughter?"

"As openly as you would have me, sir," answered the Duke, looking more disconcerted than surprised.

"Assuredly, my Lord Duke, you may well imagine, how openly that would be."

"We will be sincere with each other throughout," returned Ormond. "I have the best assurances, the very highest opinion, Sir Ralph, of your sincerity and prudence, or there could have been no connection between us. Let but these public matters be settled, and I promise you, on the faith of a gentleman, that whatever it will please you, as a man of honour and generosity, to desire, shall be done. If you are content, on reflection, to keep a doubtful matter to yourself, and to the few friends acquainted with it, well and good; if not, perhaps the pain to be given to one of the best of wives and mothers, who never seeks to know what I think fit to conceal from her, may come in aid of the reflection; but should your conclusions on this point be different from what mine are at present, the pain shall be given. It will be borne well, and perhaps I ought to have taken off the edge of it long ago; but a circumstance which I cannot explain, added to the doubt of the matter itself, prevented me. At all events, my sins cannot be presented to her in a more excusable shape than that of Miss Randolph; and he that accompanies them will be no disrecommendation."

The Duke again pressed my hand, looking at me with one of those expressions which I have before noticed, and which, to say the truth, were very attractive, nor could I well find it in my heart what to reply. I did not choose to give up the claims of Miss Randolph. On the other hand, the prospect of bringing distress into a house no less exalted by virtue than by rank, was extremely embarrassing. I muttered something, I scarcely know what, expressive of my gratitude for his Grace's confidence, and my unwillingness to connect any thing like distress with the idea of his charming daughter; and so, leaving this point unsettled, and undertaking to communicate the news of Sir Philip's safety to the ladies, I found myself next minute in the open air, with feelings very like the mingled pain and pleasure of a receding intoxication.

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## CHAPTER XII.

It cannot rain, says the proverb, but it pours. Events soon thickened in an extraordinary manner, and they began at once. I had scarcely written across the channel, when I had a letter from Mickleham, informing me of the return home of the ladies and their acquaintance with the news: and not an hour after its arrival, I found myself in the arms of Sir Philip! What a moment it was! I had often wondered to see men embrace, and disliked the custom; but I found, on this occasion, how quickly great emotions dash aside preconceived judgments. My friend's manners had as little of the foreigner in them as mine; and yet the moment he entered the room, the mutual impulse was so strong upon us, that we rushed as heartily together as a Pylades and Orestes; and both, in separating, were in tears.

I had wished to delay writing to the ladies, or rather to communicate anything further than Sir Philip's safety, till I had seen his betrothed bride, and so judged how far there were any hopes remaining of the dissolubility of the tie. I did not wish to be unjust; but knowing what I did, I could not contemplate with patience the necessity of keeping from my friend the news of Lady Vavasour's passion for him. I too

well understood his nature, not to be certain that he must still love her ; and it would be very shocking to see both of them unhappy for life, perhaps by the intervention of a female whose whole merit might consist in her having trod about his bed with a soft step, and then taken considerately to her own. If her merits were real, the case was worse. In short, I dreaded the seeing her.

Miss Randolph's letter, which requested to see me immediately, relieved me of part of this anxiety. It told me not only that the Countess was well, but that the certainty of Sir Philip's being alive had given her a momentary vivacity, in spite of the news that accompanied it. Miss Randolph feared it would not last ; but still the news was broken to her, and she was no worse. Miss Vavasour, however, was not so well ; she was in a singular state of mixed joy and sorrow, for which my charmer could not account ; and what was extraordinary, it was to her the intelligence was sent. Who sent it Miss Randolph could not imagine ; but Miss Vavasour " hoped that we should all know speedily."

After interchanging some more congratulations with my friend, almost as breathless as the first, and satisfying myself on one or two points connected with his seizure and illness, I spoke of the Duke of Ormond and Miss Randolph. He saw I avoided mentioning the Countess, and said to me, in a very impressive manner, " I know all you can tell me respecting dear Ellen. I have this moment come from the Duke. You will be very happy. Thank you for what you tell me, and for what you do *not* tell me. I know that also."

I looked at him with astonishment, wondering to see him so calm if he believed that the Countess loved him. The expression of my face was so remarkable, that he was startled in turn, and said with an air, at once intimating a wish for the confirmation of what he said, and waiving any further,

" She is well. Her aunt wrote us word so."

" Yes," said I. I could hardly speak. Seeing me so moved, he turned aside, and looked out of the window.

After a few minutes' pause, he said, in a voice which it took all his courage to keep steady, " You know me too well, dear Esher, not to know how indestructible a certain idea is in my mind ; but as the reverse was equally indestructible in that of another, and new duties have come in aid of old neces-

sities, I have every reason in the world to conduct myself like a man, and render the kind-hearted girl who has thought me worth loving as happy as I am able. You will see all my feelings in the journal I have kept for you, for I have kept a journal though I wrote no letters. You know the timidity which over-much thinking has produced in me on some points. I meant to write, but I did not dare it at first, and then I delayed so long that shame was added to the dread. I always intended it, however, and now here I am, my own letter-carrier. To suffering I have been used; I shall now try hard to become acquainted with happiness."

These affecting words, expressive of a lot so different from what he deserved, increased the impatience I felt to tell him how he was beloved; but I did my best to conceal the emotion. It was clear that he loved still, and that he did not love his intended bride. I began to suspect that some further deception had been practised upon him; and this I seized upon as a consolation. It furnished me with an excuse for still hoping to see the new connexion dissolved; nay, for doing my best to dissolve it, which I was now resolved on, let his betrothed be as charming, or even loving, as she might. Had she risked her life for him? Had she offended and repented, and lost her bloom in his behalf? For nothing less than a mixture of all these humanities, bad and good, would satisfy me, though her perfections were qualified by as much suffering as he had gone through himself, which was not very likely. I begged him, without delay, to give me the journal, and put it in my pocket as if it had been a warrant against the fair unknown. My eagerness made him smile. I now had leisure to observe his face, and internally called Blood and Buckingham all the fools in existence to observe the effect that two or three years had had upon it. Why the devil should they be able to spoil a face like his, and for no good to anybody? He did not look older at first sight. I had always noted that there was something of an invincible juvenility about his face, except in the eyes; and the air and the southern sun had embrowned him. But on observing narrowly, the youthful smoothness of his face was gone; the temples seemed beaten in; the forehead had wrinkles in it; and his glossy brown locks were now dullened and mixed with grey. He also stooped as he sat. His person, however,



seemed as noble as ever when he stood up or walked about. His step was as firm; and his eyes were finer than I ever saw them.

He now increased and satisfied my curiosity in a breath, respecting Miss Vavasour's correspondent. "You will be pleased," said he, "to find in the journal, that Miss Vavasour" (he got this word out as if resolved to conquer a difficulty) "received the news of my safety from Lord Waringstown, and that it was his lordship who brought me away. He was too quick for the schooner of the Duke of Ormond."

"Lord Waringstown!" cried I, "who is he?"

"Lord Waringstown," returned Sir Philip, "is my old friend and beloved tutor, Mr. Waring. He has succeeded to his brother's title, and by permission has left the priesthood, and mixed with the world. Indeed, he had never left it, as far as beneficence went; and his superiors reckon, no doubt, upon his doing still more good to their cause in a lay character, now that priests are under such a cloud."

"It delights me," said I, "to think that I shall have the honour of knowing him. But I did not know he was acquainted with Miss Vavasour."

"I did not tell you of the intimacy," returned my friend, "neither did I tell him of mine with the same lady, as long as I could conceal it from him. You will see the reasons in the journal."

After a little further discourse, my friend took me to his lodgings, where he introduced me to his intended bride, her aunt, and Lord Waringstown. I hardly knew which to look at first, the lady or the lord. The noble Jesuit seemed equally interested in myself, following up a cordial welcome of me, with a scrutiny of my countenance hardly compatible with good breeding. He guessed that I was a little disconcerted, for when we had all taken our chairs, he immediately rose again, and coming towards me, and taking me by the hand, said with that extreme but delightful sincerity which belonged to all Sir Philip's connexions: "Pardon me for looking so hard at you, but you may imagine how much the friend of my friend interests me, and I am interested in him still more than he can suppose." I arose, and bowed upon his hand.

His lordship was a pale man, very genteel and like a nobleman, rather above the middle height, and with one of those

young aspects (for his age) which I have often observed to accompany a life of scholarship, where the heart is good, even though it has seen great trouble. But what struck me most in his countenance, and made me repeatedly turn my eyes upon him, was his likeness to Miss Randolph. He must have commenced his tutorship with Sir Philip when very young, for he was not yet fifty, and my friend afterwards told me, that he was surprised whenever he thought of his age; "but boys," said he, "always have an elderly notion of youths, who are but a little older than themselves." This is true. I remember the ludicrous sensation I experienced sometime after I left college, on meeting a pompous little fellow who had topped me by a head and shoulders when I first went there, and who was the tallest of my companions. I was now a head and shoulders above him, and did not know whether to feel most pride, pity, or mirth, in looking down upon the same swelling little individual; who told me I had grown "quite a giant."

The young lady, Miss Earlom, received me with as much zeal and kindness, after her fashion, as the noble Lord; for which I consigned her to the devil. She was also very handsome, with an expression of good-natured delight, for which I consigned her to four more devils. I could not bear to think, that fortune had played the poor Countess such a trick, particularly as her ladyship deserved her suffering, and the new bride was not to be found fault with. She had even wit. On every side, the gates of Mercy seemed to be closing on dear Lady Vavasour, and on her lover too; for I could discern, by his manner, that he considered Miss Earlom as a good-hearted girl, to whom he was bound to behave affectionately, and whom he hoped to make happy, rather than as one who would make him so. She was very fair, though her father had married a Spaniard, and she had lived the greater part of her life in a hot country. Her father, an Englishman, who had long been dead, as well as his wife, was the richest wine-merchant in the Canaries:—no great family, I thought, to intermarry with the Hernes! But sick beds, with a pretty nurse beside them, make havoc with genealogies.

The aunt, a little thin old swarthy woman, with curls *à la Montespan*, was a perfect devil. I saw through her at once, though she flattered me enough to make me sick. She had a face, as regular and as senseless as a mask, for which she

thought herself handsome; bustling about, and playing off attitudes, for which (I beg pardon) I could have kicked her. She followed the niece about like a duenna, giving us to understand that she had had a great deal of trouble in bringing her up, though one of the best girls in the world, but "girls would be girls;" and for her own part, though it did not become her to give herself girlish airs, she was not yet old enough to forget the proper indulgence for young ladies of her age, though it was right to look after them. During this vulgar stuff, poor Miss Earlam tried to look as unvexed as she could, though it forced upon her a gravity which argued well for her good sense. Lord Waringstown looked at me with (I thought) a little bit of the slyness of a Jesuit. Sir Philip mused, and seemed to hear nothing.

I had remarked, on entering the room, that before Sir Philip introduced me to any one in particular, an irrepressible impulse seemed to take him towards his noble tutor, of whom he made some inquiry. Lord Waringstown with a look of great vivacity, said, "Yes, thank God! 'tis perfect, 'tis perfect!" Upon which Sir Philip turned round, begging pardon of the company, and introduced me with a double air of satisfaction. There was something in the look which his lordship gave me at that moment, and in what he said to me afterwards, which excited my curiosity, and he now renewed it by asking me to step with him into another room. Sir Philip looked at us, and heaved a sigh, which he turned off into some indifferent remark, taking at the same time the opportunity to leave us all. Miss Earlom returned my bow with her usual provoking sweetness. As to the aunt, she fidgetted, and hemmed, and smiled, as if she could have cut all our throats for not letting her into the secret.

As soon as we had got into our room and closed the door—"My dear Sir Ralph," said Lord Waringstown, "you will not wonder that I claim the privilege of an old friend, knowing as I do all about you, and aware that you know everything respecting us, but one. I have seen the ladies at Mickleham, and this morning I have seen the Duke of Ormond."

I found this exordium very mysterious, not knowing whether it applied to Sir Philip or myself. Concluding, however, that the former must be concerned, I said, "Your lordship then has brought good news to our friend?"

He again pressed my hand, and the tears came into his eyes. "Pardon me," said he, "for delighting to see you thus think of your friend before yourself. I have great hopes, — yes, the very greatest, — that every body will have reason to rejoice in the inquiries I have been making; but at present, they concern you alone. You know what the subject of your conversation was with the Duke of Ormond. There is now an end to all perplexities. You have an estate, you have a bride, you have a willing and avowed father-in-law, you have a proud, an affectionate, an excellent mother-in-law, and the father is proud too, nay, most happy."

"You astonish me, and enchant me, my lord! I may then ask who the lady is, and how it happens that the Duke has been so suddenly induced to come forward, even by the kind interest which your lordship has taken in my behalf?"

"The Duke does *not* come forward, except as a guest," replied my noble friend, looking still delighted. A softer emotion then came over his face, and he said, "I have been used to trouble, Sir Ralph, and I can bear it, but joy shakes me in the utterance. You know the doubt which his Grace of Ormond could not help feeling respecting the claims which your mistress had upon him. Suffice to say, at present, that they were just. Yes, indeed they were, and yet nobody living is to blame. The mother was a wedded wife; the father was honourable, though mistaken. In me behold him."

At these words, uttered in the kindest voice, his hand again placed upon mine, and his eyes fixed earnestly upon me, I was seized with such a transport of delight and reverence, that I involuntarily bent upon a knee, as if my father himself had risen from his grave. He raised and took me in his arms, blessing me several times over for my love to his daughter.

I said that I ought rather to feel ashamed at ever having experienced an interval in my acquaintance with her, but that I trusted my whole life would show my gratitude.

"No, no," interrupted this excellent man, "you have nothing to reproach yourself with. Sir Philip's friend — *her* friend — has nothing wherewith to reproach himself. When I consider how good and confiding she is, and that she had no real father at that time, nor even the semblance of a mother, and that you came back, and you searched for my

boy, and you told the Duke you would marry her had she been the daughter of the lowest menial in his household, and clearly you would have been her friend and protector for life —" (Lord Waringstown's emotions here overcame his voice. He resumed), "You did not love her enough when you first knew her. You had no parents yourself; you were very young: you did not know of what her solitary and sweet nature was capable; but to have lived in a court, and yet to be able to love when you *do* love, is merit enough with me in any man, much more in one who can also be a friend and fellow-labourer, for you and I, my young friend, have worked in the same cause without knowing it."

He alluded, I thought, to my search after Sir Philip; and he did so, but not without an allusion to what he was pleased to consider my general regard for the interests of truth and humanity. The peculiar nature of his life had given an exalted turn to his mind on all subjects, in spite of the ease and good humour with which he behaved in ordinary: and at the moment I could see that he was moved even still more than he appeared to be. Habits of reflection, joined to the tenderness of frame more or less produced by a recluse mode of living, had given him an extreme tenderness of conscience in all matters that related to himself or his own merits; while, on the other hand, his good-nature, benevolence, and his wish to find sources of consolation, induced him to think as well of others as possible; so that, while he overlooked the greatest virtues in himself, the least evidence of goodness or generosity in his neighbour warmed his heart into a sort of transport of gratitude. This character is very uncommon in the world, where everybody is bustling for himself, and obliged to insist perhaps more on his pretensions than he would under any other circumstances; but I suspect it is oftener found out of it than men of the world imagine. At all events, I may assert from experience, that there is sure to be a greater or less tendency to it, in proportion as a goodnatured man has been thoughtful, secluded, and afflicted.

Lord Waringstown and myself were in the middle of a conversation deeply interesting to both of us, a great part of which concerned Sir Philip, when the aunt abruptly came in, asking if she had not been called. I smiled at this specimen of Canary island breeding. Lord Waringstown answered

politely in the negative, adding, with a goodnatured smile, that had her presence been necessary, we should have done ourselves the honour of coming to her. She looked as if relieved from some unpleasant thought, and retreated with a face of horrible courtesy. "The poor woman," said his lordship, "can never see us speaking aside but she finds some excuse for interrupting us." He then rose, and left the house on business concerning our friend, leaving me to rejoin Miss Earlom, whom I was now disposed to find pleasanter than before. She accordingly did appear to me so charming, that had nothing been in the way, I should have tried still harder than I did to make amends for my former coldness. But next day I was to see Miss Waring. How happy was I to give her that name, and yet how unwilling to part with that of Randolph!

Meanwhile, till Sir Philip re-appears, I will take the opportunity of relating the story of Lord Waringstown, partly as told me by himself, and partly by my friend.

He was the younger son of Lord Waringstown, a Catholic nobleman of large estates in the county of Armagh, most of which had been forfeited during the troubles, and restored only but now. At the court of Charles the First, Mr. Waring became acquainted with Miss Vavasour, daughter of a younger brother of an earl of that name, who was grandfather of the one that married Lady Margaret de Tormy. She was one of the loveliest and sprightliest young women in England, not more remarkable for beauty than for goodness of heart; but, unfortunately for her, became intimate with Lady Isabella T——, a beauty of her own age, and naturally as good as herself, but who carried her animal spirits to the highest pitch of wildness and indiscretion. Had Lady Isabella been a Frenchwoman, her vivacity might have laughed and made merry through life with impunity; or had she been an inhabitant of Cyprus, or an ancient poetess, or a modern poetess, or a beauty of one of the islands that poets love, bathing in the sea like a fish, and not averse to seamen (vide Sir Richard's Camoens\*), she might have been as innocent as she seemed to think herself; but whatever licence there was in the court of his Majesty's father (and there was a great deal more than the clergy would

\* Sir Richard Fanshaw's translation of the *Lusiad*. — EDIT.

have us believe), her ladyship carried her overt acts to an excess that (to say the least of it) was not allowed in England. Her family, indeed, set the example. They say the vivacity began in the time of Elizabeth, not without the countenance of some persons very extraordinary both for rank and reputation; but they could hardly have contemplated that a few individuals should claim a privilege for vagaries not tolerated in the rest of the community, and yet be neither courtesans nor king's mistresses. I hate hypocrisy, and I do not pretend to have had more virtue when young than my neighbours; but either we are all in the wrong respecting the different manners expected of men and women, or poor Lady Isabel's relations had a good deal to answer for. I spoke one day on the subject to my philosopher, Sir Philip, but somebody coming in, the conversation was changed, and somehow or other we never renewed it. I believe it was understood among us, that Lady Waringstown took it as a kindness that nobody spoke about it. In a word, amour followed amour: the lady lived like her fathers and mothers, having an equal right, she said, to please herself, and show her admiration of what was amiable. Poor soul! she was amiable enough to break her heart, for that was the termination of her mistake. Horton said she had left the remembrance of her at Oxford, where she was once on a visit to a master of one of the colleges whose lady hoped to do her good. A strange place it was to do her good in! It was at the time, too, that the court was there. She used to appear on Sundays at chapel, looking like an angel in a picture, both for beauty of countenance and lightness of apparel, and all the young men's heads were turned. The father, at length becoming sensible that such manners were not good for his daughter, submitted her to the care of a distant relation, a venerable and excellent woman, who undertook to reform her. Unluckily, in the list of things to be omitted, she did not omit the court, especially as it was now in misfortune. There the poor girl found new lovers, though at first she behaved with more caution, and there it was that Miss Vavasour became acquainted with her. The old lady encouraged the intimacy for the sake of her giddy kinswoman. She did not consider that it might end in being the ruin of both.

It happened about one and the same period, Mr. Waring

fell in love with Miss Vavasour, and a young Lord (I forget his name) with the Lady Isabella. The love was returned on both sides; and the ladies confided their passion to one another. Unfortunately, it was concealed on both sides from their kindred; the parents of Miss Vavasour and young Waring being violently opposed to one another in matters of religion, and the young Lord's relations having specially warned him against the seductions of Lady Isabel. This was, perhaps, the reason why he ventured to try them. After some months' acquaintance, a private marriage hastily took place on the part of Waring and Miss Vavasour; and Lady Isabella pretended the same with her lover, though it was not so. A bustling little woman, then newly married to our old friend Mr. Braythwaite, and a relation of the worthy Mr. Blood's, though not partaking of his worse passions, undertook to see that no event should distress the two loving couples; and when Miss Vavasour (Mrs. Waring rather) found herself, to her great perturbation, obliged to retire to some friendly house, her ladyship, not less distressed, was under a like compulsion. And what was the reason that her usual vivacity should forsake her? Alas! she now felt herself really in love for the first time; she longed to secure her lover by marriage, and she was afraid to hint it to him, for fear he should give her up. Lady Isabel had now begun to fear that she was not respected; and even on that account, her natural generosity made her hesitate to ask her lover to unite his destiny into hers.

In the midst of these contending emotions, which fell with sudden violence upon her, and which ultimately hastened her death, she retained enough of her heedless vivacity to put in practice a very singular resolution. A few weeks after her acquaintance with her lover, she had been on a visit to her brother, Lord Francis T——, who had some services done him (I know not how) by the Duke, then Marquis, of Ormond, who was on one of his visits to England on the King's affairs. The chivalrous character of the Marquis, added to the services he had done her brother, to whom she was much attached, made one of those impressions on the poor girl, the consequences of which would have been more suitable to a chapter in the "Morte d'Arthur," than a leaf in the history of Church and State. The Marquis, who had had a devout as



well as a court education, and who was always sinning and repenting, seemed to be of the same opinion; and unfortunately he suffered the lady to discern it. In fact, I know not in what particular way, but somehow or other, very unequivocally, he gave her to understand, that he thought they had both been in the wrong; which so much disconcerted the lady, who had conceived a great esteem for him after her fashion, that she could never after hear his name mentioned without blushing. What is worse, the situation in which she had found herself was owing to him: the period was approaching, in which her lover must be certain it was not owing to himself; and though she was aware of her character in the world, yet as she really loved him, and had awakened a tenderness on his part, so great as to put him upon serious thoughts of marrying her, she had not been able to summon up courage enough to tell him of his predecessor. She was now to anticipate a worse surprise. She told him, and he fled! A succession of convulsions ensued, which killed the child, and a few days afterwards, she died herself. The young Lord had taken it in his head, not very unnaturally, that his mistress would have deceived him if she could; otherwise, said he, why not tell me before? He concluded she had not really loved him, perhaps expected to make a cloak of him; and as he was of a temper hasty and ardent, he fell, or at least seemed to do so, into a passionate contempt of her, which rendered it equally impossible for him to remain in her presence, or for her to live. He went to the continent, and was not heard of for years. At the end of that period he died; it is supposed, of wounds, which he received at Naples. "Poor wretch that I was," said Lady Isabella, in one of her lamenting moments: "I had brought myself to a pass, in which I was thought to be incapable of love itself; and yet I did love him, and I do. Tell him so when you see him. He might have been a little kinder, seeing that his own sex can think themselves capable of love, after taking a licence far beyond what I did." The expectation was ill-founded, considering how men and women are brought up; but it is nevertheless very painful to see the virtues demanded of one sex, and that the most sensitive, by those who have been the least scrupulous towards it.

It happened most unfortunately, that the very night of Lady

Isabella's disclosure to her lover, and only an hour or two before it took place, she had sent a message to Mrs. Waring, who expected to be confined in a few days; and that the message was brought by the young Lord. Waring had confided his secret to his wife's aunt, the sister of her mother, who, not carrying her bigotry so far as the rest of the family, had taken pity on her, and invited her to her house, under pretence of the delicate state of her health. The young lady's time was approaching, and the aunt being afraid of seeing her through her trouble in her own house, had ventured on letting her pay a visit to "those good souls" Mr. and Mrs. Braythwaite, who had not long since commenced their kind trade in the behalf of a select portion of the nobility and gentry. The visit was to be short, lest enquiries should be made from home; and Lady Isabel's lover now came to inform the aunt, that everything was ready. Not finding the old lady at home, he was about to leave a note, and had requested pen and ink for the purpose, of Miss Vavasour, when seeing her agitated by the mystery, and being a man of great natural openness and address, he disclosed to her, with equal delicacy and zeal, the purport of his mission. He had long been in the secret, and all knew it; for the ladies had no reserves with each other, or with their friends, though Waring regarded this unlimited confidence with less pleasure than his lordship. Waring had no faith in the story of Lady Isabel's private marriage; and though he could not help liking her for some of her qualities, or the young Lord either, he would willingly have put an end to the intimacy, had it not existed before his own. The new circumstances also, under which he found himself, increased the difficulty of so doing. To say the truth, he was a little jealous of his lordship's gaiety and familiarity with Miss Vavasour, though without the slightest doubt of her good faith; but his non-belief of the private marriage gave him, he thought, the greater reason to keep an eye on his lordship's behaviour. He regarded him as a man of pleasure, who would as willingly have made love to one lady as another. He did him an injustice; but it was natural enough under the circumstances. On the other hand, the young Lord, judging of Miss Vavasour by her friend, and not believing Waring to be nicer than himself, because he was graver, had in the first instance, believed the marriage on their part to have had as little cere-

mony in it as his own. By degrees, however, as he became acquainted with her, he began to think that the case might be otherwise. Without ceasing to love Isabella, he acquired an affectionate esteem for her friend, whose intimacy with her he showed a delight in encouraging, perhaps with a view to fixing the other's volatility. It was he, also, be it observed, who had secured the beneficent services of the Braythwaites.

The two pair of lovers were in this singular position with regard to each other, when, as ill luck would have it, Waring enters the room, just as the nobleman is leaving it. The latter had taken the hand of Miss Vavasour (*videlicet*, Mrs. Waring,) to kiss it; and in doing so, he had said something so delicate, so respectful, and so full of happiness to come, both for her and her husband, that the lady, who was naturally of an enthusiastic temper, and whose feelings had been raised from a state of the greatest anxiety to one of peace and joy, felt so much gratitude in behalf of Mr. Waring and herself, as to raise the hand that had taken hers to her own lips, adding, with delight in her eyes, and a charming blush, "My dear Lord, all will be surely well, and nobody know it. You have given life to more than one."

Now Mr. Waring had entered without being observed by the parties, so much had the moment absorbed them. He accordingly arrived close upon them, just as his wife had uttered these words. The lady coloured with an innocent confusion to see him; the lord, to his eyes, seemed doubly confused, especially as he made haste to leave them together; and though love and his natural generosity made him receive the explanation at first, and endeavour to rejoice in it, it rankled in his mind when he went away.

Waring's only faults were hastiness and jealousy. The former he carried to that excess which is supposed common to Irishmen. The latter he had as a lover. He loved his wife with a sincerity and admiration, which recoiled from thinking ill of her, as an insult offered to something angelical. On the other hand, the sex was frail; the very best of them could fall into a condition like that of Lady Isabella: Isabella was his wife's friend; the nobleman was handsome, accomplished, and of a temper gayer than his own, a temper more like his wife's; and she who could be secret in one thing, not perfectly right, perhaps, might be secret in another a great deal

less so—that was conclusive. After a night spent in these contemplations, he rose, went to the aunt's house, and astonished and afflicted Miss Vavasour with a burst of suspicion. The parting words that she had uttered to the young lord, and which her husband had suffered her so prettily to explain away, were now palpable evidences against her, that could only tell one way, unless she had been lost to all sense of propriety; and if such was the very alternative, why doubt the rest? Having made the charge, the very misgiving of his heart at seeing her astonished made him repeat it. He did not dare to think he could have committed such an outrage for nothing. In a bitter flood of tears, she referred him to the young lord himself. It did not enter her head that a quarrel might ensue. Secure of her own truth, she thought that the evident sight of another's, and the astonishment he would express, would send her husband back to her a penitent. He went, and found that the young lord had fled!—fled, too, the very same night, not three hours after he had witnessed his confusion, and in a state of emotion which had not escaped the notice of the persons with whom he lodged. He had suddenly given up his lodgings, and avowed his intention of not returning for some time. “The coward!” thought Waring; “the traitor and the coward! He pretended to have love enough for two women, and did not dare to meet a second glance from a man!”

From the lodgings, our mistaken friend went to Lady Isabella's, where he found her ladyship alarmingly ill, and unable to see anybody. The servants looked frightened, and could explain nothing. It was clear that the villain had ill-treated both his victims—a conviction, under which the enquirer again made his appearance before his astonished wife.

The alarm evinced by the poor young lady at the intelligence of the nobleman's flight, appeared to Waring a new proof of her guilt. Had she exhibited pleasure or calmness, he would have had more reason; but when did jealousy wait for reason? She confessed her agitation, and attributed it to fears, both for Isabella, and for the security of the arrangements respecting herself. Both these assurances, however just and natural, touched upon points which her husband, in the excited state of his feelings, only turned to ill account. She was afraid for an unworthy woman, and she missed the

man who knew too well how such arrangements were to be secured. Miss Vavasour (I should say Waring, but I instinctively call her so in this part of the story,) finished the dispute by throwing herself, in the most affecting manner, on Mr. Waring's pity and good construction. She expressed her fears lest the astonishment and agitation into which his suspicions had thrown her, should do harm to the poor little creature, who, "as God was her judge, was his true and loyal babe;" and then in a flood of tears she apologised so sweetly for her plain speaking, hoping that he would not think ill of her for it, and fearing that he had had but too much reason to think her a person deficient in self-government and womanly reserve, that in a passion of love and self-reproach, poor Waring begged her pardon for his inhumanity, clasping her with renewed tenderness round the heart, and cherishing her hiding head in his bosom.

Miss Vavasour seemed to feel her life restored by this evidence of a return to reason, but the shock had hastened the approach of her time; the aunt was summoned in haste, the carriage ordered, and all three instantly departed in it for Braythwaite's, not without many comments from the servants, which, in spite of the love they bore both to the old lady and the young, were not long in reaching the ears of her parents. Mr. Waring was professedly a visitor to the old lady, to whom the marriage had been disclosed when it was found impossible for the young one to remain at home; and though both had a right to be visited by whom they pleased, and Lady Isabella had always been accompanied by her own ancient kinswoman, as well as by the young lord, who was understood to be paying his addresses to her, yet some of those evidences of closer intercourse, which are sure not to escape the eyes of the curious, had long set the critics below stairs talking. One of them had a relation in town, who was connected with a family intimate with the Vavasours; the gossip was carried round; and Miss Vavasour had scarcely returned with her aunt to the latter's house, and congratulated herself on having got well through her awful trial, when her father made his appearance, with a face pale with passion, and abruptly taxed her with having an intrigue with a Papist. The poor girl had no face for a falsehood. She could have said anything at the moment to screen her husband, for whom she felt a thousand superfluous fears;

but her face conspired with her nature to betray her ; and thinking that the confession of her marriage was at any rate better than being supposed guilty of an intrigue, she made use at once of that astounding vindication. The father broke for ever with the aunt for deceiving him, though she had really done it to save his feelings, and was the most harmless liar on his side of the family. At the same time, he proclaimed his daughter's shame (as he called it) to every ear that chose to listen at the doors — which every ear did that was able ; and in less than two hours he was on the road with her to London, vowing his vengeance upon Waring for marrying against the law.

The severest enactments had been revived at that time against the Catholics, not only cutting them off from the usual privileges of society, but threatening their lives for the exercise of their worship. Miss Vavasour's father knew too well the hold he had got against Waring, especially in the terrors of his daughter ; and he used both so inexorably, allowing her to write to him for that purpose, and inspecting her letters, that the poor husband, who would willingly have risked his life to do her a service, and show his remorse for his former suspicions, could no longer support the fear of endangering hers. The father gave him the choice of having the marriage denounced, and the priest as well as himself thrown into prison to be tried for their lives, or retiring into a monastery. The poor husband, to save his wife's feelings, as well as not to do an injustice to an honest man, chose the latter alternative, and flying the country, entered himself of the Society of Jesus. As far as Waring himself was concerned, flight might have set the menace at nought. He might have left the country and still have remained free. But the priest who married them was too old to move ; he already lived only on sufferance ; and as Miss Vavasour knew this, and indeed no such mortal peril would have been risked to the old man, whether she knew it or not, Waring, to make amends by one great sacrifice for all the pain he had caused her, and to show that he preferred her peace and family quiet to every other consideration, wrote to her from the coast of France, to say, that nobody could now suffer from any act of his, for he was wedded no longer, except to heaven and her memory. He completed the generosity of his letter by saying that she of

course was able to marry again, according to the laws of her country ; and that “ as in heaven they are neither married nor given in marriage, he hoped he might deserve to see her again in the next world, without offence to any one.”

The unhappy pair endeavoured the more to reconcile themselves to their separation, because word had been written them by Lady Isabella, that their child was no more. Poor Isabel had been additionally bewildered by the misfortunes of her friends. She undertook, however, to keep an eye on the little infant for the present, and to contrive, by means of Mr. Braythwaite, that the mother should see the child from time to time. A few weeks after Mrs. Waring's departure, Lady Isabel was delivered of her own child, still-born. She wept bitterly at the loss, declaring nevertheless that it was a relief to her ; but she turned sullen and hopeless, careless of what might happen ; nay, she wished for death ; and in the course of a few weeks it came. It was in this interval that the thought struck her of saving trouble to her friends, and securing a powerful protection for their child, by pretending it was her own, and sending word of its birth to Lord Ormond.

How this came to be known, I shall relate presently. Lady Isabella, after seeing this strange act of mingled falsehood and generosity succeed, breathed her last under circumstances that looked very like a repentance of it. But of this also, when the rest of her conduct is described. The noble Earl took charge of his supposed offspring, and after a time consigned her to the care of the good Mr. Randolph, under whom she grew up to be the innocent and charming person we have described. At Mr. Randolph's death, the busy Mr. Braythwaite, who had sought his acquaintance, bore her for a time, at his dying desire, to his own house, to be put under the care of the virtuous Mrs. B., till his lordship's pleasure should be known. His lordship had in the meanwhile become acquainted at Mickleham House, where he little thought he beheld the real mother of the child ; and as little did he think, with what eyes she was regarding him when he ventured to express his wishes for her favour towards his protégée. The latter was, in consequence, repeatedly invited to the house ; and no sooner did the ladies find that Mr. Randolph, at his death, had consigned her to the care of Mr. Braythwaite, than they intreated the Duke, as a favour, to let her take up her abode finally at their house. But what

had been Miss Vavasour's feelings—Mrs. Waring's rather—when she first beheld the girl, and instantly discerned the resemblance to her husband? Let it be confessed, that if her husband was the first to do an injustice by his suspicions, the wife was now seized with suspicions in her turn. The more she looked, the less could she persuade herself that the Duke was the real father; and the more she began to believe that Waring himself had played false. The Duke, it is true, might have known more ladies than one; and one of them might have borne an astonishing resemblance to Mr. Waring, perhaps was related to him, though he had no sisters: but Lady Isabella he had certainly known; and her poor friend was certainly as capable of stratagem. When the name of Braythwaite transpired (for Master Warmestre had by that time resumed it) her suspicions amounted almost to certainty; till one day, on a sudden, there fell upon her the less humiliating, but far more awful thought,—mixed up, she said, of the two most opposite feelings possible,—the bitterest grief and the most transporting joy,—that the child might be her own. Her mind was so occupied with this thought, night and day, and so perplexed by it, that two illnesses succeeded; in the course of which Ellen was so filially attentive, and betrayed at every turn of her mind and manners so perfect, though feminine a likeness of her father, that she was unable to bear her society; so that, confiding her thoughts to Lady Vavasour, the latter contrived accordingly to diminish her attendance.

The circumstances that took place from this period up to that of Sir Philip's return to England, have been related. Mr. Waring, out of delicacy to the Vavasours, as well as from other feelings, had never disclosed his connection with them to any one, not even his beloved pupil. He had only given Sir Philip to understand, when the latter first mentioned his admiration of Lady Vavasour, that a very painful and unexplainable circumstance in his history, though implying nothing dishonourable to any party, prevented him from hearing their names mentioned without a feeling of anguish; and the more Sir Philip guessed of the nature of this circumstance, which he did pretty nearly during his after acquaintance with them, especially from the emotion exhibited by Lady Vavasour at the mention of his tutor's name, the more he thought himself bound never to speak of them again in his presence. Sir Philip often won-



dered, that his friend, though professing more regard for him than ever, and sometimes unable to look at him without tears in his eyes, did not seem to like his society as he used to do: while the latter, who, in fact, knew all that the other was about, and thought him destined like himself to love without happiness, avoided him, because comfort was to be neither taken nor given. In the bitterest moments of his first separation from Miss Vavasour, or rather in those moments when he was willing, for the sake of rallying his forces, to think ill of all parts of his fortune, he sometimes endeavoured to believe that she might have been false to him; but this fancy was always rejected, both as a new offence, and an addition to his misfortunes. He ceased at length to struggle with his love, turning entirely to that hope of meeting in another world, which he expressed in his parting letter; and when he found that she lived on, year after year, without forming a new connection, and that at length, in the course of time, they seemed still communing with each other by means of one unalterable determination, he could almost have worshipped in her the likeness of his guardian saint. The mention of her name, however, by earthly lips, always made him fall into an impatience to be reunited with her on earth, and it was because he could not bear the chance of it, nor the pressure of another Vavasour upon his friend's heart, that he was fain to be less and less in his society. Had both been of equal ages, it might have been otherwise, or had the cases been alike;—but I have observed, more than once, that if ever reserve takes place between particular friends, it is apt to be carried further than with any other persons; perhaps because both have a misgiving that it ought not to be so. Lord Waringstown has since said, good-humouredly, that having been Sir Philip's tutor, he had taken himself for an older and graver person than he was. He ought to have known, he says, that a lover is always young. Besides, he confessed that he was ashamed. He did not dare to express the remorse he had been destined to experience, for being the first author of the discovery of his marriage; for such he could never help regarding himself; and he added, as a humiliating proof of human weakness, and what made him perpetually think ill of himself, that the absurdity of his conduct, as an absurdity, fully shared, in his mind, the remembrance of the wrong of it; so that he was perpetually taxing himself with being equally

guilty and egotistical. He had turned self-reflection, however, to one great account. He had quite conquered his impatience with others. Everybody else, however wrong or absurd, seemed to him too excusable, by some reason of education or circumstance, to warrant the arrogance of reproach; and by degrees this consideration helped to reconcile him to his conscience.

A time was now come, when reserve and reproach were to be equally at an end. It has been seen how Lord Waringstown was thrown into the company of his wife, how he beheld his daughter, and was instantly struck with her likeness to himself. He lost no time in seeking out Braythwaite, and he took him with his wife abruptly into the presence of the Duke of Ormond, where Lady Waringstown (for so she must now be called) was seated with her daughter. This took place the same day on which Sir Philip introduced me to his intended bride, and was the subject on which he expressed so much satisfaction, after making that inquiry of his lordship when he entered the room. He had entertained little doubt of the issue, and so had the rest; but the Duke, in endeavouring to hasten the confession of the parties, met with an unexpected mortification. Being angry with them, he unfortunately opened the business with a threat; upon which Braythwaite said, that with all due respect to his grace, that was not the way in which Mrs. Braythwaite and himself had a right to be treated; and that whatever communications they had or had not to make with others, perhaps the presence of his grace might be unnecessary.

The Duke, doubly offended at this insolence, asked him how he dared to address him in that manner: then checking himself, and apologizing to the ladies for his warmth, proceeded to ask him some questions. Braythwaite declined to answer. He said he would not give or permit a single testimony, not only unless the threat was removed from his wife's head, but unless every decency (as he called it) was observed towards her, and due security promised her, on the faith and honour of all parties, for whatever her kindness to Lady Isabella (for it was nothing else) might have induced her at any time to venture upon. By this claim it was manifest, both that the suspicion was true, and that Braythwaite had some very powerful hold

somewhere, by which he could brave so powerful a man as Ormond.

The Duke, smiling with scorn, but looking disconcerted, asked him if he was not the Braythwaite of whom he had heard, who was in close connection with the Duke of Buckingham.

“I have a kinsman,” said Braythwaite, “who has the honour to be in his Grace the Duke of Buckingham’s household; but if your grace would insinuate that I have need of protectors, I beg leave to say you are mistaken.”

“Do you mean to answer my questions, or do you not?” inquired Ormond; “because in case you do not, perhaps the woman may think fit not to risk the danger of a worse inquiry.”

“She can undergo no danger,” returned Braythwaite; “there is more danger, if she is ill-used, to twenty others whom I could name, dukes and perhaps even princes included.”

“Ay, ay! we come to that, do we?” said the Duke; “I thought there was a protection of some sort, though I did not exactly look for one of that kind. Good God! to think that the highest names in the land—but I shall forget myself. Suppose, Mr. Braythwaite, I am not in a humour to spare the consequences of your threats, be they what they may?”

“You will spare them, to a certainty, my Lord Duke,” answered the spy:—“I will answer for your wish to do so.”

“Well,” returned Ormond, “I am not addicted to scandals, and can waive the proof. Let us drop all talk either of threat or indemnity, and proceed to question this good woman at once.”

“Pardon me, my lord,” interrupted Braythwaite, “I cannot consent to it. My device, for the benefit of all parties, is, and has ever been, ‘Entire security or nothing.’”

“And you venture to say this,” angrily observed the Duke, “in the presence of these honourable persons!”

All his Grace’s anger now seemed to return, and the ladies began to fear for the explanation; Mrs. Braythwaite creeping back to her husband out of the corner where she had stood, and planting herself doggedly beside him, when Braythwaite hastened to put an end to the delay by writing some words with a pencil, and respectfully presenting them to the Duke. The Duke read them, blushing like scarlet, in manifest amazement

and agitation ; then crumpling them into his pocket with a kind of uneasy scorn, said, " We will talk of this hereafter. What is required meanwhile shall be done. *That* is the great point undoubtedly." His Grace was proceeding, though with a voice still agitated, and looking away from his mysterious correspondent, to open anew the interrogations, when Braythwaite once more, though in a style of great respect, interfered, and requested that the Duke, and the other persons present, would severally pledge their honour, that no harm should come to anybody for whatever might have been thought proper to be done. The pledge was given, and the interrogations commenced.

Mrs. Braythwaite deposed, that the Lady Isabella (under what circumstances we have seen) sent for her one morning to her bedside, looking highly flushed, and seemingly more strong and happy than usual. She alleged, that her Ladyship first swore her to secrecy, on peril of dying before her face if she refused ; and then opened to her, for the sake of her friends, a plan by which the Earl of Ormond was to be declared father of the child. The lady was to write and subscribe a paper to that effect, Mr. Braythwaite being called in as an additional witness, though he was not to be let into the secret. This paper was to be sent to the Earl, and if he acknowledged the truth of it, the child was to be treated according to his directions, both then and afterwards ; always provided, — 1st, That she should be allowed to inherit from her supposed mother, a certain sum, which the latter possessed as her private property : and 2ndly, That if any evil should ever threaten the real father and mother, in consequence of the loss of the child, or any circumstances whatsoever took place, by which it would be advisable to inform them of its existence, she, Anne Braythwaite, as she was to answer it before God on the last day, was, upon good promise of security against any responsibility for what was past, openly and fully to declare all she knew upon the matter, one jot or one tittle not excepted. And Anne Braythwaite further confessed, though she stated she had been freed by Lady Isabella from any necessity to that effect, that a fifth of the said property had been settled in perpetuity on herself, provided the Earl's acknowledgment of the child was obtained before her Ladyship's death.

Whether there was truth in every word of this statement, could not be ascertained ; but the paper was sent ; the child (though not without some trouble and alarm) was acknowledged ; and Mrs. Braythwaite averred, that she neither had lost sight of the parties concerned, ever since the young lady had been consigned to the care of her supposed kinsman, Mr. Randolph, nor had she seen any reason, till application was made to her by Lord Waringstown, for putting into execution the disclosure enjoined her by Lady Isabel. Mr. Braythwaite, she said, had made the acquaintance of Mr. Randolph on purpose to gratify her, by witnessing the comfort of the dear young lady with his own eyes ; and after the death of the old gentleman, she had the satisfaction of having her under her own roof for a short time, at his express dying desire, till my Lord should dispose of her as he thought fit. She then had the new and singular pleasure of seeing her become an inmate in the house of her real mother, to whom she would have disclosed herself as her nurse, had not the likeness of the young lady to Mr. Waring made her fearful of impressing it too strongly upon her mother, and indeed prepared her for the escape of the secret before long, should Miss Vavasour have so wished ; which, however, she confessed she had not looked for.

“ Mrs. Waring,” sternly said the Duke of Ormond, “ *not* Miss Vavasour. You are to remember, that this lady was a wedded wife. Was not Lady Isabella aware of this circumstance ? ”

Mrs. Braythwaite here fell into tears, partly perhaps from agitation, partly from tenderness of recollection. “ My fears then were true,” said she, “ and the poor lady knew it.”

“ What fears ? ” inquired the Duke.

Mrs. Braythwaite said, that she herself had never been certain till then, of Miss Vavasour’s being a wedded wife, nor, she believed, had Lady Isabella, till the very day of her death. Her Ladyship might have been told of it, but certainly had not given it credit. On that day a letter came from Mrs. Waring, in answer to the one announcing the pretended death of her child. Lady Isabella contrived to read it, and it affected her so strongly, that upon Mrs. Braythwaite returning to the room (for her kindred had not removed her from the house), she found her at once speechless, and labouring to utter some-

thing, which, by the look of her countenance, was very particular. She pointed to the letter, which Mrs. Braythwaite accordingly read, but could gather nothing from it. She recollected, however, a passage, which she now conceived to have made the strong impression under which her Ladyship attempted to speak; but it was so worded, that it conveyed to herself no impression at the moment, though something to the effect had occasionally struck her afterwards. It was something to this purpose: — ‘God be praised that he has left me the hope of meeting her hereafter—of meeting all, for Mr. Waring writes to tell me, that we shall all meet, if we trust in God’s mercy; and you know that my beloved husband never did an action in his life which obscured the sense of his duties, or hindered him from seeing by their blessed light.’—‘I know,’ continued Mrs. Braythwaite, “that the ladies spoke of Mr. Waring and my lord, by the title of their husbands; and though I thought it was a strange thing of Miss Vavasour to say what she did of Mr. Waring, yet the name by which she called him did not strike me at the moment as being part of the strangeness.”

The Duke of Ormond looked as if he doubted this assertion; but he made no comment upon it: he only said, “Poor lady! she saw she had mistaken in every thing, and doubtless wished to undo the arrangements respecting the child. Did she say nothing afterwards?”

“Not a word,” replied our informant: “she was not able: the doctor gave her cordials, but she never spoke a word more. She shook her head angrily, when I asked if I was to do this and that with the letter, and made other signs of impatience, but soon became weaker and weaker, dropping her head back, and so gave up the effort. Only the tears ran in a very piteous manner out of the sides of her eyes, till the moment she departed; and I saw something laboured at her heart, which she had not been able to tell me.”

The great and gallant Duke of Ormond shed tears himself at the close of this recital; and even Mr. Braythwaite ejaculated something moving. The case, however, was now concluded. It was clear enough. His Grace congratulated Lord Waringstown on the establishment of his claim, saying something very kind and agreeable upon the transfer of it from

himself; and then, desiring Mr. Braythwaite to follow him to his house, the parties separated; and his Lordship came away to Sir Philip's lodgings, where I met him, as related.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

NEXT morning I had the pleasure of embracing my beloved Ellen, who was in such a transport of pleasure, that she was in a state of almost breathless quiet the whole day, scarcely knowing how to reply to us. However, she repaid us by looks. Lady Waringstown had brought her with them from Mickleham over night, having been summoned by an express. Her ladyship was almost as quiet, but preserved her wits, and was half the day engaged in whispering in corners with her lord, making, she said, no apologies for her want of politeness. I could see that their discourse concerned more than themselves, for they often stopped to regard both of us, as they sat talking apart; and every now and then Ellen would go and sit between them, each of them holding one of her hands. She had entertained great respect for the Duke of Ormond, but sometimes reproached herself that it was not so filial as it might have been. In fact, he saw her rarely, and that with little willingness; and this she could not but perceive. When he now saw her he behaved in a manner equally unconstrained and affectionate, saying he hoped she would not cease to love him, "for that any man might be proud of her regard." She kissed his hand, with more tears than he had ever drawn from her before: and he was much affected.

The day following I witnessed an extraordinary scene at court. It was my business that morning to attend on his Majesty, which I did with great impatience, longing to return to my friends. I returned sooner than I expected, and in company with Sir Philip. The Duke of Ormond had been right in his conjecture respecting Buckingham. Herne was in town three days before he saw me, and during the whole of that time had endeavoured in vain to meet with him, both at court and at York House. He wrote, and what he wrote

was very much to the purpose; but no answer was sent. Buckingham had been requested by his Majesty to keep the peace, and he kept it like the apple of his eye. On the third day, Arran undertook to speak with his Grace on the subject. Buckingham affected the utmost astonishment; said that he had received the letter, but taken it for a bad joke; that he would not have endured the suspicion from any other man, and begged him to tell as much to Sir Philip: adding, that he heartily congratulated our friend on his escape from those "accursed vagabonds;" but that he did not believe even Dalton to be concerned in the matter, having no doubt that it was a pure design on Sir Philip's purse. As to Dalton, or Blood, as I shall in future call him, there had been half-a-dozen warrants out against him a year past, and yet he was nowhere to be found.

It was Buckingham's turn that day to be in waiting. He had slept, or rather gone to bed a few hours before, in the room next to that of his Majesty; and was complaining to a French gentleman, who came from the Duchess of Orleans, of the early hours of the King, whom he called the "morning star and garter," when up comes the Duke of Ormond, and begs his Majesty's permission to present to him, in that private manner, their "gallant Rouen acquaintance, Sir Philip Herne, newly come from beyond seas."

The King, who had evidently been told the story, looked very awkward. He mustered up, however, one of his kindest faces, and gave Sir Philip a good welcome. The worst of it was, he was obliged to say something. There was a silence by no means common in the royal presence, even upon the most solemn occasions. I stole a look at Buckingham, who was very busy explaining in whispers to the French gentleman who Sir Philip was. "This is a very scandalous business," quoth the King; "inquiry must be made into it. I must speak to Coventry and Arran about it, and to my brother: we must all see about it, and put an end to those villains. They are more disgrace to us than Algiers! Odsfish! my lords," continued his Majesty, looking around him, "'tis too great an indignity, thus removing the most honourable men in England by main force, and demands an apology from us for enduring such ruffians." He looked very angry, which he probably was, at being reminded that he had the "ruffians"



about him. Buckingham whispered faster than ever to the French Count. Sir Philip, who had been asked no questions, could only bow his thanks.

The King, as Ormond foresaw he would, took his lord lieutenant by the button, and led him to a window. Ormond did not like the office he had taken upon himself, and Sir Philip had earnestly requested him to let somebody else perform it. But with that pertinaciousness in what he thought proper, which was not always so agreeable as he took it to be, he had resolved to go through with it, because he thought himself bound in honour to stand by his "Rouen acquaintance." Sir Philip was surrounded by a host of inquirers and condolers, not of the most pleasant description. He well understood, however, the position into which he had brought himself, and proceeded to turn the tables upon his misfortune in the following manner. After making a general and somewhat repelling bow round about him, he went straight up to Buckingham, whose hand he declined:—

"My Lord Duke of Buckingham," said he, in a tone low enough to escape the King's ear, but loud enough to be heard by the rest—"it is necessary, in the eyes of the world, to thrust aside the disadvantage to which you have put me, and I now do it accordingly. 'Tis you that were at the bottom of this villainy. You may affect to smile, for you do but affect it. Remember, that I know you,—that I know you, and that I know your friend, the outlaw" (Buckingham looked alarmed), "and your friends, the other outlaws, who would have committed the same outrage on a person whose name I will not mention, lest it should compromise your responsibility to myself. I shall mention no names at present, but your own; nor the rest at any time, if you choose to take upon yourself to answer for them; but, in mentioning yours, I give this honourable company to understand that I mention that of a traitor and a ruffian."

"Do you recollect, Sir Madman, in whose presence you are speaking?" said Buckingham, lifting up his voice.

"I do," contemptuously answered Sir Philip, "and so does your Grace."

"Gad!" quoth the Viscount, who stood near me, "he has him hip and thigh." The Frenchman was writing like mad

in his tablets, staring all the while at the sensation he should make in Louis's awful court.\*

"What is this?" said the King, returning: "remember my injunction, gentlemen; are we never to have peace and quiet? Here, at least, I may expect that they shall be found; and I desire they may be so. No more of these ruffling absurdities. You know I have desired it."

"Your Majesty then," said Buckingham, "must really contrive to put an end to these eternal and infernal mistakes, or who is to endure them? The next thing will be to accuse ——"

"No, Buckingham, it will *not*," sternly interrupted the King. "Peace! and let me hear no more on't. Ormond, you might have spared me this; —but no matter. Sir Philip Herne, I have expressed my concern at your treatment. I had hoped it might have sufficed; seeing that we all suffer for mistakes in our turn."

"Sir," answered Sir Philip, with a subjection and tenderness of manner exceedingly graceful, "I am bounden to your Majesty beyond what I can express, for permitting me to utter my thanks for your Majesty's gracious treatment of me. What I have been saying to the Duke of Buckingham was a private matter, not intended for your Majesty's ear; nor should I have whispered it in this place, could I have found any other. Had I posted my Lord Duke on the walls of London (as I confess I had thoughts of doing), I might have been put to my proofs in a court of justice; and as witnesses can be kept out of the way, and many delicate privacies might have been compromised, I had therefore ——" — "Consider them now," hastily interrupted the King; "consider them now; and pray let us have no more of it. Look'ye, Sir Philip, —our dignity is concerned; the public must hear no more of these scandals, whether founded in truth or mistake; and I charge you all, on your loyalty, to say no more about them. God's my life, must I ask such a thing in vain, and purely for the public good!"

"Sir," replied my friend, "if I did not interrupt your Majesty, it was because I feared I had already ventured too

\* Lord Ossory, though a pattern of behaviour, afterwards stood upon still less ceremony than Sir Philip. See p. 340. — EDIT.

many words. My honour, I conceive, is saved. The rest I lay at your Majesty's feet, submissive and grateful."

The King blushed, as if he had asked too much; and Sir Philip as if he thought so. There was some little confusion among us all, and we mingled and talked without knowing well what to say. His Majesty retired again with the Duke of Ormond. It was easy to see what was thought, though few persons ventured to congratulate my friend openly. Shall I dare to say, that even I hesitated to be among the foremost? Ossory was the first, and then Arran; and I was surprised to find Sedley very warm; but he had a large estate. I hope it will be considered that I was Page of the Presence, and that it is easier to encounter plague, pestilence, and famine, than hazard a king's displeasure, especially when a man has been used to the contrary. However, I knew I should go at last. The thought of my new expectations (confound them!) came in aid of my virtue, and I was time enough to anticipate Sir Charles.\*

I owned my weakness to Sir Philip when we came away. "Do you not know," said he, "that it is for this candour we all love you, and that you could not have it if you had not the weakness? If you come to that, I flatter myself I have been as weak as you."

"How!" said I, "had you any weakness on the occasion?"

"Had I not," cried he, in a pleasant tone—"Oh, good Lord! I suspect people will begin to love me too when they know all,—that is to say, if I have not too much to confess."

"What did you feel then?" I inquired.

"Why," returned Sir Philip, "did you not see what a lie I told when I said I was not only submissive but grateful? and did you not observe how pale I was? Nay, it was no lie, it was baser; for I really felt grateful, and could have kissed the royal feet, purely because sovereign power smiled on me and asked me a favour. Oh, I shall have a perilous notion of a king in future; I shall be inclined to a republic, purely because I resent my courtly propensities."

"I saw no courtliness," said I, "beyond what it should have been; but I chuckled to see how pale you were with passion. There I had you."

\* Sedley, just mentioned. — EDIT.

“ You will have me worse,” observed Sir Philip, “ when you find it was not with passion I was pale,—at least not with anger.”

“ What was it then ? ”

I had now another occasion to admire those qualities in my friend which, at the very moment they appeared to place him beneath us, set him more assuredly above, and yet under such circumstances as could hardly have rendered it possible for him to think so. In fact, I could perceive by his voice that he was much agitated, as he made me the following extraordinary reply :—

“ It was with fear.”

“ With fear ! What fear ? ”

“ Fear of my own feelings, and of Buckingham, and of the necessity I should be under of facing that great baby in the field. He is a human being ; and the idea of encountering a human face in hostility, with all its mysteries of life, and death, and suffering, is very dreadful to me. I am courageous enough in principle, and can do any thing for it ; but I am all fear in imagination : I may add, all sympathy. We are all creatures of circumstances ; at least I am willing to think so for my own sake ; and if the greatest scoundrel in existence should profess to be indignant, and to think I wronged him, I should hardly feel certain that I had not. Even Blood, I understand, thinks he has been wronged by mankind, and probably was so formerly ; and he was vulgarly and violently brought up. The cast of Buckingham’s face is amiable for all his infamous actions. He has been ruined by being a duke while an infant. You may undertake to think all this a refinement that does me honour, and will infallibly try to think so ; but you will *not* think it ; at least not every part of it : it is, perhaps, not desirable that you should ; at any rate, that the world at large should, or they might confound the grace of truth with the right of being weak and unhealthy. But there is no danger of that ! nor should I hazard it if there were. I have done nothing to warrant my being such a martyr.”

“ Do you remember the sea-fight,” said I, unable to enter upon these metaphysics then as I might now.

“ That alters nothing of what I have observed,” answered Sir Philip : “ I tell you I can do any thing for a principle ;

and as I have had the luck to be tried more than once, I am safe with those who know what I have done. The world, perhaps, would not easily believe me capable of fear, were it not for the multitude of those who are secretly fearful themselves; who, by the way, would be the first to try if they could not beard me, which would be inconvenient for all parties. 'Tis well for all that they do not know how difficult I find it to be angry. This it is to be educated in so much tenderness of conscience! I am bound not to regret it, for I think the world would be happier if they had more: I mean as it affects one another. But grievously are those mistaken who think such results of the substitution of practical for theoretical goodwill make a man the prouder. They no more do so than they ought to do so, The making a point of consideration of others begets a real tenderness for them, and a positive undervaluing of oneself, inconceivable to those who think it a proud thing to do right. What will you say to me, Esher, when I confess to you, that the 'turning of many thoughts,' as the old poet has it, has made me either so Christian a philosopher, or so contemptible an adversary, that it was with difficulty I roused myself to seek for these men; nay, to feel angry with them. They appeared to me like great, mischievous, stupid boys, and I as a great child to whom nothing but chance had given other thoughts. And what fault was that of theirs? So unfit am I for action. Confess that you think me fitter for a cloister than a quarrel."

"You know what I think of you, Herne," said I; "but I own you do surprise me when you say, that you have scarcely felt even angry." I thought of Lady Vavasour, of what he now knew of her situation, and of Blood's attempt; and I indeed wondered.\*

"The reason is," observed my friend, "that I find all men, as I have said before, to be the creatures of circumstances, and that I have had passions and impulses go through my own

\* What Sir Ralph wondered at will be thought by most a feeling out of nature; but I must confess I have had unquestionable proofs of its existence, and know a person who so far answers to the character described. We are too apt to take it for granted from certain writers, that nothing is human nature but what they have laid down for it. The world has succeeded in bullying them into the opinion, and they keep it up by bullying the world. It would be a rash thing to take up the finest works that ever were written, and say that human nature is only what those works represent, or that it will come to nothing else. There are fashions on great scales as well as small, which last for hundreds of years; and many opinions, laid down for unalterable, may partake of them. — EDIT.

breast, under the madness of which I know not into what crimes I might have fallen."

"You jest!"

"I am serious. Circumstances have been very serious with me, and shown me visions and experiences of humanity, under which I could not think ill of others, without implicating all human nature. Now, after all, I think well enough of myself, not to be able to think human nature a bad thing, if circumstances be favourable; and so the veriest scoundrels appear to me no worse than a parcel of great school-boys, who have had bad teachers, or some other unfavourable mischance in life: and hence it is, that I go, even to a work like the present, with no better opinion of myself than as being as great a boy as the rest, who is obliged to fight, lest the others should think ill of him."

"You do not, however, seem to have bestowed much thought upon it, till this moment."

"I put off the thought, because it was disagreeable. I have told you what I think with regard to the human face: so I turn my thoughts another way, and do the thing which I have most reprov'd in others,—act against what appears to be my better knowledge. But 'tis a trick of sympathy, like all the rest. I mean, that whether we act for or against what we think good for others, a value for the opinion of the world is somehow or other at the bottom of it. It is this that will be the salvation of mankind, if ever they come to see right. Meantime the world must spin round: things must proceed with health and vigour, or action would cease in us all, and put a stop to the very improvements that may be hop'd in it."

"I tell you what, Sir Philip," said I; "I think you had a pretty good proof of my sincerity just now; and I declare before God, that I believe you under-rate yourself in this matter, out of some subtle refinement. Do not I know very well, that if we were attacked this very minute, you would be cut piece-meal for me before my face."

"I am glad," answered my friend with a sigh, "that you know it; and we will say no more. I was made what I am, strong or weak; and I have still a friend. Still a friend! How many friends have I not! Truth will, I believe, cost me nothing with them. It ought not; for it has cost me dreadfully elsewhere."

It was the first time he alluded to Lady Vavasour. How it made me long to speak! I was too deeply moved, however, by the extraordinary being beside me, to know what to utter; and during my return home, we hardly spoke a word.

I said to myself, "this man ought to have a dozen persons to fight for him, purely to save him trouble. I'll fight with Buckingham if I can contrive it; I'll fight with Blood, with the Buccaneer, with everybody. God-zounds, will true Christianity never get on?"

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

I COULD not get rid of the thoughts and emotions described in my last chapter. I felt that I should burst out somehow or other. I did, and the consequences were important.

Lady Waringstown next morning took all the ladies to herself for the whole day, to carry them about to places of female resort, shops and others, which, to say the truth, she was about as glad to see again as themselves. The Hortons undertook to escort them, I mean the female Hortons; and no gentleman was admitted of their crew. Sir Philip did not complain, but was observed to be restless. At length he ordered his horse. Lord Waringstown had left us, to have another meeting with Mr. Braythwayte.

"You would be with the ladies, Sir Philip?"

"No," said he quietly; "but I really do not know what to do with myself."

"Oh, these men of truth!" thought I: "I shall make him confess any thing, if I please. I know something of the way in which they hamper themselves, by hampering nothing." "What," resumed I, "are there parks, friends, the mall, the bowling-green, and the wits, and Sir Philip welcome everywhere, and not know what to do with himself?"

He said nothing, and I thought looked at me reproachfully. I could not stand this. In truth, I felt that I ought not to beguile any thing out of him; especially as he loved me for my sincerity; so I spoke out.

"Allow me to ask you a plain question, my dear friend."

“You will furnish me,” said he “with something to do.” —He little thought what was coming.

“You know, my dear Herne, I have been living in the court ever since you saw me, and so have not improved in modesty; but I hope you have not forgotten that Miss Hamilton is dying for you. To be sure she is very lively just now, hearing of your safe return, but as mortal as can be for all that. She always was dying, is dying, and die she will, when you are married.”

I saw that his usual address failed him at this impromptu; and it struck me that my words did not imply sufficient consideration for the love that was at his heart. He said, “You remind me that when one is out of spirits, one ought to joke. It was a lesson, I remember, I was formerly enabled to teach you. Come, if Miss Hamilton is dying for me, how many Phillises will hang themselves when Sir Ralph Esher plays the Demophoon?”

“Do you call that a joke?” said I. “Now I am not so hard-hearted as you considerate men. I always thought that there was nothing cruel which they could not contemplate.”

“It was no joke, I allow,” returned Sir Philip, “except upon the principle of extremes meeting; and then an execrably bad jest, you know, amounts to a good one. Fleckno is as good as Marvell, if you want to laugh.”

“I must not feign any longer,” said I, a little gravely; “I did not mean to end with jesting, though I began with it. In plain truth, dear Herne, since you honour me with the title of your friend, and I know what you think belongs to that word, you will not wonder if I long to see you as happy as possible; and let me dare to say, that charming as I find Miss Earlom, and sincere, as I have no doubt, the love is that she entertains for you, I doubt sometimes whether you will be happy with her. Pardon me — I know all that you would say, and for God’s sake do not think I am probing you with the common cruelty of a gossip; I am sure you do not; — but what I mean is, that it is possible she might, in the long run, prefer the love of a heart that would love her more (you will do me justice when I say that), while, on the other hand, she might shudder to find out that she had never made you happy.”



Sir Philip's countenance underwent an inconceivable expression of melancholy kindness. He said, "I thank you for this, Ralph; you ease my mind by speaking; for everybody has kept such a silence (which indeed I do not wonder at), that I seemed as if I ought to say nothing to my own heart. Now I tell you this:— You know all,— respecting one matter. It is now as it ever was, and ever will be. But as to happiness, I have come to the conclusion, that few people have it in this world; and that if it fall to anybody's lot to bestow it, or to be thought essential to the happiness of another, it is a lot that many thousands might envy. I am restless just at this moment; I am not well; I have never quite recovered the effects of the sickness which this charming creature, as you justly call her, enabled me to get through; and you will be surprised to hear perhaps, what indeed not a little surprises me, that although what I just now spoke of is as it was ever, I have really a great affection for Miss Earlom. I feel an inexpressible gratitude for the affection she bears me; and gratitude is a very delightful sensation."

"That may be," said I, "and yet neither be happy in the course of years. Allow me to ask, even on her own account, why the marriage need be hastened so speedily as this old gentlewoman says it has been determined. Miss Earlom may not agree with Miss Hamilton after all; she may find others more to her liking, when she is to see us all in our gallantry;— a thing, let me tell you, Sir Philip, which you have too little considered. Your coat, for instance, is not the perfect thing it ought to be; and let me add, that charming as the young lady is, and witty as well as handsome, very witty and handsome ladies prefer a wit like the Viscount\* in a perfect coat, to his betters in one of less pretensions. Why not, in generosity, give her time? I do not care for giving a rub to your vanity."

"My dear Ralph," answered my friend, smiling, "it is very proper that you should talk to me in this way; but you will allow it would not be quite so easy for me to debate such questions, much less to suggest them to the persons concerned. What would you have?" continued he with a sigh. "You have my interest at heart;— well, is it not a great thing to

\* I guess this Viscount to have been Sir George Hewit, who may have been promoted since we first knew him.— EDIT.

be-loved at all, much more by one so kind and so beautiful? Is it not my interest to secure her, before she is subjected to those temptations you speak of? She has hitherto lived out of the world; she knows nothing at present of a wish to live in the world you speak of; and, though I shall not debar her from it, meanwhile, I persuade myself, I shall fix her love for me beyond recall. It may be done surely with one so loving and so good; and then if I am not happy, I shall not deserve to be so. Observe me, Esher; it is well for me that I am loved at all; 'tis surely a piece of great good fortune, and such I ought to consider it — I am not a man to be loved by those who have mixed more with society. They acquire a sort of respect for me, which it becomes very difficult to bear on either side, because it gets mixed with contempt. I mean contempt for the man who so differs with the world, and who has nothing to show them for his reasons but a premature and forced sensibility, which compelled him to think. How can I be sure that they are not in the right, and that the difference implies rather a want of energy on my part, than a defect on their own? Many excellent natures, sooner or later, fall in with arts and expediencies; and what right have I to reproach them with the pedantry of my scruples? I shall retain the scruples, perhaps because I have not strength to throw them off; but they have long made me feel as if I belonged to some other planet than this earth: some sluggish and less energetic orb; and I am, at all events, so little fitted for the orb I live in, that this feeling, the most melancholy of my existence, would be infallibly construed by all but one person in a million, into an egotism the most egotistical. Let me be loved, for God's sake, my dear friend, where I can. You know not, — for your childhood was lucky, — what it is to love and to be despised. Even now this moment, while I say it" (and he spoke with a kind of vehement self-resentment, his whole frame trembling with emotion) — "even now, you yourself sitting there, a man full of natural wisdom and tenderness, cannot help feeling a pity for me, something allied to scorn. If you were to tell my story in a book, the reader would feel it. If you were to tell it to the best and loveliest, or meekest, or most energetic of women, they would all — you know it — For God's sake —" The rest of the sentence died on my ear.

He uttered half this speech, and particularly the latter part of it, with a vehemence, so unlike his usual manner, that my breath was for the moment suspended. At his first utterance of the word "scorn," I laughed; at the second I began to recover my surprise; and when he said "you know it," I could not help bursting out in my turn.

"I know it *not*, Sir Philip," said I, rising, with vehemence in my turn; "and you will force me to speak. I say I know to the contrary. You think I mean Miss Earlom, or Miss Waring, or Lady Waringstown; but I do not, though you know well the deep and admiring affection which the two latter have for you, as well as the first. Methinks these mysteries have been carried far enough; and for my part, I will speak out, let who will suffer. Better one person should suffer than two, and a new friend than an old. Lady Vavasour loves you."

I will not attempt to describe the effect of this communication. Sir Philip turned pale and motionless, grasped the back of the chair by which he was standing, then quietly turned it and sat down, then rose immediately and met me.

"'Tis as true," said I, "as there is a God in heaven."

"What were the words you spoke?" said my friend, "do not be afraid that I shall commit any extravagance."

"Lady Vavasour — Margaret — loves you; she sought you out; she bitterly repented. She went into London for you; into the thick of the plague; and would have done twenty times more, had she not discovered that it was needless. She went to the coast of France, and lived there, at the time you were away; because the document you sent from the vessel said that it would return to that quarter."

"Let us talk of this," said my friend, in a voice like a whisper, putting his arm in mine, and proceeding to leave the room. "Why was I not told it before?"

He spoke so quietly, and yet, at the same time, appeared so bewildered, proposing too to leave the house, for which I saw no reason, that I began to fear the news had been too much for his state of health.

I said, that God only knew why such a mystery was made of it; and yet, on reflection, it was doubtless because of his new engagement. I had instinctively kept the secret myself hitherto, but I admired, I had such a regard for the Countess

myself, that Miss Earlom, much as I admired her too, must forgive me, if the old friend prevailed in my heart over the new.

"This is just," returned Sir Philip, "but not the less so was the other. I had forgotten what I asked."

He spoke in a low tone quietly; but as if he was at the very end of his breath. We quitted the house, leaving our horses at the door, where mine had stood before Sir Philip's was ordered. I now saw, that his object in coming out was to walk in the fresh air, for he only turned into the next street, and so paced up and down. I then related every thing that had happened for the last four years. Sir Philip (I did not once look at him) listened profoundly, only moving his arm a little now and then with a convulsive motion, and heaving sighs that appeared the collected breath of his attention. I concluded with saying that Lady Vavasour was ill. For the first time he pulled his hat over his eyes, then said quietly, "Let us return."

We returned into the house, the servants begging to know, as we passed, whether we meant to ride. I mechanically said "Yes," and bade them wait. When we got up stairs, Sir Philip went for a short time into the next drawing-room, and I guessed by his looks when he returned, that he had been weeping. He said, however, with a smile, "There are worlds of things, which you must think for me. I cannot say them. I have ordered some refreshment, and then we will take horse."

I looked at him inquiringly.

"Do you doubt," said he, "whither we shall go. We will take some bread and wine first, and then I shall know whether it be night or day—this year or ten years ago." He then asked me some questions upon minute points, which I had omitted, and, after the refreshment appeared, suddenly dropped the subject.

"'Tis a fine passage in the Bible," said he, as he poured out one glass after another, somewhat alarmingly, "where David takes food again, the moment his son is dead. You recollect, he could do nothing before, but weep and pray."

I thought this a singular remark, as he rightly guessed. "You are surprised," said he, "at what I say; but David refreshed himself for new tasks, and so do I. I could neither bear else the joy or the sorrow that is mixed with it."

“There will be no sorrow mixed up with it,” said I, though my heart misgave me as I spoke, and I half repented what I had done.

“And I am a new man,” pursued my friend, “and the world and I are reconciled in the best manner, for I will be no longer cut off from them. I will be as happy and as penitent as they, and endeavour to mix up right and wrong. Forgive my wild babbling, Esher; but I am so full of joy, that I feel for nobody. In truth, words are mere words with me just now. Come, let us go.”

We took horse, and in a few hours were at Mickleham Park.

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## CHAPTER XV.

I WENT in first, to see what was going on. Everybody cried out, “Here is Sir Ralph Esher!” and in a few moments old Mr. Bennett appeared, shaking his head, which was become a little palsied. “Is my Lady better?” said I. “No, dear Sir Ralph,” answered the good man, “she is not indeed. She was not worse than common when my lady the Viscountess went, and Miss Randolph; but they had not been gone many hours, when she fainted, and she has had another fainting fit but now. She will not have the doctor, and Mrs. Susan says she will die. The Lord be good unto us. I was just thinking of sending for my lady Viscountess back again.”

“Do not do that,” said I. “A word in your ear, my friend (moving with him towards his room); Sir Philip Herne is here.”

“Who, sir?” exclaimed Bennett, turning back instantly, and staring about for him. I left the old gentleman hobbling after me, and fetched my friend out of the park, where he stood leaning on his horse, with his face away from the mansion, and apparently wrapped up in thought. I tapped him on the shoulder, and said, “Lady Vavasour is a little worse to-day, but it is only fainting. Perhaps she has seen us from the window.” I said this to diminish the shock, as he was likely to find her worse than we looked for.

We met Bennett on the steps, together with a parcel of

servants, most of whom knew the stranger, and hailed him with joy. A silent greeting passed between him and the old man, in the shape of a close pressure of the hands; and Mrs. Susan coming down at that minute into the hall, fairly kissed him, shrieked, clapped her hands, and was running up again to give her mistress another fit, when I pulled her back. Lady Vavasour, with a sweet ostentation of penitence, which would have been as indelicate on most occasions as it was on the rarest side of delicacy in hers, had let the secret of her love and sorrow transpire to the household, "that they might know," she said, "what an injury she had done them, and how sorry she was for it."

"Stop a minute, Susan," said I, "I shall not trust you. The housekeeper, with her staid face, must go in first. She must tell my lady that Sir Ralph Esher is come, and that he has brought her news which she will be glad to hear." Susan was held by main force betwixt laughing and crying; and Mrs. Jeffs went up stairs. The servants had respectfully retreated. Sir Philip and myself, with my lady's maid, went into the room of the old steward.

Sir Philip paced the steward's room as pale as a sheet, occasionally addressing a smiling answer to the old man, whom I endeavoured to keep in conversation, but who could not help addressing his former friend, proffering all sorts of wines, and asking the same questions about his health. Mrs. Susan was called away, and I began to be alarmed. Presently I was called. I went and found Lady Vavasour reclining on the sofa, Mrs. Jeffs standing by her side. She held out her hand to me in her usual cordial manner, and said, "There is a stranger below, but nothing, I hear, has happened to your friends. You must make your companion welcome, Sir Ralph, and excuse me for the present. The loss of Miss Randolph and my aunt has made me weak, but I shall be better shortly." As she said this, the colour began to fail from her lips, and Mrs. Jeffs feared another fainting fit. She consigned her to the care of Susan, who happened to come into the room again, and went down stairs. Poor Susan stared and trembled as if she did not know what to be at, but I motioned her not to speak. Bennett told me, that when Mrs. Jeffs went down, she said she thought it necessary to put my lady to bed, and send for the physician.

“Have you done so,” hastily inquired Sir Philip.

“No.”

“Then wait.” He now, with the energy natural to him on such occasions, decided upon one of his strong measures, and calling for pen and ink, wrote a note, which he desired might be given to the Countess that instant.

“This instant, sir!” asked Mrs. Jeffs — “without any more notice?”

“This instant: you do not know her as I do.” Mrs. Jeffs went away with the billet, very little pleased.

She came in, humming and hawing, and looking mysterious. “Sir Philip, sir,” she whispered, “has given me a paper for my lady, but perhaps we had better wait a little. — “If you don’t give it her, I will,” said I. The housekeeper instantly forestalled me and presented it.

I shall never forget Lady Vavasour’s manner when she saw the handwriting. She altered her careless look into one of intense eagerness; then rising a little, and at the same time dropping her head and putting her hand on her heart, as if to gain strength, she turned her face slowly towards me as if for encouragement. I smiled, and made a sign accordingly. Perceiving then, for the first time, that the superscription was wet, she again looked at me, with eyes wide open, and a sudden flush in her cheeks, inconceivably beautiful. I again made a sign of acquiescence. At this, she slowly, but with an air of firmness, opened the note, which ran thus: —

“Dearest Lady Vavasour — beloved Margaret — I am here; and it is necessary to my peace that I should see you. P.H.”

Lady Vavasour, the note trembling in her hand, rose from her inclining posture by the help of my arm and Susan’s, and sat steadily on the sofa, telling Mrs. Jeffs at the same time, that she was ready to “have the honour” of seeing the “writer of that letter.” She could not utter the words Sir Philip.

Bennet said, that when the housekeeper came back to them with this message, Sir Philip had been sitting down wonderfully tranquil. Mrs. Jeffs, with the exception of substituting Sir Philip Herne for the “writer of the letter,” repeated the message with astonishment in her looks, adding that her ladyship was sitting up on the sofa as if nothing had happened. The tears suffused Sir Philip’s eyes at the beautiful cere-

moniousness of the "honour of seeing" him. He arose with as much tranquillity as he had been sitting, and in a minute we saw him enter.

The Countess rose, as Sir Philip came in, and, quitting our hands, would have made a courtesy as to her sovereign lord; but the colour which had flushed into her cheeks as suddenly forsook her, and endeavouring to murmur something, she would have dropped before his face, had he not caught her. Sir Philip motioned for air, and, seating her on the sofa, she lay with her head on his arm, his face regarding hers with an expression, which I respected too much to do more than glance at.

"I thought how it would be," said Mrs. Jeff's, "my Lady has fainted again."

"She will be better presently, I warrant," angrily whispered Susan, "if you let her alone;" and the good girl wept heartily.

I thought we might as well leave the lovers together (for I would not allow myself to think of them in any other light): so, to the astonishment and delight of Susan, I began with leading the crabbed old housekeeper out of the room, gracing my dismissal, however, with begging her to see to some luncheon for me, as I was enormously hungry. She gave me a look as much as to say, "You're a pretty gentleman to be thinking of eating at such a time." I then turned, and motioned to Susan that she might safely quit her mistress's side, which she was heartily willing to do, as Lady Vavasour had now come to herself. On recovering from her faintness she had again attempted to express something, — Susan thought, by way of apology for finding herself so near the betrothed of another lady, and being unable to move; but the "sweet gentleman," quoth Susan, "seized her hand, and pressed it to his heart, as who should say, 'This warrants you.' And I warrant my Lady thought so, for she let him do what he pleased, as if it was for him to say what was right or wrong, she trembling all the while, and with her eyes cast down; so that, if it wasn't improper for a body to stay, when true love is going on, I could have looked and cried at 'em for ever."'

For my part I did not venture to look at all; but leading Susan forth, who told me all this on the landing place, I could not help kissing her for her pretty crying face; upon which she said "Oh don't!" and kissed me as heartily in her turn.



## CHAPTER XVI.

It was nearly two hours before Sir Philip made his appearance in the room where I was keeping my post. He was still in a state of exaltation, but tranquil in his words; only he thanked me every now and then with great fervour, and said I had saved the most precious of lives. He did not propose to return to London, nor did I. I had left word for our friends where to seek for us, together with a brief account of my reasons for speaking. The physician who had meanwhile arrived, kept Lady Vavasour in her room, but pronounced her sure of her life; and her friends had liberty to revisit her.

However, I was not easy. I saw that Sir Philip, amidst all his joy, had a feeling of disquiet; and I knew but too well the reasons he had for it. The life being saved, but the happiness not secured, I began to reproach myself for my hurry; and my reproaches were greater, when I heard what Lady Vavasour and he had resolved upon.

I saw her in the morning. She was pillowed up on the sofa, and the colour that came in her cheeks, when I entered, lit her face for the moment with such a mixture of joy, sincerity, and blooming beauty, that I beheld the face which Sir Philip had described to me, when he gave the account of his first seeing it. She kissed my hand, called me indeed her friend, and said she should bless me until her dying day. I discovered, that he had not been alone with her again, since the two hours of the evening before. Presently he came in. I happened to say, that I thought it would be right in me to go to town; and asked if he had any commands. I observed that they both turned pale on the instant. Sir Philip said, that he proposed to have gone with me next morning, if I could stay as long. "As long as you please," said I, "but cannot I leave you and come back again?" An indescribable expression passed over both their faces; and I saw plainly, though I tried not to come to the conclusion, that they had resolved upon a terrible sacrifice.

I was half inclined to throw off some of the doubt and anger I felt with myself, upon the heads of these new of-

fenders. "Is virtue then," thought I, "of no use but to thwart people? And must I be thwarted, who have not been so very virtuous either?"

Lady Vavasour, seeing me disconcerted, called me to her, and again kissed my hand, looking at the same time a thousand grateful things. I saw it all in a moment, and did not at all agree with it; but how could I add pain to such hearts as these? I withdrew into the park, and walked up and down, scarcely knowing whether I walked at all. I was in the midst of my uneasiness, and thinking what I should say to convince Sir Philip that they were in the wrong, when an outrider of Lord Waringstown's dashed over the sward, not heeding the carriage road, and suddenly discovering me; turned his horse towards where I stood, and came foaming to me with a packet. I opened, read a little, and dashed into the house as fast as he.

"'Tis all happy," cried I, to the servants, as they tumbled out of my way. "'Tis all happy!" to Mrs. Jeffs, not disliking her crabbed face. "Susan!" cried I, as she scampered behind me up the stairs, "'tis all happy and joyful — I shall kiss you presently." "Bless me!" cried Susan, "is our Sir Ralph running mad?"

I heard that Sir Philip was in Lady Vavasour's room, but somebody with them as usual. "How very much alone they will be!" thought I. I stopped a moment at the door to gather breath, Susan having arrived just in time for her kiss; and then giving her to understand, that she was to be as staid as myself, went in with surprising self-possession, and called Sir Philip into another apartment. "There," said I, "my dear friend; as you seem to have made up your mind to the delights of misfortune, you will have need of all your philosophy. Stay," continued I, putting my hand over the papers, as he was about to read them, "I am wrong. The news is so happy, that I ought to prepare you for it: forgive me: it is indeed much more than happy; singularly, triumphantly."

Sir Philip looked as if he was about to refer for explanation to Mrs. Susan. "My dear friend," cried I, "the circumstances of the last two days have fairly affected my unphilosophical head; so you must have enough philosophy for all of us. Mark that. The news is so *transcendantly good*, that you must support *yourself*, your friend, Lady Vavasour;

Lord Waringstown, and everybody. Lady Waringstown will be here in a minute."

I watched my friend's face with a curiosity I cannot express. He bore the shock of delight well, but I could see it was at the cost of so much emotion, as gives these patient people in one moment the agitation of years. I did not choose to look as he read on. Upon turning round he was kneeling at a chair, his hands clasped before his buried face, and his whole frame shaking in the agony of *thanks*. What he afterwards said to Lady Vavasour, or how she bore it, God only knows; but I was admitted to see her at nine o'clock in the evening, summoned by my charming Ellen, who arrived meanwhile with her father and mother. My lord and lady were both there; Sir Philip walking up and down, enduring his happiness. I thought the Countess bore it better than he; but I believe women have a knack at sustaining immeasurable delight. I kissed her hand, and my Ellen's together, for I found them so; but nobody said any thing. In the course of a minute, Lord Waringstown, the best of Jesuits, led me to speak of Miss Earlom, of whom I could observe they had just been talking. I said what I had thought of her from the first. They hoped and trusted she would still be happy. Ellen wiped a tear from the Countess's eyes; and this pity, I verily believe, enabled them all to endure their transports.

I shall now state what this blessed mystery was.

The discovery of Miss Randolph's birth, or at least of the extreme probability of it (for it was not known at that time), by the resemblance she bore to her father, had sharpened the attention of Lord Waringstown to other young faces; and as Miss Earlom came before him when he was under the full influence of this curiosity, he could not help thinking he had seen her face before. He made inquiries of her connections from Sir Philip, who knew no more than that her father had been one of the first merchants in the Canaries. He inquired of the aunt, who seemed in no disposition to gratify him; and this made him more curious. He consulted some old papers—memorandums, and there he found—"Jan. 14. 16—, "E. E. begged me to make peace between Mr. and Mrs. E—m, which I did, he promising to pay the account." *E. E.* was *Edvardus Eques*, which was the designation for Sir Edward Herne, in the memorandums of his benevolent friend. His

lordship now began to feel certain, and anxiously made the aunt repeat her assurances that Sir Philip and Miss Earlom had always been kept apart, which the other did with great pride and complacency, saying she knew how particular the English gentry were in that and all other ante-nuptial matters; that the English residents in the Canaries were equally so; and that Sir Philip should have every proof which his noble conduct demanded, of the spotless integrity of the family into which he married. Lord Waringstown became more and more suspicious, and more pleased. He thought fit, however, to take the precaution of warning Sir Philip against unguarded moments, when the best of young persons might forget themselves, and so become as melancholy sacrifices to their virtue as others do to their vices. Sir Philip looked surprised, acknowledged the truth of his remark, and the touching beauty and behaviour of Miss Earlom; but said, that if his friend knew his heart, he would know, that nothing was further from possibility, than his seeking unwarrantable comfort in that quarter. Lord Waringstown did know it, and was again satisfied, especially as the moment was approaching when his suspicions might be determined. If they could not, he still meant to state them to Sir Philip, and thus create a turn in Lady Vavasour's favour, which he thought not only allowable for its own sake, but not to be omitted for the sake of all.

The next step taken by his lordship was an application to our friend Mr. Braythwaite, to know if that worthy and confidential person, *è secretioribus*, remembered what had become of a certain little girl, the daughter of Mrs. Earlom, consort to a wine merchant, to whom Sir Edward had owed the largest bill in the memory of wine-drinkers. Mr. Braythwaite at first could not tax his memory with the recollection of any of the parties, except his worthy but somewhat profane friend, Sir Edward; but upon having it intimated to him, that he might do a great service to divers loyal people, and that no harm could come to him, unless he refused the service—there being a little outstanding overpayment of some few years for teaching and board, &c. — Mr. Braythwaite did suddenly, and with a humorous quip at himself for his bad memory, call to mind, that the said Mr. Earlom would insist upon taking away the child to the Canaries, before it had had its time out under Mrs. Warmestre's kind care; the husband of the said Mrs.

Earlom, in whose absence the child was born, being just dead, and Sir Edward's order for the payment of the years subsequent never having been disputed at Herne House, for reasons best known to the delicacy and piety of the Baronet's widow. What further moneys the said widow paid to the said Mr. Braythwaite, rather than have her husband's name called in question, and the secrets of his house with them, Lord Waringstown did not make to appear, contenting himself with disclosing his cognizance thereof; whereupon the said Mr. Braythwaite redoubled his readiness to be of service, and his lordship accordingly took him into a room full of company, where he was presented to my Lady Viscountess, and to Miss Waring, late his acquaintance Miss Randolph, and to Miss Earlom, and to the aunt. The Viscountess knew and endured him for the occasion. To the aunt he was presented as a particular acquaintance of Mr. Earlom and his wife, whereat the harridan turned pale. Not that she had any knowledge of the affair under inquiry, but she knew as well as any one the gay life of her sister, and saw that Sir Philip would come to know it. Little did she know of his noble nature, in fancying that he would let the innocent suffer for the guilty. Not having a noble mind of her own, nor any thing like it, she had no conception of the nobleness of others; and she was anxious to secure an unexpected and wealthy alliance, that she might live twenty times as well as she ought to do, and be surrounded with liveries, and boast of those that despised her, for the remainder of her days.

“Pray Mrs. Powell,” said my lord, “do you happen to remember where Mrs. Earlom was in the year so and so?”

“In England,” said Mrs. Powell, after a pause. She thought she had better say where he was not, at all events; for Mr. Earlom was not famous for the integrity of his whereabouts, any more than his wife.

“Excuse me, madam,” said Mr. Braithwaite; “in the Canaries. I happen to know it from a very particular memorandum.”

“Perhaps you can call to mind, madam,” said Lord Waringstown, “the year in which Miss Earlom was born?”

“’Twas the year before, unquestionably,” said Mrs. Powell.

“Pardon me, madam,” observed the dreadfully correct

Braythwaite, "it was the year after." — Mrs. Powell looked aghast, not knowing to what all this tended.

"Do you see the likeness I speak of, Mr. Braythwaite?" said Lord Waringstown, after a little more discourse about the Earloms.

"I wonder, my lord, that Sir Philip did not see it," said Mr. Braythwaite: "'tis so striking it would have startled me in the public ways."

"Sir Philip was too young to have received a lasting impression of the face," said his lordship.

"Your lordship is right," observed the agent.

"Miss Earlom was the only child of her parents?" said Lord Waringstown, inquiringly.

"The only one," said Mrs. Powell: — "her mother, — her father, never had any other; — never."

She says those two nevers, thought his lordship, because she knows she had half a dozen.

Lord Waringstown saw that he should have no trouble with the old lady.

"Will you be good enough to step this way, madam," said he; — "and will you, my love, say what I told you to Miss Earlom?" addressing her ladyship. — "Ellen, my darling, you will stay awhile in the chamber."

The old lady was shown the whole matter in a few minutes. She was very indignant at first, then sullen; but on Lord Waringstown showing her, on the one hand, a picture of desertion and poverty in a foreign land, for the sister of Mr. Earlom; and on the other, a good reasonable house and appurtenances in England, for the aunt of Sir Philip Herne's sister, she fell into a strain of abject gratitude. It was clear she knew well enough the illegitimacy of her niece, though equally so, that she did not suspect who was her father. She now undertook to pour forth her thanks to heaven for the prevention of a crime not to be thought of; and was for running to announce the awful rescue to Miss Earlom, when his lordship said he would fetch her himself. Mr. Braythwaite took his leave, undertaking to return with the necessary documents in the course of the evening, which he did. My father-in-law joined his lady and the poor girl, who bore the news with greater firmness than was expected, and said, with floods of tears, that she should be proud of Sir Philip as a brother. Her father

she did not remember, and her mother very little ; but what little she did, had made a tender impression upon her, which added to her distress. Next day the journey was taken to Mickleham, the party offering to take Miss Earlom with them, under an impression, that, all circumstances considered, she might the sooner get over the worst part of her feelings. But she said well, that God had been merciful enough to work a change in her in that respect, more sudden than she could have looked for, and that she would beg leave to stay and console her aunt: all which endeared her to us the more. She married the Viscount, sure enough. The gallant Lord was glad to compound with legitimacy for a handsome stock of Sir Philip's diamonds, which her good brother generously gave her ; and she has made him such a pleasant wife, witty and wild withal, though full of goodness, that he says he does not know which is best in her veins—Sir Philip's blood, or the Canary wine. As to Sir Philip and myself, we were married about three weeks after the discovery ; our pleasant neighbour, a real Mr. Dalton, who was keeper of the King's cellar, sending us a present of such Canary, as helped to reconcile us to the name.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

IT was a few years after this blessed conclusion that we heard of the horrible attempt made upon the Duke of Ormond's life in Piccadilly, when the daring villain who headed it would have hung him at Tyburn, if the gallant old Duke had not wrestled with him\* ; and some time after this attempt, we heard of the still more extraordinary one on the crown and regalia, when the keeper was nearly killed, and the robber

\* It was on this occasion, and in the royal presence, that Ormond's son Ossory told the Duke of Buckingham, that he knew he was at the bottom of the design against his father's life ; and that if any thing happened to it, he should treat him accordingly, and pistol him, though behind the King's chair : "and," added he, "I tell it you in his Majesty's presence, that you may be sure I shall keep my word." Buckingham said nothing.

boasted with impunity that it was he who had made both attempts. We were in London, on the last occasion, at Sir Philip's town house in Pall Mall, and were considering one morning whether we should ride or go on the water, when somebody came in to say, that the King was going to examine the robber himself, and that the latter was to make his appearance at Whitehall in the course of an hour. The moment we heard the King was to examine him, we saw how it would be, and what friends he must have at court. Herne and I followed thither, and found the ante-rooms crowded like a new Tyburn. Everybody that heard of it, came to see the man that was *not* to be hung. We had reasons for not passing into the interior. In about two hours, a stir takes place, as if a king were coming, and lo and behold the culprit, passing boldly with a quick step through an avenue of faces, all thrusting into his own, in spite of ushers and yeomen.

“ 'Tis the man !” cried Sir Philip, “ 'Tis Dalton !”

“ 'Tis Sandford, truly,” said I.

“ You are mistaken, gentlemen,” said a man ; “ his name is Blood.”

“ Just so,” said Herne ; “ 'tis Blood, Dalton, and Sandford.”

“ Oh, as for that,” answered the man, “ I'll warrant he has as many *aliases* as there are holes in Alsatia.”

As the gallant Colonel came up, he bowed with great affability to one or two persons on either side him, though he did not do so to us. It was clear, nevertheless, by the look of his eye, that he knew us well. He did not, however, change colour : he looked hard and confident, and went on.

The examination, which it was said would be as public as the King could make it, turned out to be private enough ; but sufficient audience was present to let it transpire. I will not repeat the history of what every body knows ;—Blood's confident, but, at the same time, flattering demeanour to his Majesty ; his pretending that he merely meant to take from the jewels the amount of what the Duke of Ormond unjustly held from him in his estates ; his telling the King that he had engaged to take away his life while bathing, but was struck with awe at the sight of “ naked Majesty” (satirical rascal ! ) ; his assertion that, if his own life were taken, there



were many persons sworn to revenge it in the most dreadful manner, worse than that attempted on the Duke of Ormond, to which he avowed that his "madness at his wrongs" had urged him; and, finally, his artful refusal to name his accomplices, — "No, not for any tortures; for, though he was a man that might be led, by a course of injustice, into crimes, secrecy and fidelity were virtues not to be torn out of him; and a pardon would make him, *and fifty more*, the most devoted servants of the Crown."

The pardon was given accordingly; Ormond was "complimented" with a request to join in it, which he did with the most loyal of shrugs; and in the course of a month from the epoch of his rape of the crown, Colonel Thomas Blood, Lord of Sarney and the Glinns, and God knows how many other gravel-pits of unspeakable profit in the county of Wicklow, was the most content, influential, confidential, polite, self-possessed, well-behaved, modest, impudent, infernal scoundrel, in the royal presence. Mr. Evelyn told me one day, with a pious horror, that he had dined with him at the table of the Lord Treasurer, in company with Grammont. I agreed with his horror; but I did not ask him what business he had in such company.

All this is very well known; but what is not so well known is, that Buckingham certainly had to do with the attempt on the crown; and that if the King did not know it, he had a pretty ignorance of the matter, that did as well. He had to look, he knew not where, for something that was to happen to the crown jewels. He would then have had a new crown, God knows what having happened to the old one.\* This is what Mr. Braythwaite intimated to us one day, when he came with a message from Sir Philip's lawyer (for somehow he knew everybody); and by the same token, he was very drunk that day, for he had taken to his friend Earlom's enemy in his old age; and by a token conclusive, he was found hung up at a lamp-post in Little Chelsea, with a paper and a wine-bottle round his neck, purporting that "This was the body of a traitor."

Furthermore, the Countess of Vavasour, my Lady Esher,

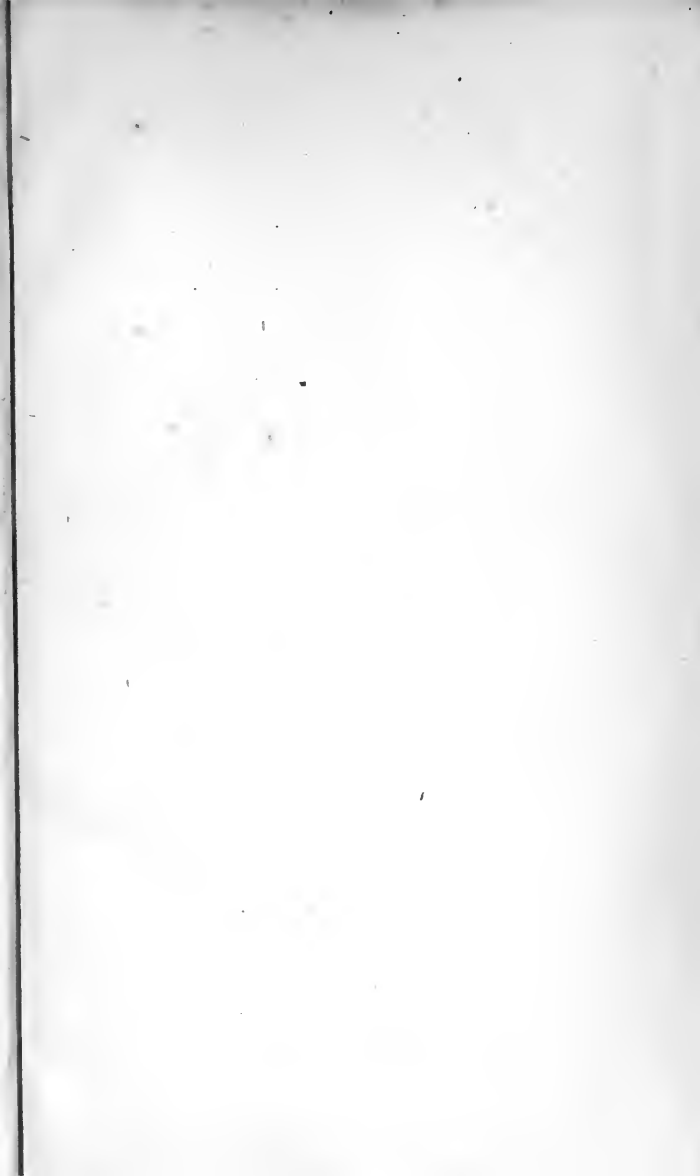
\* It is proper to state, that the present charge against the King has been brought nowhere else. — EDIT.

and the rest of us, being at Lord Arran's one morning, and his Grace the Duke of Buckingham coming in, the said Duke did, in perceiving us, absolutely blush up to the eyes, bowing at the same time low to Sir Philip, and complimenting the ladies with one of his most graceful speeches ; for which the said ladies, in a manner inconceivably correct, curtsied in profound silence to the floor.

THE END.

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