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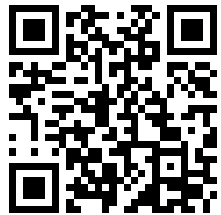
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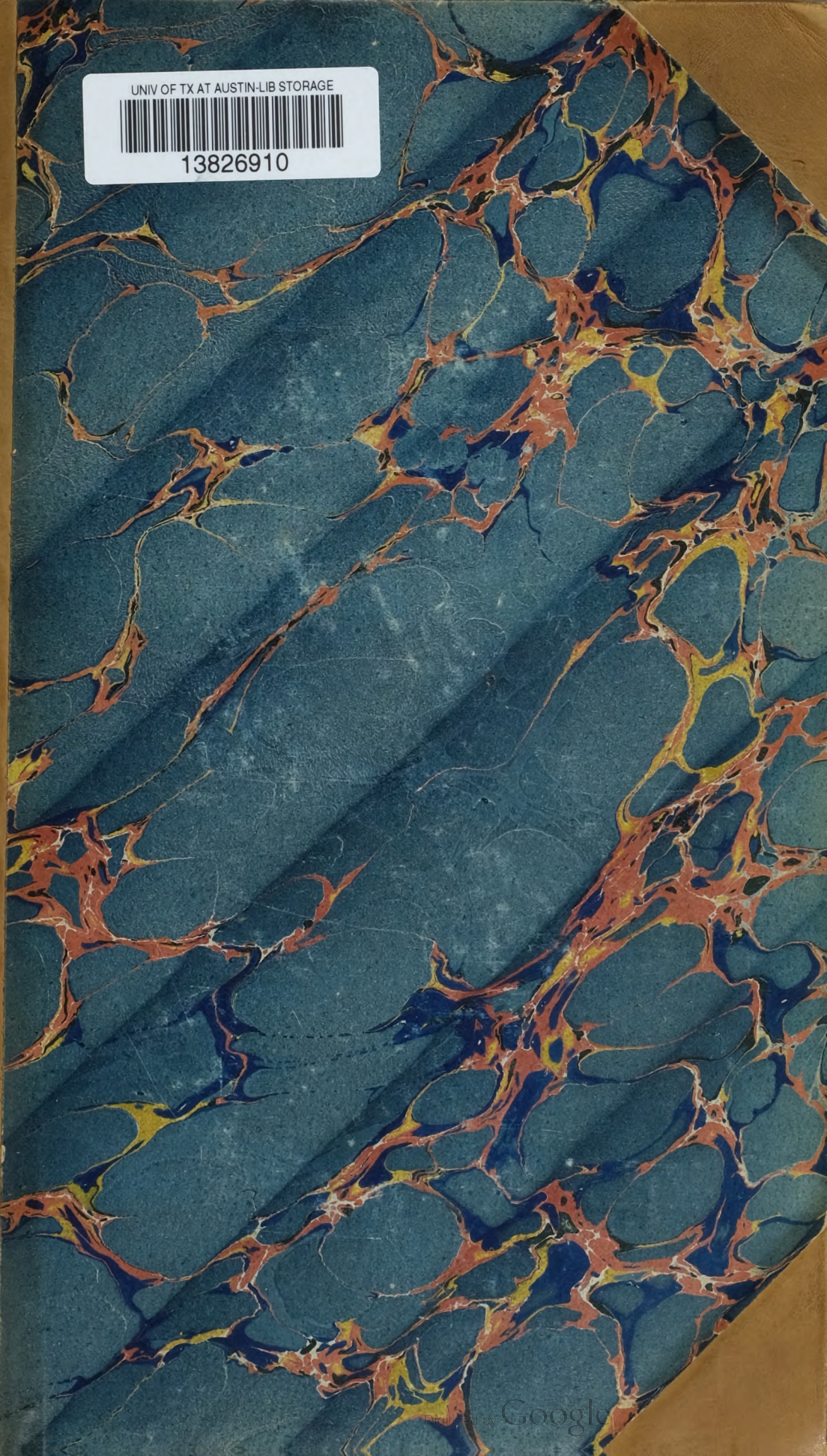
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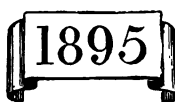


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THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

BY ANTHONY HOPE,
AUTHOR OF 'THE PRISONER OF ZENDA.'

CHAPTER I.—HOW COUNT ANTONIO TOOK TO THE HILLS.

COUNTLESS are the stories told of the sayings that Count Antonio spoke, and of the deeds that he did when he dwelt an outlaw in the hills. For tales and legends gather round his name thick as the berries hang on a bush, and with the passing of every succeeding year it grows harder to discern where truth lies and where the love of wonder, working together with the sway of a great man's memory, has wrought the embroidery of its fancy on the plain robe of fact. Yet, amid all that is of uncertain knowledge and so must rest, this much at least should be known and remembered, for the honour of a noble family—how it fell out that Count Antonio, a man of high lineage, forsook the service of his Prince, disdained the obligation of his rank, set law at naught, and did what seemed indeed in his own eyes to be good, but was held by many to be nothing other than the work of a rebel and a brigand. Yet, although it is by these names that men often speak of him, they love his memory; and I also, Ambrose the Franciscan, having gathered diligently all that I could come by in the archives of the city or from the lips of aged folk, have learned to love it in some sort. Thus am I minded to write, before the time that I must carry what I know with me to the grave, the full and whole truth concerning Antonio's flight from the city and the Court, seeking in my heart, as I write, excuse for him, and finding in the record, if little else, yet a tale that lovers must read in pride and sorrow, and, if this be not too high a hope, that princes may study for profit and for warning.

Now it was in the tenth year of the reign of Duke Valentine over the city of Firmola, its territories and dependent towns, that Count Antonio of Monte Velluto—having with him a youthful cousin of his, whom he loved greatly, and whom, by reason of his small stature and of a boyish gaiety he had, men called Tommasino—came from his own house on the hill that fronts the great gate of the city, to the palace of the Duke, with intent to ask His Highness's sanction for his marriage with the Lady Lucia. This lady, being then seventeen years of age, loved Antonio, and he her, and troth had been privily plighted between them for many months; and such was the strength and power of the love they bore the one to the other, that even to this day the old mock at young lovers who show themselves overfond, crying, 'Tis Lucia and Antonio!'

But since the Lady Lucia was an orphan, Antonio came now to the Duke, who enjoyed wardship over her, and setting out his passion, and how that his estate was sufficient and his family such as the Duke knew, prayed leave of His Highness to wed her. But the Duke, a crafty and subtle prince, knowing Antonio's temper, and the favour in which he was held by the people, counted not to augment his state and revenues by the gift of a bride so richly dowered, but chose rather to give her to a favourite of his, a man in whose devotion he could surely trust, and whose disposition was to serve his master in all things fair and foul, open or secret. Such a one the Duke found in the Lord Robert de Beauregard, a gentleman of

Provence, who had quitted his own country, having been drawn into some tumult there, and, having taken service with the Duke, had risen to a great place in his esteem and confidence. Therefore, when Antonio preferred his request, the Duke, with many a courteous regretful phrase, made him aware that the lady stood promised to Robert by the irrevocable sanctity of his princely pledge.

'So forget, I pray you, my good cousin Antonio,' said he—'forget, as young men lightly can, this desire of yours, and it shall be my charge to find you a bride full as fair as the Lady Lucia.'

But Antonio's face went red from brow to chin, as he answered: 'My gracious lord, I love the lady, and she me, and neither can wed another. As for my Lord Robert, your Highness knows well that she loves him not.'

'A girl's love!' smiled the Duke, 'a girl's love! It rains and shines, and shines and rains, Antonio.'

'It has shone on me since she knew a man when she looked on him,' said Antonio.

And Tommasino, who stood by, recking as little of the Duke as of the Duke's deerhound which he was patting the while, broke in, saying carelessly, 'And this Robert, my lord, is not the man for a pretty girl to love. He is a sour fellow.'

'I thank you for your counsel, my lord Tommasino,' smiled the Duke. 'Yet I love him.' Whereat Tommasino lifted his brows and patted the hound again. 'It is enough,' added the Duke. 'I have promised, Antonio. It is enough.'

'Yes, it is enough,' said Antonio; and he and Tommasino, having bowed low, withdrew from the presence of the Duke. But when he got clear outside of the Duke's cabinet, Antonio laid his hand on Tommasino's shoulder, saying, 'It is not well that Robert have her.'

'It is mighty ill,' said Tommasino.

And then they walked in silence to the city gate, and, in silence still, climbed the rugged hill where Antonio's house stood.

But the Duke sent for Robert de Beauregard into his chamber and said to him: 'If you be wise, friend Robert, little grass shall grow under your feet this side your marriage. This Antonio says not much; but I have known him outrun his tongue with deeds.'

'If the lady were as eager as I, the matter would not halt,' said Robert with a laugh. 'But she weeps and spits fire at me, and cries for Antonio.'

'She will be cured after the wedding,' said the Duke. 'But see that she be well guarded, Robert; let a company of your men watch her. I have known the bride to be missing on a marriage day ere now.'

'If he can touch her, he may wed her,' cried Robert. 'The pikemen are close about her house, and she can neither go in nor come out without their knowledge.'

'It is well,' said the Duke. 'Yet delay not. They are stubborn men, these Counts of Monte Velluto.'

Now, had the Lady Lucia been of a spirit as haughty as her lover's, it may be that she would have refused to wed Robert de Beauregard. But

she was afraid. When Antonio was with her, she had clung to him, and he loved her the more for her timidity. With him gone and forbidden to come near her, she dared not resist the Duke's will nor brave his displeasure; so that a week before the day that the Duke had appointed for the wedding, she sent to Antonio, bidding him abandon a hope that was vain, and set himself to forget a most unhappy lady.

'Robert shall not have her,' said Antonio, putting the letter in his belt.

'Then the time is short,' said Tommasino.

They were walking together on the terrace before Antonio's house, whence they looked on the city across the river. Antonio cast his eye on the river and on the wall of the Duke's garden that ran along it; fair trees, shrubs, and flowers lined the top of the wall, and the water gleamed in the sunshine.

'It is strange,' said Antonio, musing, 'that one maiden can darken for a man all the world that God lights with his sun. Yet since so it is, Tommasino, a man can be but a man; and being a man, he is a poor man, if he stand by while another takes his love.'

'And that other a stranger, and, as I swear, a cut-throat,' added Tommasino.

When they had dined, and evening began to come on, Antonio made his servants saddle the best horses in his stable—though, indeed, the choice was small, for Antonio was not rich as a man of his rank counts riches—and the two rode down the hill towards the city. But, as they went, Antonio turned once and again in his saddle and gazed long at the old gray house, the round tower, and the narrow gate.

'Why look behind, and not forward?' asked Tommasino.

'Because there is a presage upon me,' answered Antonio, 'that it will be long before I pass through that gate again. Were there a hope of persuading you, Tommasino, I would bid you turn back, and leave me to go alone on this errand.'

'Keep your breath against when you have to run,' laughed Tommasino, pricking his horse and tossing his hair, dark as Antonio's was fair, back from his neck.

Across the bridge they rode and through the gates, and having traversed the great square, came to the door of Lucia's house, where it rose fronting the Duke's palace. Here Antonio dismounted, giving his bridle into Tommasino's hand, and bade the servants carry his name to the Lady Lucia. A stir arose among them, and much whispering, till an old man, head of the serving-men, came forward, saying: 'Pardon, my lord, but we are commanded not to admit you to the Lady Lucia;' and he waved his hand towards the inner part of the porch, where Antonio saw a dozen or more pikemen of the Duke's Guard drawn across the passage to the house; and their pikes flashed in the rays of the setting sun as they levelled them in front of their rank.

Some of the townsmen and apprentice lads, stout fellows, each with a staff, had gathered now round Antonio, whom they loved for his feats of strength and his liberal gifts to the poor, and, understanding what was afoot, one

came to him, saying: 'There are some, my lord, who would enter with you if you are set on entering,' and the fellow's eyes sparkled; for there was great enmity in the town against the pikemen, and a lusty youth with a stick in his hand is never loth to find a use for it.

For a moment Count Antonio hesitated; for they flocked closer to him, and Tommasino threw him a glance of appeal and touched the hilt of his sword. But he would not that the blood of men who were themselves loved by mothers, wives, and maids, should be shed in his quarrel, and he raised his hand, bidding them be still.

'I have no quarrel with the pikemen,' said he, 'and we must not fight against His Highness's servants.'

The faces of the townsmen grew long in disappointment. Tommasino alone laughed low, recognising in Antonio's gentleness the lull that heralds a storm. The Count was never more dangerous than when he praised submission.

'But,' continued Antonio, 'I would fain see the Lady Lucia.' And with this he stepped inside the porch, signing to Tommasino to stay where he was; but the lad would not, and, leaping down, ran to his kinsman, and stood shoulder to shoulder with him.

Thus they stood facing the line of pikemen, when suddenly the opposing rank opened, and Robert de Beauregard himself came through. Starting slightly on sight of Antonio, he yet bowed courteously, baring his head, and Antonio, with Tommasino, did the like.

'What is your desire, my lord?' asked Robert.

'I have naught to ask of you,' answered Antonio, and he took a step forward. Robert's hand flew to his sword, and in a moment they would have fought. But now another figure came forward with uplifted hand. It was the Duke himself; and he looked on Antonio with his dark smile, and Antonio flushed red.

'You seek me, Antonio?' asked the Duke.

'I seek not your Highness, but my plighted wife,' said Antonio.

Duke Valentine smiled still. Coming to Antonio, he passed his arm through his, and said in most friendly fashion: 'Come with me to my house, and we will talk of this;' and Antonio, caught fast in the choice between obedience and open revolt, went frowning across the square, the Duke's arm through his, Robert on the Duke's other side, and, behind, Tommasino with the horses. But as they went, a sudden cry came from the house they left, and a girl's face showed for an instant, tear-stained and pallid, at an open window. A shiver ran through Antonio; but the Duke pressing his arm, he went still in silence.

At the door of the palace, a lackey took the horses from Tommasino, and the four passed through the great hall and through the Duke's cabinet beyond, and into the garden; there the Duke sat down under the wall of the garden, near by the fish-pond, and, turning suddenly on Antonio, spoke to him fiercely, 'Men have died at my hands for less,' said he.

'Then for each of such shall you answer to God,' retorted Antonio, not less hotly.

'You scout my commands in the face of all the city,' said the Duke in low stern tones. 'Now, by Heaven, if you seek to see the girl again, I will hang you from the tower of the gate. So be warned—now—once: there shall be no second warning.'

He ceased, and sat with angry eyes on Antonio; and Robert, who stood by his master, glared as fierce. But Antonio was silent for a while, and rested his arm on Tommasino's shoulder.

'My fathers have served and fought for your fathers,' said he at last. 'What has this gentleman done for the Duchy?'

Then Robert spoke suddenly and scornfully: 'This he is ready to do—to punish an insolent knave that braves His Highness's will.'

Antonio seemed not to hear him, for he did not move, but stood with eyes bent on the Duke's face, looking whether his appeal should reach its mark. But Tommasino heard; yet never a word spoke Tommasino either, but he drew off the heavy riding-glove from his left hand, and it hung dangling in the fingers of his right, and he looked at the glove and at Robert and at the glove again.

'I would His Highness were not here,' said Tommasino to Robert with a smile.

'Hold your peace, boy,' said Robert, 'or the Duke will have you whipped.'

Youth loves not to be taunted with its blessed state. 'I have no more to say,' cried Tommasino; and without more, caring naught now for the presence of the Duke, he flung his heavy glove full in Robert's face, and, starting back a pace, drew his sword. Then Antonio knew that the die was cast, for Tommasino would gain no mercy, having insulted the Duke's favourite and drawn his sword in the Duke's palace; and he also drew out his sword, and the pair stood facing the Duke and Robert de Beauregard. It was but for an instant that they stood thus; then Robert, who did not lack courage to resent a blow, unsheathed and rushed at the boy. Antonio left his cousin to defend himself, and, bowing low to the Duke, set his sword at the Duke's breast, before the Duke could so much as rise from his seat.

'I would not touch your Highness,' said he, 'but these gentlemen must not be interrupted.'

'You take me at a disadvantage,' cried the Duke.

'If you will swear not to summon your guard, I will sheath my sword, my lord; or, if you will honour me by crossing yours on mine, you shall draw yours.'

The place where they sat was hidden from the palace windows, yet the Duke trusted that the sound of the clashing steel would bring aid; therefore, not desiring to fight with Antonio (for Duke Valentine loved to scheme rather than to strike), he sat still, answering nothing. And now Tommasino and Robert were engaged, Robert attacking furiously, and Tommasino parrying him as coolly as though they fenced for pastime in the school. It was Tommasino's fault to think of naught but the moment, and he did not remember that every second might bring the guard upon them. And Antonio would not call it to his mind,

but he said to the Duke: 'The boy will kill him, sir. He is a finer swordsman than I, and marvellously active.'

Then the Duke, having been pondering on his course, and knowing Antonio—sitting there with the Count's sword against his breast—did by calculation what many a man braver in fight had not dared to do. There was, in truth, a courage in it, for all that it was born of shrewdness. For, thus with the sword on his heart, fixing a calm glance on Antonio, he cried as loudly as he could, 'Help, help, treason!'

Antonio drew back his arm for the stroke; and the Duke sat still; then, swift as thought, Antonio laughed, bowed to Duke Valentine, and turning, rushed between the fighters, striking up their swords. In amazement, they stood for a moment: Antonio drove his sword into its sheath, and, while Robert stood yet astounded, he rushed on him, caught him by the waist, and, putting forth his strength, flung him clear and far into the fish-pond. Then seizing Tommasino by the arm, he started with him at a run for the great hall. The Duke rose, crying loudly, 'Treason, treason!' But Antonio cried 'Treason, treason!' yet louder than the Duke; and presently Tommasino, who had frowned at his pastime being interrupted, fell a-laughing, and between the laughs cried 'Treason, treason!' with Antonio. And at the entrance of the hall they met a dozen pikemen running; and Antonio, pointing over his shoulder, called, in tones of horror, 'Treason, treason!' And Tommasino cried, 'The Duke! Help the Duke!' So that they passed untouched through the pikemen, who hesitated an instant in bewilderment, but then swept on; for they heard the Duke's own voice crying still 'Treason, treason!' And through the hall and out to the portico passed the cousins, echoing their cries of 'Treason!' And every man they met went whither they pointed; and when they leaped on their horses, the very lackey that had held them dropped the bridles with hasty speed and ran into the palace, crying 'Treason!' Then Antonio, Tommasino ever following, and both yet crying 'Treason!' dashed across the square; and on the way they met the pikemen who guarded the Lady Lucia, and the townsmen who were mocking and snarling at the pikemen; and to pikemen and townsmen alike they cried (though Tommasino hardly could speak now for laughter and lack of breath), 'Treason, treason!' And all to whom they cried flocked to the palace, crying in their turn 'Treason, treason!' so that people ran out of every house in the neighbourhood and hurried to the palace, crying 'Treason!' and every one asking his neighbour what the treason was. And thus, by the time in which a man might count a hundred, a crowd was pushing and pressing and striving round the gate of the palace, and the cousins were alone on the other side of the great square.

'Now thanks be to God for that idea!' gasped Tommasino.

But Antonio gave not thanks till his meal was ended. Raising his voice as he halted his horse before the Lady Lucia's house, he called loudly, no longer 'Treason!' but 'Lucia!' And

she, knowing his voice, looked again out from the window; but some hand plucked her away as soon as she had but looked. Then Antonio leaped from his horse with an oath and ran to the door, and finding it unguarded, he rushed in, leaving Tommasino seated on one horse and holding the other, with one eye on Lucia's house and the other on the palace, praying that, by the favour of Heaven, Antonio might come out again before the crowd round the Duke's gates discovered why it was, to a man, crying 'Treason!'

But in the palace of the Duke there was great confusion. For the pikemen, finding Robert de Beauregard scrambling out of the fish-pond with a drawn sword in his hand, and His Highness crying 'Treason!' with the best of them, must have it that the traitor was none other than Robert himself, and in their dutiful zeal they came nigh to making an end of him then and there, before the Duke could gain silence enough to render his account of the affair audible. And when the first pikemen were informed, there came others; and these others, finding the first thronging round the Duke and Robert, cried out on them for the traitors, and were on the point of engaging them; and when they also had been with difficulty convinced, and the two parties, with His Highness and Robert, turned to the pursuit of the cousins, they found the whole of the great hall utterly blocked by a concourse of the townsmen, delighted beyond measure at the chance of an affray with the hated pikemen, who, they conceived, must beyond doubt be the wicked traitors that had risen in arms against the Duke's life and throne. Narrowly indeed was a great battle in the hall averted by the Duke himself, who leaped upon a high seat and spoke long and earnestly to the people, persuading them that not the pikemen, but Antonio and Tommasino, were the traitors; which the townsmen found hard to believe, in part because they wished not to believe ill of Antonio, and more inasmuch as every man there knew—and the women and children also—that Antonio and Tommasino, and none else of all the city, had raised the alarm. But some hearkened at last; and with these and a solid wedge of the pikemen, the Duke and Robert, with much ado, thrust their way through the crowd, and won access to the door of the palace.

In what time a thousand men may be convinced, you may hope to turn one woman's mind; and at the instant that the Duke gained the square with his friends and his guards, Count Antonio had prevailed on the Lady Lucia to brave His Highness's wrath. It is true that he had met with some resistance from the steward, who was in Robert's pay, and had tarried to buffet the fellow into obedience; and with more from an old governess, who, since she could not be buffeted, had perforce to be locked in a cupboard; yet the better part of the time had to be spent in imploring Lucia herself. At last, with many fears and some tears, she had yielded, and it was with glad eyes that Tommasino saw the Count come forth from the door carrying Lucia on his arm; and others saw him also; for a great shout

came from the Duke's party across the square, and the pikemen set out at a run with Robert himself at their head. Yet so soon as they were started, Antonio also, bearing Lucia in his arms, had reached where Tommasino was with the horses, and an instant later he was mounted and cried, 'To the gate!' and he struck in his spurs, and his horse bounded forward, Tommasino following. No more than a hundred yards lay between them and the gate of the city, and before the pikemen could bar their path, they had reached the gate. The gate-wardens were in the act of shutting it, having perceived the tumult; but Tommasino struck at them with the flat of his sword, and they gave way before the rushing horses; and before the great gate was shut, Antonio and he were on their way through, and the hoofs of their horses clattered over the bridge. Thus Antonio was clear of the city with his lady in his arms, and Tommasino his cousin safe by his side.

Yet they were not safe; for neither Duke Valentine nor Robert de Beauregard was a man who sat down under defeat. But few moments had passed before there issued from the gate a company of ten mounted and armed men, and Robert, riding in their front, saw, hard on a mile away, the cousins heading across the plain towards the spot where the spurs of Mount Agnino run down; for there was the way of safety—but it was yet ten miles away. And Robert and his company galloped furiously in pursuit, while Duke Valentine watched from the wall of the garden above the river.

COMMERCIAL TRAVELLING IN INDIA.

BY A COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.

THE Commercial Traveller is not a *rara avis* in India, although the species is by no means so abundant as at home. True, his plumage is considerably altered, but it does not require a very clever observer to discover him. His tall, shiny hat has given place to a squat 'Sola Topi'; his black coat is exchanged for something light and easy fitting; and, strangest transformation of all, his starch is limp, very limp at times; while he himself, with all his perkiness, cannot resist an occasional lapse into limpness also. Yet there he is pegging away, never, or hardly ever, down-hearted, with a pleasant word and a smile for everybody.

Conditions of travelling are of course very much altered, and it may not be out of place for one who has had some experience 'on the road' in our Indian Empire to give here a few sketchy notes of the more outstanding features and points of difference for the delectation of those who have never ventured so far.

It is a great though common mistake for one to encumber himself with an extensive and costly outfit before leaving home, as all he wants for the voyage is plenty of light under-clothing and a few flannel suits. His kit can be easily procured at the port of arrival from excellent European outfitters, who know exactly what he requires. Amongst the goods and chattels that must be procured at the port of

arrival is a good 'boy.' Boys of the common or garden order are plentiful and cheap, but as this particular boy will be one's principal servant throughout the tour, a careful selection is necessary. Written 'characters' or credentials are of little value, as the ingenuous boy can buy such 'chits' in the bazaar at a low rate. If the stranger does not know any one who can recommend a boy who has travelled and is all that he ought to be, one of the travelling agencies will be able to assist him in this particular.

It might be as well to warn the intending traveller at this point not to expect absolute perfection in any of the servants he may have to employ from time to time. The sorrowful suggestion that 'all men are liars' has a peculiar significance when applied to Indian boys; and again, without making any sweeping assertion, and allowing for the exception which proves the rule, it is no exaggeration to say that cases have been known where the model boy has not been found proof against petty speculation. Should occasion arise on which it is necessary for one to question the veracity and integrity of his servant, he will most probably be informed gravely, that 'Hotel mans is teefs and liars, Sahib. Me no teefs and liars, Sahib;' or, as also happened within the writer's ken, when an aggrieved and testy individual lost his temper and the command of his tongue, and bluntly accused his servant of being a thief and a liar, the boy replied in a casual manner: 'Oh yes, Sahib; we all teefs and liars here, Sahib.'

Another necessary evil in the way of servants must be reckoned the inevitable coolie, with his objectionable way of crowding one on arrival at a port or railway station (*bandar*). It is not at all exceptional to find one's self and baggage surrounded on such an occasion by a dozen or a score of coolies, jostling, jabbering, shouting, and gesticulating in a most alarming manner. Expostulation with a crowd of this kind is quite out of the question; the judicious manipulation of a stout cane in such an emergency is frequently the only effectual method of enforcing respect for one's person and belongings.

Concerning hotels, we may say that in the larger centres there is no difficulty in the matter of accommodation, and in these hotels *punkah wallahs* (fan-pullers) and a *kitmagar* or table-servant can be procured, all of whom—in addition to his personal attendant—one must take into his own service for the time being. Most of the hotels can provide a carriage (*ghari*), an absolute necessity for business purposes, as any man who, priding himself on his physique, attempts to walk about during the heat of the day will soon find himself down with 'sun' or fever. It is necessary to point out that in some towns the traveller will find no hotel accommodation, and, in that event, must be content to put up at the railway station or at a 'dak bungalow' or rest-house, provided by Government, which he may occupy for twenty-four hours provided no one else is in possession. From these facts, it will be gathered that part of the necessary outfit must be bedding. This need not be elaborate, but should include

a *resai* or light mattress, with sheets and a rug for 'up-country' in the cool season.

In railway travelling, the fewer impedimenta a man carries with him the better, as very little luggage is allowed free of charge, a first-class passenger being allowed only one and a half 'maunds' (roughly, one hundred and twenty-three pounds). Travelling is, if slow, comfortable and cheap, first-class fare with sleeping accommodation provided being about one anna (a penny) per mile. Generally speaking, there are four classes of passenger accommodation on the Indian railways—first (used chiefly by Europeans), second, intermediate, and third. Third class is extremely cheap, so that the traveller is able to take a servant about with him at a comparatively small cost. The distance, for instance, between Bombay and Calcutta (fourteen hundred miles) can be covered for nineteen rupees thirteen annas, as against one hundred and twelve rupees first class.

It must be observed that Madras time is kept on all the railways. This is thirty-three minutes behind Calcutta time, seven minutes behind Allahabad time, thirteen minutes in advance of Delhi time, ten minutes in advance of Agra time, and thirty minutes in advance of Bombay time. Time is reckoned over the twenty-four hours from midnight to midnight, 23'45, for instance, corresponding to our 11'45 P.M. Other modes of progression—elephant, bullock ghâri, and such-like—may now and then have to be employed, but so infrequently that they are hardly worth mentioning.

There is one part of the system for which the thanks of the European traveller are due to the controlling authorities of the Indian railways, and that is regard for the Briton's food requirements, ample time and opportunity being afforded on a long journey for meals, which are usually both good and cheap. This provision is a very necessary adjunct to railway travelling, as distances are great, and the climate renders it necessary that the system should be kept well nourished. Too much care cannot be given to dietary in such a climate; and the tendency to over-eating, so prevalent among Europeans, must be carefully avoided. It is not too much to say that over-eating has more to do with a great deal of the illness of Europeans in India than injudicious drinking. Concerning the latter, perhaps the safest, and certainly the most usual drink of those in the habit of taking stimulants, is whisky and soda, small 'whiskies' and big 'sodas' being the order of the day. Manufactured ice (*barf*) is plentiful, and is almost as much a table requisite as salt or chutney. Soda water is consumed to such an extent by Englishmen that it is called by the natives 'Balâti Pâni' (English water).

The traveller who cannot carry a good deal of tact into his business had better not go to India, as he will find he has some curious studies in human nature to deal with. On the Bombay side, he has the Parsee element in strong force. He will find the Parsee a 'cute, business man, whose chief anxiety seems to be to get exclusive terms which will enable him to 'scoop the pool,' while the Hindu is equally anxious to throw cold-water on one's dealings

with the Parsee. On the Bengal side, again, one comes into contact with the wily Bengâli Babu, very suave and confident in his powers of conducting business, and rather prone to play the good old-fashioned game of bluff. With all his cleverness, however, he has one little failing, the result of which it is necessary to guard against—he cannot keep a secret. It is the common fate of a traveller to find that his 'special terms' quoted in the morning, privately and under a bond of secrecy, are the common property of the 'Trade' before the afternoon.

In his private capacity the Hindu is frequently very hospitably inclined. The fact that his caste prejudices preclude him from eating with Europeans does not always prevent him offering an invitation to dinner—his idea of English hospitality. This consists in his driving his guest to an hotel and paying for dinner, while he awaits its consumption in another part of the house. It takes one some little time to get used to this mode of procedure; but after a while, one sees the propriety of accepting the kindness in the spirit which prompts it.

The traveller will probably find it advisable to conduct his business on the stockroom method, a stockroom or 'godown' being easily procurable either at the hotel or in the native quarter; and very little finesse will be required to induce the native customer to let one drive him up to look at his 'stuff.' The European dealer, on the other hand, of whom, as a class, the writer cannot speak too highly, will doubtless give frequent opportunities, both for the conduct of business and the exchange of those hospitalities which make business a pleasure. We may say here that while it is customary to discuss business with a European over a cigar and a 'peg,' it is not always judicious to invite a native either to smoke or drink, unless one is very well versed in the question of caste.

A few words as to climate and the necessary precautions. Among the first changes that will manifest themselves in a man's general health will be a feeling of lassitude and exhaustion, and he will soon discover that he will be unable to do much business during the glare of mid-day. This goes against the grain with a man who is used at home to do the best part of his day's work before noon; but, should his pride prevent his coming down to resting in the middle of the day, a touch of 'sun' or 'fever' will soon teach him that 'the way of transgressors is hard.'

A very important evil to guard against is 'chill,' which carries in its wake all sorts of possibilities up to cholera. The best preventive of chill is the use of a flannel waistbelt (*cum-merbund*), which should be worn day and night. Cold baths, although very inviting, should not be indulged in too freely; and iced drinks should only be taken in moderation. The free use of drugs, best avoided under any circumstances, should be specially guarded against in such a climate, and one's medicine chest need not contain more than a small bottle of chlorodyne, to be used as a corrective, and a box of quinine capsules, to be taken when one feels more than ordinarily run down.

As for the beauties of nature to be enjoyed, the scenes of interest to be visited, the treasures of antiquity to be studied, are they not written in the books of Murray and others? we have but noted some of the elements of Indian travel from a commercial man's point of view. And so we wish the intending traveller 'bon voyage' and good business.

A LEGEND OF PRINCE MAURICE.

By H. A. BRYDEN,

Author of *Gun and Camera in Southern Africa, &c.*

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

It was Christmas time at the Cape, when many a man and woman of British blood, jaded by the sun and drought of an up-country life, flocks down to the sea. Cape Town and her charming suburbs were crowded; and the pleasant watering-places of Muizenberg and Kalk Bay were thronged with folks dying once more to set eyes on the blue ocean, to inhale the fresh breezes, and to remind themselves of their own sea-girt origin. From every corner of South Africa; from the old Colony, the Free State, the Transvaal, from far Bechuanaland, they had come. You might see sun-scorched wanderers from the far interior, hunters, explorers, prospectors, and pioneers. Some had come to restore broken health; some to taste again the sweets of civilisation, to spend hard-won money; or, perchance, an enthusiast might be seen who had been attracted south a thousand miles and more by the week's cricket tournament on the Western Province ground at Newlands.

Cape Town was at her best and bravest; Adderley Street was as crowded as Bond Street in June; and upon every hand were to be seen and heard pleasant faces, cheery voices, and the hearty greetings of friends long severed by time and distance.

On the evening of the 23d December a young man sat in his pleasant bedroom in the *annexe* of the 'International Hotel,' which lies rather out of the heat of the town on the lower slopes of Table Mountain. It was an hour before dinner, and the young man sat in his shirt sleeves before the open window, idly smoking a pipe, and feasting his eyes on the glorious view that lay before him.

Jack Compton had just come down from two years' travel and sport in the far interior—you might tell that by his lean, sun-tanned face and deeply embrowned arms, and by the collection of curios—bird-skins, photographs, horns, heads, assegais, and other articles that littered the room—and, after a rough time of it, was now enjoying to the full the ease and relaxation of life at the Cape. It was a noble prospect that lay spread before him; none nobler in the world. Cape Town, with its white houses and dark-green foliage, contrasted strongly in the near foreground with the peerless blue

and the sweeping contours of Table Bay. Out at the entrance to the Bay, Robben Island swam dimly into the far Atlantic. Across the Bay the eye was first smitten by the blinding dazzle of the beach of white sand below Blaauwberg. Then rose chain upon chain of glorious mountain scenery, the jagged sierras of Stellenbosch and the far line of Hottentots Holland melting in blues and purples upon the horizon. Under the setting sun, the crests of these distant sierras were rapidly becoming rose-tinted, and the warm browns and purples glorified a thousand-fold. Never, thought Jack Compton, as he pulled contentedly at his pipe, had he beheld a more enchanting scene.

At that instant his door was flung open, and a tall, sunburnt, keen-eyed man of thirty entered the room. 'Hallo, Jack, you old buffer,' he exclaimed, 'what are you up to, sitting here brooding like a pelican at a salt pan? I've been looking for you. I've been chatting for the last two hours with a most interesting johnnie just come round from Wal-fisch Bay. He's been trading and hunting in a new veldt far inland to the north-east, and he's had some extraordinary times. The country he's been in is, seemingly, quite unknown to Europeans; the game's as thick as sheep in a fold; and he's had the most wonderful shooting. But there's one adventure which he'll tell us more about after dinner, which has hit my fancy amazingly. As far as I can make out, Cressey—that's the name of the man—has discovered some extraordinary link with the past, a Kaffir woman, chief of some native tribe, with good white blood in her veins. Cressey has got some of her belongings, and has promised to show them to us later on.'

'But,' put in Jack Compton, 'what sort of a man is this Cressey? Can you depend upon what he says? There are some champion liars in this country, and any amount of improbable yarns floating from one ear to another. The Afrikander is the most credulous person in the world, and there's something in the climate which quickly infects the Britisher—witness yourself. I suppose gold and diamonds are primarily responsible for it all, and the old-fashioned Boer, who's the most marvel-swallowing creature of the nineteenth century.'

'That's all right, old chap,' laughingly replied Tim Bracewell. 'I won't say any more at present. You shall judge for yourself. In my opinion, this man Cressey isn't one of your natural-born Ananiases. He gives one the impression of being perfectly straightforward. He's a quiet, unassuming sort of man, rather hard to draw than otherwise.—By-the-by, we mustn't talk too loud. He's got a bedroom somewhere in this building.'

Half an hour later, the two friends were lounging about the *steep* of the 'International' waiting the summons to dinner, when a quiet-looking man in blue serge came up the steps. Tim Bracewell stepped forward and met him and introduced him to Compton. The new-

comer was a well-set-up man of middle height. He had fair brown hair, a short beard, and a pair of keen, steady, blue-gray eyes.

After dinner, which the three men partook of at a table together, they came out to the stoep again, and fixed themselves in a snug corner for coffee and cigars. They had exchanged a good deal of their experiences together at the dinner table, and Tim Bracewell now called upon Cressey to give them the promised history of his main adventure.

Well (said Cressey), it's a queer yarn, and I don't know what you'll say to it. You're the first I've told it to; and let me ask you not to talk about it outside. I don't want to be bothered by papers and interviewers and all the rest of it. I shall report my story to the Colonial Secretary for what it's worth, and then I've done all I intend to.—I started from Wal-fisch Bay with two wagons, loaded up with trading-gear, just eighteen months ago. I intended to hunt a bit, and I had five good ponies with me. I had also in my outfit three very good native 'boys'—one, especially, 'April,' a most useful chap; he was a 'Mangwato, a capital fellow at languages, and understood Zulu and Dutch, and one or two Zambesi dialects. He was a good driver, cook, and hunter—one of the best all-round natives I ever came across.

Well, I trekked through Damaraland, and Ovampoland up to the Cunene River. I hadn't much trouble with the Ovampo, as I knew their chiefs and headmen. But they're a rum lot, and you've got to watch it in their country. I did pretty well, and sent down a decent troop of cattle taken in barter to a place I've got in Damaraland.

After several months, I left the Cunene, and worked up for a new bit of country hitherto unexplored. I crossed the Okavango somewhere up towards its sources, and then found myself in the wild country of the Mukassakwere Bushmen. Here there was plenty of game, and I had some grand sport. The Bushmen were mad for meat and tobacco, and were only too eager—once they had found out my killing powers—to show me sport. I had a glorious time among elephant, rhinoceros, 'camel' [giraffe], and all the big antelopes. Elands were running in big troops, almost as tame as Alderney cows, and we lived like fighting cocks. I got a fine lot of ivory in this country; and then, taking some of the best of the Bushmen with me, pushed still farther north-by-east.

One afternoon, after a long, troublesome trek through some heavy bush-country, in which we had been all hard at work cutting a path for the wagons, we emerged pretty thankfully into clear country again. Before us lay spread a vast open grassy plain, dotted here and there with troops of game. Beyond the plain, some thirty miles distant, there stood in purple splendour against the clear horizon a majestic mountain chain, its peaks just now tinted a tender rose by the setting sun. We all stood for a while gazing, open-mouthed, at the glorious scene before us, and then camped for the night. Round my servants' camp-fire I noticed a good deal of animated conversation going

on. Two Bushmen in particular were full of chatter and gesticulation. Their curious clicking speech came fast and thick, and they pointed often in the direction of the mountains in our front.

After a time I called April to my fireside and interrogated him. He informed me that the Bushmen were speaking of a kraal of natives settled behind the mountain chain; that these natives were governed by a wonderful white-skinned woman; that they were quarrelsome and treacherous; and that we might have trouble with them. Having learned thus much, I tumbled into my wagon, pulled up the sheep-skin kaross, and fell asleep.

Early next morning I was up making ready for a longish ride. I was mighty curious to see this native village that the Bushmen spoke of, and especially the white-skinned chieftainess; at the same time I determined to prepare for any eventuality. I sent the wagons, after breakfast, back upon our spoor again, directing my men to camp in a strong place between some hills, more than a day's journey back. Here there was good water; the camp could be rendered pretty impregnable by the help of a scherm of thorn-bushes; and, with my horses, I and my attendant could easily retreat thither in case of trouble. I now selected my two best ponies, and, taking April with me, and the two Bushmen to act as guides, we set off for the mountain. My man and I were each armed with a good double rifle, and had plenty of ammunition, water-bottles, and some 'biltong' [sun-dried meat], biscuits, coffee, and a kettle; and, as I knew there were no horses among the natives in these regions, I had little fear of escape, if escape became necessary.

We rode all that day across the big plain. It was a perfect treat to see the game on every side of us. There were rhinoceroses, elands, hartebeests, Burchell's zebras, blue wildebeests, and tsesseley. They were excessively tame, and often came close up and stared at us. We fired no shot, however, but rode quietly on, occasionally diverging a little to avoid some sour-looking black rhinoceros, which stood, threatening and suspicious, directly in our path. We camped that night in a little grove of thorn-trees just beneath the mountain.

At earliest dawn of the next day we were up and away. The Bushmen led us to a kloof or gorge in the mountain chain, the only approach to the kraal we sought. We rode for two hours up a slight ascent over a very rough, rocky path; and then, suddenly turning an angle of the mountain-wall, we came in full view of the native town. A broad grassy valley, perhaps seven miles square, lay before us. This plain was dotted with circular native huts, built very much after the Bechuana fashion, and neatly thatched. Herds of cattle, goats, and native sheep were pasturing here and there, or lying beneath the shade of the acacias scattered about the plain. The town stood in an excellent position. The mountain chain upon the one hand, and a broad and deep river, flowing south-east, upon the other, served as sure defences against any sudden attack from without.

Beyond the river, eastward, a vast sweep of

broad plain, ribboned with dark-green belts of bush and forest, stretched in interminable expanse to the hot horizon.

Descending to the valley, we were not long in reaching a collection of huts, where we were pulled up short by a score of gesticulating natives, armed with huge bows and arrows, and spears. We had some trouble with these people; but after various messages and a halt of an hour or so, we were told to follow two headmen to the Queen's residence.

Mounting our horses—a proceeding which roused the most lively interest among the crowd, which by this time had gathered round us—April and I followed our guides, the Bushmen walking alongside. Passing numerous groups of well-built, well-tended huts, we were at last brought to the Queen's kotla, a large circular enclosure, fenced by a tall stockade, in which was set the hut of the great lady I sought. A messenger soon brought permission, and we rode into the enclosure.

In a couple of rapid glances I took in the whole scene. In front of a large, roomy, carefully thatched, circular hut were gathered some thirty headmen of various ages, all standing, and all armed with long spears, battle-axes, or bows and arrows. In the centre of this knot of dark Africans sat the chieftainess, a very fair-skinned woman, undoubtedly. Behind her stood two black female attendants, furnished with long fly whisks, with which they occasionally guarded their mistress from the annoyances of insects. I rode up boldly to within ten yards of this group, and dismounted, as did my man April. Handing my horse to April, I took off my broad-brimmed hat, made my politest bow to the Queen's grace, and then, calling Naras the Bushman, motioned him to stand forward and interpret. Naras waited expectantly on the Queen, and, while she addressed him, I had leisure to examine her closely and very curiously. Mapana—that was her name—for a woman of native blood, was astonishingly fair. I can best liken her colouring to that of a fair octoroon. Her beauty amazed me. I have been in the West Indies, where, especially among the French islands, are to be seen some of the most beautiful coloured women in the world. Mapana's beauty and grace reminded me in the strongest manner of some of these French octoroons. Her hair was soft and wavy—not harsh, like a pure African's—and curled naturally upon her well-shaped head. Her features were good and regular; her mouth bewitching; her dark eyes tender, kindly, and marvellously beautiful. There was an air of refinement and grace about her, which strangely puzzled me. She wore a necklet of bright gold coins about her neck, and thick ivory bangles upon her shapely arms. A little cloak of antelope skin just covered her shoulders, but concealed not at all her perfect shape and bust. A short kilt or petticoat of dressed antelope skin, and neat sandals of giraffe hide, completed her costume. It is hard to judge the age of Africans. I guessed Mapana's years at one or two and twenty. She sat there in an attitude of easy natural grace, her pretty hands just covering a sword, apparently of European make, which lay across her lap. I think I never set

eyes on a more perfectly captivating creature. I am not as a rule at all impressionable, but, as Mapana spoke, my downfall was complete—I fell in love with her at once.

TREASURE ISLANDS IN THE POLAR SEA.

PARAGRAPHS appear in the newspapers from time to time, and down to the present year of grace 1894, about a wealth of mammoth-ivory on the desert coasts and islands of Northern Siberia; but many people seem to regard such tales as more or less fabulous, and may be glad to have a connected account of what is really known about New Siberia and its mammoth tusks.

On June 13, 1881, the American steamer *Jeanette* was crushed by the ice, and sank in the Arctic Ocean to the north of Siberia. This disaster occurred at a considerable distance to the north-east of the New Siberian Islands, which lie in the Polar Sea, about two hundred miles to the north of the mouth of the Lena. The crew of the *Jeanette*, under Captain De Long, escaped in boats, and attempted to reach the Siberian coast; but before they reached the mainland, a gale divided them into two companies. One party reached the Russian settlements; but the other, under Captain De Long, wandered amidst the icy wastes in the delta of the Lena, and ultimately in this dreary wilderness all perished except two seamen. Their sorrowing companions afterwards found their bodies, and reverently buried them.

This melancholy disaster drew attention to the New Siberian Islands, and interest in them has been further excited by the projects of Dr Nansen. This gallant explorer intended to put his vessel, the *Fram*, into winter quarters amidst the New Siberian Islands, and there to pass the coming winter, previous to commencing his great drift towards the North Pole. Altering his plans, he determined to winter in the delta of the Lena. If he passes through the New Siberian Islands, he may be expected to bring back valuable scientific information concerning them.

But it is not the connection of the New Siberian Islands with the sinking of the *Jeanette*, or with the voyage of Nansen, that gives to them their chief interest, but the fact that they contain, in extraordinary abundance, relics of a world which has long passed away. Here, amidst icy solitudes, and surrounded by a sea covered with floating icebergs, wrapped for months of the year in perfect darkness, illuminated only by the red glare of the Aurora, there has been found a mine of wealth which constitutes these dreary islands perfect treasure-houses in the frozen ocean. Few stretches of the Polar Sea are more dismal and dangerous than that portion of it which lies to the north of Siberia. For eight months in the year it is fast frozen, and its surface then presents great sheets of ice, which are in many places crossed by long icy ridges, or heaped up into towering hummocks of ice. In the summer, when the ice-sheets have melted, the navigation is dangerous in the extreme. Fleets of monstrous icebergs, of the

most fantastic forms, float through the water, and often when gales arise, these great icy masses are hurled against each other with terrific force and thundering roar. Along the low shore icebergs lie stranded in vast numbers; and the coasts of the islands are surrounded by sheets of ice, which extend far out into the sea, and make landing very difficult. During the brief summer, snow-storms are of constant occurrence; and the icy winds are of such keenness that it is difficult to face them, and the birds often fall on the ground dead through the cold. To the north-east of the New Siberian Islands vast masses of packed ice occur, which are never melted, and it was amidst these fields of everlasting ice that the *Jeanette* was destroyed.

The honour of discovering and of surveying this icy sea belongs to the Russians, for, until Nordenskiöld's voyage, other European nations sailed no farther than the Kara Sea, where they were stopped, either by the cold or by the immense masses of floating ice. The Russians, however, accustomed to endure the severest cold, voyaged along the whole northern coast of Siberia, and descended the Obi and Lena in vessels constructed at Tobolsk and Irkutsk; and from the mouths of these great rivers they explored the coasts in all directions. The hardships encountered by the Russians in these voyages were very great; often whole parties died from hunger and cold, and their little vessels were frequently wrecked amidst the icy solitudes. The earliest voyages undertaken were made by traders for the discovery of valuable furs; and on land as well as on sea the fur-hunters carried on extensive explorations all through the seventeenth century. About the year 1734, however, more scientific expeditions were undertaken, and the reign of the Empress Anna marked the commencement of a new era in Siberian discovery. Larger vessels were built, the coasts were carefully surveyed, and scientific examinations were carried on throughout the whole extent of the voyages.

For a long time before this, the Russians had known of the vast amount of bones of the fossil elephant—the Mammoth—which abounded all over Northern Siberia, and an extensive trade in fossil ivory had been carried on for a considerable period. But up to this time no authentic account of the discovery of these great fur-clad elephants' bodies had been received. Some declared that the mighty mammoth lived underground in vast caverns, and that it came forth only at night; others affirmed that it wandered along the shores of the icy sea and fed on the dead bodies; and others, again, said that it was to be seen on the banks of lonely lakes in the uncertain light of early dawn, but that as soon as it was discerned, it plunged into the water and disappeared.

While voyaging along the shores of Siberia, the Russians from time to time caught glimpses of islands in the sea far to the north; but none landed on them or laid them down on the map with accuracy. In 1760 a Yakut named Eterikan saw a large island to the north-east of the mouth of the Lena, and his account raised the interest of the fur-hunters. Amongst these zealous traders, none was more active and more successful than an adventurer Liakoff or

Liachov, who for a long time had been collecting mammoths' bones and tusks on the barren plains of Northern Siberia. In 1750 Liakoff had gathered great quantities of this fossil ivory from the dreary wastes between the rivers Chotanga and Anadyr; and during his wanderings he had heard vague rumours of islands in the Arctic Ocean. In the spring of 1770 he was at Svaiatoi Noss—or the Holy Cape—a bold promontory running out into the Polar Sea, about two hundred miles east of the mouth of the Lena. This headland had long been the terror of the Russian navigators, and they had declared that it was impossible to sail round it, owing to the enormous masses of ice which were piled up against its cliffs, and to the sheets and hummocks of ice which stretched out from its extremity for a long distance into the sea. But in 1739, Demetrius Lapteff doubled the dreaded headland, and sailed safely to the east along the icy shore as far as the mouth of the Kolyma.

When Liakoff was at the Holy Cape, the ocean was fast frozen, and presented a dreary prospect of ice, ridged here and there by gigantic icy furrows and hummocks. As he looked over the vast frozen expanse, he saw a long line of black objects approaching over the ice from the north, and perceiving that they were reindeer, he concluded that they were returning to Siberia from some unknown land to the north. He at once started in a sledge drawn by dogs over the ice; and after he had followed the tracks of the reindeer for sixty miles, he came to an island, where he passed the night. Next day, he followed the tracks to the north, and discovered another island smaller than the first. The reindeer track still continued to the north; but immense hummocks of ice rendered the further progress of the bold explorer impossible. Liakoff obtained from the Russian Government permission to call the islands by his name, and—what was far more important—he obtained the sole right to collect mammoths' bones and the skins of stone-foxes in the newly discovered islands.

Three years afterwards he revisited the islands, accompanied by a friend named Protodiakonoff, and as it was now summer, they made the voyage in a five-oared boat. They found the first island to be simply packed full of the bones and tusks of mammoths, and Liakoff's joy at the discovery of this vast store of fossil ivory may be imagined. Then they voyaged to the next island, where they found cliffs of solid ice. Leaving this, they steered boldly to the north, and after a voyage of one hundred miles, they reached a large island (afterwards named Kotelnoi), which was also full of the remains of fossil elephants (mammoths).

For thirty years Liakoff enjoyed the complete monopoly of carrying away these wonderful stores of ivory. His agents and workmen went every year to the islands in sledges and boats, and on the first of the islands he had discovered they built huts and formed a great magazine.

In 1775 the Russian Government, hearing of the riches of the islands, sent Chwoinnoff, a surveyor, to examine them. He found that the first of the islands—containing the huts of the ivory diggers—was of considerable size, and contained such amazing quantities of the tusks

and teeth of elephants, that it seemed to be composed of these remains, cemented together with sand and gravel! In the middle of the island was a lake with banks formed of slopes of solid ice, and in the brief summer, these ice-banks split open by the action of the sun; and on looking down into these great cracks, it could be seen that they were full of the tusks of elephants and of the horns of buffaloes!

On Liakoff's death, the Russian Government, in 1805, granted the monopoly of the trade in the ivory islands to Sirovatskoi, a merchant who had settled at Yakutsk, who sent his agent Sannikoff to explore the islands and to try to discover new deposits of fossil ivory. Sannikoff discovered to the east of Kotelnoi another large island, which he called Fadeyeffskoi; and in 1806, Sirovatskoi's son discovered a third large island, still farther to the east, which was afterwards called New Siberia. These newly discovered islands were—like the former—full of fossil ivory; and it was thus proved that there were two groups of ivory islands: the Liakoff Islands, near the shore; and the New Siberian Islands, which lay in the Arctic Ocean, two hundred miles north of Siberia.

In 1809, Count Romanzoff sent M. Hedenström to explore the islands, fitting him out at his own expense. Hedenström reached Liakoff's first island, and was amazed at the prodigious stores of fossil ivory it contained; for although the ivory-hunters had for forty years regularly carried away each year large quantities of ivory from the island, the supply of ivory in it appeared to be not in the least diminished! In about half a mile, Hedenström saw ten tusks of elephants sticking up in the sand and gravel; and a large sandbank on the west coast of the island was always covered with elephants' tusks after a gale, leading him to hope that there was an endless amount of ivory under the sea! Hedenström and Sannikoff went on to Kotelnoi and New Siberia, and they found the hills in the former island absolutely covered with the bones, tusks, and teeth of elephants, rhinoceroses, and buffaloes, which must have lived there in countless numbers, although the island is now an icy wilderness, without the slightest vegetation. They also found that in New Siberia—the most eastern of the islands—the quantity of mammoth ivory was still more abundant, and in 1809 Sannikoff brought away ten thousand pounds of fossil ivory from New Siberia alone!

When we reflect that at present these islands are mere icy wastes, with no vegetation, and with only a few foxes and bears wandering over them, we see at once that a complete change of climate must have taken place since the time when vast herds of elephants and rhinoceroses inhabited them. This conclusion is supported by the fact that in Kotelnoi and New Siberia the remains of extensive forests have been found, in which the trees are standing upright, but are perfectly dead. In other places in the same islands, great heaps of trees, called 'The wood-hills,' are piled up on the desolate hill-sides. The ivory-hunters frequently spent the winter in the islands, and the hardships they then endured were often most extreme. For a long time in the depth of winter they were wrapped in darkness, lighted only

by the red glare of the Aurora, and by the brilliant flashing of its flickering streamers. The silence at that time was profound, for the sea was noiseless, being fast frozen, and the only sound was the moaning of the icy blasts amidst the snow-covered hills. Sometimes the snow did not melt before July, and in many places it lay on the ground all the year; the ground was also permanently frozen only a foot or two below the surface, and beneath, there was often found solid and perpetual ice.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, enormous quantities of ivory were still taken every year from these wonderful islands. In 1822–23 Lieutenant Anjou surveyed the islands, but does not seem to have noticed any remains of mammoths. A most striking story was related by Sannikoff, who declared that when he was in Kotelnoi and Fadeyeffskoi in 1809, he saw from the northern shores of these islands the distant mountains of another island far away to the north. Efforts were made to reach this unknown land by sledging over the ice, but great open stretches of water rendered progress towards the north impossible. When Erman was at Yakutsk in 1829, he was told that the ivory trade from the New Siberian Islands was as lucrative and important as ever, and that the traders journeyed to the islands in sledges over the frozen surface of the ocean. The tusks of the mammoth could be seen in New Siberia sticking up out of the sand, and the ivory-hunters were accustomed to stand on an eminence and examine the wastes of sand and gravel with telescopes, to see where the tusks protruded from the ground, which showed that the skeletons of the great elephants were buried beneath. One ivory-hunter in 1821 brought away twenty thousand pounds of ivory from New Siberia alone; and in 1836 sixty-eight thousand pounds of fossil ivory, which came chiefly from the New Siberian and Liakoff Islands, were sold at Yakutsk. Middendorf, some years later, calculated that every year one hundred and ten thousand pounds of fossil ivory were sold in the markets of Yakutsk, Obdorsk, Turukhansk, and Tobolsk; eighty thousand pounds of this amount being sold at Yakutsk alone, the market at this place being supplied chiefly from New Siberia, where the quantity of fossil ivory still seemed to be inexhaustible. Great boats full of ivory were constantly ascending the Lena to Yakutsk, and at length steamers carried the ivory to the market, up the great river.

In 1878 Nordenskiöld in the *Vega* traversed the Arctic Ocean north of Siberia, and was anxious to visit the ivory islands. He was informed of their wonderful wealth, and shortly before had discovered the bones and portions of the hide of a mammoth on the barren tundra of the Yenisei. The *Vega* neared the New Siberian Islands on August 28; but navigation was dangerous, owing to the shallowness of the sea—three to four fathoms only—and the floating icebergs. Liakoff's chief island was reached on August 30; but the enormous masses of ice which surrounded every part of the shore made a landing impossible. Still, although unable to examine the islands, Nordenskiöld obtained proof of their continued richness in

fossil ivory, for the steamer in which he ascended the Yenisei in 1875 carried more than one hundred mammoths' tusks; and he declares that Middendorf's estimate of the amount of fossil ivory sold every year in Northern Siberia is far too low. Nordenskiöld also dredged up, near the Liakoff Islands, portions of mammoths' tusks, confirming the belief that there is still a vast deposit of elephants' remains at the bottom of the sea around these islands.

A few years ago, most valuable scientific researches were carried on in these wonderful islands by Baron von Toll and Professor Bunge. These explorers carried on their investigations in 1886, Dr Bunge visiting the Liakoff group, while Von Toll explored the New Siberian Islands. The latter explorer examined the famous 'wood-hills' in New Siberia, and made a complete circuit of Kotelnoi in forty days, an undertaking which was very difficult, owing to the whole coast of the island being blocked with enormous masses of ice. From the northern point of Kotelnoi, Von Toll was fortunate enough to obtain a view of the unknown land which Sannikoff had seen eighty years ago from Kotelnoi and New Siberia. This island—which is called Sannikoff Land after its discoverer—has never yet been visited by Europeans, and lies—according to Von Toll's estimate—one hundred miles to the north of New Siberia. In Liakoff's Island, Dr Bunge found great quantities of bones of the mammoth, rhinoceros, musk-ox, and wild oxen, and this accumulation of the bones of so many animals proves how temperate the climate must have been formerly.

In 1889 news was received at St Petersburg that the body of a mammoth had been found in Northern Siberia, and Baron von Toll was once more sent into this desolate region to verify the discovery. He did not reach the spot, however—which was near the Svaiatoi Noss—until 1893, and was then too late to find anything but fragments of the skeleton and portions of the skin, which were covered with hair. From the Holy Cape, Von Toll went to one of the Liakoff Islands called Maloi, and found here complete fossil trees, fifteen feet in length. Elephants' bones abounded, showing that great trees grew at the time when mammoths and rhinoceroses wandered over these islands; and beneath were cliffs of solid ice. These ice-cliffs are common in the New Siberian Islands, and occur in many parts of the coast of Siberia; they are also found in Kotzebue Sound in North-western Alaska, and on them rests a layer of earth full of the bones of elephants and musk-oxen.

We are led to ask the question, Will Sannikoff Land, when explored, be found to be as full of fossil ivory as the New Siberian Islands? The answer will depend upon the depth of the sea to the north of New Siberia. All round the ivory islands, the sea is very shallow, averaging only from five to fifteen fathoms in depth; and if this shallowness should continue as far north as Sannikoff Land, then we may confidently expect that this hitherto untrudged island will be found to be rich in the tusks and teeth of elephants. But if the sea steadily

deepens to the north of New Siberia, so that the waters rapidly become of a great depth, there will be little chance of finding mammoths' remains in Sannikoff Land, because it will then be proved that the New Siberian Islands form what was the extreme northern point of Siberia in the days when the mammoth lived, and great forests grew where now the Polar Ocean rolls its icy waves.

What a marvellous contrast to present conditions does the imagination picture up in Northern Siberia, when the huge hairy mammoth, the woolly rhinoceros, and the musk-ox wandered over its plains, and browsed along by the banks of its majestic rivers! The climate was then comparatively genial, and its rolling uplands and wide-stretching plains were covered with dense forests and carpeted with verdant grass. The land stretched two hundred miles farther to the north than it does now, and the New Siberian Islands formed high mountains, looking over the Northern Ocean. On this long-vanished land vast herds of elephants, rhinoceroses, buffaloes, and wild horses lived peacefully and securely, for food was plentiful and carnivorous animals were few. What great convulsion of nature destroyed these myriads of gigantic beasts, and piled their bones in vast masses upon the islands of the Polar Sea? What cataclysm sank the verdant plains beneath the waves, and changed Northern Siberia into a waste and empty wilderness? And what catastrophe occurred on the land and in the sea which altered the climate of Northern Siberia from one of a genial, or at least temperate, character to one of awful cold and of Arctic severity?

We cannot fully answer these questions. It seems probable, however, that great floods of rushing water must have poured over these lands, and great invasions of the waters of the ocean must have inundated them. In these tremendous deluges, the elephants, rhinoceroses, and buffaloes were destroyed, and their carcasses were piled up in heaps in the places where they had congregated to take refuge from the rising waters. When these deluges subsided and the waters retired, the lands were covered with the remains of the drowned animals, and in some as yet unexplained manner the climate changed, and Northern Siberia, which was formerly a beautiful and verdant region, became an icy wilderness and a land of Death.

A PASSAGE IN A TRAMP.

By C. J. CUTCLIFFE HYNE.

'If you go from Mobile to Noo York City this weather to get the Queenstown boat from there, you'll be fried alive in the cars. You'd much better go home by long sea.'

'What! Train from here to New Orleans, and take the West Indian Pacific boat from there?'

'If you can afford to wait. But I warn you there are four of their steamers tied up alongside the levee this minute, and not one has a bale of cargo in her. Cotton in Louisiana is as dead as mud just now. And it may be a

fortnight before the first of them makes her clearance.'

'Too long a time for me: I must be home.'

'Then why not sail right from here? The *Tonga* goes to-morrow, and you can get passage on her, I've no doubt. Save a few dollars on it too. They won't starve you, either. She's a tramp, of course, but I guess you've been on worse.'

'I guess so,' said I; and in five minutes had been introduced to the *Tonga's* captain, and made the necessary financial arrangements with him. Afterwards we walked together and hunted up the British Consul, and went through the pleasing fiction of signing on the ship's register. Age had to be given, birthplace, and other matters, together with rating on last vessel, which happened to be that of Master. And then at the end of the line the Consul most kindly wrote my name, and I added X, my mark. My position was that of Purser, and there was also a statement to the effect that my remuneration for the run home was one shilling, coin of the British currency. It was all a pleasing fiction, which deceived no one, but it had to be gone through, because the *Tonga*, naturally holding no passenger certificate, rendered herself liable to heavy Board of Trade mulctings if she carried any one above and beyond her official crew. And in due time we dropped down the river under a pilot's care, and began steaming along the piles which mark the ship-channel through Mobile Bay.

The bay is more properly a lagoon, a great sea-lake shut in by woods of pine and cypress, and linking itself to the blue waters of the Mexican Gulf merely by a narrow pass. It is a good deal altered since Farragut gained his victory over the Confederate fleet there, for Fort Morgan is now merely a quarantine station, and the modern dredged channel did not then exist. But it is capable of further improvement. There is nominally twenty-eight feet of water in the man-made fairway beside the piles, and trusting to this, we steamed confidently down at ten knots, and got comfortably aground a mile from the lip of the deeper water.

There was no use in saying anything, though things were said. The skipper in particular was extremely moderate. He pitched his cigar high over the smoke stacks and said: 'My faith, you are a holy pilot,' and rang on the engines to full astern. But we had taken the ground on a falling tide, and the screw merely churned up yellow mud and sulphur-tainted effluvium; and after half-an-hour he gave it up, and came for rye-whisky and a palm-leaf fan in the chart-room. The pilot was left to his conscience, if he had one, and allowed to roam where he pleased in Coventry.

'He expected me to reel out ten minutes of curses, did that blessed pilot,' said the captain; 'and because I didn't, he feels lonely and

uncomfortable. The ignorant, cocksure, yellow-booted tailor! It costs somebody forty pounds for every day this steamboat's kept waiting.'

We did not stay long in the chart-room then, because the captain's steward came in to take up the carpet, which had been adorning the floor during the stay at Mobile. We went out into the burning sunshine of the bridge deck, and threw bottles overboard, and potted at them with the captain's revolver as they bobbed past with the current. This was a manœuvre executed not only for the fun of the thing, but also as a mild advertisement. It showed all who cared to see, that the captain was a perilously clean shot up to five-and-twenty yards. The crew had shown themselves to be a remarkably truculent lot on the trip out, and the hint might not be thrown away upon them. Afterwards, we descended to the main cabin, and ate pork and beans in our shirt sleeves.

As it turned out, the stranding was not without its uses to us. Three of the stoke-hole crew had bolted in Mobile, and we had not been able to fill their places. The native-born American is not sweet on the occupation of shovelling coals at four pounds a month, so long as the free-lunch counters of his great Republic will provide him gratis with at least one excellent meal per diem. But an incoming steamer hailed us as she swung past in the fairway, saying that she had stowaways on board, and asking if we would rid her of them. We consented with grace and delight, and she dropped an anchor and sent away a boat.

Her skipper—who knew ours—escorted the victims across the gap of yellow turbid water himself, and introduced them with austere sarcasm. They were two miserable-looking specimens: one a lad of seventeen in breeches and shirt, and no buttons on either; the other an unmistakable Tommy Atkins, with terror in his eye, and coal-grime on every other particle of his person. Recent history had been thorny for them. They had been routed out of corners when the steamer was well at sea, been forced to eat the buffets and contempt of an unimaginative second-mate, and then driven down with angular words into the region of coal and flame. Down in that abode of the condemned there was no chance for malingering, no break-off to indulge in *mal de mer*. Firemen and trimmers do not follow the profession of shovelling coals because they like it, but because circumstances (and usually the police) have jostled them into it with a force that cannot be fought against. They are the acknowledged pariahs of all the seas, driven by iron-fisted engineers from the North Country, and possessing—through this stress of circumstances—the tender mercies of a monkey-wrench. Consequently, the stowaway who comes down to recruit their forces, is a blessing sent from above; and if they take care to work him to the breaking strain, they are only acting according to their limited human instincts. That the poor wretch is working his passage without prospect of a copper in pay, is a detail which concerns them not. He belongs to no union; he is a man unclassified; a fellow of no account;

and his financial affairs appertain to himself alone. Man must look after himself, especially if he be of the stoking or trimming variety.

These two poor rogues who were transhipped to the *Tonga* had not only worked for a mere virtual recompense in the voyage out from Liverpool, but they had an excellent prospect of returning to the place whence they came on precisely similar terms. Their skipper dared not land them even if he had so wished. They had not passed the Health officer in the home port, and, by consequence, America judged them both poor and unclean, and would have none of them at any price whatever. Our chief, who was sent for by the skipper, looked upon them and grinned a sour and dubious smile. Then, by the divination of a penny, he apportioned them into watches, and recommended them to find their way below without delay. The Tommy seemed inclined to argue matters on the principle that he did not care to work as a slave's slave for nothing a day; but the chief's boot shot out like a catapult, and Mr Atkins went swiftly down the alleyway without further heckling.

The other vessel got her anchor and steamed away to where the piles became as black pin-dots on the glittering surface of the water; and then night came down like the turning out of a lamp. The stars were few, and struggled mistily out of a purple haze, but the noiseless summer lightning burned on all sides like little pinches of gunpowder.

The air was sodden with heat, and the night closed down on one in labouring pants. Below, it was unendurable. One lay in pyjamas on the bare planking of the bridge deck with shut eyes, and longed desperately for sleep. But the perspiration rolled down every limb in tickling rivulets, and the mosquitoes bit like dogs; and though one ached with weariness, oblivion would not come. The rustle of others in the pain of sleeplessness sounded on every side, and from time to time some poor wretch, goaded past endurance, would rise to his feet with a jerk, and, with head thrown back, would pitch hard oaths at the night which was so cruelly tormenting him.

Years passed before the day came. But when the tide reached the top of its flood, the dawn showed in a spirt of pink above the line of tree-tops which walled out the east, and as the sulphur-coloured disc of the sun leaped up in a hurry of waking, our steamer slid off her bed into the deep water of the channel.

We passed out between Dauphin Island and the quarantine station at Fort Morgan; and when the *Tonga* lifted to the first blue swells of the Mexican Gulf, that erring pilot left us with a wave of the hand, and pulled off to his schooner, we on our part wishing much to see his face no more. In two hours the low sand-dunes of Alabama were dropped below the curve of the sea, and only a broken palisade of tree-trunks ran across the glistening water, to tell that somewhere was a coast-line.

The *Tonga* had rounded the Dry Tortugas by nightfall, and, with the light of the next day, was standing north up Florida Channel in the three-knot sluice of the Gulf Stream. Flying-fish got out of the water, and ran like silver

rats along the surface. Yellow tangles of weed eddied past, and jumped and broke in the cream of the wake. On the starboard hand, not twenty miles away, were the unseen reefs of the Bahamas. To port, a screw-pile light-house straddled over the water, to tell that Florida was only a fathom deep under foot, but a dozen miles west before one could walk upon it dry-shod.

From the steamer's iron foredeck the men who were rated as O.S. and A.B. were wheeling away in barrows the coals which were stacked there, and tipping them into the bunkers. On the upper bridge the mate was going over the iron railings with a white paint-brush; and the third-mate—who was standing the watch in carpet slippers and a pith helmet—was giving a lick of oak varnish to the woodwork. The boatswain and a quartermaster were unbending the bridge deck awning; and the skipper was reading *Shirley* in a cane-chair under the lee of the fiddle, and grumbling because there was little tale and much padding. The full swing of the tramp's sea-routine was well on the move. The last mosquito from the engine-room was dead.

We were cut down to twenty-seven tons of coal a day, and the pace was not as a rule delirious. When the wind and the Gulf Stream both gave us a pluck, and the noon report said thirteen knots for the previous twenty-four hours, the skipper gave me rye whisky at eight bells, and we toasted his 'old woman' (who kept a lodging-house at Llandudno). It is true this knottage only happened twice; but the morning observation was not missed if we had barely reeled in a wretched ten, only the sentiment was changed to 'Well, let's hope it's better to-morrow.'

It was always well to be cheerful about the run, because there were so many other things to distress one. The skipper's car is the common dump for all the graver complaints of ship-board. Once, two of the deck-hands brought him up a mess-kid full of meat which stank. He admitted the odour: he could not well do otherwise; but he told them *he* couldn't alter it. They could either eat or go without. They were accustomed to a precious sight worse ashore. Very often in their own domestic kennels they were without a bone of any sort or description. 'I never did see such fellers as you,' said the skipper; 'always grumbling; never contented. If I gave you baked angel to your dinner, you'd have a complaint 'cause the stuffin' wasn't right. Always grumbling.'

Another time it was the donkeyman bewailing 'pains in his inside.' 'Well, if you've got pains, you shouldn't have,' quoth the skipper. 'I've physicked you four days handrunning now, out of different bottles each time, and if there's any merit in drugs, the pains should have gone. Get to your work.—This comes,' he commented afterwards, 'of my being good-natured. If I'd knocked off his dose the first day, there'd have been no more of it. But an old sailor nowadays'll lap up medicine like he would liquor.'

The skipper was Welsh, with a profound distrust for all other nationalities. The mate and the third-mate were undoubtedly Welsh,

also; and the second-mate said he was Welsh, and might have been. The engineers were Scots to a man, and told one so in confidence, as though it were a matter of news. The firemen and trimmers were made up of English and Irish sweepings exclusively. The deck hands spoke all the tongues of Pentecost which had found lodgment in Europe. They had a great notion of their rights, all of them, and it took a man with a large hand to rule all so that the routine went on without break, and yet keep himself to windward of the law when he got back to shore. Still the *Tonga's* skipper did that, and did it well. He was a man who stood four feet five in his carpet slippers, and was quite willing to tackle anything that wore whiskers. He had a most gristly reputation at the back of him, and traded on it to the maintenance of entire peace.

Going eastward home from the Banks of Newfoundland, we picked up heavy gales from the northward and north-west, which made the steamer labour heavily. The iron lower decks were incessantly full of churning green and white water, and often she took it clear over the canvas dodgers of the upper bridge. There were molasses casks in the forehold, and these got bilged, and their contents had to be pumped overboard. When her rust-streaked flank heaved up to a sea, one could see the sweet stuff pouring out in a solid chocolate-coloured stream.

In the middle of this hurly-burly the engines chose to break down. When the jar came, the skipper and I were sitting wedged into angles of the chart-room. I looked up inquiringly. He yawned, and asked if I had any cigarette papers. We lay there in the trough for four mortal hours, rolling through forty-two degrees; and as he did not see fit to discuss the subject, neither did I. We smoked on, and the pile of cigarette ends grew in the wash-basin. Then the engines rumbled on again, and the *Tonga's* head bucked into the seas, and her screw raced cheerily between whiles. We had contracted a five-foot list to starboard through the shifting of various items in the cargo, and we carried that list with us into the dock at Liverpool.

'H'm,' commented the skipper. 'Water on the boil again, and off we go. We're loaded high—and—a forty-five degree roll means "over." But there was no use my stirring out of here. She won't bring up head to sea with a mizzen trysail, because I've seen her fail at that before. I couldn't have done any mortal good down in the engineer's shop; and if I'd gone out on deck and messed about, the hands would have thought there was danger, and got excited. A captain's everybody on an old windjammer; on a steamboat he isn't; and because I knew that, I stayed in here.'

The man who bemoaned the gale principally was the mate. The paint of the ship was his special care, and the scouring seas had cleaned away the entire coat which he had given everything since the coals had been cleared from the lower decks. But the mate was a Welshman of energy. He got out his cans afresh; and because there were not brushes enough to go round, he dealt out wads of waste to some; and ten of us worked at the bulwarks

and the derricks and the winches till they were all reeled in seemly drab and green.

We were still painting when we made our number off Bray Head; but we finished off the Tuskar; and when the Mersey pilot came on board at Point Lynas, all was dry and spruce. Other preparations had been made also. The captain's steward had put down the carpet in the chart-room. The captain himself had taken his false teeth from the drawer where they usually travelled, and stepped them in place. And another official on the ship's register bent a tall, stiff white collar, the first for many unbuttoned weeks.

It was cold and foggy in the estuary, and we had to slow down after we passed the North-west Ship, and one was reminded of another fog we had met off Cape Hatteras. There, too, the engines were rung off to 'Half ahead,' so that the skipper might save his ticket if anything happened. But word had been sent down to the engine-room, and the throttle-valve was not touched. That was one of the two days we made a consecutive thirteen knots.

THE TARANTULA-KILLER.

THE Tarantula is a large burrowing spider which dwells in a shaft-like hole it sinks in the earth. Its appearance is most repulsive, and inspires any one who examines it with a feeling of profound disgust. As it stands, it frequently covers an area as large as the palm of a man's hand; and over its body and legs there bristles a thick covering of red-brown hair. It may be said that its home is in many lands; but its greatest size is attained in tropical and semi-tropical countries. In the south of Europe, along the Mediterranean coast, it has been known for centuries as the 'Mad Spider,' because the symptoms following its bite are similar to those of hydrophobia. There the peasantry, especially those of Sicily, regard it with mingled feelings of hate and superstitious dread. They will tell you that the only chance of recovery from its bite is for the patient to commence dancing without delay, and to continue until he falls senseless from exhaustion—a remedy which, ridiculous as it seems, has something to be said in its favour, when we know that the one danger to be overcome is the tendency to sleep. As long as this can be successfully avoided, the patient is in no danger; but if he gives way, and allows himself to fall into a stupor, then he is likely to succumb, even from the comparatively mild poison of the European variety.

It is in the tropical countries of South America, however, where all forms of insect and vegetable life attain their highest development, that this great spider is most deadly. And farther north, in the provinces of Mexico, where it is quite as numerous, its poison is only a slight degree less dangerous. There we have met it everywhere, and studied its habits. In the orange orchards, the vineyards, and the open prairies, we have watched it attack enemies

many times its own size, and marvelled at the ease with which it overcame them. Even its own kind are not exempt from its fierce onslaught, and we remember once seeing a pair of them meet on the upturned root of a fig-tree and fight a duel to the death—the death of both. Of man it seems to have no fear whatever, and will attack without hesitation either his hand or foot, if they come within striking distance. In doing so, it stands upon its four hind-legs. It opens wide its enormous fangs until the mandibles protrude in a straight line from its face, then, with all the muscular force it is capable of, launches itself forward, sinking them, with a vicious thrust, deep into the flesh of its enemy.

Though it burrows a passage in the ground like the trap-door spider, this is its only point of similarity to that industrious tribe. It does not line the walls of its domicile with silk, as they do, at least not to the same extent; nor does it construct the same ingenious device with which they close the entrance to their underground dwellings and bar the way to any possible intruders. Perhaps it is because it feels secure in its own might, that it disdains any such artifice. At all events, there is a marked contrast between the tarantula and trap-door spider in this respect, that while the latter, on the approach of an unknown danger, quickly retires to its domicile, closing the door behind it, the tarantula no sooner hears an unusual noise than he boldly sallies forth to investigate the cause.

Yet, notwithstanding all its great courage and pugnacity, there is one enemy the sound of whose coming throws it into paroxysms of fear. This enemy, of which it has such an instinctive dread, is a large wasp, known as the 'Tarantula-killer.' It has a bright blue body, nearly two inches long, and wings of a golden hue. As it flies here and there in the sunlight, glittering like a flash of fire, one moment resting on a leaf, the next on a granite boulder, it keeps up an incessant buzzing, which is caused by the vibration of its wings. No sooner does the tarantula hear this than he trembles with fear, for well he knows the fate in store for him when once his mortal foe perceives his whereabouts. This it soon does, and hastens to the attack. At first, it is content with flying in circles over its intended victim. Gradually it approaches nearer and nearer. At last, when it is within a few inches, the tarantula rises upon his hind-legs and attempts to grapple with his foe, but without success. Like a flash, the giant wasp is on its back. The deadly fangs have been avoided. The next instant a fearful sting penetrates deep into the spider's body. Its struggles almost cease. A sudden paralysis creeps over it, and it staggers, helpless like a drunken man, first to one side, then to the other. These symptoms, however, are only of short duration. While they last, the wasp, but a few inches away, awaits the result; nor does it have to wait long. A few seconds, and all sign of life has disappeared from the tarantula; the once powerful legs curl up beneath its body, and it rolls over dead.

Then takes place one of those strange incidents which illustrate the perfect adaptation

to circumstances, everywhere so remarkable in the economy of the insect world. The wasp seizes hold of the now prostrate spider, and with little apparent effort, drags it to a hole in the ground. Therein it completely buries it with earth, after having first deposited in its back an egg, which in course of time changes into a grub, and lives upon the carcass in which it was born. This grub in a short while becomes another tarantula wasp, thus adding one more to the ranks of the enemy of the spider race.

The amount of slaughter which these large wasps inflict upon the tarantulas is almost incredible, and it is noticed that those to which the greatest destruction is due are the females. It can only be realised when it is known that though the female deposits but one egg in each spider, she has a large number to get rid of, each one of which she provides with a home, and its grub with future sustenance at the expense of the life of a spider.

From the powerful character of the tarantula wasp's sting, it may be inferred that they are dangerous to human beings. But this is not so. It never annoys them unless teased. Without a doubt, it is man's friend, not his enemy, and much would dwellers in Mexico regret its absence were it destroyed. Though much is known of and has been written about the dreaded tarantula itself, but little is ever heard of the tarantula wasp. Perhaps this is not to be wondered at, when we notice on all sides how frequently an injury or damage is remembered, but how easily forgotten is a service or kindness, whether they be due to our little friends of the insect world, or to those we have in the greater world around us.

THE UNSEEN.

When eyes are bright with hope, the skies are blue,

The seas are mother-o'-pearl, the world is fair;
Sunshine falls sweet on drops of diamond dew,
And fairies dwell in flower-bells everywhere.

When eyes are dim with tears, the skies are gray,
The seas are foaming floods, the world is cold;
Sad mists creep down and shadow all the way,
And every face we meet seems strangely old.

But when the eyes are closed to outward sights
In Sleep's dear Dreamland, glories meet their gaze;
Visions of hope-filled noons and love-filled nights,
Of light aye radiant, made of rainbow-rays.

Then, when they look within, the realms of Thought
Lie all outspread—what has been, what shall be;
Mountain and plain into right focus brought.
'The Unseen,' say you? Nay! what we best see!

The inward sight is true, and clear, and strong;
Age dims it not; no blindness comes with tears;
For Time is short, Eternity is long,
And souls are made for æons, not for years.

MARION.

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SOME MEMORIES OF BOOKS, AUTHORS, AND EVENTS.

FIFTY years ago, Edinburgh was still at the height of its literary fame, although some of its brightest stars had passed away. Scott, Hogg, and Galt were dead; but De Quincey, Professor Wilson, Lord Jeffrey, and a host of others, still shed their light on the literary world. The *Edinburgh Review*, *Tait's* and *Blackwood's Magazines* were then at the zenith of their reputation, and were contributed to by the greatest literary geniuses of the age. In *Some Memories of Books, Authors, and Events*, by James Bertram, author of the well-known *Harvest of the Sea*, we have many reminiscences of this golden age. Mr Bertram's youth was cast in these good old times; and owing to his connection with *Tait's Magazine*, in his position of Manager to Mr Tait, he came in personal contact with many of the 'lions' of the day. *Tait's* then numbered among its contributors Thomas De Quincey, Joseph Hume, Richard Cobden, John Hill Burton, Mrs Howitt, Miss Mitford, and a great many others of equal celebrity. Of all these, the author's reminiscences of De Quincey are by far the most interesting. This is owing, no doubt, to his having had frequent personal intercourse with the Opium-eater, and to his having afterwards been on some footing of intimacy with him. De Quincey was then resident in Edinburgh, and a very frequent contributor to *Tait's*, although some of his contributions were never published. This was owing to the editor's (Mrs Johnstone's) opinion that it was unadvisable to insert an article from him in every number of the Magazine, as tending to make his communications commonplace. As these were never returned, there is some probability of their being still in existence.

De Quincey had odd ways sometimes of sending in his copy. One afternoon a policeman walked into *Tait's* establishment with a packet of copy.

'Who gave you this?' asked Mr Tait. 'It was my neighbour, sir, at the North Bridge.'

'Who gave it to him?'

'It was his neighbour, sir.'

'And where did he get it?'

'Oh, he got it from the little man that makes the fine speeches, and lives down yonder, sir,' was the reply.

On another occasion, De Quincey walked into a public-house close to the shop and begged the landlord to take charge of some loose sheets of copy and give them to Mr Tait the next day. 'I ask this favour of you,' said De Quincey, 'as that gentleman's place of business is closed. I had hoped to be here two hours ago, but have been unexpectedly detained by holding a prolonged conversation with a talkative friend.'

Another story is told by a young actor employed at one of the Edinburgh theatres. He was in the Queen's Park one day practising a back-fall which he had to do on the stage, when he was accosted by a little gentleman with a divine face. 'I think you will do it very effectually,' he said; 'but you must guard your head properly, otherwise you might give it a bad knock on the boards; the stage, I venture to hope you are aware, is so different from this soft substance.' The actor was struck with the politeness of the little man, and more so when he received an invitation to accompany him to his lodgings and have some refreshment. As they were entering, the servant addressed the gentleman as Mr De Quincey; and the actor, who knew him by reputation, felt proud of his attentions. De Quincey produced a bottle of brandy, and, with many profuse apologies for the absence of a glass, half filled a teacup, filling it up with water, and proffered it to his guest. Then came the grand object of all this. De Quincey asked him if, on his way to the theatre, 'he would do him the great favour to carry up to town a small packet of much value, and have it sent to Mr

Tait's place of business by a porter from the Register House. "Circumstances over which I have no control," added the Opium-eater, "and into which I need not enter—nor do I consider they would be of interest to you—preclude my going up to town for a few days."

The packet was duly taken and delivered. The 'circumstances over which he had no control' were the curtailment of his personal liberty. Poor De Quincey was then living at Holyrood 'in sanctuary,' that refuge of persecuted debtors, and his perambulations were perforce mainly confined to the Queen's Park.

De Quincey had a great partiality for tripe, and there were a few select taverns, notably the 'Guildford Arms' in West Register Street, which he was in the habit of frequenting for the purpose of indulging in this simple luxury. If at any time he happened to be 'lost,' he was pretty sure to be found at one of them. But this partiality was bred largely of necessity, for, as he said once to Mr Tait's housekeeper, 'the state of my stomach, which I may tell you is a perpetual source of woe to me, will prevent my eating flesh meats of the kind you mention [blackfaced mutton and moorfowl]. If, therefore, you could procure a portion of tripe, and stew it for me, as also a pudding of the batter or custard kind, I should indeed be grateful to you.'

In money matters he was very careless, and, perhaps in consequence, never carried much money in his pocket at a time. On one occasion he returned a cheque to Mr Tait, telling him that two pounds were all that he required at that time. This 'shortness' placed him in an amusing predicament once. One morning, as Mr Tait's shop was being opened, De Quincey drove up in a cab, and thus addressed one of the apprentices: 'I am Mr De Quincey, and I presume that you are one of the young gentlemen who assist Mr Tait in conducting his business. I am at the moment much embarrassed for want of a sum of money; the difficulty will not, however, I can assure you, be permanent; but it is in the meantime most urgent.'

The apprentice anxiously asked how much he required, thinking perhaps a five-pound note. However, it happened to be only sixpence, which he wanted to make up his cab fare, being so much short. The sixpence was joyfully tendered; and after thanking his benefactor most effusively for his great politeness, he drove off.

Fifty years ago, Sir Walter Scott still lived in the memory of his personal friends, and fresh anecdotes were constantly being told of him by those who had known him well. Not so well known, however, is one trait of his character: no man was more careful than he of his personal dignity. That he was 'hail, fellow, well met' with the players in the stage adaptations of his works is apocryphal. On one occasion a well-known Scottish actor, of whom Sir Walter had taken friendly notice, asked him for a few letters of introduction on the occasion of his going to London. Sir Walter declined to give them, only softening the refusal by saying, 'I have written to my friends about you.' At a dinner party where the great man was a guest,

a young gentleman called out: 'Pleasure of wine with you, Scott!' Sir Walter looked fixedly at him, but took no further notice. Unless Sir Walter condescended to be familiar first, it was not safe to be familiar with him.

A book that made a great sensation half a century ago was the *Vestiges of Creation*. The mystery at first attached to the authorship of this book gave rise to many curious and amusing scenes. A bore was one day in Mr Tait's shop holding forth with all his might on the *Vestiges*, and declaring that Robert Chambers was no more the author of the book than he was. 'He write such a book! It's not in him. He's the most over-rated literary man I ever knew.' A lady happened to come in and overhear this tirade. On perceiving her, Mr Tait said to her: 'How do you do, Mrs Chambers?' The bore disappeared with great precipitation, both Mrs Chambers and Mr Tait being greatly amused at the situation.

There was one attempt to appropriate the credit of the authorship, unrivalled for consummate impudence. There was offered for publication to several Edinburgh publishers the manuscript of a pamphlet bearing the title, '*A Word to my Critics*, by the Author, of the *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*.' As Mr Bertram remarks, it is charitable to suppose that the man who wrote it was a lunatic.

All kinds of persons were named as the probable authors of the book, and some of these evinced no desire to repudiate the honour. Some, indeed, smiled and smirked their friends, and even themselves, into the belief that they had something to do with it. Although the authorship was kept a strict secret, many suspected, even from the first, that Robert Chambers was the author.

Mr Bertram thus tells the story of his first encounter with William and Robert Chambers. 'One Saturday afternoon in the summer of 1838, whilst crossing Bruntsfield Links on my way home, endeavouring, as I walked over the grass, to read a story in one of the volumes of *Chambers's Journal*, then of a somewhat unwieldy size, I was stopped by two gentlemen, one of whom accosted me in kindly fashion and asked what I was reading. "It is *Chambers's Journal*, sir," was of course my reply.

"Yes, I can see that," said the gentleman. "But what is the name of the story you are reading?"

"It is about George MacQueen, the apprentice who was flogged with the cook's frying-pan for not delivering it promptly," said I.

"Then the other gentleman spoke. "Are you learning a business?" he asked; to which I answered that I was learning to be a bookseller with Mr Tait of Princes Street.

"A capital place. Have you been there long?"

"No, sir; only ten months."

"Just so. Now, can you tell me the size of that book, what it is called in the shop?" was the next question.

'I described it as an oblong quarto, or a quarto in folio shape—a reply which both gentlemen, judging from their looks, seemed to think was to the point.'

'My examiner then asked my name, who my

father was, and where I lived. When I had made suitable replies, I was allowed to go, the more pleasant-looking of the two saying: "We know Mr Tait very well; you are in a good place, and have an excellent master."

'I wondered who these gentlemen were—the one bright and smiling, the other presenting a graver cast of countenance; but no long time elapsed ere I discovered their identity. They proved to be William and Robert Chambers, the conductors of the periodical they found me reading.'

Mrs Johnstone, the editor of *Tait's*, besides being a novelist and critic of some ability, was the author of the celebrated *Meg Dods' Cook and Housewife's Manual*. A lady, a friend of hers very likely, summed up her character thus: 'She writes very good novels; but I must say, although she has written *Meg Dods*, she keeps a very bad cook, and never gives her friends a morsel they can eat. It's not quite so easy to teach a cook as to write about cooking.'

Mr Johnstone is said to have helped his wife by handing her books of reference and mending her pens; but this is very probably ill-natured, as Mr Johnstone himself was a man of ability.

Would-be contributors and authors were as troublesome then as they are now, and Mr Bertram tells some amusing stories of them, one of which is worth repeating. One day Mr Tait's premises were invaded by a family, consisting of father, mother, son, and two daughters, bearing a ponderous manuscript volume of poems—'All written by ourselves,' as the mother said, in a joyous key. The title was 'A Poem for Every Day in the Year, and Two for Sundays, by Mr and Mrs Mullingar and their Sons and Daughters.' Mr Tait was non-plussed, and the mother seemed inclined to sit down and await his decision; however, a visitor opportunely arriving, they said they would call again. They did; but the publisher was 'not at home;' and they were turned over to Mr Bertram, who assured Mrs Mullingar, with his best air of wisdom, that poetry never paid.

'And yet,' said the lady in a reproachful tone, 'Sir Walter Scott made thousands of pounds by his poems.'

'Yes; and so did Byron and Moore,' chimed in one of the daughters, with a severe look, 'and other poets too. Look at Rogers!'

In vain was Mrs Mullingar assured that these were exceptional circumstances; she was confident *their* book would sell. Mr Bertram at last got out of the scrape by suggesting that, as Mr Tait was unwilling to publish books of poetry, they should try Blackwood. He does not say whether Blackwood was duly grateful, or whether he published the book; but, as it has never been heard of, it is very probable he did not.

Mr Bertram has many reminiscences of minor Edinburgh celebrities, some of them very interesting, although a few of the characters are only locally known. Of one of these, the Rev. Dr Dickson of St Cuthbert's, some good anecdotes are told. 'Weel, Jenny,' said the Doctor to one of his parishioners who had a common failing, 'can you tell me where all drunkards will go to?' 'Oh, 'deed can I, Doctor,' said the woman; 'they will just gang to the nearest

public-house.' Another story was of a parishioner who knew she was dying, but who persisted in worrying herself about things of this world. At last, in order to pacify her, her husband said: 'Maggie, my woman, dinna fash yoursel' about worldly matters: listen to the minister about your hinner end, and as sure as death, I'll gie ye a grand funeral!'

George Combe, author of the *Constitution of Man*, was a friend of Mr Tait, but ultimately they fell out over phrenology, the former being a firm believer in it, while the latter was a scoffer. Mr Tait took occasion to give his views on the subject in the Magazine, and this so disgusted Combe, that he did not send a copy of his book on North America for review until it was formally asked for. Mr Combe married a niece of Mrs Siddons, and it is said that a clause in the marriage contract provided that he would 'become a hearer in any church where she could find the most sense and the least doctrine preached.'

And lastly, a few words in regard to Mr Bertram himself, who was by no means an obscure figure in Edinburgh literary life. When *Tait's Magazine* was given up in 1846, Mr Bertram, who was then about twenty-two years old, was thrown upon his own resources. He tried the stage for a while; but after three years, finding he could not make a living on it, he returned to Edinburgh and engaged in journalism. He contributed to *Chambers's Journal*, *Hogg's Instructor*, and other periodicals. He was appointed editor of the *North Briton* in 1855, one of the first penny newspapers, and afterwards edited and conducted various other newspapers. He was a prolific 'all-round' writer, and one of the earliest disciples of the 'New Journalism' school. He took up the study of fisheries, on which he was a recognised authority, and his best known work is the *Harvest of the Sea*, a book which has led to increased knowledge and a much better understanding of fishery economy. Mr Bertram died in 1892, before his latest work, his *Memories*, had been given to the public.

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

CHAPTER I. (continued).

Now Count Antonio was a big man and heavy, so that his horse was weighed down by the twofold burden on its back; and looking behind him, he perceived that Robert's company drew nearer and yet nearer. And Tommasino looking also, said, 'I doubt they are too many for us, for you have the lady in your arms. We shall not get clear of the hills.'

Then Antonio drew in his horse a little, and letting the bridle fall, took the Lady Lucia in both his arms and kissed her, and having thus done, lifted her and set her on Tommasino's horse. 'Thank God,' said he, 'that you are no heavier than a feather.'

'Yet two feathers may be too much,' said Tommasino.

'Ride on,' said Antonio. 'I will check them

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for a time, so that you shall come safe to the outset of the hill.'

Tommasino obeyed him; and Antonio, riding more softly now, placed himself between Tommasino and the pursuers. Tommasino rode on with the swooning lady in his arms; but his face was grave and troubled, for, as he had said, two feathers may be overmuch, and Robert's company rode well and swiftly.

'If Antonio can stop them, it is well,' said he; 'but if not, I shall not reach the hills;' and he looked with no great love on the unhappy lady, for it seemed like enough that Antonio would be slain for her sake, and Tommasino prized him above a thousand damsels. Yet he rode on, obedient.

But Antonio's scheme had not passed undetected by Robert de Beauregard; and Robert being a man of guile and cunning, swore aloud an oath that though he died himself, yet Tommasino should not carry off Lucia. Therefore he charged his men one and all to ride after Tommasino and bring back Lucia, leaving him alone to contend with Antonio; and they were not loth to obey, for it was little to their taste or wish to surround Antonio and kill him. Thus when the company came within fifty yards of Antonio, the ranks suddenly parted, five diverged to the right, and four to the left, passing Antonio in sweeping curves, so far off that he could not reach them, while Robert alone rode straight at him. Antonio, perceiving the stratagem, would fain have ridden again after Tommasino; but Robert was hard upon him, and he was in peril of being thrust through the back as he fled. So he turned and faced his enemy. But although Robert had sworn so boldly before his men, his mind was not what he had declared to them, and he desired to meet Antonio alone, not that he might fight a fair fight with him, but in order treacherously to deceive him—a thing he was ashamed to do before his comrades. Coming up then to Antonio, he reined in his horse, crying, 'My lord, I bring peace from His Highness.'

Antonio wondered to hear him; yet, when Robert, his sword lying untouched in its sheath, leaped from his horse and approached him, he dismounted also; and Robert said to him: 'I have charged them to injure neither the lady Lucia nor your cousin by so much as a hair; for the Duke bids me say that he will not constrain the lady.'

'Is she then given to me?' cried Antonio, his face lighting up with a marvellous eagerness.

'Nay, not so fast,' answered Robert with subtle cunning. 'The Duke will not give her to you now. But he will exact from you and from me alike an oath not to molest—no, not to see her, for three months, and then she shall choose as she will between us.'

While he spoke this fair speech, he had been drawing nearer to Antonio; and Antonio, not yet convinced of his honesty, drew back a pace. Then Robert let go hold of his horse, unbuckled his sword, flung it on the ground, and came to Antonio with outstretched hands. 'Behold!' said he; 'I am in your mercy, my lord. If you do not believe me, slay me.'

Antonio looked at him with searching wistful eyes; he hated to war against the Duke, and his heart was aflame with the hope that dwelt for him in Robert's words; for he did not doubt but that neither three months, nor three years, nor three hundred years, could change his lady's love.

'You speak fair, sir,' said he; 'but what warrant have I?'

'And, save your honour, what warrant have I, who stand here unarmed before you?' asked Robert.

For a while Antonio pondered; then he said, 'My lord, I must crave your pardon for my doubt; but the matter is so great that to your word I dare not trust; but if you will ride back with your men and pray the Duke to send me a promise under his own hand, to that I will trust. And meanwhile Tommasino, with the lady Lucia, shall abide in a safe place, and I will stay here, awaiting your return; and, if you will, let two of your men stay with me.'

'Many a man, my lord,' returned Robert, 'would take your caution in bad part. But let it be so.—Come, we will ride after my company.' And he rose and caught Antonio's horse by the bridle and brought it to him; 'Mount, my lord,' said he, standing by.

Antonio, believing either that the man was true or that his treachery—if treachery there were in him—was foiled, and seeing him to all seeming unarmed, save for a little dagger in his belt which would hardly suffice to kill a man, and was more a thing of ornament than use, set his foot in the stirrup and prepared to mount. And in so doing he turned his back on Robert de Beauregard. The moment for which that wicked man had schemed and lied was come. Still holding Antonio's stirrup with one hand, he drew, swift as lightning, from under his cloak, a dagger different far from the toy in his belt—short, strong, broad, and keen. And that moment had been Antonio's last, had it not chanced that on the instant Robert drew the dagger, the horse started a pace aside, and Antonio, taken unawares, stumbled forward and came near falling on the ground. His salvation lay in that stumble, for Robert, having put all his strength into the blow, and then striking, not Antonio, but empty air, in his turn staggered forward, and could not recover himself before Antonio turned round, a smile at his own unweariness on his lips.

Then he saw the broad keen knife in the hand of Robert. Robert breathed quickly, and glared at him, but did not rush on him. He stood glaring, the knife in his hands, his parted lips displaying grinning teeth. Not a word spoke Antonio, but he drew his sword, and pointed where Robert's sword lay on the grass. The traitor, recognising the grace that allowed him to take his sword, shamed, it may be, by such return for his own treachery, in silence lifted and drew it; and, withdrawing to a distance from the horses, which quietly cropped the grass, the two faced one another.

Calm and easy were the bearing and the air of Count Antonio—if the pictures of him that live drawn in the words of those who knew him be truthful—calm and easy ever was he, save when he fought; but then it seemed as

though there came upon him a sort of fury akin to madness, or (as the ancients would have fabled) to some inspiration from the God of War, which transformed him utterly, imbuing him with a rage and rushing impetuosity. Here lay his danger when matched with such a swordsman as was little Tommasino; but for all that, few cared to meet him, some saying that, though they called themselves as brave as others, yet they seemed half appalled when Count Antonio set upon them; for he fought as though he must surely win, and as though God were with him. Thus now he darted upon Robert de Beauregard, in seeming recklessness of receiving thrusts himself, yet ever escaping them by his sudden resource and dexterity, and ever himself attacking, leaving no space to take breath, and bewildering the other's practised skill by the dash and brilliance of his assault. And it may be also that the darkness, which was now falling fast, hindered Robert the more, for Antonio was famed for the keenness of his eyes by night. Be these things as they may, in the very moment when Robert pricked Antonio in the left arm and cried out in triumph on his stroke, Antonio leaped on him and drove his sword through his heart; and Robert, with the sword yet in him, fell to the ground, groaning. And when Antonio drew forth the sword, the man at his feet died. Thus, if it be God's will, may all traitors perish.

Antonio looked round the plain; but it grew darker still, and even his sight did not avail for more than some threescore yards. Yet he saw a dark mass on his right, distant, as he judged, that space or more. Rapidly it moved; surely it was a group of men galloping, and Antonio stood motionless regarding them. But they swept on, not turning whither he stood; and he, unable to tell what they did, whether they sought him or whither they went, watched them till they faded away in the darkness; and then, leaving Robert where he lay, he mounted his horse and made speed towards the hills, praying that there he should find his cousin and the lady Lucia, escaped from the pursuit of the Duke's men. Yet had he known what those dimly discerned riders bore with them, he would have been greatly moved at all costs and at every hazard to follow after them, and seek to overtake them before they came to the city.

On he rode towards the hills, quickly, yet not so hastily but that he scanned the ground as he went so well as the night allowed him. The moon was risen now, and to see was easier. When he had covered a distance of some two miles, he perceived something lying across his path. Bending to look, he found it to be the corpse of a horse: he leaped down and bent over it. It was the horse Tommasino had ridden: it was hamstrung, and its throat had been cut. Antonio, seeing it, in sudden apprehension of calamity, cried aloud; and to his wonder his cry was answered by a voice which came from a clump of bushes fifty yards on the right. He ran hastily to the spot, thinking nothing of his own safety nor of anything else than what had befallen his friends; and under the shelter of the bushes two men of the

Duke's Guard, their horses tethered near them, squatted on the ground, and, between, Tommasino lay full length on the ground. His face was white, his eyes closed, and a bloody bandage was about his head. One of the two by him had forced his lips open, and was giving him to drink from a bottle. The other sprang up on sight of Antonio, and laid a hand to his sword-hilt.

'Peace, peace!' said Antonio. 'Is the lad dead?' 'He is not dead, my lord, but he is sore hurt.'

'And what do you here with him? And how did you take him?'

'We came up with him here, and surrounded him; and while some of us held him in front, one cut the hamstrings of his horse from behind; and the horse fell, and with the horse the lady and the young lord. He was up in an instant; but as he rose, the Lieutenant struck him on the head and dealt him the wound you see. Then he could fight no more; and the Lieutenant took the lady, and with the rest rode back towards the city, leaving us charged with the duty of bringing the young lord in so soon as he was in a state to come with us.'

'They took the lady?'

'Even so, my lord.'

'And why did they not seek for me?'

The fellow—Martolo was his name—smiled grimly; and his comrade, looking up, answered: 'Maybe they did not wish to find you, my lord. They had been eight to one, and could not have failed to take you in the end.'

'Ay, in the end,' said Martolo, laughing now. 'Nor,' added he, 'had the Lieutenant such great love for Robert de Beauregard that he would rejoice to deliver you to death for his sake, seeing that you are a Monte Velluto and he a rascally!'

'Peace! He is dead,' said Count Antonio.

'You have killed him?' they cried with one voice.

'He attacked me in treachery, and I have killed him,' answered Antonio.

For a while there was silence. Then Antonio asked, 'The lady—did she go willingly?'

'She was frightened and dazed by her fall, my lord; she knew not what she did nor what they did to her. And the Lieutenant took her in front of him, and, holding her with all gentleness, so rode towards the city.'

'God keep her,' said Antonio.

'Amen, poor lady!' said Martolo, doffing his cap.

Then Antonio whistled to his horse, which came to his side; with a gesture he bade the men stand aside, and they obeyed him; and he gathered Tommasino in his arms. 'Hold my stirrup, that I may mount,' said he; and still they obeyed. But when they saw him mounted, with Tommasino seated in front of him, Martolo cried, 'But, my lord, we are charged to take him back and deliver him to the Duke.'

'And if you do?' asked Antonio.

Martolo made a movement as of one tying a noose.

'And if you do not?' asked Antonio.

'Then we had best not show ourselves alive to the Duke.'

Antonio looked down on them. 'To whom bear you allegiance?' said he.

'To His Highness the Duke,' they answered, uncovering as they spoke.

'And to whom besides?' asked Antonio.

'To none besides,' they answered, wondering.

'Ay, but you do,' said he. 'To One who wills not that you should deliver to death a lad who has done but what his honour bade him.'

'God's counsel God knows,' said Martolo. 'We are dead men if we return alone to the city. You had best slay us yourself, my lord, if we may not carry the young lord with us.'

'You are honest lads, are you not?' he asked. 'By your faces, you are men of the city.'

'So are we, my lord; but we serve the Duke in his Guard for reward.'

'I love the men of the city as they love me,' said Antonio. 'And a few pence a day should not buy a man's soul as well as his body.'

The two men looked at one another in perplexity. The fear and deference in which they held Antonio forbade them to fall on him; yet they dared not let him take Tommasino. Then, as they stood doubting, he spoke low and softly to them: 'When he that should give law and uphold right deals wrong, and makes white black and black white, it is for gentlemen and honest men to be a law unto themselves. Mount your horses, then, and follow me. And so long as I am safe, you shall be safe; and so long as I live, you shall live; and while I eat and drink, you shall have to drink and eat; and you shall be my servants. And when the time of God's will—whereof God forbid that I should doubt—is come, I will go back to her I love, and you shall go back to them that love you; and men shall say that you have proved yourselves true men and good.'

Thus it was that two men of the Duke's Guard—Martolo and he whom they called Bena (for of his true name there is no record)—went together with Count Antonio and his cousin Tommasino to a secret fastness in the hills; and there in the course of many days Tommasino was healed of the wound which the Lieutenant of the Guard had given him, and rode his horse again, and held next place to Antonio himself in the band that gathered round them. For there came to them every man that was wrongfully oppressed; and some came for love of adventure, and because they hoped to strike good blows; and some came whom Antonio would not receive, inasmuch as they were greater rogues than were those whose wrath they fled from.

Such is the tale of how Count Antonio was outlawed from the Duke's peace and took to the hills. Faithfully have I set it down, and whoso will may blame the Count, and whoso will may praise him. For myself, I thank Heaven that I am well rid of this same troublesome passion of love, that likens one man to a lion and another to a fox.

But the Lady Lucia, being brought back to the city by the Lieutenant of the Guard, was lodged in her own house, and the charge of

her was commended by the Duke into the hands of a discreet lady; and for a while His Highness, for very shame, forbore to trouble her with suitors. For he said, in his bitter humour, as he looked down on the dead body of Robert de Beauregard: 'I have lost two good servants and four strong arms through her; and mayhap, if I find her another suitor, she will rob me of yet another stalwart gentleman.'

So she abode, in peace indeed, but in sore desolation and sorrow, longing for the day when Count Antonio should come back to seek her. And again was she closely guarded by the Duke.

SOLUBLE PAPER.

By the aid of heat and powerful chemicals, it is possible to dissolve anything, even the hardest rock; but the material as such is destroyed in the process, being converted into a number of different substances. It is one thing to dissolve a refractory body, and quite another to get it back in the same chemical state as it was at first. Of all the things that we should least expect to dissolve readily, cotton, wood, paper, and similar material appear to be the most insoluble; yet a process has been discovered by three well-known chemists which permits us to dissolve cotton-wool, &c., and, by proper treatment, to reproduce it unaltered. By 'unaltered' we mean unaltered in a chemical sense. Of course, it would not be possible to reproduce the actual fibres of the original material, but the substance would be recovered in mass.

It is just as well, before we go any farther, to get a clear idea of the substance we are dealing with when we speak of cotton-wool or raw cotton. Chemists call the pure substance 'cellulose,' because it is the material out of which the cell-walls of plants are built. When we have said this, we have said a great deal; for, as all the parts of a plant are made up of cells, this cellulose is to us human beings, not to speak of the other animals, one of the most important bodies in the whole of Nature's laboratory. Wood, cotton, linen, straw, grass, hemp, jute, paper, and many other things, are all more or less pure forms of cellulose. Chemists always mean something by every syllable in their queer language, and the termination -ose indicates that cellulose is a close relation to starch and sugar; also, from this, it is a second cousin to the alcohols and ethers. Perhaps, one of these days, chemists will show us how to convert wood and straw into a good nourishing diet; wood-biscuits have been made in Berlin as food for horses. Plants are able to convert sugar into cellulose, and *vice versa*, and there is no reason why we should not learn to do so too. Considering the immense number of industries in which paper is employed, a process by which this cellulose could be dissolved up and re-deposited in moulds, or in any desired shape, has always been much sought after; but until recently it has not been found.

Various ways of dissolving cotton-wool, the purest form of cellulose, have been known for a long time, and many valuable applications have arisen from them; but dissolved paper could not be re-formed in a state capable of use by itself. Black oxide of copper dissolved in strong ammonia will dissolve cotton-wool and most forms of cellulose. Advantage is taken of this in the manufacture of Willesden papers, the copper-ammonia being allowed to act on the surface of the sheets, so as to partially dissolve the paper and re-deposit it as a hard waterproof coating. When thick paper is required, one or more sheets are cemented together with the copper-ammonia solution. The dark-green surface of the Willesden paper is due to the copper it contains; but by suitable treatment, paper dissolved in copper-ammonia solution can be obtained white and free from copper. Strong oil of vitriol will dissolve cotton-wool, but changes it into grape-sugar. Vegetable parchment, so largely used for covering jam-pots and a variety of other purposes, is merely ordinary unsized paper that has been dipped in oil of vitriol for a few minutes. Collodion and gun-cotton are both made by treating cotton-wool with nitric acid. Gun-cotton is one of the principal constituents of cordite and other smokeless powders. Celluloid is gun-cotton mixed with camphor, and, as may be imagined, is highly inflammable.

The new soluble paper is made by acting upon cotton-wool with strong alkali, and then treating it with the vapour of that particularly evil-smelling liquid, carbon bisulphide. A golden-coloured dough is the result of these operations. The dough swells enormously on the addition of water, and finally dissolves completely. One curious point about the solution is its wonderful viscosity, a solution containing seven parts in a hundred being like glycerine. Strong alcohol or brine coagulates the solution, and heat produces the same effect. The yellow colour of the dough is due to impurities; after purification, the jelly and solution being perfectly free from colour. The weakness of the solution capable of forming a jelly is astonishing; a jelly containing only five parts of the soluble paper in a thousand being stiff enough to be handled: this is water standing upright with a vengeance! A jelly containing ten parts in a hundred is quite solid to the touch. The alkali and sulphur are easily removed from the jelly by washing, and pure paper or cellulose is left behind.

As may be imagined, the applications to which this discovery can be put are immense. When perfectly dry, the cellulose is semi-transparent, resembling horn. It is hard, and can be turned readily in the lathe, taking an excellent polish. Although much may be done with it in this way, it is the direct applications of the jelly and solution that will prove the most valuable. The solution forms a splendid adhesive, and, on account of its purity, will be of great service in mounting photographs, besides taking the place of gum, india-rubber solution, and glue, if it can be made cheap enough. It has actually been used for book-binding and for the rougher work of bill-sticking. Another use will be for the sizing of

writing and other commercial papers, the great advantage being that they would not fall to pieces if they happened to get wet. One process it seems to be really designed for—namely, the manufacture of artificial silk by means of an apparatus copied from the spinnerets of the spider, invented not very long ago. The jelly can be cast in moulds, and takes an excellent impression of any surface with which it is in contact. There is thus a probability of its being employed for making ornamental mouldings, and as a substitute for papier-mâché.

A machine has been constructed for making films direct from the solution. The films can be made thick or thin, of any width, and in continuous rolls. The material takes up dyes so readily that it can be coloured as it passes through the machine without having to undergo any special process. Any graining or pattern can be imparted to the paper at the same time, so that there are great possibilities of using it in the manufacture of leather-papers, ceiling and other decorative papers.

Another use of the jelly—which will, in all probability, be of the utmost value—is for the treatment of textile fabrics such as linen and cotton. It is customary at present to 'weight' textile goods with china clay, and to use various substances to give them a good surface appearance. The main object of the china clay is to deceive the unsuspecting Hindu, who buys the goods by weight; but the practice is not confined to goods intended for the Indian market. The soluble cellulose bestows a better appearance on the fabrics, and at the same time adds greatly to their strength. One drawback to the cellulose produced from the jelly is that it is not perfectly transparent, like celluloid; but the chemists who discovered it are trying to overcome this difficulty, so that it can be employed for the production of photographic negative films.

Many more applications than we have cited will no doubt suggest themselves to those who read this article, and there seems to be a future of extended usefulness before the new invention. Its discoverers are still working on the same lines, and hope to elaborate many more interesting and valuable modifications of this very important cellulose.

A LEGEND OF PRINCE MAURICE.

PART II.—CONCLUSION.

MAPANA had one of those rare voices which, almost more than mere beauty alone, seem created to enslave mankind. I once, years ago, on a trip home to England, heard Sarah Bernhardt. The tones of her silvery voice came nearer to Mapana's than any I ever heard.

How so fair a woman came to be heading a barbarous tribe here in this outlandish corner of Africa—whence she took her European descent—puzzled me intensely. I was determined somehow to hunt out the mystery. I had noticed, when we first encountered Mapana's tribesmen at the foot of the mountains, that much of their speech resembled the Sechuana and Basuto

tongues, with which I am well acquainted. The languages of the various Bantu tribes have strong affinities. I noticed many words even resembling Zulu and Amakosa among these people, who, by the way, called themselves Umfaenzi. The difference of idiom and intonation at first bothered me; in a little while, however, as Mapana questioned and cross-questioned the Bushmen, I began pretty clearly to understand her. I spoke in a low tone to April; he, too, comprehended her speech. I now ventured to address her myself. I spoke slowly and distinctly; and, after a little, she began to understand much of what I said, as, too, did her headmen and counsellors. I explained that I was a subject of a great white Queen, dwelling far across some mighty waters; that I had heard of another white Queen, and had travelled far to pay her my respects, and to enter upon terms of good-will and friendship with her and her tribe.

My words seemed to give satisfaction. Mapana spoke in an aside with some of the older men about her, and then addressed me. She told me that she was of white descent herself—at a remote distance of time—that the blood had always been cherished in her tribe, and that she and her counsellors were glad to receive me. She directed me to be lodged in a new hut just outside her kotla, and intimated that she would be pleased to receive me later in the day. Meanwhile, food and water, and whatever else we required, should be placed at my disposal. A guard of a couple of armed men was told off to keep away intrusive or too curious tribes-people from our quarters.

We killed a sheep, and enjoyed a square meal; after which I went, surrounded by a concourse of interested natives, to a stream close by, where I had a good wash, combed out my hair and beard, and made myself presentable for the next interview with the fascinating Mapana. For the rest of the afternoon we sat resting, and luxuriated in a quiet smoke.

At about four o'clock a young headman came with a message that Mapana wished to see me again. He seemed by no means pleased with his errand, and preceded me with a very unprepossessing scowl upon his face. The Queen was now only attended by a few of her women. I sat down near her; my conductor stood leaning upon his assegai.

'Seleni,' said Mapana, looking at him, 'I wish to speak with the white man alone; you can leave me.'

'Queen,' answered the young man, not too civilly, I thought, 'this man is a stranger. Who knows his heart? He may cherish mischief. I stay to guard the Queen from danger.'

Mapana flushed a little. It was pretty to see the colour run under the clear brunette of her skin. 'There is no danger,' she said, with some asperity.—'Go, till I call for you.'

Making an obeisance, Seleni, much against his will, stalked out of the kotla.

Mapana turned to me. 'Seleni is a kinsman of mine,' she said; 'and he presumes upon it.'

I had noticed that this young man, and one or two others among the headmen, were slightly

paler in colour than the rest of the tribe, and I told Mapana so.

'Yes,' she returned. 'Seleni is descended from the white man from whom I descend, but by a baser branch. My forefathers come directly from the white man who settled among the Umfanzi long ago, and married the chief's daughter. That white man—Morinza, we call him—became ruler over the tribe, taught us many things, and left the family of chiefs to which I belong. I have sent for you'—here she inquired my name, which I told her—'to look upon the things which I have here. They were Morinza's, and they have always been cherished in my family.'

Here she took the necklet of coins from her neck and handed it to me. She had also for my inspection the sword I have spoken of, and an old-fashioned book, very handsomely bound in red leather, curiously gilt and stamped. This book she took from a covering of soft hide, in which it was carefully wrapped.

I was intensely interested, and first examined the gold coins composing the necklet. There were seven in all, four large and three smaller. I recognised at once the head of Charles I., and made out without difficulty that the coins were twenty-shilling and ten-shilling pieces of that king's reign. I next took up the sword. The scabbard had once been handsome in leather and metal, but was now worn and battered. The sword itself, a straight, narrowish rapier, was a very beautiful one. It was in excellent condition and finely engraved. On the centre of the blade were these words in old-fashioned lettering:

'RUPERTUS MAURITIO SUO.
BREDAE, 1638.'

Latin for: 'From Rupert to his Maurice. Before Breda, 1638.'

Now in the mind of every schoolboy (said Cressey, pausing in his narrative) the names Rupert and Maurice always run together. They were nephews of Charles I., sons of Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, and they are well known in English history. Since I came to Cape Town, I have been to the Library, and I find that Prince Maurice served his first or second campaign in 1638 with the Prince of Orange at the siege of Breda. Prince Rupert was there learning the trade of war at the same time. The meaning of the inscription on that sword—which I have, and will show you presently—is to my mind perfectly clear.

Well, to get on with my yarn. As I sat in Mapana's kraal with the sword in my hands, I began to wonder whether I was in a dream. Was it possible that the beautiful brunette before me, chieftain of a tribe of outlandish Kaffirs, came of such stock as this? The idea seemed too wildly improbable. Yet, if her tale and the evidence before me meant anything, it meant that this sword, these gold coins, had once belonged to Maurice of the Rhine. I took the book in my hand and turned over its yellow pages. What I saw there yet more electrified me, and stimulated yet further my imagination. The book was an old French work on hawking, entitled, *La Fauconnerie; par Charles d'Esperon; Paris: 1605.* On the

fly-leaf was written, in an antique yet clear hand:

'MAURITIO P. d. d. MATER AMANTISSIMA,
ELIZABETHA R. 1635.'

Translated, this would run: 'To Maurice, Prince, a gift from his loving mother Elizabeth, Queen, 1635.'

There was no earthly reason to suppose that the inscription upon that old fly-leaf lied. That book, then, had once belonged to Prince Maurice; had once been the loving gift to him of the unlucky, beautiful Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, his mother. It seemed so strange, so tragic, to find here these relics of the old Stuart blood; to see before me perhaps even a descendant of that ill-starred line, that my mind, as I gazed from the old book to Mapana, from Mapana's soft eyes to the book again, ran in a flood of strangely mingled emotions. I asked Mapana again to tell me how these things had come into her family.

She reiterated that her father and grandfather had always told her that these were the things of Morinza (was not this name, I asked myself, an African corruption of Moritz or Maurice?), the white man, their ancestor. That he had them with him when he encountered the tribe. That in those days the Umfanzi lived much farther to the west (she indicated the direction with her hand), not far from a great water (probably the South Atlantic); that other things of his had also formerly belonged to them, but had almost all been lost in wars and wanderings.

Now I have been always fond of history, and, as a youngster, the story of the Stuarts had a deep interest for me. I had a clear recollection in my mind that Prince Maurice had been lost at sea some time during the Commonwealth or Cromwell's Protectorate, while on a privateering or filibustering expedition. Was it not possible, I asked myself, that he had been wrecked off the African coast, or even marooned by a discontented crew? I find, by the way, on coming down country, that Maurice was actually off the west coast of Africa in 1652, the year of his supposed death. He is believed by some to have been lost in a storm off the West Indies, but the circumstance of his death seems to be very much shrouded in mystery. There is nothing clear about it.

I told Mapana that I knew something of the origin of these relics. That their owner had once been a warrior in my country; and that I should like to take them home, and have them identified, if possible. That for her own sake, this ought to be done.

She looked very wistfully at me, but shook her head, and told one of her girls to put the sword and book back in her hut. The necklet she put on again. By this time it was dark and we sat by a blazing fire of wood.

Mapana now asked me to sup with her. I was not loth, of course; and, having still some coffee, sugar, and a tin of condensed milk in my saddle-bags, I had them and the kettle brought round. I boiled some water, and treated my charming barbarian to her first cup of coffee. She was delighted, and drank two beakers of it with the greatest enjoyment.

Then nothing would do but I must give her my teaspoon. It was an old worn silver one, as it happened. She looked so merry, so good-humoured, so fascinating, there by the cheery firelight, that I felt inclined to deny her nothing.

'But,' I said, 'you must give me something in return.'

She looked reflectively for a moment, then sent a girl to her hut. The girl returned with two more of the gold coins I have mentioned. They were strung close together on fine sinew, and were used, as Mapana showed me, as a fillet or decoration for the head. We made the exchange amid much merriment and some chaff, and I think were mutually content. I certainly had the best of the deal. Mapana at my suggestion used the spoon with her milk and porridge, which she had previously eaten by means of a kind of flat spoon—and her pretty fingers. I don't know what possessed me—perhaps it was the caressing touch of her hand, which had been once or twice laid upon mine while begging for the spoon—but, before saying good-night and going to my hut, I asked Mapana if she would like to be saluted in the fashion of my country. She assented with a smile. I stooped towards her, placed my hands upon her shoulders, and kissed her upon the cheek and lips. Never was caress more sweet! I don't think Mapana thought so badly of it either; there was no sign of displeasure in her dark eyes. Her maidens were rather startled, and ejaculated some very astonished 'ous;' but they were very discreet.

Before I quitted her, I asked Mapana to lend me the old book on Falconry. I wanted to examine it more closely. On my promising to deliver it to her again, she sent for it and placed it in my hands. I went back to my hut, put the book into my saddle-bag till morning, and quickly fell into a sound slumber.

I saw little of Mapana till next evening. She was bathing with her women at a lagoon in the morning. Then a council of headmen was held, chiefly to discuss my visit; this lasted some hours. I wandered quietly about the village, escorted by two tribesmen; saw that the horses were well fed and cared for, looked at our rifles, and waited rather impatiently for another audience with Mapana. During the afternoon the Bushmen left the town. They had soon tired of its attractions, and yearned to be in the veldt again.

It was not till nightfall that Mapana sent for me. I supped with her again by the fire in front of her hut, and again we had coffee and much laughter together. She was in curious spirits; sometimes rippling over with fun and a sort of naive coquetry; at others, looking serious and thoughtful, and even, as I thought, a little askance at me. I lighted my pipe and began to smoke. Presently she sat herself a little nearer to me and spoke.

'My headmen,' she said, 'want to know if you have come to stay long among us, Kareesa' (so she pronounced my name); 'I could not tell them this morning. What does Kareesa say? I tire of ruling these people alone. I want a man to help me. Seleni hopes to become that man; but Seleni—well, I love not Seleni over-

much. Why should not Kareesa join his lot with mine and share my power?' Mapana looked more beautiful than ever, I thought, at that moment; she was very serious, and her dark eyes were turned almost beseechingly to mine. Half barbarian though she was, I never could forget that white blood ran strong within her; and in mere looks alone there was enough to tempt many a better man than I, who was already more than half in love with her.

I knew not what to say, but was about to stumble into some sort of speech. She leaned yet nearer, and placed a hand gently upon my arm. At that instant a sharp whistle, which I knew to be April's, and April's only, smote my ears. I half turned round. As I did so, an arrow grazed the breast of my flannel shirt and drove deep into the left bosom of Mapana. She uttered a little choking cry, and fell into my arms, a dying woman. I could not let her go in her last agony, poor soul; yet I knew there was deadly danger about me even as I supported her. Those moments were like some vile and terrible dream. In a second or two another arrow transfixed the fleshy part of my upper arm. Almost at the same instant the report of a rifle rang out; there was a cry, and a fall, and I knew Mapana was avenged—by April.

Next came April's voice: 'Baas, Baas, are you there? Come quickly.'

I cried out: 'All right; I'm coming;' and then looked into my poor lost Mapana's face again. She had given a shiver or two, a last struggle, and was now dead in my arms. I laid her quietly upon the earth and kissed her brow. She had in her hands, poor thing, as she often had, the old sword. Her grip upon the scabbard was so strong that I could not easily loosen it. I drew the blade quickly from the scabbard, and with one last look at her as she lay, still wonderfully beautiful even in death, I left Mapana.

Meanwhile, the whole town was in a frightful uproar. Poor Mapana's women were shrieking in her hut. Men's voices were yelling excitedly in different directions. War-drums were beating already.

I rushed to the kotla entrance. April was there with the two horses, saddled and bridled, and our rifles both loaded. First, I made him break and draw the arrow from my arm. He pointed to the body of Seleni, whom he had shot dead just as he fired his second arrow at me. We jumped into our saddles and galloped straight for the river. It was our only chance. By great good luck, we reached the banks safely, swam our horses across, and chanced the crocodiles. Once on the other side, we cantered steadily, all through the night, due south. At early morning we swam the river again, much against the grain, and then, after an hour's rest in thick bush, steadily continued our flight, now more to the eastward. To cut a long story short, by dint of nursing our nags, we made good our escape, reached the wagons in safety, and trekked hard till we had put a hundred and fifty miles between us and Umfanzi-land.

Whether the Umfanzis followed us or not, I don't know. Quite possibly, the death of

Mapana, and the consequent turmoil, so bothered them that they never did. Thanks to my idea of keeping our nags always saddled and bridled, and to April's bravery and smartness, we escaped with our lives.

Poor dead Mapana! I shall never cease to mourn her as a good, and true, and most bewitching woman. I admired her beauty and her kindly heart. May she rest in peace!

Well (ended Cressey) that's my yarn. It's a curious one, isn't it? If you are as dry as I am, you must want a whisky and seltzer. After that, if you'll come to my bedroom, I'll show you the relics—the two coins, the sword, and the book—I brought from Umfanzi-land.

Touching these same relics, which have proved undoubtedly to have once belonged to Prince Maurice of the Rhine, they are likely to adorn shortly the collection of a great personage, or of a well-known Museum.

As for the descent of poor Mapana—whether she and her forefathers truly sprang, as she claimed, from Prince Maurice himself—that is a mystery dead with her dead self, never to be clearly explained on this side the dark portals.

LOCAL DAINTIES.

PECULIAR honours have long been accorded to certain localities, by epicures and those versed in culinary lore, for the savoury viands and dainty dishes they supply. In some cases such delicacies have been immortalised in a local proverb or folk-rhyme; while others have gained an equal reputation from their historic associations. Thus, the Downs near Sutton, Banstead, and Epsom produce delicate small sheep, a luxury which could delight even a royal connoisseur; for Richard Sutton is reported to have said, 'How the king [Charles II.] loved Banstead mutton!' Despite the lapse of years, the meat of the small Southdown still retains its wonted flavour, and it is as delicious as it was in the days of the Merry Monarch. The Dartmoor sheep, which produces the esteemed Oakhampton mutton, is a small breed; and a Northumberland rhyme reminds us of

Rothbury for goats' milk,
And the Cheviots for mutton.

From time immemorial, Kent has been noted for its brawn, that made at Canterbury being sent to all parts of the county. It would seem, too, that Sussex was once famous for this dish, for an old entry tells how Henry VI. directed the sheriff of Sussex to buy for a Christmas feast 'ten brawns with the heads.' Of English sausages, the finest are produced at Epping, Norwich, Oxford, and Cambridge. Soyer speaks in high praise of some presented to him by Sir George Chetwynd, and which were made by a country pork-butcher at Atherstone, a small town near Greendon Hall. Bologna and Göttingen are celebrated for their savoury sausages, and in Theodore Hook's amusing *Adventures of Peter Priggins, the College Scout*, will be found a recipe for the manufacture of Oxford sausage-meat, which has

earned a well-merited distinction. According to an old Cornish rhyme, which is quoted in Dr King's *Art of Cookery*, the following dainties were once proverbial:

Cornwall swab pie, and Devon white pot brings,
And Leicester beans and bacon fit for kings.

Melton-Mowbray has long been in repute for its pork pies; and a world-famed luxury known to most epicures are the Strasbourg pâtés, long esteemed so great a delicacy as to be sent to distant countries as presents. Speaking of such savoury dishes, it appears that the Salters' Company were in days gone by noted for their game pies, the recipe for the making of which, as preserved in their books, is deserving of notice: 'Take a pheasant, a hare, a capon, two partridges, two pigeons, and two rabbits; bone them, and put them into paste in the shape of a bird, with the livers and hearts, two mutton kidneys, forcemeats, and egg-balls, seasoning, spice, ketchup, and pickled mushrooms, filled up with gravy from the various bones.' A pie was so made by the Company's cook in 1836, and was found to be excellent.

For years past Gloucester has had a lucrative trade in lampreys; and from a very early period until the year 1836, it was customary for the city to send at Christmas 'a lamprey with a raised crust' to the sovereign, entries of its regular transmission appearing in the Corporation Records.

During the Commonwealth, it appears from the subjoined minute that the pie was sent to the members for the city: 'Paid to Thomas Suffield, cook, for lamprey pies sent to our Parliament men, £8.' Indeed, a well-stewed lamprey has long been esteemed a rare delicacy by most epicures, and as such, it is said, almost excused the royal excess which carried off Henry I. at Rouen. In 1530 the Prior of Llanthony at Gloucester sent 'cheese, carp, and baked lampreys' to Henry VIII. at Windsor, for which the bearer received twenty shillings.

The Berkshire breed of pigs is one of the best in England, and York House, Bath, has long been famous for the mild flavour of the hams dressed there. The fine quality of Yorkshire ham has often been attributed to the superiority of the salt employed; while Wiltshire bacon has always been in request on account of its delicate taste. On the Continent, there are the so-called hams of Bayonne, cured at Pau, in the Lower Pyrenees; while the Spanish hog-meat and Westphalia hams are generally considered to owe 'much of their peculiar excellence to the swine being fed on beech-mast, which our limited forests cannot to any extent allow.' A genuine *hare de sanglier*, or wild-boar's head, from the Black Forest would, it has often been remarked, elevate the plainest dinner into dignity. A late king of Hanover used to send one to each of his most esteemed friends in England every Christmas; and 'it was a test of political consistency to remain long upon his list, for all who abandoned His Majesty's somewhat rigid creed of orthodoxy in Church and State were periodically weeded out.'

Among specialties regarding birds may be mentioned the capon of Surrey and Sussex;

and the turkeys and geese of Norfolk and Suffolk. Passing through Essex, one may see whole 'herds' of geese and ducks in the fields there, fattening without thought of the future. Most of these birds, writes Dr Doran, 'are foreigners. They are Irish by birth; but they are brought over by steam, in order to be perfected by an English education; and when the due state of perfection has been attained, they are transferred to London.'

Dunstable larks are a dainty much coveted by epicures, and London is annually supplied, from the country about Dunstable alone, with not fewer than four thousand dozen. But the enthusiasm with which *gourmets* speak of these birds is far exceeded by the Germans, who travel many hundred miles to Leipzig merely to eat a dinner of larks. Such is the slaughter of larks at the Leipzig fair, that as many as half a million are annually eaten, principally by the booksellers frequenting that city.

Whittlesey Mere, in Huntingdonshire, now drained, once produced the finest ruffs and reeves, a delicacy of which Prince Talleyrand was extremely fond, his regular allowance during the season being two a day. An amusing anecdote is told of a young curate who had come up to be examined for priests' orders, and was asked to dinner at Bishophorpe by Archbishop Markham. Out of modesty, he confined himself exclusively to the dish before him till one of the resident dignitaries observed him. But it was too late; the ruffs and reeves had vanished to a bird.

A similar tale has been told of another delicate morsel, the wheatear, popularly designated 'the English ortolan.' A Scotch officer was dining with a certain Lord George Lennox, then Commandant at Portsmouth, and was placed near a dish of wheatears, which was rapidly disappearing under his repeated attentions to it. Lady Louisa Lennox tried to divert his notice to another dish, but 'Na, na, my leddy,' was the reply; 'these wee birdies will do verra weel.'

Norfolk and Suffolk have also been long renowned for partridges, and in years past a Leicestershire partridge was never dressed at Belvoir Castle. Some gastronomic enthusiasts have praised the pochard or dun-bird as a special dainty. It is a species of wild-fowl caught in the decoys of Essex and other counties. The flesh is said to melt in the mouth like that of the celebrated canvas-back duck of America. Then there is the Dorking fowl; and the Scotch grouse has never been equalled, in connoisseurs' opinion. Burns, too, it may be remembered, wrote a poem in praise of Scotch 'haggis;' and Bishop, referring to jack-pudding, humorously speaks of the dainties of different countries. A favourite dish in Shropshire is bubble-and-squeak, of which report goes George II. was fond. It is generally said that, when Prince of Wales, he happened to partake of it at a bachelor's table in that county, and was so pleased with it, that the homely dish was frequently afterwards seen at Carlton House.

The county of Chester has for ages past been famous for the excellence of its cheese; and as far back as the time of Henry II. it is recorded how Countess Constance of Chester kept a herd

of kine, and made good cheeses, three of which she presented to the Archbishop of Canterbury. The pride of Cheshire in the time-honoured superiority of its cheese may be gathered from a provincial song, published with the music, about the year 1746, during the Spanish War in the reign of George II. Next to Cheshire rank Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, and Somerset for their cheese; and in the last county there is a proverbial rhyme current which runs thus:

If you would have a good cheese, and hav'n old,
You must turn 'n seven times before he is old.

According to a popular error, Stilton cheese was originally made in the parish of Stilton, Lincolnshire: in point of fact, it was first produced in Leicestershire, where it continues to be made in the greatest quantity, but derived its name from an inn on the Great North Road in the parish of Stilton, where it was first brought into notice.

The finest cream cheese is that of Cottenham and Southam in Cambridgeshire; and formerly Banbury was noted for its milk cheese, about an inch in thickness. Thus, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Act I. scene i.), Bardolph calls Slender a 'Banbury cheese;' and in *Jack Drum's Entertainment* we read, 'You are like a Banbury cheese, nothing but paring.' Falstaff was more complimentary to Tewkesbury than to Prince Hal when he said the prince's brains were thicker than Tewkesbury mustard.

The cheese known by the name of 'Trent Bank' is a good substitute for Parmesan, which is manufactured between Cremona and Lodi, the highest part of the Milanese. The butter of Epping and Cambridge has long been held in the highest repute; and as far back as the time of Elizabeth, Devonshire has been noted for its clouted cream. The Hampshire honey, again, is deservedly in demand; and a Sussex rhyme says:

Amberley—God knows,
All among the rooks and crows,
Where the good potatoes grows.

The famous plums of Pershore in Worcestershire are an important source of income to the parishioners, and it is said you can guess what kind of plum crop there is in any given year by the way a Pershore man answers the question where he comes from. 'Why, from Pershore, to be sure,' lets you see that the crop is good. But if he replies, 'From Pershore, God help us!' you may infer that it is a bad year for plums. Cornwall and the Scilly Isles send many delicacies in the way of vegetables; and formerly, Deptford onions, Battersea cabbages, Mortlake asparagus, Chelsea celery, and Charlton peas, were in high repute. At one time, the neighbourhood about Bath was noted for its strawberries; and Kent still maintains its superiority in the flavour of its cherries, some of its chief orchards being in the parishes on the borders of the Thames, the Darent, and the Medway. According to Busino, Venetian ambassador in the reign of James I., it was a favourite amusement in the Kentish gardens to try who could eat most cherries. In this way, one young woman managed to eat twenty pounds, beating by two and a half pounds her opponent.

The merits of certain local articles of con-

fectionery have long been undisputed, and Banbury cakes are still much sought after, being shipped to most parts of the world. It is noteworthy that 'Banberrie cakes' are mentioned in a *Treatise on Melancholie*, published in 1586, among the articles that carry with them melancholy; and Ben Jonson, in his *Bartholomew Fair* (1614), introduces a Banbury man who 'was a baker—but he does dream now, and sees visions: he has given over his trade, out of a scruple he took that inspired conscience; those cakes he made were served in bridalls, maypoles, morrises, and such profane feasts and meetings.' There are the Richmond 'Maids of Honour,' delicious cheese-cakes, peculiar to Richmond, and in all probability named from its regal days, when there was kept up here a royal palace and court. George III. seems to have been an admirer of this delicacy, his tables at Windsor Castle and Kew being regularly supplied with it. It is stated that the large sum of one thousand pounds was once paid to the fortunate possessor of the recipe for making this cheese-cake, with the good-will of the business, said to have been originally established in Hill Street, Richmond.

Shrewsbury was not only famous for its painted glass-works, and for its making of excellent brawn, but also for its cakes. Indeed, 'Shrewsbury cakes' have for many a year past been proverbial, a local dainty which Shenstone has recorded among the products of his birth-place:

And here each season do those cakes abide,
Whose honoured names the ingrative city own,
Rendering through Britain's Isle Salopia's praises
known.

Shrewsbury, too, has long been noted for its Grinnel cakes, which are also made at Coventry, Devizes, and Bury in Lancashire. Mention should be made of Congleton, which has gained distinction for its cakes and gingerbread. These cakes are locally known as 'Court cakes,' from being eaten at the quarterly-account meetings of the Corporation. They are of a triangular form, with a raisin inserted at each corner, representing, it has been suggested, the Mayor and its Justices, who were the governing body under the charter of James I.

Referring to fish dainties, Sussex seems to have been specially favoured, having been renowned for 'a Chichester lobster, an Arundel mullet, a Pulborough eel, a Selsey cockle, an Amberley trout, and a Rye herring.' There is an amusing rhyme to this effect:

Arundel mullet—stinking fish,
Eats it off a dirty dish,

which is said by the people of Offham to the folk of Arundel; but the retort is:

Offham dingers, Church bell-ringers,
Only taters for your Sunday dinners.

Few local industries are of older standing than the Colchester oyster fishery, and the annual oyster banquet is a well-known institution; the finest British oysters are said to be spawned in the Colne. The Christchurch and Severn salmon have long had a high repute; and the salmon at Killarney, broiled, toasted, or roasted on arbutus skewers, is inimitable.

The Dublin haddock is another delicacy peculiar to the sister island, some of the finest being also caught on the Cornish coast. The herring and pilchard pies of Cornwall have been proverbial; and the herring industry of Great Yarmouth is one of the most important centres of our fishing-trade. Then there are the Whitstable oysters; and the finest smelts were formerly considered to come from the Medway, at Rochester. A Norfolk rhyme speaks of Cromer crabs and Runton dabs; and Quin thought the inhabitants of Plymouth ought to be the happiest of mortals from their supply of dories. Plymouth was noted for its red mullet; and Greenwich whitebait are still an attraction. Pope long spoke of

The Kennet swift, for silver eels renowned;

but, as it has been often observed, the Kennet is a slow river; there are no eels at all in the upper part, and those in the lower part are too large; but eels in perfection may be eaten at Salisbury, Anderton, or Overton.

Local dainties of one kind or another might be further multiplied, for there has always been a certain amount of rival emulation in this respect, although in some cases they seem to have been largely influenced by fashion. Thus, according to an old proverb, 'He who hath breems in his ponds may bid his friends welcome;' but this fish nowadays is rarely seen.

OLD LONDON DUELLING-GROUNDS.

LESS than a century ago, many of the most densely crowded spots in London at the present day were green fields, where, far removed from turmoil and the roar of traffic, many a duel was fought. Neighbourhoods where narrow lanes were seen a while ago, with flowering banks and blooming hedgerows, have become broad thoroughfares; and where the meadows stretched away as far as the eye could reach, endless streets and squares have sprung up, and shut out Highgate and other wooded hills that are still there. But the noted Duelling-grounds—the spots upon which, day after day, affairs of honour were decided—have completely disappeared. The tide of life has advanced like an intrusive wave, and has blotted them out. Down to the very days of the Protectorate, even Leicester Fields, of which Leicester Square now forms the centre, was a large open common, and used for military exercise. Leicester House, in the middle of the seventeenth century, was the only mansion to be seen in the vicinity. The locality was notorious as a duelling-ground. The duel between Coote and Captain French was fought here in 1699, when Coote was killed on the spot. Duelling in Leicester Fields, it will be remembered, is graphically described in *Esmond*. In the novel, Lord Mohun and Lord Castlewood (unlike Lord Mohun and the Duke of Hamilton in the historical duel) had quarrelled at the 'Greyhound.' Thereupon, they take chairs to the Fields. The gentlemen are set down

opposite the 'Standard' Tavern. The chairmen smoke their pipes, and watch the duellists in the dim moonlight.

Soon after the meeting here between Coote and French, Leicester Fields was formed into a square, with Leicester House and its gardens occupying the north side. When Leicester Fields was beginning to be built over, the fields behind Montague House, in Bloomsbury, became the scene of duelling. The ground nearest to Montague House was known as Capper's Farm a hundred years ago; and the whole of the district north of this farm extended in an unbroken line to the rustic village of Paddington. A favourite walk over these fields, on a Sunday afternoon, was to the Field of the Forty Footsteps. In this field, according to tradition, two brothers fought; and so fierce was the combat, that both were slain: since which time—so runs the tale—their footprints remained as indented there during the unnatural encounter; nor could any grass, or vegetable growth of any sort, ever be produced where forty footmarks were thus disclosed. Profiting by this tradition, Jane Porter wrote an ingenious novel called *The Field of the Forty Footsteps*. The incident is also recorded by Southey. After quoting a letter from a friend recommending him to visit the spot called 'The Brothers' Steps,' he says: 'We sought for nearly half an hour in vain. We were almost out of hope, when an honest man who was at work directed us to the ground adjoining a pond. There was found what we sought. The steps are the size of a large human foot, about three inches deep. The place where one or both these brothers is supposed to have fallen is still bare of grass. The labourer also pointed out the bank where the wretched woman—as tradition relates—sat to see the combat.'

These fields remained waste and useless, with the exception of some nursery grounds near the New Road, and a piece of ground enclosed for the Toxophilite Society, until the end of the last century. An enterprising builder then began to erect houses. The latest record of these traditional footprints, previous to their being built over, is to be found in Moser's *Commonplace Books*: 'Went into the fields at the back of Montague House, and there saw for the last time the "forty footsteps." The building materials are there ready to cover them from the sight of man.'

Bloomsbury Fields were in those days—particularly during the reign of William III.—often chosen as a duelling-ground. Law, the financier, killed the mysterious Beau Wilson in these fields.

Another famous ground, in still more recent times, was Chalk Farm, near which was the 'White House,' a tavern, with a tea garden. An adjacent field, screened on one side by trees, was a favourite resort of duellists. One of the earliest duels at Chalk Farm took place in the summer of 1790 between Captain Aston and Lieutenant Fitzgerald. A lady, as was frequently the case, was the cause of their dispute. Fitzgerald, firing first, shot Aston in the neck. He recovered, but was killed in another duel, a few years later. In April 1803, two officers—Montgomery and Macnamara—fought a duel

here because the dog of one officer had growled at the dog of the other. The first-named officer was killed, and the latter was severely wounded. There was a trial for manslaughter; but the verdict was 'Not Guilty.'

Concerning the 'affair' between Moore and Jeffrey at Chalk Farm, where, as Byron insists, 'Authors sometimes seek the field of Mars,' Tom Moore has himself left a record. Just as both pistols were raised, and they were waiting for the signal to fire, some police officers, whose approach no one had noticed, rushed out of a hedge behind Jeffrey. One of them struck at Jeffrey's pistol with his staff and knocked it out of his hand; while another took possession of Moore's. They were conveyed, crestfallen, to Bow Street. It is reported that they fired blank cartridges. This incident inspired the famous epigram, 'They only fire ball cartridge at reviews.' Byron also ridiculed this duel in his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. Moore and Jeffrey, as is well known, became cordial friends after this meeting at Chalk Farm.

In another 'literary duel,' fought on the same ground, John Scott—a man of considerable promise—met with his end. It was on a moonlight night in February 1821. The quarrel came about through a provoked attack on Lockhart in the *London*. Scott was challenged by a friend of Lockhart's.

Old London taverns, or the courts outside, were duelling-grounds in former days. In one of the rooms at the 'Star and Garter,' a fashionable tavern in Pall Mall, a fatal duel was fought in 1762. It was between William, fifth Lord Byron, and his Nottinghamshire neighbour, Mr Chaworth. The quarrel arose out of a heated argument over the dinner table; and in little more than an hour after its commencement, Mr Chaworth received a mortal wound from his opponent. Lord Byron—great-uncle and immediate predecessor of the poet—was tried for the capital offence; but he was found guilty only of manslaughter by the House of Lords.

'Dick's' tavern stood on the south side of Fleet Street, near Temple Bar, and was originally called 'Richard's,' Richard Turner being the noted proprietor. Two hot-headed youths disagreed at 'Dick's' about some trifle; and the matter was subsequently decided at the 'Three Cranes' in the Vintry, by one of them, Rowland St John, running his companion, John Stiles of Lincoln's Inn, through the body.

'Dick's' is famous as the tavern to which Steele conducted the Twaddlers, as commemorated in the *Tuttler*. The 'Grecian' was also a notorious coffee-house. Two young scholars, not inappropriately, had a dispute at the 'Grecian' about the accent of a certain Greek word; and not being able to decide the question amicably, stepped out into the court and settled it with swords. Until Dr Johnson's time, duels in England were generally fought with swords; but they were soon afterwards superseded by pistols: for when civilians gave up wearing swords, there was less inducement to make use of this weapon. The 'Grecian' was a noted coffee-house in Devereux Court, in the Strand. The place derived its name from a Greek from the Levant, who was the original proprietor.

Constantine, as he was called, sold coffee, chocolate, sherbet, and tea. The place was frequented by a goodly company of wits and poets, including Addison, Steele, and Goldsmith.

At another tavern in the Strand, the 'Adelphi,' a duel was fought between the editor of the *Morning Post* and a certain Captain Stoney. The editor, an eccentric clergyman, named Dudley, had inserted an article which happened to give offence to the Captain; and on refusing to name the author, received a challenge. They took a room at this tavern, and called for a brace of pistols; and when these failed, they resorted to swords. They were both wounded, and were then separated with difficulty.

It was at the 'Castle' Tavern, in Covent Garden, that Sheridan fought a duel with Captain Mathews in 1772. They had repaired to Hyde Park, but finding the crowd too great, adjourned to this coffee-house. They fought with swords, and both were wounded, though neither of them severely. The quarrel was about the beautiful Miss Linley, to whom Sheridan was already secretly married.

The celebrated duel between the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun was arranged at the 'Rose' Tavern, in Covent Garden. The duel took place in Hyde Park. It was fought on the 15th of November 1712. The Duke got out of his coach 'on the road that goes to Kensington,' and walked 'over the grass and between the two ponds.' The weapons were swords; and Lord Mohun was killed on the spot, falling in the ditch on his back, and the Duke falling near him, severely wounded. The keeper of Price's Lodge, in the park, lifted the Duke up; and he walked with the keeper's help about thirty yards, when he declared that he could go no farther, and died. Macartney, Lord Mohun's second, who escaped to the Continent, was accused by Colonel Hamilton, the Duke's second, of having stabbed his principal over his (the Colonel's) shoulder. A proclamation was issued offering five hundred pounds reward for the apprehension of Macartney, to which was added three hundred by the Duchess of Hamilton. The ostensible cause of the quarrel was the right of succession to the estate of Gerard, Earl of Macclesfield, both having married nieces of the Earl; but politics had perhaps as much to do with it as the lawsuit in which they were engaged. No man of his time was more frequently involved in duels than Lord Mohun. He was twice tried for murder. A Bill for the prevention of duelling was brought into the House of Commons immediately after this affair; but it was lost after the second reading.

Duelling went on for nearly a hundred years in London after this event. Early in the present century—as recently as 1822—a duel was fought in the park between two Dukes—Bedford and Buckingham. A noted one occurred in a copse, in a lonely part of Hyde Park, between John Wilkes, the agitator, and Samuel Martin, a member of Parliament. Both fired four times, when Wilkes received a severe wound. His antagonist relenting, hastened to offer to assist him off the ground. But Wilkes urged Martin to make his escape and avoid

arrest. Wilkes was the cause of another duel in Hyde Park. In a coffee-house, one Captain Douglas spoke of Wilkes as a scoundrel, adding that the epithet equally applied to his adherents. A clergyman named Green espousing Wilkes's cause, pulled the Captain's nose. Thereupon, they repaired to the park, though late in the evening. The duel was fought with swords. The parson ran the Captain through the doublet, and they left the ground satisfied.

Holland Park, at the beginning of the century, was a famous duelling-ground. The spot usually chosen was near Addison Road, a spot known as the Moats. Lord Camelford fought a duel here in 1804 with Captain Best, the crack shot of that period. The dispute occurred at the 'Prince of Wales's' Coffee-house, in Conduit Street. The parties met near the Moats about eight o'clock one morning in March; and having taken up their position, Lord Camelford fired the first shot. It missed; and Captain Best, taking aim, lodged his bullet in his lordship's body.

Less than half a century ago, Battersea Fields was one of the darkest and dreariest spots in the suburbs of London. It was a swampy waste of some three hundred acres. Costermongers and roughs and so-called gypsies made these fields their favourite resort. Many a duel was fought there. The isolated character of the place recommended it to duellists of all sorts and conditions. In the most remarkable 'affair' that happened in Battersea Fields, near the notorious Red House, the Iron Duke was a principal. He had got into hot-water for the part he had taken in the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill. Abuse fell upon him fast and furious. The young Earl of Winchilsea, one of the leaders of the Anti-Catholic party, published a violent attack on the Duke's personal character. The Duke in vain attempted to induce the Earl to retract his charges. He subsequently sent him a challenge. Lord Winchilsea, after escaping the Duke's shot, tendered an apology.

Putney Heath, at the time a noted rendezvous for highwaymen, was the scene of frequent duels, private and political. William Pitt while Prime Minister exchanged shots on this heath with Tierney; and another famous duel, between Canning and Castlereagh, took place there, near that well-known landmark, the Obelisk.

Hounslow Heath was another duelling-ground. One wintry night in 1696, Beau Fielding fought a duel on this heath with Sir Henry Colt. The exact ground chosen was at the back of Cleveland Court. Fielding, who wished to fight where the beautiful Duchess of Cleveland, his future wife, might witness the duel, is reported to have run Sir Henry through the body before he had time to draw his sword. But the Baronet, though wounded, succeeded in disarming his antagonist, and so ended the affair. The place where this duel was fought is the present site of Bridgewater House.

Another duelling-ground in London was Tottenham Fields. The neighbourhood was a dead level, as shown in old etchings, broken only by a clump of trees in the centre. In the last encounter which took place there, in 1711, a

Kentish gentleman named Dering was killed by one Richard Thornhill. It was one of the most savage duels on record. The men fought so near that the muzzles of the pistols actually touched each other. Westminster House of Correction and the surrounding streets now cover these fields.

Endless attempts during all this time were being made to put a stop to duelling. The duelling-grounds in London were being built over, but still grounds were to be found, and men continued to challenge and fight. Members of Parliament brought in Bills for its suppression; divines preached; authors directed their satire against the evil. 'If any one that fought a duel was made to stand in the pillory,' writes Addison, 'it would quickly lessen these imaginary men of honour, and put an end to so absurd a practice.'

Still members of Parliament, divines, and authors—those who most condemned the practice of duelling—were being constantly drawn into duels. Lord Shaftesbury was challenged by Lord Mornington in 1853 for something he had said in a speech on the Juvenile Mendicancy Bill. Lord Shaftesbury referred the affair to his solicitors; and thus was given the *coup de grâce* to the notion that when challenged a man must fight.

The last duel—the last fatal one, at least—was fought in a field in Maiden Lane in a solitary part of Holloway, in 1843. The district acquired considerable notoriety from the event. It was the duel fought between Colonel Fawcett and Lieutenant Munro. The former was killed. The duellists were not only brother-officers; they were also brothers-in-law, having married two sisters. The coroner's jury on the inquest returned a verdict of wilful murder, not only against Lieutenant Munro, but against the seconds also. The latter, however, were acquitted. Munro evaded the hands of justice by seeking refuge abroad. Four years later, he surrendered to take his trial at the Old Bailey. He was found guilty, and sentenced to death. He was, however, strongly recommended to mercy; and the sentence was eventually commuted to twelve months' imprisonment. The neighbourhood in which this duel was fought is no longer solitary; a wide thoroughfare, known as the Brecknock Road, runs through it; and a rifle-ground, beside the 'Brecknock Arms,' appropriately indicates the place where the final shot was fired.

M I R A G E.

THIS is the name applied to certain optical illusions due to the curving of rays of light as they pass through the atmosphere. The illusory appearance may take one or other of three forms: objects may simply seem very much elevated; or they may be elevated and inverted; or, lastly, they may seem depressed and inverted. Because rays usually travel in straight lines, we cannot see round corners, nor can we see objects below the horizon; but sometimes, because of the peculiar state of the atmosphere, the rays of light are so bent that when they

reach the eye they make distant objects seem in a higher position than they actually are. In this way, bodies that are really below the horizon may seem elevated above it, and though at a great distance, may thus become visible. This sort of thing is usually seen across water, and among nautical men it is known as 'looming.' Not unfrequently, objects that 'loom' seem unusually near, and are magnified vertically, so as to appear like spires or columns. Snowdon is now and then seen by pilots in Dublin Bay, although the distance between them is over a hundred miles as the crow flies. The Isle of Wight has several times been visible from Brighton; and the cliffs near Calais have been seen from Ramsgate, the distance in both cases being about sixty miles.

But it is in tropical seas that the most remarkable instances have occurred. A good many years ago, a pilot in Mauritius reported that he had seen a vessel which turned out to be two hundred miles off. The incident caused a good deal of discussion in nautical circles; and, strange to say, a seemingly well-authenticated case of the same kind occurred afterwards at Aden. A pilot there announced that he had seen from the heights the Bombay steamer then nearly due. He stated precisely the direction in which he saw her, and added that her head was not then turned towards the port. This caused some alarm, and a steamer lying in the harbour was sent out to tow in the vessel supposed to be disabled. It cruised about in the direction indicated for a whole day without success; but two days afterwards, the missing steamer entered the port; and it was found, on inquiries, that at the time mentioned by the pilot she was exactly in the direction and position indicated by him, but about two hundred miles off. To prove that there is no hallucination in statements like these, evidence would be required as conclusive as that needed to establish the reality of the great sea-serpent.

Sometimes, however, objects are not only elevated but inverted. This appearance is very common in Polar seas, the inversion being due to the rays from the lower part of the distant object being more bent than those from the upper part. Sailors see it best from a lofty position, such as the mast-head. A well-known case occurred off the coast of Greenland in 1822, when Captain Scoresby was made aware of the nearness of his father's ship by recognising its inverted image in the sky. And in 1854 the whole English fleet of nineteen sail was seen as if suspended in the air upside down by those on board H.M.S. *Archer*, cruising fifty miles away, off Oesel in the Baltic. It is not unusual to see two or three different horizons with images of a distant vessel alternately inverted and upright.

Cold heavy air over water is just as it were in the opposite condition from warm light air over a sandy desert; hence, in the latter case the rays are bent in the opposite direction, and seem to come from an object below the real one. So that in the mirage of the Desert the

observer sees the distant object directly through the uniform part of the air between himself and it, and he likewise sees an inverted image below as if caused by reflection in a sheet of water. Indeed, travellers across the Desert have often been cheated by the appearance. A Deputy Surveyor-general of South Australia once reported the existence of a large inland lake there. He did not take the precaution to go up to it; and when the lake was afterwards sought for, it was found that he had been deceived by the mirage.

The mirage can be seen nearly every day in the plains of Lower Egypt, and also to a limited extent in the plains of Hungary and Southern France. Now and then something of the kind can be seen in summer by stooping down and looking along our sandy coasts, such as Morecambe Bay and the coast of Devonshire, or over the Fen district, at that season dried up by the summer heat.

We must remember that the mirage of the Desert creates nothing, but merely inverts bodies that actually exist a little distance off; though in the Sahara, skylight rays descending are bent upwards by the hot air next the sand, and the eye is actually deluded by an impression resembling the reflection of skylight from water, the illusion being increased by the flickering due to convection currents, suggesting the effects of a breeze on the water. Many of the descriptions given of the mirage are 'travellers' tales' in the uncomplimentary sense. One of the most absurdly extravagant examples of this is the following: 'This treacherous phenomenon deludes the traveller's eye with a regular succession of beautiful lakes and shady avenues; and then, again, with an expanse of waving grass around a picturesque villa; here is presented a grove of towering trees; there, a flock of browsing cattle.'

WITH THE PAST.

THINK you ever of one gloaming
In a golden Summer gone,
When, amid the gathering shadows,
Eyes, love-lighted, brighter shone?
All the birds had hushed their voices,
In the grass the daisies slept,
And on soft cool wing, the west wind
Past us like an angel swept.

Think you ever of the Silence—
Silence sweeter far than speech—
That stole o'er us as Love drew us
Closer, trembling, each to each?
Oh the years that I had waited
For a moment such as this!
Stretching out vain arms to clasp thee,
Thrilling 'neath thy phantom kiss.

Am I waking? am I dreaming?
Has that bygone day come back?
Nay! 'tis only Memory straying
O'er the dear old beaten track!

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

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SOME NOTABLE BEGINNERS IN CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES said once that every articulately speaking human being has in him stuff for one good novel; the 'Autocrat' might have safely added also a good supply of articles, poems, or essays. But how is he to get himself into print? Here the art, and artifice, and versatility of the writer tell. Compare the detective story by an actual member of the Force with one by Sherlock Holmes, and the difference will be seen in a moment. Apparently every editor has his own burden to bear, and can a tale unfold, from which we infer that said human being is striving to become articulate in the columns of all the journals and periodicals in the country. Even *Reynolds* receives, according to its editor, as many weekly poetical contributions as would fill a sack. The editor of a certain weekly periodical has a stereotyped form warning intending contributors that he has as many poems and short stories on hand as will supply him well on into the twentieth century. Another editor finds about one in fifteen contributions available. Contributions have come to *Chambers's Journal* from lords and labourers, priests and lawyers; and one day, as Mr Payn has recorded, came volunteer contributions from a bishop, a washerwoman, and a thief. It was remarked on one occasion that what has proved most worth reading has not always come from the best educated or most highly placed in life: great names are not always a guarantee for good articles. The stream of voluntary contributions in 1872 averaged 200 per month, nineteen-twentieths of which went back. Ten years later (1882-83) the large number of 3225 manuscripts was received, only 330 of which had been accepted. Even if they were all of the highest merit, it is evident that only a small proportion could have been retained; and this stream still continues to flow in unabated volume.

There are various ways of conducting a periodical, one of the most thoroughgoing being that of Edward Cave, who was said never to have looked out of his window save for the benefit of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which he had founded. One modern method is to intimate to volunteer authors that the editor cannot return rejected contributions under any circumstances. Naturally, would-be contributors look upon this as a one-sided arrangement, and think twice before they risk the experiment of losing sight of their manuscript. Such an editor, backed, as he thinks, by a competent staff, and scanning the literary horizon for rising authors whom he hastens to invite to contribute, feels sufficient unto himself and his magazine. But unless an editor makes superhuman exertions, and is continually getting new blood into the concern, his periodical suffers in regard to variety of interest and freshness. You get to know exactly what will be said, and how it will be said, by any given class of writers.

The founders of *Chambers's* evidently started with this idea of being sufficient unto themselves, but speedily altered their arrangements. A preliminary prospectus was issued stating that 'no communications in prose or verse' were wanted. Experience soon modified their attitude towards outside contributors, and a good article was accepted, if suitable, from whatever quarter it came. Started over sixty years ago, just seven months before Scott passed away at Abbotsford, *Chambers's Journal* is still in general circulation, and is still read to pieces at all the public libraries. Quite a host of ready and able pens have united in giving continuity of purpose, and variety, freshness, and breadth of interest to this periodical from the commencement. A glance over the five series now issued will supply also a good hint as to the changed and changing tastes of the reading public. Fiction and light literature bulk more largely now than ever before, and it may be that there is less patience even with the long serial, and a demand for the short story has set in.

In giving the editorial experience of close upon half a century, and in allusion to the trades-union or close corporation method of conducting a periodical, William Chambers wrote: 'Sooner or later the tone of such a periodical ceases to be fresh, and it sinks into the region of *clique* and *coterie*. The trouble of working the winnowing-machine with respect to outside contributions is sure to be repaid, sooner or later—at least such has been our experience—by the acquisition of that priceless boon, an original writer.' It would be invidious to mention a long string of names of writers who have helped to make *Chambers* one of the best-read periodicals in the country; but a mention of one or two of the casual contributors, who have since risen to eminence, may be of interest, and help to show how the first tiny rill of a contribution afterwards broadened out to a larger stream of useful effort, with the sunshine of public favour upon it.

It is now nearly half a century since, in the casual way we have indicated, a contribution dropped in from George Meredith. The author of the *Egoist* and *Richard Feverel* had his first contribution printed in this *Journal* for July 7, 1849. It is entitled 'Chillianwallah,' and memorialises the bloody fight which took place at the village of that name in the Punjab, during the second Sikh war, on the 13th of January 1849. A few shots had been fired against our men while encamping, when Lord Gough gave orders for an attack; our soldiers moved forward through the jungle in the face of a masked battery. There was a panic among the cavalry, and the loss of almost the entire 24th Regiment. Yet the British troops maintained their position at the end of the day. The place is known in the neighbourhood as Katalgarh, or the 'house of slaughter.' An obelisk has been erected on the spot to the British officers and men who fell during the engagement. The poem is written as a dirge over the dead, and is in sad and solemn strain, quite in keeping with the subject; but of course entirely unlike the well-known efforts of Rudyard Kipling, who would doubtless have made Tommy Atkins his spokesman.

One is not always sure how and when to take Mr Payn seriously, and it is sometimes difficult to get a bottoming of fact in his otherwise delightful *Literary Recollections*. Certainly he does something less than justice to William Chambers in omitting to mention that he was a capable and successful editor, when the *Journal* was under his control, with a strong sense of what the public wanted and cared to read. However that may be, Mr Payn became a story-teller in connection with this *Journal*. Miss Mitford, his near neighbour when he was resident at Maidenhead, had done her best to keep him out of literature, and showered good advice upon him, when she saw all was of no avail. 'Be careful as to style,' wrote his literary god-mother; 'give as much character as you can, and as much truth, that being the foundation of all merit in literature and art.' An interview in Edinburgh with a so-called African lion-tamer, and the invention of an imaginary

Count Gotschakoff, supplied the necessary hints and suggestions for the string of adventures in 'The Family Scapegrace.' This story was placed before Robert Chambers, and Mr Payn asked for an opinion. Those who have seen Mr Payn's handwriting will not be surprised at what followed. Mr Payn, as recorded in *My First Book*, says: 'He looked at the manuscript, which was certainly not in such good handwriting as his own, and observed slyly: "Would you just mind reading a bit of it?" The author read a little of it, although interrupted by the maid bringing in coals, with the result that Mr Chambers said: "I think it will suit nicely for the *Journal*"—the pleasantest words I ever heard from the mouth of man,' observes Mr Payn. Mr Payn's reputation as a story-teller was confirmed after the issue of 'Lost Sir Massingberd,' also in this *Journal*. After serial issue, 'The Family Scapegrace,' disguised as *Richard Arbour*, was issued in one volume, but it excited no attention; although, on returning to the old title, it sold as well as any of the other numerous novels from the same hand.

To his credit, be it said, Mr Payn has taken cheerful views of authorcraft, and of life and literature generally. Now Mr Grant Allen warns intending literary aspirants off the premises by telling them that in no market can they sell their abilities to such poor advantage. 'Don't take to literature if you've capital enough in hand to buy a good broom, and energy enough to annex a vacant crossing.' Mr Payn, although he envies the judge and bishop who have five thousand pounds a year and a retiring pension, still thinks he has been 'exceptionally fortunate in receiving such small prizes as literature has to offer in the way of editorships and readerships; but the total income I have made by my pen has been but an average of fifteen hundred pounds a year for thirty-five working years. As compared with the gains of Law and Physic, and of course of Commerce, this is surely a very modest sum, though it has been earned in a most pleasant manner.' If Mr Payn, ranking in the first dozen of story-tellers, envies the judge or bishop, there are those doubtless who envy the author of *Lost Sir Massingberd*.

And now we have had Mr Stanley J. Weyman, who wrote of Oxford life for this *Journal*, rising up and calling Mr Payn blessed, because of the valuable hints received from him when he began novel-writing. 'He is father of us all,' said Mr Weyman to an interviewer the other day: 'Hornung, Gribble, Conan Doyle, Hope, and myself.'

It was not unnatural that Thomas Hardy, whose father and a brother have both been connected with the building trade at his native Dorchester, and who was himself trained as an architect, should take as the subject of his first contribution, 'How I Built Myself a House,' which appeared March 18, 1865. His maiden effort describes in a humorous vein how a Londoner, living already in a highly desirable semi-detached villa, and finding himself cramped for room, along with his wife, in the innocence of their hearts heedlessly consulted an architect, had a larger mansion built, and piled on the extras with a vengeance. How the future proprietor

climbed to the top of the scaffolding near the chimneys, suffered from giddiness, and did not see or enjoy the view, is capitally told. The altering of the plans, as new ideas flowed in upon husband and wife, raised the cost several hundreds of pounds over the estimate. This shows a professional touch, and is realistically told; but it does not appear that Mr Hardy followed out this vein. The encouragement received for his novel *Desperate Remedies* in 1871, and the distinct success of one of his best books, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, in 1874, placed him in the ranks of our four or five most popular novelists of the day.

While a student of medicine at Edinburgh University, Dr A. Conan Doyle had his first short story accepted and printed in *Chambers's Journal* in 1879. It is entitled 'The Mystery of Sasassa Valley, a South African Story,' and occupies four pages. From this and his other contributions, 'The Bravos of Market Drayton,' 'The Surgeon of Gaster Fell,' and 'Captain Wilkie,' the story of a reclaimed thief and Salvation Army Captain, it was evident that Dr Doyle was a born story-teller. He had that reputation at school; and long ere he was in his teens, 'I had,' he tells us, 'traversed every sea and knew the Rockies like my own back garden. How often had I sprung upon the back of the charging buffalo, and so escaped him! It was an every-day emergency to have set the prairie on fire in front of me in order to escape from the fire behind.' At school, it was therefore quite natural that he should have an attracted and attentive audience when spinning yarns. But, as he remarks, 'it may be that my literary experiences would have ended there, had there not come a time in my early manhood when that good old harsh-faced school-mistress, *Hard Times*, took me by the hand. I wrote, and with amazement I found that my writing was accepted. *Chambers's Journal* it was which rose to the occasion, and I have had a kindly feeling for its mustard-coloured back ever since.' The story 'Captain Wilkie,' which has just been printed, seems a kind of forecast of his Sherlock Holmes narratives, and contains a reference to the influence upon him by one of his Edinburgh teachers, Dr Joseph Bell, who was continually impressing upon his pupils the vast importance of marking little distinctions, and the endless significance, when followed out, of so-called trifles in appearance, manner, and conduct. In all probability Dr Bell never dreamt of the use one brilliant pupil would make of his lectures.

Mr D. Christie Murray lately held a Boston audience spell-bound for about an hour and a half, while relating the experiences of a war correspondent, and the Bohemian life at home and abroad, which had gone to make him a novelist. He told how the late Mr Robert Chambers, then conducting this *Journal*, wrote him the following note: 'SIR—I have read with unusual pleasure and interest, in this month's *Gentleman's Magazine*, a story from your pen entitled "An Old Meerschauum." If you have a novel on hand or in preparation, I should be glad to see it. In the meantime, a short story not much longer than "An Old Meerschauum" would be gladly considered by,

yours very truly, ROBERT CHAMBERS.' This led to the publication, in succession, of 'A Life's Atonement,' 'Valentine Strange,' and 'The Silver Lever' in this *Journal*. The first story had been written, laid aside, and almost forgotten in the crowded life of a journalist and war correspondent. On re-writing some of it, and sending it in, the cheerful reply came back, that if the rest of it was as good as the beginning, it would be accepted. So Mr Murray worked away, during much hardship, at the remainder, and thus joined the crowded ranks of the modern novelists.

Here we must stop at the most interesting point, for it would be like telling tales out of school to gossip about early contributions of Mr Stanley Weyman, Sir Wemyss Reid, and of many another writer whose early but unacknowledged work first saw the light in *Chambers's*. Mr Leslie Stephen might not care to be reminded of the share he had, along with Mr Payn, in a forgotten Christmas number.

It is true that authors seldom hide their lights under a bushel nowadays, when log-rolling has become so much of a fine art, and a reputation can be gained or lost in a few months. Thomas Carlyle's ambition was to write his books as soundly as his father built his bridges. For time tests all things, and however much or little may be in a name, good work will never go out of fashion.

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

CHAPTER II.—COUNT ANTONIO AND THE TRAITOR PRINCE.

OF all the deeds that Count Antonio of Monte Velluto did during the time that he was an outlaw in the hills (for a price had been set on his head by Duke Valentine), there was none that made greater stir or struck more home to the hearts of men, howsoever they chose to look upon it, than that which he performed on the high hill that faces the wicket gate on the west side of the city, and is called now the Hill of Duke Paul. Indeed it was the act of a man whose own conscience was his sole guide, and who made the law which his own hand was to carry out. That it had been a crime in most men, who can doubt? That it was a crime in him, all governments must hold; and the same, I take it, must be the teaching of the Church. Yet not all men held it a crime, although they had not ventured it themselves, both from the greatness of the person whom the deed concerned, and also for the burden that it put on the conscience of him that did it. Here, then, is the story of it, as it is yet told both in the houses of the noble and in peasants' cottages.

While Count Antonio still dwelt at the Court, and had not yet fled from the wrath aroused in the Duke by the Count's attempt to carry off the Lady Lucia, the Duke's ward, the nuptials of His Highness had been cele-

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brated with great magnificence and universal rejoicing; and the feasting and exultation had been most happily renewed on the birth of an infant Prince, a year later. Yet heavy was the price paid for this gift of Heaven, for Her Highness the Duchess, a lady of rare grace and kindness, survived the birth of her son only three months, and then died, amidst the passionate mourning of the people, leaving the Duke a prey to bitter sorrow. Many say that she had turned his heart to good had she but lived, and that it was the loss of her that soured him and twisted his nature. If it be so, I pray that he has received pardon for all his sins, for his grief was great, and hardly to be assuaged even by the love he had for the little Prince, from whom he would never be parted for an hour, if he could contrive to have the boy with him, and in whom he saw, with pride, the heir of his throne.

Both in the joy of the wedding and the grief at the Duchess's death, none had made more ostentatious sign of sharing than His Highness's brother, Duke Paul. Yet hollow alike were his joy and his grief, save that he found true cause for sorrow in that the Duchess left to her husband a dear memorial of their brief union. Paul rivalled the Duke in his caresses and his affected love for the boy, but he had lived long in the hope that His Highness would not marry, and that he himself should succeed him in his place, and this hope he could not put out of his heart. Nay, as time passed and the baby grew to a healthy boy, Paul's thoughts took a still deeper hue of guilt. It was no longer enough for him to hope for his nephew's death, or even to meditate how he should bring it about. One wicked imagining led on, as it is wont in our sinful nature, to another, and Satan whispered in Paul's ear that the Duke himself was short of forty by a year, that to wait for power till youth were gone was not a bold man's part, and that to contrive the child's death, leaving his father alive, was but to double the risk without halving the guilt. Thus was Paul induced to dwell on the death of both father and son, and to say to himself that if the father went first the son would easily follow, and that with one cunning and courageous stroke the path to the throne might be cleared.

While Paul pondered on these designs, there came about the events which drove Count Antonio from the Court; and no sooner was he gone and declared in open disobedience and contumacy against the Duke, than Paul, seeking a handle for his plans, seemed to find one in Antonio. Here was a man driven from his house (which the Duke had burned), despoiled of his revenues, bereft of his love, proclaimed a free mark for whosoever would serve the Duke by slaying him. Where could be a better man for the purposes of a malcontent prince? And the more was Paul inclined to use Antonio

from the fact that he had shown favour to Antonio, and been wont to seek his society; so that Antonio, failing to pierce the dark depths of his heart, was loyally devoted to him, and had returned an answer full of gratitude and friendship to the secret messages in which Paul had sent him condolence on the mishap that had befallen him.

Now in the beginning of the second year of Count Antonio's outlawry, His Highness was most mightily incensed against him, not merely because he had so won the affection of the country-folk that none would betray his hiding-place either for threats or for rewards, but most chiefly by reason of a certain act which was in truth more of Tommasino's doing than of Antonio's. For Tommasino, meeting one of the Duke's farmers of taxes, had lightened him of his fat bag of money, saying that he would himself assume the honour of delivering what was fairly due to His Highness, and had upon that scattered three-fourths of the spoil among the poor, and sent the beggarly remnant privily by night to the gate of the city, with a writing, 'There is honour among thieves; who, then, may call Princes thieves?' And this writing had been read by many, and the report of it, spreading through the city, had made men laugh. Therefore the Duke had sworn that by no means should Antonio gain pardon save by delivering that insolent young robber to the hands of justice. Thus he was highly pleased when his brother sought him in the garden (for he sat in his wonted place under the wall by the fish-pond) and bade him listen to a plan whereby the outlaws should be brought to punishment. The Duke took his little son upon his knees, and prayed his brother to tell his device.

'You could not bring me a sweeter gift than the head of Tommasino,' said he, stroking the child's curls; and the child shrank closer into his arms, for the child did not love Paul, but feared him.

'Antonio knows that I love Your Highness,' said Paul, seating himself on the seat by the Duke, 'but he knows also that I am his friend, and a friend to the Lady Lucia, and a man of tender heart. Would it seem to him deep treachery if I should go privately to him and tell him how that on a certain day you would go forth with your Guard to camp in the spurs of Mount Agnino, leaving the city desolate, and that on the night of that day I could contrive that Lucia should come secretly to the gate, and that it should be opened for her, so that by a sudden descent she might be seized and carried safe to his hiding-place before aid could come from Your Highness?'

'But what should the truth be?' asked Valentine.

'The truth should be that while part of the Guard went to the spurs of the Mount, the rest should lie in ambush close inside the city gates and dash out on Antonio and his company.'

'It is well, if he will believe.'

Then Paul laid his finger on his brother's arm. 'As the clock in the tower of the Cathedral strikes three on the morning of the 15th of the month, do you, dear brother, be in your summer-house at the corner of the garden

yonder; and I will come thither and tell you if he has believed and if he has come. For by then I shall have learned from him his mind: and we two will straightway go rouse the Guards and lead the men to their appointed station, and when he approaches the gate we can lay hands on him.'

'How can you come to him? For we do not know where he is hid.'

'Alas, there is not a rogue of a peasant that cannot take a letter to him!'

'Yet when I question them, ay, though I beat them, they know nothing!' cried Valentine in chagrin. 'Truly, the sooner we lay him by the heels, the better for our security.'

'Shall it be, then, as I say, my lord?'

'So let it be,' said the Duke. 'I will await you in the summer-house.'

Paul, perceiving that his brother had no suspicions of him, and would await him in the summer-house, held his task to be already half-done. For his plan was that he and Antonio should come together to the summer-house, but that Antonio should lie hid till Paul had spoken to the Duke; then Paul should go out on pretext of bidding the Guard make ready the ambush, and leave the Duke alone with Antonio. Antonio then, suddenly springing forth, should slay the Duke; while Paul—and when he thought on this, he smiled to himself—would so contrive that a body of men should bar Antonio's escape, and straightway kill him. Thus should he be quit both of his brother and Antonio, and no man would live who knew how the deed was contrived. 'And then,' said he, 'I doubt whether the poor child, bereft of all parental care, will long escape the manifold perils of infancy.'

Thus he schemed; and when he had made all sure, and noised about the Duke's intentions touching his going to the spurs of Mount Agnino, he himself set forth alone on his horse to seek Antonio. He rode till he reached the entrance of the pass leading to the recesses of the hills. Then he dismounted, and sat down on the ground; and this was at noon on the 13th day of the month. He had not long been sitting, when a face peered from behind a wall of moss-covered rock that fronted him, and Paul cried, 'Is it a friend?'

'A friend of whom mean you, my lord?' came from the rock.

'Of whom else than of Count Antonio?' cried Paul.

A silence followed and a delay; then two men stole cautiously from behind the rock; and in one of them Paul knew the man they called Bena, who had been of the Duke's Guard. The men, knowing Paul, bowed low to him, and asked him his pleasure, and he commanded them to bring him to Antonio. They wondered, knowing not whether he came from the Duke or despite the Duke; but he was urgent in his commands, and at length they tied a scarf over his eyes, and set him on his horse, and led the horse. Thus they went for an hour. Then they prayed him to dismount, saying that the horse could go no farther; and though Paul's eyes saw nothing, he heard the whinnying and smelt the smell of horses.

'Here are your stables then,' said he, and dismounted with a laugh.

Then Bena took him by the hand, and the other guided his feet, and climbing up steep paths, over boulders and through little water-courses, they went, till at length Bena cried, 'We are at home, my lord;' and Paul, tearing off his bandage, found himself on a small level spot, ranged round with stunted wind-beaten firs; and three huts stood in the middle of the space, and before one of the huts sat Tommasino, composing a sonnet to a pretty peasant girl whom he had chanced to meet that day. For Tommasino had ever a hospitable heart. But seeing Paul, Tommasino left his sonnet, and with a cry of wonder sprang to meet him; and Paul took him by both hands and saluted him. That night and the morning that followed, Paul abode with Antonio, eating the good cheer and drinking the good wine that Tommasino, who had charged himself with the care of such matters, put before him. Whence they came from, Paul asked not; nor did Tommasino say more than that they were offerings to Count Antonio—but whether offerings of free-will or no, he said not. And during this time Paul spoke much with Antonio privily and apart, persuading him of his friendship, and telling most pitiful things of the harshness shown by Valentine his brother to the Lady Lucia, and how the lady grew pale and peaked, and pined, so that the physicians knit their brows over her, and the women said no drugs would patch a broken heart. Thus he inflamed Antonio's mind with a great rage against the Duke, so that he fell to counting the men he had, and wondering whether there was force to go openly against the city. But in sorrow Paul answered that the pikemen were too many.

'But there is a way, and a better,' said Paul, leaning his head near to Antonio's ear. 'A way whereby you may come to your own again, and rebuild your house that the Duke has burned, and enjoy the love of Lucia, and hold foremost place in the Duchy.'

'What way is that?' asked Antonio in wondering eagerness. 'Indeed I am willing to serve His Highness in any honourable service, if by that I may win his pardon and come to that I long for.'

'His pardon! When did he pardon?' sneered Paul.

To know honest men and leave them to their honesty is the last great gift of villainy. But Paul had it not; and now he unfolded to Antonio the plan that he had made, saving (as needs not to be said) that part of it whereby Antonio himself was to meet his death. For a pretext, he alleged that the Duke oppressed the city, and that he, Paul, was put out of favour because he had sought to protect the people, and was fallen into great suspicion. Yet, judging Antonio's heart by his own, he dwelt again and longer on the charms of Lucia, and on the great things he would give Antonio when he ruled the Duchy for his nephew; for of the last crime he meditated, the death of the child, he said naught then, professing to love the child. When the tale began, a sudden start ran through Antonio, and his face flushed; but he sat still and listened with unmoved

face, his eyes gravely regarding Paul the while. No anger did he show, nor wonder, nor scorn; nor now any eagerness; but he gazed at the Prince with calm musing glance, as though he considered of some great question put before him. And when Paul ended his tale, Antonio sat yet silent and musing. But Paul was trembling now, and he stretched out his hand and laid it on Antonio's knee, and asked, with a feigned laugh that choked in the utterance, 'Well, friend Antonio, is it a clever plan, and will you ride with me?'

Minute followed minute before Antonio answered. At length the frown vanished from his brow, and his face grew calm and set, and he answered Duke Paul, saying, 'It is such a plan as you, my lord, alone of all men in the Duchy could make; and I will ride with you.'

Then Paul, in triumph, caught him by the hands and pressed his hands, calling him a man of fine spirit and a true friend, who should not lack reward. And all this Antonio suffered silently; and in silence still he listened while Paul told him how that a path led secretly from the bank of the river, through a secret gate in the wall, to the summer-house where the Duke was to be; of this gate he alone, saving the Duke, had the key; they had but to swim the river and enter by this gate. Having secreted Antonio, Paul would talk with the Duke; then he would go and carry off what remained of the Guard over and above those that were gone to the hills; and Antonio, having done his deed, could return by the same secret path, cross the river again, and rejoin his friends. And in a short space of time, Paul would recall him with honour to the city and give him Lucia to wife.

'And if there be a question as to the hand that dealt the blow, there is a rascal whom the Duke flogged but a few days since—a steward in the Palace. He deserves hanging, Antonio, for a thousand things of which he is guilty, and it will trouble me little to hang him for one whereof he chances to be innocent.' And Duke Paul laughed heartily.

'I will ride with you,' said Antonio again.

Then, it being full mid-day, they sat down to dinner, Paul bandying many merry sayings with Tommasino, Antonio being calm but not uncheerful. And when the meal was done, Paul drank to the good-fortune of their expedition; and Antonio having drained his glass, said, 'May God approve the issue,' and straightway bade Tommasino and Martolo prepare to ride with him. Then, Paul being again blindfolded, they climbed down the mountain paths till they came where the horses were, and thus, as the sun began to decline, set forward at a fair pace, Duke Paul and Antonio leading by some few yards; while Tommasino and Martolo, having drunk well, and sniffing sport in front of them, sang, jested, and played pranks on one another as they passed along. But when night fell they became silent; even Tommasino grew grave and checked his horse, and the space between them and the pair who led grew greater, so that it seemed to Duke Paul that he and Antonio rode alone through the night, under the shadows of the great hills. Once

and again he spoke to Antonio, first of the scheme, then on some light matter; but Antonio did no more than move his head in assent. And Antonio's face was very white, and his lips were close shut.

SUSPENDED VITALITY IN PLANTS AND ANIMALS.

A WRITER on 'Humanity Past and Future,' in the *Pall Mall Magazine*, says: 'A means will be discovered to suspend animation, and thereby prolong interrupted life perhaps for centuries.' This bold prediction is a curious comment upon the controversy, renewed from time to time, as to the possibility of the growth of 'mummy wheat.' Botanists generally deny the possibility of the suspended vitality of corn during many centuries, and reduce its life-history to the short span of seven years. Yet scientific dreamers already fancy the problem of suspended animation, even in warm-blooded animals, almost solved. But if Nature altogether refuses, even under the most favourable circumstances, to extend her lease of life to those grains which she has herself matured and hardened to endure months or years of seeming death, how is she to be induced to do so in the case of those creatures to whom breath is life, and the exclusion of air, death?

Nevertheless, hibernation—which is a form of suspended animation—is common in many warm-blooded animals; whilst the chrysalis state is almost universal among insects. No one knows how long these two forms of death-in-life may endure under abnormal conditions, or how far the principle may be extended. Indian jugglers have, as we know, long claimed the power of suspending animation at will, and one instance at least is recorded in which this power seems to have been subjected successfully to a very severe test. Doubters, however, will continue to class this with the stories of toads shut up in rocks, and the growth of mummy wheat, regarding all alike as impossible.

The sceptic may be right, but it is quite possible to err on the side of scepticism; and it is certain that the vitality of seeds is much under-estimated. A case in point came under the notice of the writer some years ago, when, on the death of an aged relative, seeds of melon and geranium which had been stored for nearly fifty years—the locality whence derived and the date having been carefully noted by the deceased—were sown, with the result that many of them grew and produced fruit and flowers of excellent quality. This, which can be vouched for, proves that, under ordinary circumstances, seeds will retain vitality for at least half a century; how much longer, who shall say? Darwin gives many instances of seeds which have germinated after having been floated for long periods on sea-water; and a plant reared from a nut, supposed to have been a relic of the great Krakatoa eruption, which had stranded near Port Elizabeth three years afterwards, is still growing in the Botanic Gardens there.

But perhaps the most remarkable cases of long-continued suspension of vitality and renewal

of life in plants are those which occur occasionally when earth, which has remained undisturbed for centuries, upon exposure to the air brings forth plants, not indeed, unknown to botanists, but unknown to the district in which they appear. Dr Carpenter, in his *Vegetable Physiology*, brings forward several singular cases of this kind; in one, clay thrown up from beneath fourteen feet of peat-earth yielded seeds which, when sown, produced a species of chrysanthemum. In another, some well-diggers in America, forty miles from the sea, came upon sea-sand, which, upon being brought to the surface and scattered, yielded a number of small trees. These proved to be beech-plum trees, which grow only on the sea-shore, and were of course new to the district.

Professor von Heldrich of Athens asserts that at the silver mines of Laurium, in Greece, a luxuriant crop of horned poppy of an unknown species has appeared on soil covered to a depth of ten feet by the scoriæ thrown out by the ancient workers, and recently disturbed in order to remelt the old refuse.

An exceedingly interesting instance of this kind occurred in Bath some years ago, when, on uncovering the old Roman baths, wherever the spade of the explorer let in air and light, a fern—certainly at present unknown in the neighbourhood—sprang up in every little nook and corner. Some of these plants lived and grew for years; but, although carefully protected, they have now entirely disappeared. The new life and strange environment was in some way distasteful to them, and they died away as they had appeared, suddenly. A similar story might be told in many other localities. Even in London, it is said that the hedge-mustard springs up wherever a house is burned down; and after the Great Fire in 1666, the yellow rocket appeared in profusion in the district swept by the flames. In South Africa it has been observed that whenever a grass fire occurs near Graaf-Reinet, the Cape gooseberry and a scarlet flowering bulb spring up for miles, instead of the plants burned; and in the same neighbourhood, wherever stones are excavated, the tobacco tree appears on the spot quarried.

Now, in all these cases, the plants reappearing after long somnolence must have been buried at a season when fructification was perfected and germination in abeyance. For, if they had not been in seed, they could not have survived; and had germination commenced, they would doubtless have perished. It is just this fact which seems to be overlooked in the case of mummy wheat, which Lord Winchelsea has failed to make grow; but which Mr Sutton, a practical seed-grower, says his firm has frequently grown successfully when sown immediately after being taken from the mummy cases, before the atmosphere has had time to destroy its vitality.

It is evident that wheat and other seeds would have a much greater chance of survival if hermetically sealed up just after harvest, when the germinating power is at its lowest, than if packed away in the same manner just at seed-time, when the germ, though unseen, has begun to develop. It may indeed be kept back for a time by absence of moisture; but

the germ, once fully formed and then checked, will not grow again.

If we turn from plant to animal life, we shall see the same problem of suspended vitality presented in many forms. Let us, for instance, consider that wonderful awakening after rain in tropical and semi-tropical countries, so often described by travellers. Months of drought have dried up the water-courses, so that you may dig down deep in the beds of rivers and ponds and find no moisture. The earth is bare and parched, riven in great cracks by the scorching sun, and a silence as of death reigns everywhere. There is a tropical shower, and suddenly the air resounds with the croakings of frogs and toads, the chirpings of insects, and the songs of birds; whilst grass and flowering plants spring up as if by magic. It is a veritable resurrection, brought about by that which may well be termed the water of life—the sudden revival of many things animate and inanimate apparently dead.

Lumholtz says: 'In South Australia a drought once lasted for twenty-six months. The country was transformed into a desert, and life was not to be seen. Sheep and cattle had perished, and so had the marsupials. Suddenly rain poured down. The long drought was at an end, and six hours after the storm had begun, the rain was welcomed by the powerful voices of the frogs. Flies afterwards came in great numbers, and then bats appeared in countless swarms.'

But independently of drought, there are many singular and inexplicable cases of the intermittent appearance of living things after having undergone long periods of quiescence. Such is happily the case with the locust, of the latest visitation of which in South Africa it is said that after rain they made their appearance in vast numbers, emerging from the ground where their eggs had lain for nearly twenty years. The ordinary locust does not seem to have a definite time for reappearance; but the American locust, known as the *Cicada septemdecim*, comes out regularly every seventeen years, whence its name. It emerges in the pupa state from deep holes in the ground, even in hard pathways, crawls to some neighbouring tree, where it sheds its skin, and sits drying its wings and singing 'Pha-ra-oh,' by which name it is commonly known. As the locusts increase in number, this song becomes a loud chorus; and as they sing, they hollow out long furrows in the branches of the tree upon which they rest, and in these furrows they lay their eggs. The branches thus excavated die and drop off, and thus probably the eggs are conveyed to the earth, to be washed into the soil by rains, in order to undergo their seventeen years of change and death-like sleep; and at the end of the seventeen years, return to upper air and so follow again the example of their long-deceased parents. But what becomes of the perfect insects, how the eggs germinate, how and why they become buried so deeply under ground, and what metamorphoses they undergo during this long burial, no one knows. The only thing certain about them is, that they will return punctually at the end of seventeen years, and neither earlier nor later.

There seems reason to suppose that those

disease-producing microscopic objects known to modern science as 'bacteria' have also periods of quiescence and renewed activity, resulting in epidemics of various kinds; but whether the air, earth, or water serves them as a resting-place during their periods of repose, and by which of the elements they are conveyed to their victims, we do not know with certainty. It seems, however, to be proved that some at least are destroyed by that sunshine which exerts so vivifying an influence upon most plants and animals.

From all these instances, it seems clear that Nature refuses to be bound by any of the hard and fast rules which Science formulates. She works by secret and mysterious laws, hidden alike from the learned and simple; she has not only her regular and set periods of sleep and re-awakening, but also long and indefinite seasons of repose or death-like trance, during which her children lie *perdu* in earth or air, or beneath the running waters, awaiting, like the sleeping damsels of old romance, the kiss of some fairy Prince to restore them to life and vigour. The kiss may come by fire or flood, or by the viewless air, and after months or years or centuries of waiting; but whenever it does come, it is certain to find them ready to cast off the trammels of their enchanted sleep, and to resume their place, and play again their destined rôle, for either weal or woe, in the living tapestry of Nature's handiwork.

THE RECOLLECTIONS OF CAPTAIN WILKIE.*

By A. CONAN DOYLE.

IN TWO PARTS—PART I.

'WHO can he be?' thought I, as I watched my companion in the second-class carriage of the London and Dover Railway.

I had been so full of the fact that my long-expected holiday had come at last, and that for a few days at least the gaieties of Paris were about to supersede the dull routine of the hospital wards, that we were well out of London before I observed that I was not alone in the compartment. In these days we have all pretty well agreed that 'Three is company and two is none' upon the railway. At the time I write of, however, people were not so morbidly sensitive about their travelling companions. It was rather an agreeable surprise to me to find that there was some chance of whiling away the hours of a tedious journey. I therefore pulled my cap down over my eyes, took a good look from beneath it at my vis-à-vis, and repeated to myself, 'Who can he be?'

I used rather to pride myself on being able to spot a man's trade or profession by a good look at his exterior. I had the advantage of studying under a Professor at Edinburgh who was a master of the art, and used to electrify both his patients and his clinical classes by long shots, sometimes at the most unlikely of pursuits, and never very far from the mark. 'Well, my man,' I have heard him say, 'I can see by

your fingers that you play some musical instrument for your livelihood, but it is a rather curious one—something quite out of my line.' The man afterwards informed us that he earned a few coppers by blowing *Rule Britannia* on a coffee-pot, the spout of which was pierced to form a rough flute. Though a novice in the art compared to the shrewd Professor, I was still able to astonish my ward companions on occasion, and I never lost an opportunity of practising myself. It was not mere curiosity, then, which led me to lean back on the cushions and analyse the quiet middle-aged man in front of me.

I used to do the thing systematically, and my train of reflections ran somewhat in this wise: 'General appearance vulgar, fairly opulent, and extremely self-possessed—looks like a man who could outchaff a bargee, and yet be at his ease in the best middle-class society. Eyes well set together, and nose rather prominent—would be a good long-range marksman. Cheeks flabby, but the softness of expression redeemed by a square-cut jaw and a well-set lower lip. On the whole, a powerful type. Now for the hands—rather disappointed there. Thought he was a self-made man by the look of him, but there is no callus in the palm, and no thickening at the joints. Has never been engaged in any real physical work, I should think. No tanning on the backs of the hands; on the contrary, they are very white, with blue projecting veins and long delicate fingers. Couldn't be an artist with that face, and yet he has the hands of a man engaged in delicate manipulations. No red acid spots upon his clothes, no ink-stains, no nitrate-of-silver marks upon the hands (this helps to negative my half-formed opinion that he was a photographer). Clothes not worn in any particular part. Coat made of tweed, and fairly old; but the left elbow, as far as I can see it, has as much of the fluff left on as the right, which is seldom the case with men who do much writing. Might be a commercial traveller, but the little pocket-book in the waistcoat is wanting, nor has he any of those handy valises suggestive of samples.'

I give these brief headings of my ideas merely to demonstrate my method of arriving at a conclusion. As yet I had obtained nothing but negative results; but now, to use a chemical metaphor, I was in a position to pour off this solution of dissolved possibilities and examine the residue. I found myself reduced to a very limited number of occupations. He was neither a lawyer nor a clergyman, in spite of a soft felt hat, and a somewhat clerical cut about the necktie. I was wavering now between pawn-broker and horse-dealer; but there was too much character about his face for the former; and he lacked that extraordinary equine atmosphere which hangs about the latter even in his hours of relaxation; so I formed a provisional diagnosis of betting man of methodistical proclivities, the latter clause being inserted in deference to his hat and necktie.

Pray, do not think that I reasoned it out like this in my own mind. It is only now, sitting down with pen and paper, that I can see the successive steps. As it was, I had

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formed my conclusion within sixty seconds of the time when I drew my hat down over my eyes and uttered the mental ejaculation with which my narrative begins.

I did not feel quite satisfied even then with my deduction. However, as a leading question would—to pursue my chemical analogy—act as my litmus paper, I determined to try one. There was a *Times* lying by my companion, and I thought the opportunity too good to be neglected.

'Do you mind my looking at your paper?' I asked.

'Certainly, sir, certainly,' said he most urbanely, handing it across.

I glanced down its columns until my eye rested upon the list of the latest betting.

'Hullo!' I said, 'they are laying odds upon the favourite for the Cambridgeshire.—But perhaps,' I added, looking up, 'you are not interested in these matters?'

'Snares, sir!' said he violently, 'wiles of the enemy! Mortals are but given a few years to live; how can they squander their so!—They have not even an eye to their poor worldly interests,' he added in a quieter tone, 'or they would never back a single horse at such short odds with a field of thirty.'

There was something in this speech of his which tickled me immensely. I suppose it was the odd way in which he blended religious intolerance with worldly wisdom. I laid the *Times* aside with the conviction that I should be able to spend the next two hours to better purpose than in its perusal.

'You speak as if you understood the matter, at any rate,' I remarked.

'Yes, sir,' he answered; 'few men in England understood these things better in the old days before I changed my profession. But that is all over now.'

'Changed your profession?' said I interrogatively.

'Yes; I changed my name too.'

'Indeed?' said I.

'Yes; you see, a man wants a real fresh start when his eyes become opened, so he has a new deal all round, so to speak. Then he gets a fair chance.'

There was a short pause here, as I seemed to be on delicate ground in touching on my companion's antecedents, and he did not volunteer any information. I broke the silence by offering him a cheroot.

'No; thanks,' said he; 'I have given up tobacco. It was the hardest wrench of all, was that. It does me good to smell the whiff of your weed.—Tell me,' he added suddenly, looking hard at me with his shrewd gray eyes, 'why did you take stock of me so carefully before you spoke?'

'It is a habit of mine,' said I. 'I am a medical man, and observation is everything in my profession. I had no idea you were looking.'

'I can see without looking,' he answered. 'I thought you were a detective, at first; but I couldn't recall your face at the time I knew the force.'

'Were you a detective, then?' said I.

'No,' he answered with a laugh; 'I was the other thing—the detected, you know. Old scores

are wiped out now, and the law cannot touch me, so I don't mind confessing to a gentleman like yourself what a scoundrel I have been in my time.'

'We are none of us perfect,' said I.

'No; but I was a real out-and-outer. A "fake," you know, to start with, and afterwards a "cracksman." It is easy to talk of these things now, for I've changed my spirit. It's as if I was talking of some other man, you see.'

'Exactly so,' said I. Being a medical man I had none of that shrinking from crime and criminals which many men possess. I could make all allowances for congenial influence and the force of circumstances. No company, therefore, could have been more acceptable to me than that of the old malefactor; and as I sat puffing at my cigar, I was delighted to observe that my air of interest was gradually loosening his tongue.

'Yes; I'm a changed man now,' he continued, 'and of course I am a happier man for that. And yet,' he added wistfully, 'there are times when I long for the old trade again, and fancy myself strolling out on a cloudy night with my jemmy in my pocket. I left a name behind me in my profession, sir. I was one of the old school, you know. It was very seldom that we bungled a job. We used to begin at the foot of the ladder, in my younger days, and then work our way up through the successive grades, so that we were what you might call good men all round.'

'I see,' said I.

'I was always reckoned a hard-working, conscientious man, and had talent too—the very cleverest of them allowed that. I began as a blacksmith, and then did a little engineering and carpentering, and then I took to sleight-of-hand tricks, and then to picking pockets. I remember, when I was home on a visit, how my poor old father used to wonder why I was always hovering around him. He little knew that I used to clear everything out of his pockets a dozen times a day, and then replace them, just to keep my hand in. He believes to this day that I am in an office in the City. There are few of them could touch me in that particular line of business, though.'

'I suppose it is a matter of practice?' I remarked.

'To a great extent. Still, a man never quite loses it, if he has once been an adept.—Excuse me; you have dropped some cigar ash on your coat,' and he waved his hand politely in front of my breast, as if to brush it off.—'There,' he said, handing me my gold scarf pin, 'you see I have not forgot my old cunning yet.'

He had done it so quickly that I hardly saw the hand whisk over my bosom, nor did I feel his fingers touch me, and yet there was the pin glittering in his hand. 'It is wonderful!' I said as I fixed it again in its place.

'Oh, that's nothing! But I have been in some really smart jobs. I was in the gang that picked the new patent safe. You remember the case. It was guaranteed to resist anything; and we managed to open the first that was ever issued, within a week of its appearance. It was done with graduated wedges, sir, the

first so small that you could hardly see it against the light, and the last strong enough to prise it open. It was a cleverly managed affair.'

'I remember it,' said I. 'But surely some one was convicted for that?'

'Yes, one was nabbed. But he didn't split, nor even let on how it was done. It would have been as much as his life was worth.—Perhaps I am boring you, talking about these old wicked days of mine?'

'On the contrary,' I said, 'you interest me extremely.'

'I like to get a listener I can trust. It's a sort of blow-off, you know, and I feel lighter after it. When I am among my new and highly respectable acquaintances, I dare hardly think of what has gone before.—Now, I'll tell you about another job I was in. To this day, I cannot think about it without laughing.'

I lit another cigar, and composed myself to listen.

'It was when I was a youngster,' said he. 'There was a big City man in those days who was known to have a very valuable gold watch. I followed him about for several days before I could get a chance; but when I did get one, you may be sure I did not throw it away. He found, to his disgust, when he got home that day, that there was nothing in his fob. I hurried off with my prize, and got it stowed away in safety, intending to have it melted down next day. Now, it happened that this watch possessed a special value in the owner's eyes because it was a sort of ancestral possession—presented to his father on coming of age, or something of that sort. I remember there was a long inscription on the back. He was determined not to lose it if he could help it, and accordingly he put an advertisement in an evening paper offering thirty pounds reward for its return, and promising that no questions should be asked. He gave the address of his house, 31 Caroline Square, at the end of the advertisement. The thing sounded good enough, so I set off for Caroline Square, leaving the watch in a parcel at a public-house which I passed on the way. When I got there, the gentleman was at dinner; but he came out quick enough when he heard that a young man wanted to see him. I suppose he guessed who the young man would prove to be. He was a genial-looking old fellow, and he led me away with him into his study.

"Well, my lad," said he, "what is it?"

"I've come about that watch of yours," said I. "I think I can lay my hands on it."

"Oh, it was you that took it!" said he.

"No," I answered; "I know nothing whatever about how you lost it. I have been sent by another party to see you about it. Even if you have me arrested, you will not find out anything."

"Well," he said, "I don't want to be hard on you. Hand it over, and here is my cheque for the amount."

"Cheques won't do," said I; "I must have it in gold."

"It will take me an hour or so to collect it in gold," said he.

"That will just suit," I answered, "for I have

not got the watch with me. I'll go back and fetch it, while you raise the money."

'I started off, and got the watch where I had left it. When I came back, the old gentleman was sitting behind his study table, with the little heap of gold in front of him.

"Here is your money," he said, and pushed it over.

"Here is your watch," said I.

'He was evidently delighted to get it back; and after examining it carefully, and assuring himself that it was none the worse, he put it into the watch-pocket of his coat with a grunt of satisfaction.

"Now, my lad," he said, "I know it was you that took the watch. Tell me how you did it, and I don't mind giving you an extra five-pound note."

"I wouldn't tell you in any case," said I; "but especially I wouldn't tell you when you have a witness hid behind that curtain." You see, I had all my wits about me, and it didn't escape me that the curtain was drawn tighter than it had been before.

"You are too sharp for us," said he good-humouredly. "Well, you have got your money, and that's an end of it. I'll take precious good care you don't get hold of my watch again in a hurry.—Good-night.—No; not that door," he added as I marched towards a cupboard. "This is the door," and he stood up and opened it. I brushed past him, opened the hall door, and was round the corner of the square in no time. I don't know how long the old gentleman took to find it out, but in passing him at the door, I managed to pick his pocket for the second time, and next morning the family heirloom was in the melting-pot after all.—That wasn't bad, was it?"

The old war-horse was evidently getting his blood up now. There was a tone of triumph in the conclusion of his anecdote which showed that, sometimes at least, his pride in his smartness surpassed his repentance of his misdeeds. He seemed pleased at the astonishment and amusement I expressed at his adroitness.

'Yes,' he continued with a laugh, 'it was a capital joke. But sometimes the fun lies all the other way. Even the sharpest of us comes to grief at times. There was one rather curious incident which occurred in my career. You may possibly have seen the anecdote, for it got into print at the time.'

'Pray, let me hear it,' said I.

SOME POPULAR REMEDIES.

REMEDIES are popular from a variety of causes. Among the humbler classes of society a remedy becomes popular because it is economical, not difficult to procure, and easily applied. Such, for instance, is a cobweb put on a cut finger to stop bleeding. Though a very uncleanly remedy—as the cobweb, generally from some neglected corner, is charged with dirt—it is nevertheless a somewhat effective one. In the *Midsummer Night's Dream* we find Bottom, the weaver, exclaiming to the fairy Cobweb: 'If I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you.'

Blood has a tendency to clot more rapidly if a substance is brought in touch with it presenting a multiplication of points of contact; thus the cobweb checks bleeding from small blood-vessels. The leaf of the matico plant, which is used by dentists to stop bleeding after the extraction of a tooth, is generally supposed to have a similar mechanical action. When Frank Buckland the naturalist was out fishing, he had the misfortune to cut one of his fingers, which bled profusely, so he took the down-like seed from the head of a bulrush and pressed it on the wound, when a clot soon formed around the seed, and the bleeding ceased.

In the dark ages, boiling tar was a common remedy to arrest the flow of blood from a bleeding artery; and among some barbarous races this very painful method is still adopted. During the American Civil War, old tarred rope carded was used to dress the wounded. In our hospitals a finer picked oakum has been employed, called 'tenax' and 'marine lint,' which is tow impregnated with tar. Tar taken internally, as tar water, was once a popular remedy. It is not a pleasant medicine to take, unless its taste is artfully concealed by more agreeable flavours. Dickens makes little Pip, in *Great Expectations*, say of his sister, Mrs Joe Gargery, that she had 'a belief in its virtues correspondent to its nastiness,' and that 'so much of this elixir was administered to me as a choice restorative, that I was conscious of going about smelling like a new fence.' Bishop Berkeley—to whom Pope ascribed 'every virtue under heaven'—pronounced a eulogy on tar water similar to that he himself received from the poet. When he was accused of imagining that he had discovered a panacea in tar water, he acknowledged with perfect frankness that he suspected he had. Berkeley's tar was of course not coal-tar, but tar from pine-trees. Tar water has received some commendation of late as a remedy for bronchial affections.

There is not so much domestic pharmacy as there was, science having plainly shown that many of the 'herbes of vertue'—which were credited by the old herbalists with possessing such wonderful powers to cure—are of little medicinal value. Still, there exists among some rustic folk a predilection for old remedies which can be freshly prepared by their own hands from vegetables and herbs they are well acquainted with, and therefore free from the impurities that may come from long keeping and the adulterations of the market. Moreover, economy is another reason.

Herb teas are very popular. A kettle and tea-pot are almost always ready to hand, and the process of preparation is a simple one. Again, medicine appears less objectionable to take when it is made in the form of a beverage and called a tea. Saffron, camomile, and linseed are taken largely in this way, and indis-

criminally administered for a great number of complaints, not only in the country, but by the working classes in towns—often when more potent and valuable remedies ought to be administered. Saffron is commonly accounted a sort of specific for measles—for no known reason. Children, therefore, suffering from this fever often receive no other treatment, and sink under it. Camomile has been held by country villagers from time immemorial to be a strong tonic, and the smell from beds of the flower is supposed to be very invigorating for invalids. Large quantities of the plant are grown at Mitcham, in Surrey.

Linseed tea is made from the seeds of the common flax plant, and is pronounced to be 'very healing.' The *testa* or envelope of the seed yields a mucilaginous substance, which soothes and protects inflamed and irritable parts. Hence the discomforting sensation produced by a sore throat is alleviated by this simple old remedy.

Other teas are made with sage, hyssop, and elder-flower. With the making of elder-flower tea, Hans Andersen introduces to us one of his charming little fairy stories, *A Tale in the Tea-pot*. A little boy takes a chill, and after having two tea-cupfuls of elder-flower tea—'which warms one so nicely'—falls into a comfortable slumber while a friendly old man is narrating a story. Taken thus in large quantities, warm drinks doubtless produce an agreeable sense of warmth in the body at an early stage in colds, and increasing the action of the skin, relieve the congestion of internal parts. The soporific effect of the elder-flower has been overrated. The author of *The Frugal Housewife* informs us that the narcotic scent from the tree makes it unwholesome to sleep under its shade.

Country people are much impressed with the value of the exhalation from hops as a remedy for sleeplessness. It has been found that those who sleep in hop-houses are with difficulty roused from their slumber. A pillow stuffed with hops is often used to induce sleep in the wakeful; but it frequently proves quite ineffective.

The names of certain flowers indicate that they were considered to have a miraculous or magical power. The St John's wort was supposed to have the power of keeping off evil spirits, of being a marvellous cure for various disorders, and of having great efficacy in maniacal cases. The flowers of the plant when made into a salve were much used in villages in Kent for dressing wounds. The peony is called after Peon, in Greek mythology the physician of the gods. 'In our own days,' says Ann Pratt, 'anodyne necklaces are worn by children, which are believed to aid dentition and to prevent convulsions; and the beads are turned of the roots of one or other of the common peonies.' The rustic poet, John Clare, refers to superstitious customs connected with the fumitory. And the name of the plant is derived from the Latin word *fumus*, 'smoke,' because, it is said, the smoke of this plant was

believed by the ancient exorcists to have the power of expelling evil spirits.

The giant puff-ball, a species of fungus, is edible when cooked; but if eaten raw, sometimes causes poisonous symptoms. Recent experience has shown that it is an excellent styptic for wounds. It has also been used successfully for troublesome bleeding from the nose, small masses of the fungus being inserted into the cavity of the nostril. Its action is mechanical, like the cobweb's.

Fishermen and others living by the sea are often not quick to discover and utilise the medicinal properties of plants to be seen every day beside them. Readers of Charles Kingsley's *Two Years Ago* will remember how old Dr Heale of Aberlva, a small fishing-town, complains of his new assistant, Tom Thurnall, and the unbusiness-like manner in which he performs his duties in the surgery. A patient supposed to be consumptive enters the surgery, and Tom Thurnall tells him he ought to try carrageen moss. 'There was a drawerful of it to his haud' (grumbles the old doctor), 'had been lying there any time this ten years. I go to open it; but what was my feelings when he goes on, cool as a cucumber, "And there's bushels of it here," says he, "on every rock; so, if you'll come down with me at low tide this afternoon, I'll show you the trade, and tell you how to boil it." I thought I should have knocked him down.'

Carrageen or Irish Moss is a seaweed growing plentifully on rocky shores in Northern Europe. After it has been washed in cold water and dried, it can then be boiled, and made to form a pleasant demulcent drink suitable for coughs and colds, like linseed tea. Boiled in milk, it is said to be good for fattening calves; and if milk be employed instead of water, it can be made into a kind of blanc-mange, and flavoured with sugar and spices. It has been much recommended for consumption on account of its nutritive properties, but these, it must be observed, have been much exaggerated.

Another common seaweed, the bladder-wrack, has been judged to possess entirely different virtues. When trodden on, it makes audible protest by a slight report like that of a popgun, the air-bladders with which the fronds are studded bursting under the pressure of the foot. An extract made from this seaweed forms the basis of a popular remedy for obesity; yet a recent observer declares that pigs in Ireland are fattened on it for the market.

Extensive advertising, a showy label, and a high-sounding or foreign name, go a long way to make a remedy popular. Painful nervous affections being so common to the denizens of large towns, there is an urgent demand for what are called 'pain-killing' medicines. Many of these 'pain-killers' contain very strong poisons, and, unfortunately, their power to kill is not restricted to pain if they are taken in immoderate doses. Some of the so-called 'blood mixtures' also contain poisonous drugs. It is to be regretted that these popular remedies should be sold by grocers, drapers, and general store-keepers, who may have as little knowledge of the action of drugs as their customers. The

greater part are proprietary medicines; but bearing a Government stamp, the public are often led to imagine that they are patent medicines, and they are vaguely so termed. A proprietary medicine is a secret remedy, whereas the composition of a patent medicine is certainly known, and can be seen at the Patent Office. Both, however, bear the Inland Revenue stamp, which of course gives no guarantee of their efficacy or wholesomeness. In France, Germany, Italy, and Japan, more stringent enactments are in force. The Governments of France and Germany do not allow even chemists to sell secret remedies; and in Italy they must be sold only by chemists under the surveillance of the sanitary authorities, and with medical prescriptions.

Gelsemium, the root of the yellow jasmine, is the principal ingredient of many American pain-killers. If not taken with extreme caution, this drug soon manifests its poisonous properties. When as a popular remedy for tooth-ache, it was being imported from the United States in large quantities in the form of a tincture, some sailors on board a vessel in which it was being conveyed supposed it was sherry. Their crime was quickly brought home to them, after they had surreptitiously partaken of it; for they very soon displayed all the alarming symptoms produced by overdoses of the drug. Yet it is one of the most valuable remedies we possess for painful affections of the dental nerves.

Tonga is a harmless remedy not unknown in England, and has long been used for neuralgia by the natives of the Fiji Islands, who prepare it from the bark, leaves, and roots of several indigenous plants.

Cocaine has a curious history. It is prepared from the leaves of the coca shrub, cultivated on the slopes of the Cordilleras of Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia. Before the Spaniards had conquered Peru, the coca leaf was used by the aborigines in their religious rites: it was placed in the mouths of the dead to secure their favourable reception in another world. The Indians chewed the leaf not only for the pleasurable intoxication it produced, but because it gave them strength to endure fatigue and hunger. The following lines were written by Cowley:

Our Varicocha first his Coea sent
Endowed with leaves of wondrous nourishment,
Whose juice sucked in, and to the stomach ta'en,
Long hunger and long labour can sustain;
From which our faint and weary bodies find
More succour, more they cheer the drooping mind,
Than can your Bacchus and your Ceres joined.
Three leaves supply for six days' march afford;
The Quitoita with this provision stored,
Can pass the vast and cloudy Andes o'er.

In 1569, the Spaniards had become so alarmed by the prevalence of the habit of chewing coca, that a decree was passed by a Council of Bishops prohibiting its use. In South America, the Indians who work as miners and at other laborious occupations continue the habit of chewing coca. Athletes, pedestrians, and mountain-climbers accomplish their feats with greater ease under the influence of the drug. There is some diversity of opinion as to whether it really

gives strength; one view is that it simply lulls for a time the sense of hunger or fatigue. Nevertheless, coca has come to be very generally regarded as a good nerve stimulant and tonic. Pharmacologists prepare it as a wine, which vocalists take.

Since 1860, it had been known that cocaine, the active principle of the leaf, had a benumbing effect when applied to the tongue. Yet it was not till 1884 that a knowledge of this well-known fact led to the discovery of its marvellous anæsthetic value in surgical operations. By the instillation of a few drops of a solution of cocaine into the eye, the surgeon is able to remove particles of grit or metal that have become embedded in the superficial structures of that very sensitive organ, with little or no pain to the patient, and without his losing consciousness as with chloroform or ether. Cocaine is now extensively used both at home and abroad in ophthalmic surgery. It is a brilliant example of a remedy for the relief of pain that has become widely popular in a very short time, not from much advertising, but mainly by its own intrinsic worth. It also proves of service in many minor operations on other structures than the eye, and in alleviating the pain of various disorders. Like most powerful drugs, it requires special knowledge and care for its safe administration.

Menthol is one of the commonest remedies, and is put up in the form of pencils or cones, which have to be simply rubbed on the affected parts to diminish sensibility. This substance is obtained as a crystalline body from Chinese or Japanese oil of peppermint after exposure to cold. It has been used in China and Japan as a specific for headache for at least two thousand years, according to Mr Takahanashi, the Japanese Consul at New York. It was not until about 1879 that it began to attract much attention elsewhere. In Paris and Vienna, the liquid oil has been sold at a very high price under the name of 'Po-ho-yo,' or *Gouttes Japonaises*. The cones are easy of application, and can be carried about in the pocket. They are enclosed in little wooden boxes, because menthol camphor evaporates if left exposed for any length of time at the temperature of most living-rooms. Menthol when applied to the unbroken skin leaves a feeling of coldness, which lasts about ten or fifteen minutes, and is followed by a slight burning sensation, and then numbness. For deep-seated neuralgias, menthol is absolutely useless, though often absurdly advertised as curing all kinds of nerve-pain. Menthol has also been proved to have antiseptic properties.

Of many of these much-vaunted anti-neuralgic and pain-killing remedies, it can only be said that they relieve us of pain for a time by deadening our sensibilities, but do not effect a permanent cure by removing the cause. The curative remedies are frequently those which are not easy of application or rapid in their action, but require a great deal of care, self-command, and time. 'Our remedies,' as Shakespeare says, 'oft in ourselves do lie.' We are apt to set them aside for the latest novelty in pharmacy, because they would necessitate changes in our mode of living not agreeable to us; such as retiring earlier to rest, restricting

our diet, wearing extra clothes to meet the changes in temperature of our variable climate, or perhaps ridding ourselves altogether of some habits of self-indulgence. These remedies, it is to be feared, cannot be described as popular.

A CAPTIOUS CRITIC.

By FRED. M. WHITE.

I AM not a great novelist, albeit a fairly popular one. It is far better to be popular than great, and makes all the difference to one's material comfort. A great author is rarely appreciated, at least until he is dead; whereas the popular one winters in the Riviera, and has portraits of his drawing-room furniture in the *Strand Magazine*. Anyway, my work is in good demand; commissions are plentiful, so plentiful last summer that I rather overdid the thing, the natural consequence being nervous irritability and a tendency to lie awake o' nights; and, as a greater writer than myself says, 'That way madness lies.'

'What you want,' remarked my Doctor—who is one of those charming practitioners who always prescribe exactly what the patient most longs for—is a thorough change. Give up work altogether for a month; go to some quiet breezy spot on the coast, and simply live out of doors.'

I had no difficulty in summoning up enough will-power to follow out this request. Solitude has no terrors for me. I packed up my bag, and took the first train to Barnstaple, whence I drifted to a place called Morthoe; and there I pitched my tent—if the expression may be allowed—in a comfortable farmhouse, where the welcome was all that could possibly be expected for the money.

I did not tell any one what my profession was, and consequently I passed for an ordinary individual. After a time, I naturally made acquaintances—the parson and the squire, and that kind of thing. There was nobody with whom to talk shop, which was a drawback. But even that comes in time. I found my *fidus Achates* one morning on the sands, where I had gone in search of a bath. He was a tall, rather melancholy-looking man with a restless eye. Being anything but a bold swimmer, and the coast being dangerous, I was naturally indisposed to try the briny deep, and my new acquaintance obligingly pointed out a perfect natural bath wherein I could disport myself.

'Almost as if it were made on purpose,' he remarked, 'I always come here myself. I've got a house behind the sand-hills there. I shall be pleased to see you any evening that you care to drop in.'

I thanked the speaker, and for the time being we parted. Subsequent inquiry elicited the fact that my friend's name was Walter Wanless, and that he was a stranger, who had taken a furnished house there for a year. Usually, I was informed, he preserved a reserved attitude. He was inclined to be eccentric; and all his housework, cooking, &c., was done for him by a solitary man-servant, who, so the gossips hinted, was employed more in the capacity of a keeper than anything else.

As a novelist, this suggestion merely served to pique my curiosity. A writer looks unconsciously for copy, even in moments of leisure. But I am bound to confess that I saw nothing peculiar in the behaviour of Wanless when one day I lunched with him. The sole was done to the turn; a subsequent dish of curry left nothing to be desired; the sherry was really dry, and not merely acid; and the lusty servitor waited in a manner which would have done credit to a professional. Yet at the same time I could not help seeing that Wanless was very much afraid of his man Bellamy. For instance, when he attempted to help himself to a third glass of sherry, Bellamy calmly removed the glass, and placed the decanter at my end of the table. The thing was done so coolly that I could hardly restrain my astonishment.

For a moment I saw a lurid light flash into the peculiar dark eyes of my host; his hand clenched, then he laughed pleasantly. 'Bellamy presumes, as all old servants do,' Wanless said. 'But he is right, all the same; I am a wretched drinker.'

Bellamy said nothing; he did not even smile. He handed round a box of cigars, from which Wanless selected one; and then he locked up the box and put the key in his pocket.

'You don't want to sit here all day, sir,' he said respectfully but firmly. 'You had better go for a walk, I think.'

Wanless rose obediently, and I followed. As we passed through the hall, I caught a glimpse of a small but complete-looking library which was lined with books. With the fascination that volumes of any kind possess for me, I was about to enter, when Bellamy closed the door and locked it. 'Sir,' he said to his employer, 'you are wasting the afternoon.'

Well, it wasn't for me to interfere, if Wanless was disposed to put up with that kind of thing. We had a very pleasant afternoon upon the sands, when I found my friend to be a wonderfully entertaining companion, exceedingly well read, but shy, I thought, on speaking of modern writers of fiction. We parted, at length, with mutual regret.

'I shall not see you for the next day or two,' Wanless remarked, grasping my hand heartily, 'as business calls me away; but I shall be delighted if you will dine with me on Thursday. Bellamy will not be present, as he has a day off, and I shall order dinner to be sent in from the hotel.—And now, good afternoon, my dear Gibson.'

As a matter of fact, my name is Osborne, but it is one of the weaknesses of human nature, whenever a man is addressed by the wrong patronymic, to allow the mistake to pass. It would have been far better for me had I corrected the mistake, instead of allowing it to pass in my haste to accept the invitation to dinner.

At half-past six on the Thursday night I entered Wanless's dining-room. The dinner was not all that could be desired, but then Bellamy was absent, and the food was brought and served by a waiter from the hotel. The wines, which were my host's own, left nothing to be wanted, the peculiar sherry was there, and some wonderful champagne of 1874 vintage to which we

both did ample justice. By the time we had completed our repast, Wanless's eyes were shining, and his manner had grown a little boisterous.

'And now no more wine,' he said, as he dismissed the waiter. 'I shall suffer terribly in the morning from what I have had already, and Bellamy will bully me in his polite way for a week. Let us go into the library and smoke. We shall be quite alone, and can have a cosy chat. It is not often that I have the nerve to face my books, much as I love them. Time was when things were very different, and'—

Wanless broke off abruptly, and led the way to the library. A lamp was on the table; a little fire burned in the grate; and yet, in that cheerful, book-lined apartment, I felt singularly depressed. I tried to shake off the feeling; I tried to ignore the gleam that flashed in the dark, restless eyes of my companion. With as much ease as I could assume, I carelessly examined the well-filled shelves. 'You appear to have a good selection here,' I remarked. 'In so select a gathering, I am flattered at seeing a volume of my own.' Any writer will pardon the innocent vanity of the remark. I heard a short, sharp exclamation break from my host. I saw his eyes blazing as he looked towards the book on which my hand lay lovingly.

'Oh, so you are *that* Osborne,' he said in a manner most uncomplimentary. 'I had no idea that I was entertaining so great a man. Ah! ah!' The laugh was about the most unpleasant that I have ever heard.

'Sit down,' my host commanded. 'Oh, I know your work very well indeed. In fact, I know the work of the whole gang of you. But I haven't read a line of that volume of short stories you have there. The stories are quite recent, I suppose?'

I replied as quietly as I could in the affirmative, at least as quietly as a man can when his host, with eyes 'in a fine frenzy rolling,' locks the door and puts the key carefully away in his pocket.

'Then of course you remember all the *dénoûment*—hateful word,' Wanless said as he opened my innocent book and glanced at the first story. 'We will have a little mental amusement, and you shall correct me if I am wrong. I see the first story is a ghost tale, called "The White Mystery." And here, looking casually through, I find are two characters. They are brothers—one, a brave military man; the other a nervous, imaginative youth, who is scoffed at by the brother because he fears a ghost. Let me forecast the end of the story. The youngster sees the *spook*, and dies of terror on the spot; whilst the other fool can never speak afterwards without trembling when he recounts the story. Doesn't he say that he "cannot speak of the nameless horror of that awful face?"'

'You have guessed it,' I said, with a stifled parody of a laugh.

But Wanless did not appear to be at all elated by his success. He smiled with bitter, weary scorn, and fluttered over the leaves to the next story. 'I take no credit to myself for that discovery,' he proceeded. 'Here is another little thing entitled "My Uncle Dick." Heavens!

what awful memories does that hoary kind of title conjure up. Let me prophesy again. Uncle Dick is a man of money; he is crusty and curt; the hero of the story—written in the autobiographical style—wants to marry a cousin; and the old boy won't let him. Said old boy dies of apoplexy after a fit of passion, and leaves nothing to the narrator but an old deed chest, in which are discovered securities of priceless value. So they get married, and live happily ever after, eh?"

'Your foresight is really wonderful,' I replied. 'Any one would think that you had been a writer of current fiction yourself.'

Wanless glared at me so threateningly that I involuntarily moved towards the poker. His eyes were filled with horror, hate, and loathing.

'Man, you don't know what I am. You cannot understand what has brought me to my present pitiable condition,' he hissed. 'Let us carry on the ghastly farce to the end. Here is another of your screeds. It is called "The Black Bag." I wonder how many thousands of tales have been written with the same title? Again let us pursue the psychological programme. The hero is a young man who gets into conversation with an engaging stranger in a railway carriage. The fascinating one has a black bag. When they change carriages, some one accosts the stranger, who informs his companion he is detained by business. Well, he delivers the bag at an address in Liverpool. It's always Liverpool, by the way. Well, the police arrest the courteous ass, and the bag contains an infernal machine. Man, can you deny that I am correct?'

I couldn't. My head was bowed with shame. Viewing myself in the lurid mirror of those dark eyes, I saw myself as others see me. Never has an author been so at the mercy of a critic before.

'I claim no marvellous foresight,' Wanless said sternly. 'Let us try again. Here is another story, called "A Strange Coincidence;" need I say that it refers to a singular dream of a deserted wife, which makes such an impression upon her, that she telegraphs her husband not to go near a certain place at a time named. He disregards the warning, and is murdered. Again, I will ask you to correct me if I am mistaken.'

'Well, you are, this time,' I said as cheerfully as possible. 'The husband refrains, and some one mistaken for him is done to death.'

This little point in my favour rendered me more cheerful. I was about to give vent to some little *jeu d'esprit*, when my companion gave a cry of rage and horror, at the same time dashing the book to the ground. 'I knew it,' he shouted as he bounded to his feet; 'I knew that I should come across it in that cursed volume. I cannot even get away from it in my solitary retreat. Is there no originality in the craft at all? Here it is, in your volume called "By Mental Telegraph." The title explains the story. Oh, I know that mysterious, slender, beautiful maiden with her visions and hallucinations but too well; the psychological siren who has driven me to madness. *She* recovers when she gets a husband,

and becomes a model queen of the nursery ever afterwards. But I shall always be the same. It is you and your class who are responsible for this: you must die.' With the last word ringing on his lips, Wanless flew at me and bore me to the ground. Strong as I was, I was powerless in his grasp, for the madman possessed the strength of a dozen beings at that moment. I could feel his hot breath upon my face as he bent over me. 'You are one of the fiends who has robbed me of my reason,' he hissed. 'You are one of the successful hacks who dress up old tales, and try to galvanise paralytic corpses into life until the gibbering dead faces mock us to insanity. Once I deemed the world to be fresh and bright; but the weary monotony of the novels I craved for made me what I am. Make the most of your time—you will never leave this room alive. As a duty to my fellow-sufferers, I am going to rid the world of one scribbling fiend to-night.'

I tried to expostulate, but the words died on my lips. Wanless bent over me, and gripped my throat with convulsive force. The strength of despair came back to me as I realised that we were in that solitary place alone, and that my life depended upon my own efforts. We rolled over and over, but Wanless was always uppermost. From time to time I compelled him to relinquish his grip; the sudden rush of air to my lungs caused me to feel sick and dizzy. But the contest was bound to end in one way, for, as I became weaker, my antagonist gathered fresh vigour.

'It is useless,' he cried triumphantly. 'You have got to die.'

I knew it, but I would not despair. And then, as I commenced to fail, there came a sound welcome as a voice from heaven—the sound of Bellamy's step in the hall. He tried the door only to find it fast; he shouted, and in response came a feeble gurgle from me. Bellamy wasted no further time; something told him that he had arrived in time to prevent a terrible tragedy. As Bellamy's whole weight broke in the door, Wanless gave me a squeeze that caused the countless stars to dance and flicker before my eyes. Then sleep, peaceful and childlike.

When I came to myself again, I was in bed. The windows were open to the breeze, a glorious sun was shining, and Bellamy stood respectfully before me. On the whole, I felt little the worse for my adventure.

'I am extremely sorry for what has happened, sir,' Bellamy said politely. 'The people here know nothing, and I shall esteem it a personal favour if you will preserve our secret. I ought, perhaps, to have told you, sir.'

'But what on earth is the matter with Mr Wanless?' I asked.

'Well, sir,' Bellamy said deferentially, 'my master's name is not Wanless at all. He is Mr Cultshaw, the critic and essayist, who used to be "reader" to Messrs Gilley, the great publishers. Of course you know him by name, sir. Two years ago, the poor gentleman had brain-fever from overwork, and he's never been the same since. If he has three glasses of wine, he's quite mad. Usually, he is harmless enough; but when excited, he has a perfectly morbid

hatred of magazine writers. He attributes his malady to reading the same class of story with what he calls the same *motif* over and over again. He did not know you by sight, and, indeed, mistook your name; but *you* he holds in especial detestation, sir. He would have killed you if he could.

'I quite believe that, Bellamy,' I replied grimly. 'But you may trust me to say nothing about what has happened. How is your patient?'

'Perfectly well this morning, and without a notion what took place last night. But on the whole, sir, I would respectfully beg to suggest that you do not meet again. I don't suppose that you are specially attached to the place, and as it agrees with my poor master'—

'Say no more, Bellamy,' I replied. 'I will get away to-day. I came out for quiet and rest, and not for midnight adventures. And there's a ten-pound note for you, Bellamy, with my most grateful thanks.'

From that day to this I have seen nothing of Wanless, nor am I likely to now, for he died last week, and therefore I am at liberty to publish this singular story, the moral of which is obvious. People say that latterly my stories are less trite than they were. Have any of you noticed it, may I ask?'

READING.

THE inaccuracy which very often troubles us in our ordinary speaking, troubles us very often also in our ordinary reading. It is a common thing to hear in conversation such expressions as: 'That is,' 'I mean,' 'In other words,' or, 'It's this way, you understand,' coming immediately after statements which are supposed to convey to us the speaker's meaning. Such expressions show us that the speaker is not pleased with the clearness of the statement, and wishes to explain the matter further. It is seldom that we come across a man whose words have power to paint for us with swift, unerring touches the very picture which he wishes us to see. Descartes, when speaking of the method by which we should conduct our thoughts in seeking truth, observes, in reference to the accurate use of words, that we should never forget to substitute mentally for the terms we use the definitions which restrict them and explain them. Not many people either consciously or unconsciously obey this rule. The spread of scientific modes of thinking and expression will ultimately rectify the matter. The immediate enforcement of the rule would tend to quiet life considerably; many people would be practically silent, a result which possibly might be attended with advantage. To aim at clearness and conciseness of expression is, however, open to us all, and every effort in that way must be of use to us.

But it is to Reading, rather than to speaking, that we wish to apply the principle involved in Descartes' rule. Reading seems easier than speaking, in a sense. When we speak, we are thinkers and authors—we must conceive and express; when

we read, we seem only recipients, the thinking having apparently been done for us already by the writer whom we read. This is only partly the case. It is an old and true saying that 'the eye sees what it brings with it the capacity for seeing.' We may illustrate this by a parable. An unpoetical man, having bought for tenpence a copy of selections from Browning, and finding it hard to comprehend, observed: 'Well, well, what can you expect for tenpence?' The application of the principle involved in Descartes' rule would put a stop to that slim, soulless form of reading which we know as 'skimming.' We all 'skim,' more or less; all, more or less, read on as though we were proof-readers for the daily press. The words spin past. In many cases the eye seems scarcely to do more than to mechanically note agreements or discrepancies of form, and the mind behind the eye feels that it has not altogether managed to take in the meaning of the swiftly-passing phrase. The mind reads what it has in it the faculty for reading. There are minds that, like the little plates used by photographers, are sensitive to any the most swiftly changing light or shadow of expression. Such minds have strong imaginative power, the faculty of swift and vivid picturing. But even such minds must employ that process of 'development' we call reflection before these swift impressions can be fixed and lasting.

The word 'reading' is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word *radan*, the first meaning of which is 'to discern.' Words are the symbols of the fleeting thought, and it is with those symbols that we have to do in reading. The depth of our discernment in reading must, therefore, to a very great extent depend upon our knowledge of the complicated history of associations locked up in each important word. The steady use of a good etymological dictionary is the thing to be desired. A book of this kind is a prism which will decompose for us the light-rays of language, which are words, and show us in them changing hues of beauty of which we had hardly dreamed.

WITH THEE.

With thee, Sweetheart, I would delight to stroll
In woody aisles where cool paths loitering go,
And where the trill of best-remembered birds
Falls on our ears in cadence soft and low.

Or down the lazy stream 'mid languorous airs
Of summer noon; while scent of fragrant flowers
Steals o'er us dreaming in our gliding skiff,
All unaware of the gay-fleeting hours.

Or I would roam with thee through open fields,
Where the gray oak in pathos of decay
Would give us shelter, while we watched the gleam
Of purple sunset ere it died away.

Or on the moors, where blue-winged dragonflies
Float in the shining haze, and the wild bee
Goes murmuring by: all places are the same
If thou, Sweetheart, art only there with me.

WILLIAM COWAN.

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GLASGOW.

THE citizens of what with its population of more than three-quarters of a million is unquestionably the Second City of the Empire, have recently felt a revival of interest in more than one important chapter of its history which had been forgotten in the rush of material advance. The successful exhibition of 'Old Glasgow,' and the archæological literature it has evoked, suggest above all things the fact that 'Old Glasgow' is not so very old after all. In neither, certainly, have we the oldest of all Glasgows—that Celtic Gleschu or 'beloved green spot' which was something more than a memory even in the seventeenth century, since 'the eminent Glasgowe' is described by Richard Franck—ex-Cantab Cromwellian trooper, enthusiastic angler, and extravagant sentimentalist—as 'the nonsuch of Scotland where an English florist may pick up a posie.' It cannot be said that there has been brought back to memory the Glasgow of the original Cathedral or of the original University, of the War of Independence or of the Reformation, of the 'wild West Whigs,' or of the most romantic of all historical dramas, on the penultimate act of which the curtain fell when Mary fled from the field of Langside—that Langside which nowadays conjures up nothing but decorous and prosperous suburbanity. The 'Old Glasgow' which has recently been appealing to the eye, the memory, and the imagination, is but the germ of that 'Greater Glasgow' of to-day, whose latest statistician gives 806,085 as 'the population massed within a radius of four miles of the Royal Exchange.' This 'Greater Glasgow' has inspired its inhabitants with an enthusiasm and a pride not without their comic side, which have nevertheless had most beneficial results, and are matched nowhere in the United Kingdom, or if anywhere, in Birmingham alone.

It is almost as easy to trace the evolution of Glasgow as it is to describe its general

features and character. After a visit of twenty-four hours, followed by other twenty-four at the Coast, the sharp-eyed globe-trotter can give a word-photograph of the City in five minutes. He gloats over its wide, spacious, and crowded thoroughfares; its numerous and attractive shop-fronts; the superb service of trains and steamboats which makes it the 'easiest town in the world to get out of;'; the superabundant activity and liberal hospitality of its citizens, and the ambition and energy of its Corporation. He will tell you that when the Town Council have brought to perfection the system of tramways which they have taken into their own hands, and when the two great enterprises for bringing its various divisions together—the Underground Railway and the Subway—have been completed, Glasgow will be not only 'the easiest town to get out of,' but the easiest to travel in, instead of being as at present the most difficult after London. He will point to its rehabilitated and marvellously complete Cathedral with its memories of Jocelyn and Wishart and the War of Independence, as evidence that the civic pride which is still the most notable feature of Glasgow must have from the first been strong, since it was powerful enough to save the building from an iconoclastic and fanatical mob. He will point to the new and stately pile of University buildings, which from their site on Gilmore-hill command on one side a view of the city, and on another a prospect of the finest and most varied scenery in Scotland, as proof that Glasgow wealth is still the nursing mother of Glasgow culture. But the American tourist, if he has as keen an eye to the strength and the weakness of Glasgow as Mr Albert Shaw, who recently visited it, and gave it a position of superiority to many cities even in his own United States, in respect at all events of municipal administration, will also point to the dark side of the picture. If the Clyde has brought wealth to Glasgow, it has also brought fogs, almost as dense and depressing as those

of London, and odours that suggest not Araby the Blest, but the pestilence that walketh at noon-day. If Glasgow is the city of energy, liberality, and landscapes, it is also the city of one-roomed and two-roomed houses, occupied by vice, squalor, and misery, of a high death-rate, of black smoke, and of the rain that raineth every day.

No doubt the citizens of Glasgow are, with that public spirit which has always animated them, grappling as best they can with the problems that the very growth and prosperity of their city have brought them face to face with—have, indeed, created. 'Rookeries' and slums are being assailed. Dr Russell, the officer of public health for the City, in a *brochure* upon the results of the census of 1891, demonstrates that 'the proportion of the total population living in houses of one room has fallen rapidly since 1871, and is now lower than it has ever been;' although he has to admit that, while of the larger towns of Scotland Glasgow has the smallest average dwelling-house with most persons per room, Edinburgh has the smallest house with fewest persons per room. Last year, regulations regarding the 'emission' of black smoke from factory chimneys have been issued of such stringency that some manufacturers say they are positively harassing and calculated to drive manufactures from Glasgow; and the first stage has been reached in the great work of the destruction of the city sewage, which, finding its way into the Clyde, has converted a portion of it into an open drain. But it will take several years before even the energy and well-regulated ambition of the City Fathers, and the not less public-spirited private citizens of Glasgow, can restore it and its river to even a semblance of their early beauty and sweetness. As for the social question, which is probably more appalling in Glasgow than in any other cities of the world, with the exception of London, Paris, and New York, are we a whit nearer its solution than when John Bright, many years ago in the Corn Exchange, Edinburgh, declared that the great political difficulty of the future was how to reach those 'moral depths deeper than ever Atlantic cable fathomed, and to bring from thence misery's sons and daughters, and the multitude that are ready to perish?'

As for the development of Glasgow—that Glasgow which the late Mr Robert Louis Stevenson differentiated from other civic communities in Scotland as 'chief city of Scottish men'—has it not been unfolded as in a panorama by a succession of travellers from John Hardyng to Dorothy Wordsworth? Hardyng, whose grotesque *Chronicle in Metre* was published in the time of James I., and covers the period 'from the first beginning of Eng-lande unto the reign of Edward IV.,' looks upon certain portions of Scotland as victualling grounds for English armies, and contemplates 'Glasgow' with the eye of a Blücher as an excellent place to sack. But he photographed it for all time when he described it as

A goodly cytee and univesitee,
Where plentiful is the countree also,
Replenished well with all commoditee.

The second stage in the evolution of Glasgow

is well marked by Thomas Tucker, who reported to Cromwell's government in 1655 on the state of Scotland with a view to its incorporation with the English Commonwealth. He repeats the idea and almost the words of Hardyng when he describes 'Glasgow' as 'a very neate burgh toune lyeing upon the bankes of the river Cluyde,' and as 'seated in a pleasant and fruitful soyle.' But he goes further, and presents us with the embryo of the Glasgow of to-day in his allusion to its trade: 'The inhabitants (all but the students of the collidge which is here) are traders and dealers; some for Ireland with small smiddy coales, in open boates, from foure to ten tonnes, from whence they bring hoopes, barrell-staves, meale, oates, and butter; some from France with pladding, coales, and herring (of which there is a great fishing yearly in the Westerne Sea), for which they return salt, pepper, rosin, and prunes; some to Norway for timber; and every one with theyr neighbours the Highlanders, who come hither from the isles and westerne parts; in summer by the Mul of Cantyre, and in winter by the Tarban [Tarbert] to the head of the Loguh Fyn (which is a small neck of sandy land, over which they usually draw theyr small boates into the Firth at Dunbarton), and soe passe up in the Cluyde with pladding, dry hides, goat, kid, and deere skyns, which they sell, and purchase with theyr price such commodities and provisions as they stand in neede of from time to time.' Have we not here the germ—and something more—of that justifiable pride which made Burns's contemporary, Mayne, of *Siller Gun* fame, sing thus, realistically rather than tunelessly, of Glasgow, when he was apprentice to Andrew Foulis, the famous printer to the University?

Hence Commerce spreads her sails to a'
The Indies and America.
Whatever makes ae penny twa
Is waffed to the Broomiclaw
On bony Clyde.

It is, of course, in the accounts of travellers in Scotland during the last century that the evolution of Glasgow is most easily marked. It was a wise instinct which made its citizens, in the time of the Commonwealth, strive to bring about a Union between England and Scotland. The Union, when it was actually accomplished, made the fortune of Glasgow. This was foreseen by Defoe, who was an active agent in promoting the great step which has brought such blessings to both countries. In his *Tour*, published in 1726, he writes of the Glasgow merchants with all the satisfaction of a prophet who has seen his prediction fulfilled: 'The Union has, indeed, answered its end to them more than to any other Part of the Kingdom, for as the Union opened the door to the Scots into our American colonies, the Glasgow merchants presently embraced the opportunity, and though, at its first concerting, the Rabble made a formidable effort to prevent it, yet afterwards they knew better when they found the great Increase of their Trade by it.' But there can be no question that the citizens of Glasgow, who probably found themselves capable of concentrating their municipal energies

after the confirmation by Parliament in 1672 of the 'letter of Guildry,' which put an end to the disputes between the Merchants' and Trades' Guilds, prepared the way for the Union. Defoe testifies that Glasgow is 'one of the cleanliest, most beautiful, and best-built cities in Great Britain.' Almost the same words are used by John Macky, a political agent, who was in Scotland shortly after the Jacobite rising of 1715, and who published an account of his tour in 1723. 'Glasgow,' he says, 'is the beautifullest little city I have seen in Britain. It stands deliciously on the banks of the Clyde, over which there is a fair stone bridge of eight arches.' At this time, according to Dr James Colville and Dr David Murray, who have recently investigated the condition of their city during the early portion of last century, its population was less than 14,000, and its rental £8000. 'The house-rent of a countess was £9, while in the same building the wives of two lairds paid rents of £6, 13s. 4d. and £5, 10s. respectively.' Macky declares Glasgow to be 'a place of the greatest trade in the Kingdom, especially to the Plantations, from whence they have 20 or 30 sail of ships every year, laden with tobacco and sugar.' It is rather odd, however, to find that at this time the men of Glasgow did not confine their attentions to the Clyde, for we learn that 'they are purchasing a harbour on the Frith near Alloa, to which they have but twelve miles of land, and then they can reship their sugars and tobacco for Holland, Germany, and the Baltic, without being at the trouble of sailing round England or Scotland.' In connection with the rapid progress made by Glasgow as a consequence of the Union, it 'should never be forgotten,' writes Dr Colville, in his recent interesting and valuable monograph on eighteenth-century visitors to the City, 'that the founders of Glasgow trade were four young men whose combined capital was not £10,000. They were Cunningham of Lainshaw, Spiers of Elderslie, Glassford of Dougalstown, and Ritchie of Busby. Their estates were bought out of the wealth they acquired.'

The view of Glasgow taken by Defoe, Macky, and Captain Burt—the Burt whom Macaulay has immortalised—we find repeated by later travellers, such as the Welshman Pennant, who says of the city in 1772 that it is 'the best built of any second-rate city I have seen;' by Gray, the poet, who testifies to its 'elegance;' and by Samuel Johnson, who says that 'the prosperity of its commerce appears by the greatness of its many private houses and the general appearance of wealth.'

Long ere this, the city had begun to utilise those rich fields of iron and coal which have since built up such vast and varied industries and transformed the face of the land. Muslins and linens were already largely made; bleaching and calico-printing date from early in last century, and the Turkey-red industry from the end of it. And it was in Glasgow, shortly after the middle of the century, that James Watt perfected the steam-engine—a discovery by which Glasgow has profited to the full.

We find towards the close of the century the hygienic value of the Coast, as represented by such places as Largs, Rothesay, and Wemyss

Bay, being appreciated by the busy citizens of Glasgow. 'Largs,' says Lettice, a young Oxonian who visited Glasgow in 1792, and is quoted, like Macky, at some length, by Dr Colville, 'not long ago the scene of great fairs for the disposal of Highland stock, is now resorted to in summer for sea-bathing.' Of Wemyss Bay he writes: 'Here Glasgow merchants have built each a neat white house, one joining the other, and making, in fact, a single villa with a green lawn spread out before it to the water's edge, adorned with parterres of flowers, and backed with wood and winding walks on the rising ground. Hither they retire, with their families, from their city and its busy hum for the summer season.'

The century that has elapsed since Lettice saw Glasgow at work and at play has no doubt witnessed wonders. Its population, which then was sixty-seven thousand, as against Edinburgh with its seventy thousand, has been multiplied twelve times. The deepening of the Clyde has since, by making Glasgow a port, rendered it independent of Alloa or even of Greenock. At enormous cost, a narrow river which to the end of the 18th century could be waded across, now admits huge sea-going ships: Henry Bell's *Comet*, first of trading steamers in the Old World, began to ply between Glasgow and Greenock in 1812. Steamboats and railways have made Largs, Rothesay, Wemyss Bay, Dunoon—the whole, indeed of the west coast—the summer-resorts of the Glasgow middle-class. The working-man of Glasgow may, by the expenditure of half-a-crown, command, in half-an-hour, the finest scenery in Scotland. Were Bailie Nicol Jarvie to revisit his native city, he would find that his beloved Saltmarket had been eclipsed by Sauchiehall Street and Buchanan Street, and that its special 'comforts' were accounted vulgar; while his cateran cousin would discover that his Loch Lomond fastnesses had become the picnicking ground of Sunday-school children from Gorbals or Argyle Street. But in its general characteristics, and in the temper and ambitions of its citizens, Glasgow remains what it was in Hardyng's day.

The remarkable combination of restless energy and fatalism which, in the literary cant of the day, is known as *fin de siècle*, is evidently to have its influence in Glasgow as elsewhere. The desire to render it the most complete at least of provincial cities in Great Britain before the century is out, is becoming a passion. In some respects the wish may be said to have been already gratified. Glasgow's two homes of civic life and culture, the City Chambers and its University buildings, both erected within the past few years at a total cost of nearly a million, certainly challenge, if they do not defy competition. Instead of its one public recreation ground—that Glasgow Green, which almost rivals Hyde Park itself as the open-air platform of political and social reformers—Glasgow has now nearly a dozen public parks and 'open spaces.' In respect of fresh air and facilities for walking, the inhabitants of none of its districts have now anything to complain of. The water-supply of Glasgow has long been the envy of other cities in Britain. Its Corporation are resolved that it shall not be out-

distanced in this most important of sanitary respects even by Manchester. A new Aqueduct from Loch Katrine is being built, and according to the present Lord Provost's *résumé* of the work done by the Town Council during 1894, 'the anticipation is that the entire works embraced in the present extension of the Loch Katrine Water Supply will be completed in about six years from now (say, by the year 1900), and that they will add one-half to the quantity presently available, increasing that to almost sixty-five million gallons per day.'

Within the past ten years, six new bridges across the Kelvin and the Clyde have either been opened or decided upon. The most important—that which is to take the place of Telford's historic Glasgow Bridge—will probably be completed by 1899.

The consolidation of the City and its suburbs has been greatly advanced by the formation of what is popularly known as 'Greater Glasgow.' There seems every reason to believe that, before the century is over, it will be completed by the inclusion within the city of the three still out-standing burghs of Govan, Partick, and Kinning Park, with their population of nearly 120,000. Of late years, a strenuous effort has been made to rid Glasgow of the reproach so often levelled against it of being, like most busy commercial communities, indifferent to art and refinement. It remains to be seen whether the enthusiasm for music which has led to the formation of a Scottish orchestra having Glasgow for its headquarters is a passing fancy. But the enthusiasm for art, which has already produced a 'Glasgow school,' that cannot at the very least be denied the merit of originality, may be relied upon to build, before the year 1900, an Art Gallery worthy to be named in the same breath with the City Chambers and the new University buildings—worthy also to be the permanent home of the genuine though imperfectly appreciated art treasures now in the possession of the Corporation. In regard to one matter—which is, however, of the highest importance so far as the intellectual and moral well-being of the great mass of the public is concerned—Glasgow lags behind Edinburgh. It has several large collections of books—the University Library contains one hundred and seventy-five thousand volumes, and the Mitchell Library seventy-five thousand—but it has no public lending library. Is it encouraging a vain hope to predict that this deficiency will, by the adoption of the Free Libraries Act or otherwise, be rectified before the century comes to a close?

In another respect the citizens of Glasgow are, through their civic representatives, displaying an activity which surpasses that of Birmingham, and which may not be without its perils. The movement to municipalise locomotion in Glasgow which took shape on the 1st July of last year, when the Corporation began to work the tramway system, is likely to be followed by efforts in other directions.

At the present moment the public are being agitated over a measure to regulate the traffic of the city and almost the life of the citizens. The excellent intentions and good sense of its promoters are beyond all question; but there is

always a risk that regulation of this kind may lead to moral coercion. What with the various Committees, Trusts, and other bodies which look after genuine public interests such as the City Improvements, and the various questions that are conjured up by 'The River,' Glasgow seems to many outsiders to have quite enough of enterprises on hand to occupy fully even its energies for the next dozen years. The concentration of these energies appears now to be at least as necessary as their extension. The familiar paradox which sums up the history of Glasgow and the West of Scotland—'The Clyde has made Glasgow, and Glasgow has made the Clyde'—is as true as ever it was. The output of the Clyde last year proves that it still occupies its old position of pre-eminence as the first shipbuilding centre in the Kingdom, sending out on all the waters of the globe the largest, swiftest, and finest steam-ships afloat. But will the dream of a purified Glasgow and a purified Clyde be realised before the twentieth century begins to run its course?

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

CHAPTER II. (*continued*).

It was midnight when Duke Paul and Antonio reached the plain: the moon, till now hidden by the mountains, shone on them, and seeing Antonio's face more plainly, Paul cried, half in jest, half in uneasiness, 'Come, man, look not so glum about it! 'Tis but the life of a rogne.' 'Indeed it is no more,' said Antonio, and he turned his eyes upon Duke Paul.

Paul laughed, but with poor merriment. Whence it came he knew not, but a strange sudden sense of peril and of doom had fallen on him. The massive quiet figure of Antonio, riding ever close to him, silent, stern, and watchful, oppressed his spirit.

Suddenly Antonio halted and called to Martolo to bring him a lantern: one hung from Martolo's saddle, and he brought it, and went back. Then Antonio lit the lantern and gave an ivory tablet to Paul and said to him, 'Write me your promise.'

'You distrust me, then?' cried Paul in a great show of indignation.

'I will not go till you have written the promise.'

Now Paul was somewhat loth to write the promise, fearing that it should be found on Antonio's body before he could contrive to remove it; but without it Antonio declared he would not go. So Paul wrote, bethinking himself that he held safe in his house at home permission from the Duke to seek Antonio and beguile him to the city, and that with the witness of this commission he could come off safe, even though the tablet were found on Antonio. Taking the peril then, rather than fail, he wrote, setting forth the promises he made to Antonio in case (thus he phrased it) of the death of his brother. And he delivered the tablet to Antonio; and Antonio, restoring the lantern to Martolo, stowed the tablet about him, and they set forth again.

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As the clock of the tower of the Cathedral, distantly booming in their ears, sounded the hour of two, they came to where the road parted. In one direction it ran level across the plain to the river and the city, and by this way they must go, if they would come to the secret gate and thence to the Duke's summer-house. But the second road left the plain, and mounted the hill that faces the wicket-gate, which is now called the Hill of Duke Paul. And at the parting of the road, Antonio reined in his horse and sat silent for a great while. Again, Paul, scanning his face, was troubled, so that Martolo, who had drawn near, saw him wipe a drop from his brow. And Paul said, 'For what wait we, Antonio? Time presses, for it has gone two o'clock.'

Then Antonio drew him apart, and fixing his eyes on him, said, 'What of the child? What mean you by the child? How does it profit you that the father die, if the child live?'

Paul, deeming that Antonio doubted him and saw a snare, and holding it better to seem the greatest of villains than to stir suspicion in a man who held him in his hands, smiled cunningly, and answered, 'The child will grow sickly and pine when his father is not alive to care for him.'

'It is enough,' said Antonio; and again a flush mounted on his face, and died down again, and left him pale. For some think he would have turned from his purpose, had Paul meant honestly by the child. I know not. At least, the foul murder plotted against the child made him utterly relentless.

'Let us go on and end the matter,' urged Paul, full of eagerness, and, again, of that strange uneasiness born of Antonio's air.

'Ay, we will go on and finish it,' said Antonio, and with that he leaped down from his horse. Paul did the like, for it had been agreed that the others, with the horses, were to await Antonio's return, while the Count and Paul went forward on foot: and Tommasino and Martolo, dismounting also, tied the horses to trees and stood waiting Antonio's orders.

'Forward!' cried Paul.

'Come, then,' said Antonio, and he turned to the road that mounted the hill.

'It is by the other road we go,' said Paul.

'It is by this road,' said Antonio, and he raised his hand and made a certain sign, whereat the swords of his friends leaped from their scabbards, and they barred the way, so that Duke Paul could turn nowhere save to the road that mounted the hill. Then Paul's face grew long, drawn, and sallow with sudden fear. 'What means this?' he cried. 'What means this, Antonio?'

'It means, my lord, that you must mount the hill with me,' answered Antonio, 'even to the top of it, whence a man can see the city.'

'But for what?'

'That this matter may be finished,' said Antonio; and, coming to Paul, he laid a hand on his shoulder and turned him to the path up the hill. But Paul, seeing his face and the swords of Tommasino and Martolo that barred all escape, seized his hand, saying, 'Before God, I mean you true, Antonio! As Christ died for us, I mean you true, Antonio!'

'Of that I know not, and care not; yet do not swear it now by Christ's name if it be not true. How meant you, my lord, by your brother and your brother's son?'

Paul licked his lips, for they had gone dry, and he breathed as a man pants who has run far and fast. 'You are three to one,' he hissed.

'We shall be but man to man on the top of the hill,' said Antonio.

Then suddenly Tommasino spoke unbidden. 'There is a priest in the village a mile away,' said he, and there was pity in his voice.

'Peace, Tommasino! What priest has he provided for his brother?'

And Tommasino said no more; but he turned his eyes away from the face of Duke Paul: yet when he was an old man, one being in his company heard him say he dreamed yet of it. As for Martolo, he bent his head and crossed himself.

Then Paul threw himself on his knees before Antonio and prayed him to let him go; but Antonio seemed not to hear him, and stood silent with folded arms. Yet presently he said, 'Take your sword then, my lord. If I fall, these shall not touch you. Thus much I give, though it is more than I have right to give.'

But Paul would not take his sword, but knelt, still beseeching Antonio with tears, and mingling prayers and curses in a flow of agonised words.

At last Antonio plucked him from the ground and sternly bade him mount the hill; and finding no help, he set out, his knees shaking beneath him, while Antonio followed close upon him. And thus Tommasino and Martolo watched them go till the winding of the path hid them from view, when Martolo fell upon his knees, and Tommasino drew a breath as though a load had rested on his chest.

It was but a short way to the summit, but the path was steep, and the two went slowly, so that, as they came forth on the top, the first gleam of dawn caught them in its pale light. The city lay gray and drab below them; and the lonely tree that stands to this day upon the hill, swayed in the wind with mournful murmurings. Paul stumbled and sank in a heap upon the ground. And Antonio said to him, 'If you will, pray,' and went and leaned against the bare trunk of the tree, a little way apart. But Paul, thinking on man's mercy, not on God's, crawled on his knees across the space between and laid hold of Antonio's legs. And he said nothing, but gazed up at Antonio. And at the silent appeal, Antonio shivered for an instant, but he did not fly the gaze of Paul's eyes, but looked down on him and answered, 'You must die. Yet there is your sword, and there a free road to the city.'

Then Paul let go Antonio's legs and rose, and drew his sword. But his hand was trembling, and he could scarce stand. Then Antonio gave to him a flask that he carried, holding strong waters; and the wretch, drinking greedily, found some courage, and came suddenly at Antonio before Antonio looked for his attack. But the Count eluded him, and drawing his

blade, awaited the attack; and Paul seized again the flask that he had flung on the ground, and drained it, and, mad now with the fumes, rushed at Antonio, shrieking curses and blasphemies. The sun rose on the moment that their blades crossed; and before its rays had shone a minute, Antonio had driven his sword through the howling wretch's lung, and Duke Paul lay dying on the grassy hill.

Then Count Antonio stripped off his doublet and made a pillow of it for Paul's head, and sat down by him, and wiped his brow, and disposed his body with such ease as seemed possible. Yet he took no pains to stanch the blood or to minister to the wound, for his intent was that Paul should die and not live. And Paul lay some moments on his back, then twisted on his side; once he flung his legs wide and gathered them again under his body, and shivered, turning on his back again: and his jaw fell, and he died there on the top of the hill. And the Count closed his eyes, and sat by him in silence for many minutes; and once he buried his face in his hands, and a single sob shook him.

But now it was growing to day, and he rose, and took from the Duke's waist the broad silken band that he wore, wrought with golden embroidery on a ground of royal blue. Then he took Paul in his arms and set him upright against the trunk of the tree, and, encircling tree and body with the rich scarf, he bound the corpse there; and he took the ivory tablet from his belt and tied the ribbon that hung through a hole in it to the ribbon of the Order of St Prisian, that was round Paul's neck, and he wrote on the tablet, 'Witness my hand—ANTONIO of Monte Velluto.' And he wiped the blade of his sword long and carefully on the grass till it shone pure, clean, and bright again. Then he gazed awhile at the city, that grew now warm and rich in the increasing light of the sun, and turned on his heel and went down the hill by the way that he had come.

At the foot, Tommasino and Martolo awaited him; and when he came down alone, Martolo again signed the cross; but Tommasino glanced one question, and, finding answer in Antonio's nod, struck his open palm on the quarters of Duke Paul's horse and set it free to go where it would; and the horse, being free, started at a canter along the road to the city. And Antonio mounted and set his face again towards the hills. For awhile he rode alone in front; but when an hour was gone, he called to Tommasino, and, on the lad joining him, talked with him, not gaily indeed (that could not be), yet with calmness and cheerfulness on the matters that concerned the band. But Paul's name did not cross his lips; and the manner in which he had dealt with Paul on the hill rested unknown till a later time, when Count Antonio formally declared it, and wrote with his own hand how Duke Paul had died. Thus, then, Count Antonio rode back to the hills, having executed on the body of Paul that which seemed to him right and just.

Long had Duke Valentine waited for his brother in the summer-house, and greatly won-

dered that he came not. And as the morning grew and yet Paul came not, the Duke feared that in some manner Antonio had detected the snare, and that he held Paul a prisoner—for it did not enter the Duke's mind that Antonio would dare to kill his brother. And when it was five o'clock, the Duke, heavy-eyed for want of sleep, left the summer-house, and having traversed the garden, entered his cabinet and flung himself on a couch there; and notwithstanding his uneasiness for his brother, being now very drowsy, he fell asleep. But before he had slept long, he was roused by two of his pages, who ran in crying that Duke Paul's horse had come riderless to the gate of the city. And the Duke sprang up, smiting his thigh, and crying, 'If harm has come to him, I will not rest till I have Antonio's head.' So he mustered a party of his Guards, some on horseback and some on foot, and passed with all speed out of the city, seeking his brother, and vowing vengeance on the insolence of Count Antonio.

But the Duke was not first out of the city; for he found a stream of townsmen flocking across the bridge; and at the end of the bridge was a gathering of men, huddled close round a peasant who stood in the centre. The pikemen made a way for His Highness; and when the peasant saw him, he ran to him, and resting his hand on the neck of the Duke's horse, as though he could scarce stand alone, he cried, pointing with his hand to the hill that rose to the west, 'The Duke Paul, the Duke Paul!' And no more could he say.

'Give him a horse, one of you, and let another lead it,' cried the Duke. 'And forward, gentlemen, whither he points!'

Thus they set forth, and as they went, the concourse grew, some overtaking them from the city, some who were going on business or for their pleasure into the city turning and following after the Duke and his company. So that a multitude went after Valentine and the peasant, and they rode together at the head. And the Duke said thrice to the peasant, 'What of my brother?' But the peasant, who was an old man, did but point again to the hill.

At the foot of the hill, all that had horses left them in charge of the boys who were of the party, for the Duke, presaging some fearful thing, would suffer none but grown men to mount with him; and thus they went forward afoot till they reached the grassy summit of the hill. And then the peasant sprang in front, crying, 'There, there!' and all of them beheld the body of Duke Paul, bound to the tree by the embroidered scarf, his head fallen on his breast, and the ivory tablet hanging from the ribbon of the Order of St Prisian. And a great silence fell on them all, and they stood gazing at the dead Prince.

But presently Duke Valentine went forward alone; and he knelt on one knee and bowed his head, and kissed his brother's right hand. And a shout of indignation and wrath went up from all the crowd, and they cried, 'Whose deed is this?' The Duke minded them not, but rose to his feet and laid his hand on the ivory tablet; and he perceived that it was

written by Duke Paul; and he read what Paul had written to Antonio; how that he, the Duke, being dead, Antonio should come to his own again, and wed Lucia, and hold foremost place in the Duchy. And, this read, the Duke read also the subscription of Count Antonio—'Witness my hand—ANTONIO of Monte Velluto.' Then he was very amazed, for he had trusted his brother. Yet he did not refuse the testimony of the ivory tablet or suspect any guile or deceit in Antonio. And he stood dry-eyed, looking on the dead face of Duke Paul. Then, turning round, he cried in a loud voice, so that every man on the hill heard him, 'Behold the body of a traitor!' And men looked on him, and from him to the faces of one another, asking what he meant. But he spoke no other word, and went straight-way down the hill, and mounted his horse again, and rode back to the city; and, having come to his Palace, he sent for his little son, and went with him into the cabinet behind the great hall, where the two stayed alone together for many hours. And when the child came forth, he asked none concerning his uncle the Duke Paul.

Now all the company had followed down from the hill after the Duke, and no man dared to touch the body unbidden. Two days passed, and a great storm came, so that the rain beat on Paul's face and the lightning blackened it. But on the third day, when the storm had ceased, the Duke bade the Lieutenant of the Guard to go by night and bring the body of Paul: and the Lieutenant and his men flung a cloak over the face, and, having thus done, brought the body into the city at the break of day: yet the great square was full of folk watching in awe and silence. And they took the body to the Cathedral, and buried it under the wall on the north side in the shade of a cypress tree, laying a plain flat stone over it. And Duke Valentine gave great sums for masses to be said for the repose of his brother's soul. Yet there are few men who will go by night to the Hill of Duke Paul; and even now when I write, there is a man in the city who has lost his senses and is an idiot: he, they say, went to the hill on the night of the 15th of the month wherein Paul died, and came back mumbling things terrible to hear. But whether he went because he lacked his senses, or lost his senses by reason of the thing he saw when he went, I know not.

Thus died Duke Paul the traitor. Yet, though the Duke his brother knew that what was done upon him was nothing else than he had deserved, and should have suffered had he been brought alive to justice, he was very wroth with Count Antonio, holding it insolence that any man should lay hands on one of his blood, and, of his own will, execute sentence upon a criminal of a degree so exalted. Therefore he sent word to Antonio, that if he caught him, he would hang him on the hill from the branches of the tree to which Antonio had bound Paul, and would leave his body there for three times three days. And, this message coming to Antonio, he sent one privily by night to the gate of the city, who laid outside the gate a letter for the Duke; and in the

letter was written, 'God chooses the hand. All is well.'

And Count Antonio abode still an outlaw in the mountains, and the Lady Lucia mourned in the city.

(To be continued.)

WINTER CLOTHING.

ACCORDING to statistics, the death-rate is always higher during the winter months. This fact may to a certain extent in many cases owe its origin to imperfect clothing. It is clearly evident that a large percentage of colds might be avoided, and many lives prolonged, if proper garments were worn. The object of clothes as an influence in preserving health should be to maintain, as far as possible, an equal warmth of the surface and extremities of the body, and whilst conducing to the comfort, promote a free circulation, perspiration, and innervation of all external parts of the system.

The healthful operation of clothing is, however, not altogether confined to its property of retaining warmth. The injurious influence of moisture, for example, has also to be guarded against. Even the lower animals exhibit many interesting facts illustrative of instinct or natural provisions for adapting their clothing to suit the seasons. It certainly does not say much for the boasted superiority of man's reason, when we find that the lower animals, with only instinct for a guide, suffer less from the effects of cold, wet, and atmospheric changes than human beings do. This transpires simply because common-sense and reason are too frequently laid aside by foolish habits, the outcome of vanity, ignorance, and fashion.

Perhaps the best and most concise plan in dealing with winter clothing will be to consider how the body may well be protected against climatic vicissitudes. We may best guard against external colds by wearing such materials of dress as, by their thickness and low conducting power, prevent undue escape of animal heat. The most useful for this object are furs and woollen fabrics. The important point to attend to as regards winter apparel is unquestionably that of under-clothing. It should consist of lamb's-wool, flannel, knitted Shetland, or some woollen material. A thick lamb's-wool jersey with pants of the same fabric answers the purpose well. Socks or stockings of a like manufacture, or thick merino, should not be neglected. 'Warm, but light,' is a maxim applicable to most winter garments.

The principal advantages to be gained from woollen under-clothing are twofold. First, that being porous, it permits of transpiration through from the skin's surface, which is very desirable. Second, that perspiration becomes absorbed by the woolly fibres, and eventually evaporates from the outer surface of the clothes. This, however, does not occur if the under-clothing is of calico, linen, or even silk, which is proved by the fact that these materials remain damp after sweating. In India and other hot countries it is for this reason that flannel under-clothing is generally preferred.

Some people, however, with delicate and

sensitive skins are unable to wear lamb's-wool or flannel on account of the irritation they sometimes produce. When this is the case, fine woollen under-wear, such as the Scotch hosiery, may be substituted with advantage, being far less likely to cause the troublesome itching at times occasioned by flannel. This is soft and elastic, and, having no seams, is very comfortable to wear. Those who are naturally of a 'chilly disposition,' and who are obliged to be out of doors in all kinds of weather, will obtain great benefit by wearing a chamois leather vest over the jersey. Of course, this garment must be ventilated by small holes. This is especially useful in very cold weather and during long journeys. For general purposes, however, the long-sleeved Cardigan wool waistcoat is preferable, which may be worn under or over the ordinary waistcoat, and is permeable. Chest protectors made either of flannel or leather are not based on any scientific principle. The warmth which they impart is of a local nature, whilst the other extremities, left unprotected, become cold. The chest and throat are apt to be bathed in profuse perspiration, whilst feet and hands remain chilly.

During at least seven months of the year in this country, some variety of fleecy undergarments is certainly desirable, for the reasons previously alluded to. Every person should possess a good mackintosh for wet weather and snow, against which no better protection can be found. The best kind of waterproof is a light, well-ventilated Inverness cape, which can with ease be placed over any other coat. In order to avoid that fruitful source of chills, damp feet, a valuable resource may be found in boots to which a light india-rubber (not gutta-percha) sole is affixed. They not only have the advantage of keeping the feet dry, but wear longer in wet weather. Strong uppers well dubbed should of course not be forgotten.

Warm socks or stockings, according to individual taste, form an important item in winter clothing, and should on no account be neglected. Truly did Plutarch observe, 'Keep the head cool and feet warm.' Cold and damp feet are a cause of more mischief than is generally supposed. There is nothing which can equal the much-abused goloshes as a means of protecting the feet against the penetration of snow. They are now made in great variety, some having places for the heels of the boots, which make them more slightly and comfortable than the old-fashioned ones.

As regards overcoats, their variety and texture are so great that it would be tiresome to enumerate them in detail. Suffice it to say, when selecting a greatcoat it is well to bear in mind that warmth combined with lightness are the most important points. Heavy coats are decidedly objectionable, as their weight is only a useless burden to the wearer, especially when exposed to wet. A light warm topcoat answers better in every respect, as it permits evaporation, which those of a denser substance tend to impede. The Irish frieze ulsters so much in vogue some years past, when rightly understood are only suitable for travelling or driving; but

for walking they are only burdensome and out of place. The same remark equally applies to the fur-lined overcoats with which our 'gilded youth' delight to adorn themselves.

The use of mufflers in winter has numerous advocates both in the medical profession and otherwise; but should the habit be once commenced, it must be continued without intermission. If this be neglected, a severe cold and sore throat will most likely result.

As a general rule, comforters are better avoided, except at night-time, when coming out of a heated atmosphere or driving in a keen wind. Most people, when adjusting neck-wraps, unfortunately leave the throat more or less exposed. When worn, they should be folded twice round the throat, in order to completely protect it, otherwise they are apt to occasion more harm than benefit. A collar fitting close in front is a valuable substitute for a comforter during the winter-time, as it will afford complete protection to the throat.

All suits worn in winter should be thick. The best are made of serge or stout tweed cloth. If winter waistcoats were lined with flannel, the wearer would experience much comfort, as the usual thin backs which tailors insert do not protect the wearer sufficiently, all the warmth being in front, whilst there is very little behind.

A well-fitting flannel belt worn round the loins next to the skin will be found invaluable as a preventive against lumbago and chills in the loins, to which many persons are peculiarly susceptible during cold winds.

Good winter gloves are a matter of no small moment to those who study comfort, and are desirous of escaping from the irritation and pain consequent upon chilblains. Knitted-wool gloves or leather lined with fleece are about the best for men. Ladies will find the new gloves made either of leather or kid lined with silk all that can be desired as regards comfort and elegance. Most men are accustomed to wear white linen shirts throughout the year: this, however, is a mistake, as linen tends to prevent the escape of insensible perspiration; a spun silk, or, better still, flannel shirt is far superior as a preventive against chills.

Ladies would do well to pay more attention to their winter clothes, as the sex are far more susceptible of cold than men. All their undergarments should be made of the finest Welsh flannel cut high at the neck; but when this causes irritation, the under-clothing referred to above may then be resorted to. A good felt under-skirt, which can now be obtained in any colour, should form a portion of every lady's winter attire. A knitted-wool waistcoat will be found highly useful if worn under a cloak or jacket during the winter season. Tailor-made costumes of warm but light cloth are in every way superior to any light material or silk.

Too much care cannot be taken in order to protect the throat from cold. The small sable furs which are very fashionable answer this purpose in every respect. On damp cold days, ladies will experience much comfort and benefit by wearing a good Shetland veil or fleecy 'cloud' drawn across the mouth.

It is much to be regretted that women's boots

are generally so ill adapted to protect their owners from that great evil, wet feet. Strong thick-soled boots with cork soles inside will exclude all damp and keep the feet warm, which is more than can be said of those mostly worn. There is an old saying that thick boots are the doctor's enemy.

Those who are most susceptible to the severity of winter are children, invalids, and the aged, as in these stages heat-power is low. Under the influence of such conditions, a sense of chilliness is felt, particularly on the surface and extremities. This is Nature's indication that more clothing is required to supplement defective circulation. If this be forthwith adopted, chilliness will be removed, and the extra warmth oftentimes counteracts any disturbances of circulation to which a weakened body is liable, and which so often lay the foundation of future disease.

For some years past a fabric known as 'flannelette' has been much used for ladies' and children's winter under-clothing. This article, although cheap, is neither so warm nor durable as ordinary flannel, for the woolly surface soon wears off, leaving a thin cotton base, which affords inadequate protection against the cold. The high cloth button gaiters now sold at most boot-shops will be found very useful by women and children in cold wet weather, as they keep the ankles warm and dry.

Various other matters with regard to clothing are sufficiently indicated by common-sense, such as the frequent change of garments, particularly under ones. It is desirable to avoid all tight-fitting clothes, lacings, or buttonings, as they create improper pressure, and interfere with free motion and circulation, thereby making the wearer feel cold. If some of the suggestions we have mentioned were adopted more generally during the cold weather, a great amount of discomfort would certainly be obviated, and many colds avoided.

THE RECOLLECTIONS OF CAPTAIN WILKIE.*

PART II.—CONCLUSION.

'WELL, it is hard lines telling stories against one's self, but this was how it happened. I had made a rather good haul, and invested some of the swag in buying a very fine diamond ring. I thought it would be something to fall back upon when all the ready was gone and times were hard. I had just purchased it, and was going back to my lodgings in the omnibus, when, as luck would have it, a very stylishly dressed young lady came in and took her seat beside me. I didn't pay much attention to her at first; but after a time something hard in her dress knocked up against my hand, which my experienced touch soon made out to be a purse. It struck me that I could not pass the time more profitably or agreeably than by making this purse my own. I had to do it very carefully; but I managed at last to wriggle my hand into her rather tight pocket, and I thought

the job was over. Just at this moment she rose abruptly to leave the 'bus, and I had hardly time to get my hand with the purse in it out of her pocket without detection. It was not until she had been gone some time that I found out that, in drawing out my hand in that hurried manner, the new and ill-fitting ring I wore had slipped over my finger and remained in the young lady's pocket. I sprang out, and ran in the direction in which she had gone, with the intention of picking her pocket once again. She had disappeared, however; and from that day till this I have never set eyes on her. To make the matter worse, there was only fourpence-halfpenny in coppers inside the purse. Sarve me right for trying to rob such a pretty girl; still, if I had that two hundred quid now, I should not be reduced to— Good heavens, forgive me! What am I saying?

He seemed inclined to relapse into silence after this; but I was determined to draw him out a little more, if I could possibly manage it. 'There is less personal risk in the branch you have been talking of,' I remarked, 'than there is in burglary.'

'Ah!' he said, warming to his subject once again, 'it is the higher game which is best worth aiming at.—Talk about sport, sir, talk about fishing or hunting! why, it is tame in comparison! Think of the great country-house with its men-servants and its dogs and its fire-arms, and you with only your jemmy and your centre-bit, and your mother-wit, which is best of all. It is the triumph of intellect over brute-force, sir, as represented by bolts and bars.'

'People generally look upon it as quite the reverse,' I remarked.

'I was never one of those blundering life-preserver fellows,' said my companion. 'I did try my hand at garrotting once; but it was against my principles, and I gave it up. I have tried everything. I have been a bedridden widow with three young children; but I do object to physical force.'

'You have been what?' said I.

'A bedridden widow. Advertising, you know, and getting subscriptions. I have tried them all.—You seem interested in these experiences,' he continued; 'so I will tell you another anecdote. It was the narrowest escape for penal servitude that ever I had in my life. A pal and I had gone down on a country beat—it doesn't signify where it was—and taken up our headquarters in a little provincial town. Somehow it got noised abroad that we were there, and householders were warned to be careful, as suspicious characters had been seen in the neighbourhood. We should have changed our plans when we saw the game was up; but my chum was a plucky fellow, and wouldn't consent to back down. Poor little Jim! He was only thirty-four round the chest, and about twelve at the biceps; but there is not a measuring tape in England could have given the size of his heart. He said we were in for it, and we must stick to it; so I agreed to stay, and we chose Morley Hall, the country-house of a certain Colonel Morley, to begin with.

'Now, this Colonel Morley was about the last man in the world that we should have

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meddled with. He was a shrewd, cool-headed fellow, who had knocked about and seen the world, and it seems that he took a special pride in the detection of criminals. However, we knew nothing of all this at that time; so we set forth hopefully to have a try at the house.

'The reason that made us pick him out among the rest was that he had a good-for-nothing groom, who was a tool in our hands. This fellow had drawn up a rough plan of the premises for us. The place was pretty well locked up and guarded, and the only weak point we could see was a certain trap-door, the padlock of which was broken, and which opened from the roof into one of the lumber-rooms. If we could only find any method of reaching the roof, we might force a way securely from above. We both thought the plan rather a good one, and it had a spice of originality about it which pleased us. It is not the mere jewels or plate, you know, that a good cracksman thinks about. The neatness of the job, and his reputation for smartness, are almost as important in his eyes.

'We had been very quiet for a day or two, just to let suspicion die away. Then we set out one dark night, Jim and I, and got over the avenue railings and up to the house without meeting a soul. It was blowing hard, I remember, and the clouds hurrying across the sky. We had a good look at the front of the house, and then Jim went round to the garden side. He came running back in a minute or two in a great state of delight. "Why, Bill," he said, gripping me by the arm, "there never was such a bit of luck! They've been repairing the roof or something, and they've left the ladder standing." We went round together, and there, sure enough, was the ladder towering above our heads, and one or two labourers' hods lying about, which showed that some work had been going on during the day. We had a good look round, to see that everything was quiet, and then we climbed up, Jim first, and I after him. We got to the top, and were sitting on the slates, having a bit of a breather, before beginning business, when you can fancy our feelings to see the ladder that we came up by suddenly stand straight up in the air, and then slowly descend until it rested in the garden below! At first, we hoped it might have slipped, though that was bad enough; but we soon had that idea put out of our head.

"Hullo, up there!" cried a voice from below.

'We craned our heads over the edge, and there was a man, dressed, as far as we could make out, in evening dress, and standing in the middle of the grass plot. We kept quiet.

"Hullo!" he shouted again. "How do you feel yourselves? Pretty comfortable, eh? Ha! ha! You London rogues thought we were green in the country. What's your opinion now?"

'We both lay still, though feeling pretty considerably small, as you may imagine.

"It's all right; I see you," he continued. "Why, I have been waiting behind that lilac bush every night for the last week, expecting to see you. I knew you couldn't resist going up that ladder, when you found the windows were too much for you.—Joe! Joe!"

"Yes, sir," said a voice, and another man came from among the bushes.

"Just you keep your eye on the roof, will you, while I ride down to the station and fetch up a couple of constables?—*Au revoir*, gentlemen! You don't mind waiting, I suppose?" And Colonel Morley—for it was the owner of the house himself—strode off; and in a few minutes we heard the rattle of his horse's hoofs going down the avenue.

'Well, sir, we felt precious silly, as you may imagine. It wasn't so much having been nabbed that bothered us, as the feeling of being caught in such a simple trap. We looked at each other in blank disgust, and then, to save our lives, we couldn't help bursting into laughter at our own fix. However, it was no laughing matter; so we set to work going round the roof, and seeing if there was a likely water-pipe or anything that might give us a chance of escape. We had to give it up as a bad job; so we sat down again, and made up our minds to the worst. Suddenly an idea flashed into my head, and I groped my way over the roof until I felt wood under my feet. I bent down, and found that the Colonel had actually forgotten to secure the padlock! You will often notice, as you go through life, that it is the shrewdest and most cunning man who falls into the most absurd mistakes; and this was an example of it. You may guess that we did not lose much time, for we expected to hear the constables every moment. We dropped through into the lumber-room, slipped down-stairs, tore open the library shutters, and were out and away before the astonished groom could make out what had happened. There wasn't time enough to take any little souvenir with us, worse luck. I should have liked to have seen the Colonel's face when he came back with the constables and found that the birds were flown.'

'Did you ever come across the Colonel again?' I asked.

'Yes; we skinned him of every bit of plate he had, down to the salt-spoons, a few years later. It was partly out of revenge, you see, that we did it. It was a very well-managed and daring thing, one of the best I ever saw, and all done in open daylight too.'

'How in the world did you do it?' I asked.

'Well, there were three of us in it—Jim was one; and we set about it in this way. We wanted to begin by getting the Colonel out of the way, so I wrote him a note purporting to come from Squire Brotherwick, who lived about ten miles away, and was not always on the best of terms with the master of Morley Hall. I dressed myself up as a groom and delivered the note myself. It was to the effect that the Squire thought he was able to lay his hands on the scoundrels who had escaped from the Colonel a couple of years before, and that if the Colonel would ride over, they would have little difficulty in securing them. I was sure that this would have the desired effect; so, after handing it in, and remarking that I was the Squire's groom, I walked off again, as if on the way back to my master's.

'After getting out of sight of the house, I crouched down behind a hedge; and, as I expected, in less than a quarter of an hour the

Colonel came swinging past me on his chestnut mare. Now, there is another accomplishment I possess which I have not mentioned to you yet, and that is, that I can copy any handwriting that I see. It is a very easy trick to pick up, if you only give your mind to it. I happened to have come across one of Colonel Morley's letters some days before, and I can write so that even now I defy an expert to detect a difference between the hands. This was a great assistance to me now, for I tore a leaf out of my pocket-book and wrote something to this effect:

"As Squire Brotherwick has seen some suspicious characters about, and the house may be attempted again, I have sent down to the bank, and ordered them to send up their bank-cart to convey the whole of the plate to a place of safety. It will save us a good deal of anxiety to know that it is in absolute security. Have it packed up and ready, and give the bearer a glass of beer."

"Having composed this precious epistle, I addressed it to the butler, and carried it back to the Hall, saying that their master had overtaken me on the way and asked me to deliver it. I was taken in and made much of downstairs; while a great packing-case was dragged into the hall, and the plate stowed away among cotton-wool and stuffing. It was nearly ready, when I heard the sound of wheels upon the gravel, and sauntered round just in time to see a business-like closed car drive up to the door. One of my pals was sitting very demurely on the box; while Jim, with an official-looking hat, sprang out and bustled into the hall.

"Now, then," I heard him say, "look sharp! What's for the bank? Come on!"

"Wait a minute, sir," said the butler.

"Can't wait. There's a panic all over the country, and they are clamouring for us everywhere. Must drive on to Lord Blackbury's place, unless you are ready."

"Don't go, sir!" pleaded the butler. "There's only this one rope to tie.—There; it is ready now. You'll look after it, won't you?"

"That we will. You'll never have any more trouble with it now," said Jim, helping to push the great case into the car.

"I think I had better go with you and see it stowed away in the bank," said the butler.

"All right!" said Jim, nothing abashed. "You can't come in the car, though, for Lord Blackbury's box will take up all the spare room.—Let's see—it's twelve o'clock now. Well, you are waiting at the bank door at half-past one, and you will just catch us."

"All right—half-past one," said the butler.

"Good-day!" cried my chum; and away went the car, while I made a bit of a short cut and caught it round a turn of the road. We drove right off into the next county, got a down-train to London; and before midnight, the Colonel's silver was fused into a solid lump.

I could not help laughing at the versatility of the old scoundrel. "It was a daring game to play," I said.

"It is always the daring game which succeeds best," he answered.

At this point the train began to show symptoms of slowing down, and my companion

put on his overcoat and gave other signs of being near the end of his journey. "You are going on to Dover?" he said.

"Yes."

"For the Continent?"

"Yes."

"How long do you intend to travel?"

"Only for a week or so."

"Well, I must leave you here. You will remember my name, won't you? John Wilkie, I am pleased to have met you.—Is my umbrella behind you?" he added, stretching across.—"No; I beg your pardon. Here it is in the corner;" and with an affable smile, the ex-cracksman stepped out, bowed, and disappeared among the crowd upon the platform.

I lit another cigar, laughed as I thought of my late companion, and lifted up the *Times*, which he had left behind him. The bell had rung, the wheels were already revolving, when, to my astonishment, a pallid face looked in at me through the window. It was so contorted and agitated, that I hardly recognised the features which I had been gazing upon during the last couple of hours. "Here, take it," he said—"take it. It's hardly worth my while to rob you of seven pounds four shillings; but I couldn't resist once more trying my hand;" and he flung something into the carriage and disappeared.

It was my old leather purse, with my return ticket, and the whole of my travelling expenses. How he had taken it he knows best himself; I suppose it was while he was bending over in search of an imaginary umbrella. His newly re-awakened conscience had then pricked him, so that he had been driven to instant restitution.

['Captain Wilkie' was written by Dr Conan Doyle several years ago, and is interesting, both as a vigorous story in itself and as being in the vein which he afterwards developed in the well-known Sherlock Holmes stories.]

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THAT energetic body, the London County Council, have under consideration the question as to the desirability of securing a supply of sea-water for London. It may be thought that this boon has already been secured, for the Railway Companies have for many years supplied sea-water in casks for bathers' use. But the Council's scheme is a far more comprehensive one, and comprises the formation of a huge reservoir near London, into which the sea-water would be pumped through many miles of piping. Moreover, the water would not be intended for bath purposes only, but for cleansing streets, scouring sewers, and doing all such sanitary work as comes within the duties of the local authorities. It is certain that the fresh-water supply of London is inadequate, and this scheme would at once relieve the difficulty. A measure having the same object was actually passed in the House of Commons about fourteen years back, but on account of the costly nature of the project it came to nought. It is possible that the new scheme may prove abortive from the same cause.

About two years ago some excitement was caused by the rumour that a new advertising horror was imminent in the shape of letters projected upon the sky at night by means of a powerful optical apparatus. Happily, the idea turned out to be quite impracticable, although experiments were made with a powerful electric search-light. But the idea, in a modified form, has since come forward, and proves to be only a mitigated evil. At Charing Cross, London, which has been described as the finest site in Europe, a projecting lantern has been erected, which every night throws luminous advertisements not only upon the National Gallery, but upon the adjoining façade of St Martin's Church. This impertinent offence is such a new one that the authorities are powerless to prevent it, and it will probably be necessary to obtain a special Act of Parliament to abate what is both a scandal and a nuisance.

An American technical journal has been publishing some figures with reference to the economy of covering steam-pipes. Experiment shows that the waste of heat in using one hundred feet of two-inch pipe uncovered, which conveys steam at from seventy to eighty pounds pressure, for one year of three thousand working hours, costs sixty-four shillings and sixpence with coal at eight shillings and fourpence per ton. By using the least efficient of insulated coverings, this loss is reduced to about one-fourth that amount; and with the best procurable, to about ten shillings per year. Other experimenters have made out the loss incurred by using uncovered or inefficiently covered steam-pipes to be considerably more than that above indicated, and the truth probably lies between the two estimates; for usually a steam-pipe is under pressure more than ten hours a day, and coal cannot always be had for as low a price as that quoted. However, the matter is worth attention, especially at a season of the year when loss from such a cause is naturally at its maximum.

Mr J. H. Myers is the inventor of the Voting Machine, which there is every reason to believe will take the place of the complex and expensive arrangements now necessary for elections in America—and possibly in process of time in this country too. The machine takes the form of a sheet-iron cabinet five feet square and seven feet high, with an entrance and exit door for the voter. Upon entering this cabinet, the voter finds himself confronted by a series of knobs in parallel lines, each row being devoted to the candidates of any particular party—the name of each candidate, printed in the party colours, being attached to each knob. By pulling a lever at the top of a column of knobs, one vote is cast for every candidate of a party, while by the same movement all other knobs and levers are locked, but are released and ready for the next voter by the action of opening and closing the exit door. The knobs actuate counters such as are attached to printing and other machines so as to keep a check on the work done. The cost of the voting machine is about fifty pounds, which is very little when compared with the usual expenses of an election.

An interesting account recently appeared in

the *Pittsburgh Despatch* of the manner in which rats, as well as cats, have been made to adapt themselves to new conditions of existence. At the cold-storage warehouses at Pittsburgh, mice and rats were originally unknown, the temperature being too low for them. But after a few months, rats appeared, and they were clothed in long and thick fur, Nature having presented them with 'greatcoats' to meet the rigours of a temperature far below the freezing-point. Cats were now turned into the rooms to try conclusions with the rats; but the poor creatures pined and died. Presently, a cat with unusually thick fur was found, which survived the ordeal, and by careful attention, a litter of kittens was reared. By this means a number of cold-proof cats have been distributed among the storage-houses, cats which, curiously enough, cannot live in the open air during the hot season.

In a recent lecture at the London Institution on Electro-motors, Professor Sylvanus Thompson pointed out their great advantage in many situations over steam-engines. He alluded to the fact that many forms of rotary steam-engine had been devised, but all were unsatisfactory. The electric motor is a rotary machine, and does away with the great fault of the steam-engine—namely, the reciprocating action of the pistons. A large number of electric motors are now at work in our various towns and cities, and it is certain that where the current can be obtained from the public mains their use represents a great economy when compared with either steam or gas engines.

In a course of lectures on Diphtheria, Dr Lennox Browne stated that bacteriological research had proved that about forty per cent. of cases believed to be diphtheritic were not so, and he advised practitioners to use every means available to differentiate the true from the false. He also gave the history of a number of cases sent for treatment as diphtheria, showing on the lantern screen enlarged drawings of the throat, taken at the bedside of each patient, together with photo-micrographs, illustrating the results of bacteriological examination. In this way it was shown that bedside diagnosis cannot be relied upon in these cases until it has been corroborated by the microscope.

Mr Morris, assistant-director of Kew Gardens, lecturing at the London Institution on some curiosities of tropical plant-life, said that among these were the pearls found occasionally in the cocoa-nut palm of the Philippine Islands, pearls which, like those of the ocean, are composed of carbonate of lime. The bamboo, too, yields another precious product in the shape of true opals, which are found in its joints. In each case, this mineral matter is of course obtained from the soil. The natives of the Celebes use these vegetable opals as amulets and charms against disease. Deposits of stony matter are by no means uncommon in trees, and Sir F. Abel has recorded that he found in a tree in India a slab of limestone eight feet long. It is known, too, that much of the teak which comes to us from Burma has to be rejected on account of the stony matter which it contains playing such havoc with the tools brought to bear upon it. Many other curiosities of vegetable life were referred to in Mr Morris's interesting lecture.

It is said that some experiments have recently been successfully conducted with reference to a new method of fruit preservation. The method is a simple one, and consists in sealing the fruit hermetically in an atmosphere of carbonic acid gas, without the aid of ice, refrigerator, or any other apparatus. If this system be as successful as it is reported to be, it will certainly revolutionise the trade in tinned fruits, and possibly other edibles. It will also render possible the exportation from India and other distant countries of fruits which most Europeans have never seen or heard of. We must wait for further details before we draw too largely upon the pleasures of anticipation.

At the Stanley show at the Agricultural Hall, London, an exhibition to which all cyclists look forward with interest, the great novelty was the Bamboo Cycle exhibited by the Bamboo Cycle Company of Wolverhampton. In lightness, as well as in durability, bamboo compares favourably with the best steel; and when, as in the present case, it is associated with aluminium, we have combined two of the lightest of constructive materials. Whether the bamboo cycle will really prove a rival to the modern steel horse, which has accomplished such wonders, is a matter which at present it is impossible to forecast. But the introduction of bamboo in the construction of the machine is interesting and worthy of record.

The velocipede tax in France produced last year, it appears, no less a sum than 950,000 francs (£38,000), for 132,276 cycles. There was, besides, a sum of 1,400,000 francs (£56,000) exacted from 4957 cyclist clubs, with 283,380 members. In the same year the dog tax in France produced 8,700,000 francs (£346,000) for 2,885,200 dogs.

It is happily agreed by all civilised nations that although the death penalty may be a terrible necessity, it should be carried out in as humane a method as possible. Hence there was in certain quarters a great outcry, and allegations of needless cruelty, when 'Electrocution,' as it is called, was introduced in the United States. It was alleged that although the action of the electric current was apparently very quick, there was a moment when the sufferer must experience the most horrible torture which it is possible to conceive. As far as we can remember, the objectors could not give any scientific reason why this should be the case, while at the same time the allegation was almost impossible of refutation. But a case of high voltage electric shock, from which the victim ultimately recovered, has recently been reported upon, from which it would appear that, contrary to well-established belief, the recipient of such a shock feels no pain whatever. In the case referred to, a middle-aged man accidentally received the full force of a current of one thousand volts. He was rendered unconscious for some hours, but eventually under careful medical treatment was restored. He remembered everything up to the time of grasping the wires which had caused the trouble; but from that time his memory was a blank until he woke up from his torpor. The only pain was what he now for the first time felt from the burns upon his skin.

It has recently been affirmed by a French scientific authority that the resuscitation of a man apparently killed by electricity is possible if the patient be treated as one rescued from drowning. Of course, if the current, such as that of lightning-flash, has caused actual destruction of tissue, there can be little hope of recovery; but electric shock very often causes suspended animation, which if taken in time will yield to proper treatment. We need hardly point out that the recognised treatment of the apparently drowned consists chiefly in establishing respiration by artificial means, helped by the administration of oxygen gas. This gas is now readily obtainable commercially in all large towns.

A new vehicle has lately appeared in the London streets which reminds one of the once fashionable sedan-chair; but the resemblance is confined to the cab or body of the carriage. Shafts it has none, for either horses or men; but it has three bicycle wheels, one in front and two behind, which are driven by the foot-power of two men, the occupants of the vehicle taking no part in its propulsion.

Mr J. W. Swan, whose name is so well known in conjunction with that of Edison in connection with the glow-lamp patents, recently presented to the Royal Society—of which he has been created a Fellow—a specimen of gold-leaf which is about ten times thinner than that produced by the goldbeater. The process adopted in securing this fairy-like web of metal is to cover copper foil with a thin deposit of gold by means of the electric current, and then to dissolve away the copper by chemical means.

A new form of railway carriage seat has just been introduced experimentally by the North British Railway Company. It consists of a number of steel rings knit together, upon which a strong tension is put, resembling in general construction the wire-wove mattresses which are now in such common use. Such a seat promises durability and comfort during a long railway journey, and it will be invulnerable to the assaults of those curiously constituted mortals who take delight in cutting the cushions in ordinary use in railway carriages.

Beavers, once plentiful all over Germany, seem now to be found only in one circumscribed area—namely, in four forests on the middle Elbe, between a point a little above Wittenberg to near Magdeburg. Some of them are in Prussian territory, some in the Duchy of Anhalt; and though strictly preserved by both governments, they are decreasing in numbers. An elaborate study by Dr Friedrich enumerates in all one hundred and eight inhabited dams, some with only one or two beavers; so that in all probability this interesting animal will soon be quite extinct so far as Germany is concerned.

The Council of the Imperial Institute at South Kensington have announced that a special Exhibition of Photography in its relation to the arts, sciences, and industries will be held in that building next summer. The exhibits will be grouped under seven divisions. The first will comprise the History of Photography and examples of early processes; the

second being devoted to Artistic Photography, and will include a representative exhibition of all schools. Division three will be devoted to Photography as an Industry, and will deal principally with the apparatus used in the art. Processes in operation, including the production of portraits by natural and artificial light, will be included here. Division four will embrace Photography in its Application to various Industries. Division five will be devoted to Photography as the Handmaid to various branches of Science; and division six will deal with its Importance to Education. The remaining division will embrace miscellaneous applications of photography.

'The Senses and Intelligence of Animals' formed the subject of an interesting lecture given recently by Sir John Lubbock at the Working Men's College, London. The lecturer asserted that it was still a doubtful point whether ants could hear; he had tried them with a great variety of sounds, but the insects never gave the slightest indication of hearing them. It was also certain that bees were not susceptible to ordinary tones of sound, and he therefore thought that the custom of 'tanging,' which was popularly supposed to help towards the swarming of bees, was quite useless. The custom probably arose from an idea of giving notice to neighbours that a swarm was loose. Possibly both bees and ants could hear the higher overtones which were beyond the range of human hearing. With regard to vision in insects, it was certain that bees could distinguish colours, and that blue was their favourite; ants were also sensible to colour, and were able to distinguish the ultra-violet rays of the spectrum which were invisible to human beings. Sir John Lubbock pleaded that the practice of arranging stuffed birds and beasts in glass cases, and insects in cabinets, should merely be the preliminary of a more exhaustive study of the living creatures. We should endeavour to ascertain their relations and adaptations to the forces of Nature, which might give a clue to senses and perceptions of which at present we have no conception.

A NIGHT IN A RAT-TRAP.

UNLESS men become soldiers or adventurers in other lands, they oftentimes cannot obtain the excitement of even disturbed slumbers. Should burglars attack the house, it is as well to remember that the periodical bought on the previous day's railway journey contains a coupon guaranteeing loss up to one thousand pounds, say; so that it is better to let them 'burgle' on at their sweet will, rather than interrupt, and be shot or knocked on the head. Ferocious dogs are as a rule fastened up, and bulls not commonly left loose in the fields. Every now and then, however, it is possible by fire or water to secure an unusual sensation. The following narrative will show that exceptional advantages in this respect—outside these two elements—often fall to the lot of the most peaceful of men.

Having inherited an old Border castle on the banks of the Esk, I feel it a duty at times to occupy it. An old woman acted as custodian; and crumbling walls, rats, damp, and

wind, to say nothing of an hereditary ghost, did not render it a pleasant home. In the last century, this ghost had obligingly held four conferences with the Rev. Mr Ogilvie, minister of Forganwick. The minister's exhortations, however—which are yet on record in a dingy duodecimo—were thrown away upon the wayward phantom; and on the minister's departure, he soon returned to his cantrips. Fortunately, the old woman was deaf, so that he knocked inside the walls and rolled up and down stairs as noisily as he liked without disturbing her. I had been wont for some years to inhabit Touldenny Castle for a month each autumn, as I could then obtain a little grouse-shooting and trout-fishing on the neighbouring moorland. Some thirty years ago I was at the castle as usual in a stormy October. The floods were out, and tempests night by night shook even the solid walls of the castle. There was a library of old-fashioned lore in the tower, and by means of curtains and a good fire, I made myself tolerably comfortable. Maggie, however, grumbled more than usual about the rats, and they certainly were both numerous and obtrusive.

At length she announced her intention of leaving the castle for a night, in order to be present at the wedding festivities of a niece in a neighbouring village. It struck me that while she was absent, I would strike a decided blow at the rats. The uppermost storey of the tower was used as a storeroom, and I was not surprised at old Maggie's complaints when I found four or five holes in the floor near the walls, and evident traces that, night by night, rats held high revelry there upon my meal and cheeses. I remembered the raids which the men connected with the slaughter-houses at Paris once made upon rats, after baiting the rooms for a few nights with horse-flesh and leaving the vermin to devour them in peace. Their victims were numbered by thousands; and it occurred to me that on a smaller scale I, too, might get rid of a considerable number of these pests. Accordingly, for a couple of nights before Maggie left, I put plates of sugar, biscuits, and honey on the floor of the storeroom, finding next morning that these had been much appreciated by the rats. On the day of my projected battue I placed five tin boxes cunningly by the side of the holes, connecting them with string to my down-stairs library, so that when I liked to pull the string the boxes would fall over the holes and leave the rats behind, as Juvenal says, 'inclusos carcere nasse.' I took care to put out more and more dainty cates that day than usual; and as I heard the rats in the evening running behind the wainscot, chuckled over the example so speedily to be made of these marauders.

Maggie went off at three on a dull dark afternoon. She left a cold dinner in the dining-room; and after discussing it I went up to the library and smoked till about 11 P.M., when I laid aside my book, and prepared for revenge. Arming myself with a handy flexible cane, I lit a bedroom candle and pulled the important string. Judging from the commotion overhead, a good many rats were imprisoned. What a sight presented itself as I opened the storeroom

door and quickly closed it behind me! The floor was black with rats, tumbling and leaping over each other in dire terror. The Pied Piper himself might have summoned them—

Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, gray rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cooking tails and pricking whiskers,
Families by tens and dozens.

I began at once to lay about me with the cane, and wherever it fell at least one victim suffered. Then I turned and hit behind me, the rats fleeing in abject fear. I thought of the stories of rats attacking men when they were driven into a corner, and decided now that they were gross exaggerations. At that moment my candlestick slipped out of my hand and fell with a rattle on the floor, leaving me in utter darkness. In an instant a rat sprang at my throat, and as I seized and dashed it on the ground, several more leaped at my face, and more ran to my ankles and climbed up within and without my trousers, inflicting sharp bites when they found an opportunity. In vain did I shout and dash them off, trample on them, and lay about me with the cane. More came, till I began to be seriously alarmed, and thought of Bishop Hatto's fate. Had I fallen, they would have eaten me alive. I fumbled for the door, and at length turned the handle. Fool that I was, I had forgotten, when I closed it behind me, that it fastened with an old-fashioned spring, having perhaps been used at times as a prison. There was no possible exit; and I was bitten severely round my neck and face as I tried to kick the door out. The brutes had lost all fear of man in the dark, and I shuddered at the thought of my bones being found in that awful den.

Something must be done, and that speedily. There was a large aperture in the outer wall six feet from the floor. An iron stanchion ran through it, dividing the aperture in two. Outside was a curious iron cradle, something like the 'crow's nest' on the mainmast of a modern whaler, and here watch and ward used to be kept in the troublous days of old, or a captive was put in it, as the Countess of Buchan was displayed from the walls of Berwick. A ladder led to it from the floor, but it lay broken and rotting on the ground. I was impelled, however, with the horror of the situation; and while half-a-dozen rats at least hung on each leg, I swept off as many more from my neck and face, and leaping up, seized the stanchion. Despair lent strength, and I pulled myself up by putting my feet on the rough stones of the wall, dislodged some half-rotten boards, and felt the cold night-air blow on my heated, bleeding face. Next I threw all the rats that were hanging to my legs far out into the dark void below. The river Esk I knew ran beneath, and there was little fear of any of them surviving the fall. Some rats, I found, maddened by the smell and taste of my blood, climbed as I had done up the rough stone walls and positively attacked me again, like so many angry ants. Wounded, torn, bleeding, and bitten in every limb, I managed to push myself out gently into the iron cradle, and there was comparatively safe.

Only two or three rats could reach me, and these I soon dashed down. The others apparently gave up the chase when I was thus in the cold wind and rain, comparatively out of their reach.

I was safe for the time, but by no means comfortable. I leaned against thick iron bars which were dripping with wet and exceedingly cold. The wind was gathering to a hurricane, and I had no covering of any kind. It must be about midnight, I calculated, and morn would not break before seven at the earliest. Buttoning up my coat, I made up my mind to face any inclemency of weather, rather than descend to the murderous den I had so narrowly quitted alive. The rats would depart at dawn by making two or three fresh holes, and I could break down the door, get to bed, and foment my wounds. In a very short time I was stiff and shivering with cold. Shower after shower drifted over; the wind blew in squalls, and roared round the tower. Moon and stars were alike obscured; but a dull, heavy roar came up from below. I knew it was the Esk far down in full flood. There was nothing for it but to wait on as patiently as I could. Feeling my watch's face, I guessed it was about half-past three.

Soon a dreadful fear stole over me, one that even silenced the horrors of my escape from the rats. If I moved in my uneasy perch, it appeared loose and rickety. What if it broke down altogether with my weight in it? It certainly had held no one, save some adventurous boy, for a hundred and fifty years, so that the ironwork and staples might well give way beneath my weight. I gently rocked myself, and the whole structure showed such alarming symptoms of collapsing, that I lay still in the greatest fear, scarcely daring to sneeze or cough. If the cage did yield, I should be precipitated sixty feet down into the raging river. I would have returned to the storeroom and taken my chance of the rats having left; but to alter my position and get back to the big iron stanchion was in itself most perilous. If I put any undue weight upon a dangerous part, I should infallibly be dropped into the Esk. From its roar and rush far below, I could guess what my fate would be did I fall.

Slowly the hours wore on, as they only do when the mind is in deep stress of anxiety. Half-famished and blue with cold, I rejoiced to see far away a streak of light upon the horizon. My heart leaped as I recognised the first footsteps of the dawn 'clad in amice gray.' Gradually the light broadened, and night grew brown instead of black, and then the gloom dissolved and faded, and a red rim surrounded the distant eye of light. And then the hills grew more distinct, and, joy of joys, the sun rose upon a dripping world! I could now investigate the crazy iron cradle in which I rested, or rather lay.

It had originally been attached by two iron bands to the central stanchion, and by two huge iron pins, some four feet under the aperture, to the wall. The iron bands had long been rusted through, and the whole weight of the structure now rested on one of the iron pins which penetrated the joint of the masonry,

and looked most insecure. My getting into it had evidently caused the other pin to slip out, so that the infirm structure and I rested—so long as I did not move—on the one weak-looking pin. I saw at once that a movement might cause it to slip sideways, when I should be precipitated out at once; or else to snap off, when I should also be carried downwards in its ruin. There was a further danger, that my very remaining in it might cause it gradually to become detached from the one pin which alone held it together. Here was a dreadful discovery! My head was below the level of the aperture; and to raise my arms, shift my position, and attempt to grasp the stanchion, was perilous in the extreme. It was firm enough, I saw. Could I once clutch it, I felt assured that I could pull myself up and reach the interior of the storeroom.

Two more mortal hours did I wait in hopes that some one would come, and I could call for help; but Maggie would not be back till evening, and no public road ran near the tower. It overlooked a wide stretch of moorland. I was now so benumbed, too, that I felt what steps were to be taken would have to be chosen at once. I dared not stand up on the crazy 'crow's nest.' Change of posture might immediately cause its fall. Having carefully studied the situation, I determined to wait no longer, but to take off my braces—which were fortunately made of stout buckskin—and throw them round the stanchion. I could then venture to stand up, and, holding by them, could pass hand above hand to the stanchion, when despair, I felt, would give me strength to pull myself up. Accordingly, I began my attempts to throw the braces round the stanchion: ten or twelve times they fell back on me, and then a new terror seized me, lest they should slip out of my hands altogether, in which case certain death would stare me in the face. At that moment a voice reached my ears from below, and I saw my keeper passing under with the gardener.

'Save us!' he said, 'is yon the maister like a bird in a cage? He'll surely be doon in a meenute mair.—Hold on, maister,' he shouted. 'I'll come up! Hold on!'

Just then a large piece of mortar gave way below me, and fell clattering down the wall into the river with a splash. I saw that a moment's delay might mean death, so, rising slowly to my feet, I flung the braces once more round the stanchion and grasped the ends, when, with a dull crack, all the iron cradle gave way under me and fell with a horrid crash into the Esk. I remained hanging three or four inches below the stanchion; but fortunately retained my senses, and gripping the braces in my teeth with the strength of despair, pulled myself up inch by inch, and seized the stanchion with my right hand; then I dropped the braces, and with a great effort reached up with the left and gripped it convulsively with both, still hanging, but so far safe. Not an instant dared I linger, as I felt my strength going every moment, but dragged myself higher and higher till I got hold of the masonry within with one hand, and clung a second to gain breath.

Now came the worst part of the struggle; I had to bring the left hand from the stanchion to the wall and pull myself on to my chest in the window. I did get the hand on the stone, but could not, even for dear life, get farther. My eyes closed, my head swam, a mist came over me, and I all but dropped in a faint. But just then I heard the steps of the keeper coming, ah! how leisurely, up-stairs! 'Quick, quick, Malcolm, for your life!' I shouted in a last effort of vitality. 'Come and get hold of me! Quick! Haste! Help!' Again I all but fell; but now the door opened, and Malcolm rushing in, clasped both my wrists, and I was safe! I was in a dead-faint, and Malcolm would never have pulled me up by himself. With the help of the gardener, who now hurried in, I was dragged into the room more dead than alive, and lay senseless on the floor till a glass of whisky, the national panacea for all evils, was brought. Even then, I was stiff, bleeding, torn, wet through, and generally miserable. They helped me to bed, however, and I slept.

Of course, thinks the reader, you had a bad brain-fever afterwards. Certainly not. At least your hair turned white with the agony of that night? Nothing of the kind. I was bathed and fomented, and rested for a couple of days in bed, and then, thanks to a sound constitution, was able to leave for England. Much, however, as I value the old tower of Touldenny Castle, I see it too often, am devoured by its rats, ay, and hang from it, too frequently in my dreams, to care ever again to behold its walls, gray, stern, and weather beaten, against the heathery hills and far blue mountains of Eskdale.

SONNET.

I DREAMT last night that I was once again
A little child, with eager, wondering eyes;
And, on mine ears, like some sweet heavenly strain,
I heard the music of dead voices rise.
I listened to the murmur of the stream
That ran beside my father's cottage door;
The bleat of sheep, the curlew's eerie scream—
I heard them all, as in the days of yore.
I saw the glimmer of the white hawthorn
Upon the trees beside the garden wall;
And then, on Fancy's wings still onward borne,
Methought I saw my mother, last of all:
And at the sight—in heart again a boy—
I wept, even in my dream, glad tears of joy.

M. C. C.

** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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JOSIAH WEDGWOOD AND HIS LATEST BIOGRAPHER.

ONE hundred years ago Josiah Wedgwood, the creator of British artistic pottery, passed away at Etruria, near Burslem, surrounded by the creations of his own well-directed genius and industry, having 'converted a rude and inconsiderable manufacture into an elegant art and an important part of national commerce.' His death took place on 3d January 1795, the same year in which Thomas Carlyle saw the light at Ecclefechan, and one year and a half before the death of Burns at Dumfries. During fifty years of his working life, largely owing to his own successful efforts, he had witnessed the output of the Staffordshire potteries increased five-fold, and his wares were known and sold over Europe and the civilised world. In the words of Mr Gladstone, his characteristic merit lay 'in the firmness and fullness with which he perceived the true law of what we may call Industrial Art, or, in other words, of the application of the higher art to Industry.' Novalis once compared the works of Goethe and Wedgwood in these words: 'Goethe is truly a practical poet. He is in his works what the Englishman is in his wares, perfectly simple, neat, fit, and durable. He has played in the German world of literature the same part that Wedgwood has played in the English world of art.'

To the already existing lives of the great potter, Dr Smiles has just added another (*Josiah Wedgwood*: London, John Murray), and having had access to certain family manuscripts and memorandum books, he has been enabled to throw additional light on the personal history of Josiah Wedgwood. We are told in the preface that Mr C. T. Gatty, at the request of the Wedgwood family, had made some progress with a biography, and being unable to proceed, handed over his materials to Dr Smiles. Long ago, in his sketch of Brindley and the early engineers, Dr Smiles had occasion to record the

important service rendered by Wedgwood in the making of the Grand Trunk Canal—towards the preliminary expense of which he subscribed one thousand pounds—and in the development of the industrial life of the Midlands. Now we have a volume devoted to Wedgwood, which should prove as important, as stimulating, and inspiring as any of the numerous volumes from the same hand. Indeed, the veteran author deserves a word or two to himself before we proceed to discuss Wedgwood, as his works are so closely identified with British industrial progress.

Since the issue of *Self-help* in 1859, more than one hundred and fifty thousand copies have been sold of that work, and it has been translated into most European languages. It is very popular in Italy; and the Italian Minister of Finance, at a conversazione in honour of Dr Smiles at Rome, in March 1888, said: 'I have had my children educated by reading your books.' Another Italian compliment was to the effect, 'You have done more to make Italy than ever Cavour or Garibaldi did.' The now extensive, faithful, portrait gallery of strong, enduring, persevering men began with George Stephenson, comprised the early engineers, and included sketches of Robert Dick, Thomas Edward, James Nasmyth, the latest being Josiah Wedgwood.

But to Wedgwood. More than once it has happened that the youngest of thirteen children has turned out a genius. It was so in the case of Sir Richard Arkwright, and it turned out to be so in the case of Josiah Wedgwood, the youngest of the thirteen children of Thomas Wedgwood, a Burslem potter, and of Mary Stringer, a kind-hearted but delicate, sensitive woman, the daughter of a nonconformist clergyman. The town of Burslem, in Staffordshire, where Wedgwood saw the light in 1730, was then anything but an attractive place. Drinking and cock-fighting were the common recreations; roads had scarcely any existence; the thatched hovels had dunghills before the doors, while the hollows from which the potter's clay was excavated were filled with stagnant water, and

the atmosphere of the whole place was coarse and unwholesome, and a most unlikely nursery of genius.

It is probable that the first Wedgwoods date from the hamlet of Weggewood in Staffordshire. There had been Wedgwoods in Burslem from a very early period, and this name occupies a large space in the parish registers during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while of the fifty small potters settled there, many bore this honoured name. The ware consisted of articles in common use, such as butter-pots, basins, jugs, and porringers. The black glazed and ruddy pottery then in use was much improved after an immigration of Dutchmen and Germans. The Elers, who followed the Prince of Orange, introduced the Delft ware and the salt glaze. They produced a kind of red ware, and Egyptian black; but disgusted at the discovery of their secret methods by Astbury and Twyford, they removed to Chelsea in 1710. An important improvement was made by Astbury, that of making ware white by means of burnt flint. Samuel Astbury, a son of this famous potter, married an aunt of Josiah Wedgwood. But the art was then in its infancy, not more than one hundred people being employed in this way in the district of Burslem, as compared with about ten thousand now, with an annual export of goods amounting to about two hundred thousand pounds, besides what are utilised in home-trade. John Wesley, after visiting Burslem in 1760, and twenty years later in 1781, remarked how the whole face of the country had been improved in that period. Inhabitants had flowed in, the wilderness had become a fruitful field, and the country was not more improved than the people.

All the school education young Josiah received was over in his ninth year, and it amounted to only a slight grounding in reading, writing, and arithmetic. But his practical or technical education went on continually, while he afterwards supplemented many of the deficiencies of early years by a wide course of study. After the death of his father, he began the practical business of life as a potter in his ninth year, by learning the throwing, rather an important branch of the trade. The thrower moulds the vessel out of the moist clay from the potter's wheel, into the required shape, and hands it on to be dealt with by the stouker, who adds the handle. Josiah at eleven proved a clever thrower of the black and mottled ware then in vogue, such as baking-dishes, pitchers, and milk-cans. But a severe attack of virulent smallpox almost terminated his career, and left a weakness in his right knee, which developed, so that this limb had to be amputated at a later date. He was bound apprentice to his brother Thomas in 1744, when in his fourteenth year; but this weak knee, which hampered him so much, proved a blessing in disguise, for it sent him from the thrower's place to the moulder's board, where he improved the ware, his first effort being an ornamental teapot made of the ochreous clay of the district. Other work of this period comprised plates, pickle-leaves, knife-hafes, and snuff-boxes. At the same time he made experiments in the chemistry of the

material he was using. Wedgwood's great study was that of different kinds of colouring matter for clays, but at the same time he mastered every branch of the art. That he was a well-behaved young man is evident from the fact that he was held up in the neighbourhood as a pattern for emulation.

But his brother Thomas, who moved along in the old rut, had small sympathy with all this experimenting, and thought Josiah flighty and full of fancies. After remaining for a time with his brother, at the completion of his apprenticeship Wedgwood became partner, in 1752, in a small pottery near Stoke-upon-Trent: soon after, Mr Whieldon, one of the most eminent potters of the day, joined the firm. Here Wedgwood took pains to discover new methods and striking designs, as trade was then depressed. New green earthenware was produced, as smooth as glass, for dessert service, moulded in the form of leaves; also toilet ware, snuff-boxes, and articles coloured in imitation of precious stones, which the jewellers of that time sold largely. Other articles of manufacture were blue flowered cups and saucers, and varicoloured teapots. Wedgwood, on the expiry of his partnership with Whieldon, started on his own account in his native Burslem in 1760. His capital must have been small, as the sum of twenty pounds was all he had received from his father's estate. He rented Ivy House and Works at ten pounds a year, and engaged his second-cousin, Thomas, as workman at eight shillings and sixpence a week. He gradually acquired a reputation for the taste and excellence of design of his green glazed ware, his tortoiseshell and tinted snuff-boxes, and white medallions. A specially designed tea-service, representing different fruits and vegetables, sold well, and, as might be expected, was at once widely imitated. He hired new works on the site now partly occupied by the Wedgwood Institute, and introduced various new tools and appliances. His kilns for firing his fine ware gave him the greatest trouble, and had to be often renewed. James Brindley, when puzzled in thinking out some engineering problem, used to retire to bed and work it out in his head before he got up. Sir Josiah Mason, the Birmingham pen-maker, used to simmer over in his mind on the previous night the work for the next day. Wedgwood had a similar habit, which kept him often awake during the early part of the night. Probably owing to the fortunate execution of an order through Miss Chetwynd, maid of honour to Queen Charlotte, of a complete cream service in green and gold, Wedgwood secured the patronage of royalty, and was appointed Queen's Potter in 1763. His Queen's ware became popular, and secured him much additional business.

An engine lathe which he introduced greatly forwarded his designs; and the wareroom opened in London for the exhibition of his now famous Queen's ware, Etruscan vases, and other works, drew attention to the excellence of his work. He started works besides at Chelsea, supervised by his partner Bentley, where modellers, enamellers, and artists were employed, so that the cares of his business, 'pot-making and navigating'—the latter the carrying through

of the Grand Trunk Canal—entirely filled his mind and time at this period. So busy was he, that he sometimes wondered whether he was an engineer, a landowner, or a potter. Meanwhile, a step he had no cause to regret was his marriage in 1764 to Sarah Wedgwood, a handsome lady of good education and of some fortune.

Wedgwood had begun to imitate the classic works of the Greeks found in public and private collections, and produced his unglazed black porcelain, which he named *Basaltes*, in 1766. The demand for his vases at this time was so great that he could have sold fifty or one hundred pounds' worth a day, if he had been able to produce them fast enough. He was now patronised by Royalty, by the Empress of Russia, and the nobility generally. A large service for Queen Charlotte took three years to execute, as part of the commission consisted in painting on the ware, in black enamel, about twelve hundred views of palaces, seats of the nobility, and remarkable places. A service for the Empress of Russia took eight years to complete. It consisted of nine hundred and fifty-two pieces, of which the cost was believed to have been three thousand pounds, although this scarcely paid Wedgwood's working expenses.

Prosperity elbowed Wedgwood out of his old buildings in Burslem, and led him to purchase land two miles away, on the line of the proposed Grand Trunk Canal, where his flourishing manufactories and model workmen's houses sprang up gradually, and were named *Etruria*, after the Italian home of the famous Etruscans, whose work he admired and imitated. His works were partly removed thither in 1769, and wholly in 1771. At this time he showed great public spirit, and aided in getting an Act of Parliament for better roads in the neighbourhood, and backed Brindley and Earl Gower in their Grand Trunk Canal scheme, which was destined, when completed, to cheapen and quicken the carriage of goods to Liverpool, Bristol, and Hull. The opposition was keen; and Wedgwood issued a pamphlet showing the benefits which would accrue to trade in the Midlands by the proposed waterway. When victory was secured, after the passing of the Act there was a holiday and great rejoicing in Burslem and the neighbourhood, and the first sod of the canal was cut by Wedgwood, July 26, 1766. He was also appointed treasurer of the new undertaking, which was eleven years in progress. Brindley, the greatest engineer then in England, doubtless sacrificed his life in its progress, as he died of continual harassment and diabetes at the early age of fifty-six. Wedgwood had an immense admiration for Brindley's work and character. In the prospect of spending a day with him, he said: 'As I always edify full as much in that man's company as at church, I promise myself to be much wiser the day following.' Like Carlyle, who whimsically put the builder of a bridge before the writer of a book, Wedgwood placed the man who designed the outline of a jug or the turn of a teapot far below the creator of a canal or the builder of a city.

In the career of a man of genius and original powers, the period of early struggle is often the most interesting. When prosperity comes, after difficulties have been surmounted, there is generally less to challenge attention. But Wedgwood's career was still one of continual progress up to the very close. His Queen's ware, made of the whitest clay from Devon and Dorset, was greatly in demand, and much improved. The fine earthenwares and porcelains which became the basis of such manufactures were originated here. Young men of artistic taste were employed and encouraged to supply designs, and a school of instruction for drawing, painting, and modelling was started. Artists such as Coward and Hoskins modelled the 'Sleeping Boy,' one of the finest and largest of his works. John Bacon, afterwards known as a sculptor, was one of his artists, as also James Tassie of Glasgow. Wedgwood engaged capable men wherever they could be found. For his Etruscan models he was greatly indebted to Sir W. Hamilton. Specimens of his famous portrait cameos, medallions, and plaques will be found in most of our public museums.

The general health of Wedgwood suffered so much between 1767 and 1768, that he decided to have the limb which had troubled him since his boyhood, amputated. He sat, and without wincing, witnessed the surgeons cut off his right leg, for there were then no anaesthetics. 'Mr Wedgwood has this day had his leg taken off,' wrote one of the Burslem clerks at the foot of a London invoice, 'and is as well as can be expected after such an execution.' His wife was his good angel when recovering, and acted as hands and feet and secretary to him; while his partner Bentley (formerly a Liverpool merchant) and Dr Darwin were also kind; and he was almost oppressed with the inquiries of many noble and distinguished persons during convalescence. He had to be content with a wooden leg now. 'Send me,' he wrote to his brother in London, 'by the next wagon a spare leg, which you will find, I believe, in the closet.' He lived to wear out a succession of wooden legs.

Indifference and idleness he could not tolerate, and his fine artistic sense was offended by any bit of imperfect work. In going through his works, he would lift the stick upon which he leaned and smash the offending article, saying, 'This won't do for Josiah Wedgwood.' All the while he had a keen insight into the character of his workmen, although he used to say that he had everything to teach them, even to the making of a table plate.

He was no monopolist, and the only patent he ever took out was for the discovery of the lost art of burning in colours, as in the Etruscan vases. 'Let us make all the good, fine, and new things we can,' he said to Bentley once; 'and so far from being afraid of other people getting our patterns, we should glory in it, and throw out all the hints we can, and, if possible, have all the artists in Europe working after our models.' By this means he hoped to secure the good-will of his best customers and of the public. At the same time he never sacrificed excellence to cheapness. As the sale

of painted Etruscan ware declined, his Jasper porcelain—so called from its resemblance to the stone of that name—became popular. The secret of its manufacture was kept for many years. It was composed of flint, potter's clay, carbonate of barytes, and *Terra ponderosa*. This and the Jasper-dip are in several tones and hues of blue; also yellow, lilac, and green. He called in the good genius of Flaxman in 1775; and for the following twelve years, the afterwards famous sculptor did an immense amount of work and enhanced his own and his patron's reputation. Flaxman did some of his finest work in this Jasper porcelain. Some of Flaxman's designs Wedgwood could scarcely be prevailed upon to part with. A bas-relief of the 'Apotheosis of Homer' went for seven hundred and thirty-five pounds at the sale of his partner Bentley; and the 'Sacrifice to Hymen,' a tablet in blue and white Jasper (1787), brought four hundred and fifteen pounds. The first-named is now in the collection of Lord Tweedmouth. Wedgwood's copy of the Barberini or Portland vase was a great triumph of his art. This vase, which had contained the ashes of the Roman Emperor Alexander Severus and his mother, was of dark-blue glass, with white enamel figures. It now stands in the medal room of the British Museum alongside a model by Wedgwood. The vase itself once changed hands for eighteen hundred guineas, and a copy fetched two hundred and fifteen guineas in 1892.

Josiah Wedgwood now stood at the head of the potters of Staffordshire, and the manufactory at Etruria drew visitors from all parts of Europe. The motto of its founder was still 'Forward;' and, as Dr Smiles expresses it, there was with him no finality in the development of his profession. He studied chemistry, botany, drawing, designing, and conchology. His inquiring mind wanted to get to the bottom of everything. He journeyed to Cornwall, and was successful in getting kaolin for china-ware. Queen Charlotte patronised a new pearl-white tea-ware; and he succeeded in perfecting the pestle and mortar for the apothecary. He invented a pyrometer for measuring temperatures; and was elected Fellow of the Royal Society. Amongst his intimate friends were Dr Erasmus Darwin, poet and physician (the famous Charles Robert Darwin was a grandson, his mother having been a daughter of Wedgwood's), Boulton of Soho Works, James Watt, Thomas Clarkson, Sir Joseph Banks, and Thomas Day.

We have an example of the benevolence of Wedgwood's disposition in his treatment of John Leslie, afterwards Professor Sir John Leslie of Edinburgh University. He was so well pleased with his tutoring of his sons, that he settled an annuity of one hundred and fifty pounds upon him; and it may be that the influence of this able tutor led Thomas Wedgwood to take up the study of heliotype, and become a pioneer of photographic science, even before Daguerre. How industrious Wedgwood had been in his profession is evident from the seven thousand specimens of clay from all parts of the world which he had tested and analysed. The six entirely new pieces of earthenware and porcelain which, along with his Queen's ware,

he had introduced early in his career, as painted and embellished, became the foundation of nearly all the fine earthenware and porcelains since produced. He had his reward, for, besides a flourishing business, he left more than half a million of money.

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

By ANTHONY HOPE, Author of *The Prisoner of Zenda*.

CHAPTER III.—COUNT ANTONIO AND THE PRINCE OF MANTIVOGLIA.

I KNOW of naught by which a man may better be judged than by his bearing in matters of love. What know I of love, say you—I, whose head is gray, and shaven to boot? True, it is gray, and it is shaven. But once it was brown, and the tonsure came not there till I had lived thirty years and borne arms for twelve. Then came death to one I loved, and the tonsure to me. Therefore, oh ye proud young men and laughing girls, old Anselm knows of love, though his knowledge be only like the memory that a man has of a glorious red-gold sunset which his eyes saw a year ago: cold are the tints, gone the richness, sober and faint the picture. Yet it is something; he sees no more, but he has seen; and sometimes still I seem to see a face that I saw last, smiling in death. They tell me such thoughts are not fitting in me, but I doubt their doing a man much harm; for they make him take joy when others reap the happiness that he, forestalled by fate's sickle, could not garner. But enough! It is of Count Antonio I would write, and not of my poor self. And the story may be worth the writing—or would be, had I more skill to pen it.

Now in the spring of the second year of Count Antonio's banishment, when the fierce anger of Duke Valentine was yet hot for the presumption shown by the Count in the matter of Duke Paul's death, a messenger came privily to where the band lay hidden in the hills, bringing greeting to Antonio from the Prince of Mantivoglia, between whom and the Duke there was great enmity. For in days gone by Firmola had paid tribute to Mantivoglia, and this burden had been broken off only some thirty years; and the Prince, learning that Antonio was at variance with Duke Valentine, perceived an opportunity, and sent to Antonio, praying him very courteously to visit Mantivoglia and be his guest. Antonio, who knew the Prince well, sent him thanks, and, having made dispositions for the safety of his company and set Tommasino in charge of it, himself rode with the man they called Bena, and, having crossed the frontier, came on the second day to Mantivoglia. Here he was received with great state, and all in the city were eager

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to see him, having heard how he had dealt with Duke Paul, and how he now renounced the authority of Valentine. And the Prince lodged him in his Palace, and prepared a banquet for him, and set him on the right hand of the Princess, who was a very fair lady, learned, and of excellent wit; indeed, I have by me certain stories which she composed, and would read on summer evenings in the garden; and it may be that, if I live, I will make known certain of them. Others there are that only the discreet should read; for what to one age is but mirth, turns in the mind of the next to unseemliness and ribaldry. This Princess, then, was very gracious to the Count, and spared no effort to give him pleasure; and she asked him very many things concerning the lady Lucia, saying at last, 'Is she fairer than I, my lord?' But Antonio answered, with a laugh, 'The moon is not fairer than the sun, nor the sun than the moon: yet they are different.' And the Princess laughed also, saying merrily, 'Well parried, my lord!' And she rose and went with the Prince and Antonio into the garden. Then the Prince opened to Antonio what was in his mind, saying, 'Take what command you will in my service, and come with me against Firmola; and when we have brought Valentine to his knees, I will take what was my father's, and should be mine: and you shall wring from him your pardon and the hand of your lady.' And the Princess also entreated him. But Antonio answered, 'I cannot do it. If Your Highness rides to Firmola, it is likely enough that I also may ride thither; but I shall ride to put my sword at the service of the Duke. For, although he is not my friend, yet his enemies are mine.' And from this they could not turn him. Then the Prince praised him, saying, 'I love you more for denying me, Antonio; and when I send word of my coming to Valentine, I will tell him also of what you have done. And if we meet by the walls of Firmola, we will fight like men; and, after that, you shall come again to Mantivoglia;' and he drank wine with Antonio, and so bade him God-speed. And the Princess, when her husband was gone, looked at the Count and said, 'Valentine will not give her to you. Why will not you take her?'

But Antonio answered: 'The price is too high.'

'I would not have a man who thought any price too high,' cried the Princess.

'Then your Highness would mate with a rogue!' asked Count Antonio, smiling.

'If he were one for my sake only,' said she, fixing her eyes on his face and sighing lightly, as ladies sigh when they would tell something, and yet not too much nor in words that can be repeated. But Antonio kissed her hand, and took leave of her; and with another sigh she watched him go.

But when the middle of the next month came, the Prince of Mantivoglia gathered an army of three thousand men, of whom seventeen hundred were mounted, and crossed the frontier, directing his march towards Firmola by way of the base of Mount Agnino and the road to

the village of Rilano. The Duke hearing of his approach, mustered his Guards to the number of eight hundred and fifty men; and armed besides hard upon two thousand of the townsmen and apprentices, taking an oath of them that they would serve him loyally; for he feared and distrusted them; and of the whole force, eleven hundred had horses. But Count Antonio lay still in the mountains, and did not offer to come to the Duke's aid.

'Will you not pray his leave to come and fight for him?' asked Tommasino.

'He will love to beat the Prince without my aid, if he can,' said Antonio. 'Heaven forbid that I should seem to snatch at glory, and make a chance for myself from his necessity.'

So he abode two days where he was; and then there came a shepherd, who said, 'My lord, the Duke has marched out of the city and lay last night at Rilano, and is to-day stretched across the road that leads from the spurs of Agnino to Rilano, his right wing resting on the river. There he waits the approach of the Prince; and they say that at daybreak tomorrow the Prince will attack.'

Then Antonio rose, saying, 'What of the night?'

Now the night was very dark, and the fog hung like a gray cloak over the plain. And Antonio collected all his men to the number of threescore and five, all well armed and well horsed; and he bade them march very silently and with great caution, and led them down into the plain. And all the night they rode softly, husbanding their strength and sparing their horses; and an hour before the break of day they passed through the outskirts of Rilano and halted a mile beyond the village, seeing the fires of the Duke's bivouacs stretched across the road in front of them; and beyond there were other fires where the Prince of Mantivoglia lay encamped. And Bena said, 'The Prince will be too strong for the Duke, my lord.'

'If he be, we also shall fight to-morrow, Bena,' answered Antonio.

'I trust, then, that they prove at least well matched,' said Bena; for he loved to fight, and yet was ashamed to wish that the Duke should be defeated.

Then Count Antonio took counsel with Tommasino; and they led the band very secretly across the rear of the Duke's camp till they came to the river. There was a mill on the river, and by the mill a great covered barn where the sacks of corn stood; and Antonio, having roused the miller, told him that he came to aid the Duke, and not to fight against him, and posted his men in this great barn; so that they were behind the right wing of the Duke's army, and were hidden from sight. Day was dawning now: the camp-fires paled in the growing light, and the sounds of preparation were heard from the camp. And from the Prince's quarters also came the noise of trumpets calling the men to arms.

At four in the morning the battle was joined, Antonio standing with Tommasino and watching it from the mill. Now Duke Valentine had placed his own Guards on either wing and the townsmen in the centre; but the Prince had

posted the flower of his troops in the centre; and he rode there himself, surrounded by many lords and gentlemen; and with great valour and impetuosity he flung himself against the townsmen, recking little of how he fared on either wing. This careless haste did not pass unnoticed by the Duke, who was a cool man and wore a good head; and he said to Lorenzo, one of his lords who was with him, 'If we win on right and left, it will not hurt us to lose in the middle;' and he would not strengthen the townsmen against the Prince, but rather drew off more of them, and chiefly the stoutest and best mounted, whom he divided between the right wing, where he himself commanded, and the left, which Lorenzo led. Nay, men declare that he was not ill-pleased to see the brunt of the strife and the heaviest loss fall on the apprentices and townsmen. For a while indeed these stood bravely; but the Prince's chivalry came at them in fierce pride and gallant scorn, and bore them down with the weight of armour and horses, the Prince himself leading on a white charger, and with his own hand slaying Glinka, who was head of the city-bands and a great champion among them. But Duke Valentine and Lorenzo upheld the battle on the wings, and pressed back the enemy there; and the Duke would not send aid to the townsmen in the centre, saying, 'I shall be ready for the Prince as soon as the Prince is ready for me, and I can spare some of those turbulent apprentices.' And he smiled his crafty smile, adding, 'From enemies also a wise man may suck good;' and he pressed forward on the right, fighting more fiercely than was his custom. But when Antonio beheld the townsmen hard pressed and being ridden down by the Prince of Mantivoglia's knights, and saw that the Duke would not aid them, he grew very hot and angry, and said to Tommasino, 'These men have loved my house, Tommasino. It may be that I spoil His Highness's plan, but are we to stand here while they perish?'

'A fig for His Highness's plan!' said Tommasino; and Bena gave a cry of joy and leaped, unbidden, on his horse.

'Since you are up, Bena,' said the Count, 'stay up, and let the others mount. The Duke's plan, if I read it aright, is craftier than I love, and I do not choose to understand it.'

Then, when the townsmen's line was giving way before the Prince, and the apprentices, conceiving themselves to be shamefully deserted, were more of a mind to run away than to fight any more, suddenly Antonio rode forth from the mill. He and his company came at full gallop; but he himself was ten yards ahead of Bena and Tommasino, for all that they raced after him. And he cried aloud, 'To me, men of Firmola, to me, Antonio of Monte Velluto!' and they beheld him with utter astonishment and great joy. For his helmet was fallen from his head, and his fair hair gleamed in the sun, and the light of battle played on his face. And the band followed him, and, though they had for the most part no armour, yet such was the fury of their rush, and such the mettle and strength of their horses, that they made light of meeting the Prince's

knights in full tilt. And the townsmen cried, 'It is the Count! To death after the Count!' And Antonio raised the great sword that he carried, and rode at the Marshal of the Prince's Palace, who was in the van of the fight, and he split helmet and head with a blow. Then he came to where the Prince himself was, and the great sword was raised again, and the Prince rode to meet him, saying, 'If I do not die now, I shall not die to-day.' But when Antonio saw the Prince, he brought his sword to his side and bowed and turned aside, and engaged the most skillful of the Mantivoglian knights. And he fought that day like a man mad; but he would not strike the Prince of Mantivoglia. And after a while the Prince ceased to seek him; and a flatterer said to the Prince, 'He is bold against us, but he fears you, my lord.' But the Prince said, 'Peace, fool. Go and fight.' For he knew that not fear, but friendship, forbade Antonio to assail him.

Yet by now the rout of the townsmen was stayed, and they were holding their own again in good heart and courage; while both on the right and on the left the Duke pressed on and held the advantage. Then the Prince of Mantivoglia perceived that he was in a dangerous plight, for he was in peril of being worsted along his whole line; for his knights did no more than hold a doubtful balance against the townsmen and Antonio's company, while the Duke and Lorenzo were victorious on either wing; and he knew that if the Duke got in rear of him and lay between him and Mount Agnino, he would be sore put to it to find a means of retreat. Therefore he left the centre and rode to the left of his line and himself faced Duke Valentine. Yet slowly was he driven back, and he gave way sullenly, obstinately, and in good order, himself performing many gallant deeds, and seeking to come to a conflict with the Duke. But the Duke, seeing that the day was likely to be his, would not meet him, and chose to expose his person to no more danger: 'For,' he said, 'a soldier who is killed is a good soldier; but a chief who is killed save for some great object is a bad chief.' And he bided his time, and slowly pressed the Prince back, seeking rather to win the battle than the praise of bravery. But when Count Antonio saw that all went well, and that the enemy were in retreat, he halted his band; and at this they murmured, Bena daring to say, 'My lord, we have had dinner, and may we not have supper also?' Antonio smiled at Bena, but would not listen.

'No,' said he. 'His Highness has won the victory by his skill and cunning. I did but move to save my friends. It is enough. Shall I seek to rob him of his glory? For the ignorant folk, counting the arm more honourable than the head, will give me more glory than him if I continue in the fight.' And thus, not being willing to force his aid on a man who hated to receive it, he drew off his band. Awhile he waited; but when he saw that the Prince was surely beaten, and that the Duke held victory in his hand, he gave the word that they should return by the way they had come.

'Indeed,' said Tommasino, laughing, 'it may

be wisdom as well as good manners, cousin. For I would not trust myself to Valentine if he be victorious, for all the service which we have done him in saving the apprentices he loves so well.'

So Antonio's band turned and rode off from the field, and they passed through Rilano. But they found the village desolate; for report had come from the field that the Duke's line was broken, and that in a short space the Prince of Mantivoglia would advance in triumph, and, having sacked Rilano, would go against Firmola, where there were but a few old men and boys left to guard the walls against him. And one peasant, whom they found hiding in the wood by the road, said there was panic in the city, and that many were escaping from it before the enemy should appear.

'It is months since I saw Firmola,' said Antonio with a smile. 'Let us ride there and reassure these timid folk. For my lord the Duke has surely by now won the victory, and he will pursue the Prince till he yields peace and abandons the tribute.'

Now a great excitement rose in the band at these words; for although they had lost ten men in the battle and five more were disabled, yet they were fifty stout and ready; and it was not likely that there was any force in Firmola that could oppose them. And Martolo, who rode with Tommasino, whispered to him, 'My lord, my lord, shall we carry off the Lady Lucia before His Highness can return?'

Tommasino glanced at Antonio. 'Nay, I know not what my cousin purposes,' said he.

Then Antonio bade Bena and Martolo ride on ahead, taking the best horses, and tell the people at Firmola that victory was with the Duke, and that His Highness's servant, Antonio of Monte Velluto, was at hand to protect the city till His Highness should return in triumph. And the two, going ahead while the rest of the band took their mid-day meal, met many ladies and certain rich merchants and old men escaping from the city, and turned them back, saying that all was well; and the ladies would fain have gone on and met Antonio; but the merchants, hearing that he was there, made haste to get within the walls again, fearing that he would levy a toll on them for the poor, as his custom was. At this Bena laughed mightily, and drew rein, saying, 'These rabbits will run quicker back to their burrow than we could ride, Martolo. Let us rest awhile under a tree; I have a flask of wine in my saddle-bag.' So they rested; and while they rested, they saw what amazed them; for a lady rode alone towards them on a palfrey, and though the merchants met her and spoke with her, yet she rode on. And when she came to the tree where Bena and Martolo were, they sprang up and bared their heads; for she was the Lady Lucia; and her face was full of fear and eagerness as she said, 'No guard is kept to-day, even on helpless ladies. Is it true that my lord is near?'

'Yes, he is near,' said Bena, kissing her hand. 'See, there is the dust of his company on the road.'

'Go, one of you, and say that I wait for him,' she commanded; so Martolo rode on to

carry the news farther, and Bena went to Antonio and said, 'Heaven, my lord, sends fortune. The Lady Lucia has escaped from the city, and awaits you under yonder tree.'

And when Tommasino heard this, he put out his hand suddenly and caught Antonio's hand and pressed it, saying, 'Go alone, and bring her here: we will wait: the Duke will not be here for many hours yet.'

Then Antonio rode alone to the tree where Lucia was; and because he had not seen her for many months, he leaped down from his horse and came running to her, and, kneeling, kissed her hand; but she, who stood now by her palfrey's side, flung her arms about his neck and fell with tears and laughter into his arms, saying, 'Antonio, Antonio! Heaven is with us, Antonio.'

'Yes,' said he. 'For His Highness has won the day.'

'Have not we won the day also?' said she, reaching up and laying her hands on his shoulders.

'Heart of my heart,' said he softly, as he looked in her eyes.

'The cage is opened, and, Antonio, the bird is free,' she whispered, and her eyes danced and her cheek went red. 'Lift me to my saddle, Antonio.'

The Count obeyed her, and himself mounted; and she said, 'We can reach the frontier in three hours, and there—there, Antonio, none fears the Duke's wrath.' And Antonio knew what she would say, save that she would not speak it bluntly—that there they could find a priest to marry them. And his face was pale as he smiled at her. Then he laid his hand on her bridle and turned her palfrey's head towards Firmola. Her eyes darted a swift question at him, and she cried low, 'Thither, Antonio?'

Then he answered her, bending still his look on her, 'Alas, I am no learned man, nor a doctor skilled in matters of casuistry and nice distinctions. I can but do what the blood that is in me tells me a gentleman should do. To-day, sweetheart—ah, will you not hide your face from me, sweetheart, that my words may not die in my mouth?—to-day our lord the Duke fights against the enemies of our city, holding for us in hard battle the liberty that we have won, and bearing the banner of Firmola high to heaven in victory.'

She listened with strained frightened face; and the horses moved at a walk towards Firmola. And she laid her hand on his arm, saying again, 'Antonio!'

'And I have fought with my lord to-day, and I would be at his side now, except that I do his pleasure better by leaving him to triumph alone. But my hand has been with him to-day, and my heart is with him to-day. Tell me, sweetheart, if I rode forth to war and left you alone, would you do aught against me till I returned?'

She did not answer.

'A Prince's city,' said he, 'should be like his faithful wife; and when he goes against the enemy, none at home should raise a hand against him; above all, may not one who has fought by his side. For to stand side by side

in battle is a promise and a compact between man and man, even as though man swore to man on a holy relic.'

Then she understood what he would say, and she looked away from him across the plain; and a tear rolled down her cheek as she said, 'Indeed, my lord, the error lies in my thoughts; for I fancied that your love was mine.'

Antonio leaned from his saddle and lightly touched her hair. 'Was that indeed your fancy?' said he. 'And I prove it untrue?'

'You carry me back to my prison,' she said. 'And you will ride away.'

'And so I love you not?' he asked.

'No, you love me not,' said she; and her voice caught in a sob.

'See,' said he; 'we draw near to Firmola; and the city gates are open; and, look, they raise a flag on the Duke's palace; and there is joy for the victory that Martolo has told them of. And in all the Duchy there are but two black hearts that burn with treacherous thoughts against His Highness, setting their own infinite joy above the honour and faith they owe him.'

'Nay, but are there two?' she asked, turning her face from him.

'In truth I would love to think there was but one,' said he. 'And that one beats in me, sweetheart, and so mightily, that I think it will burst the walls of my body, and I shall die.'

'Yet we ride to Firmola,' said she.

'Yet, by Christ's grace,' said Count Antonio, 'we ride to Firmola.'

Then the Lady Lucia suddenly dropped her bridle on the neck of her palfrey and caught Antonio's right hand in her two hands and said to him, 'When I pray to-night, I will pray for the cleansing of the black heart, Antonio. And I will make a wreath and carry it to the Duke and kiss his hand for his victory. And I will set lights in my window and flags on my house; and I will give my people a feast; and I will sing and laugh for the triumph of the city and for the freedom this day has won for us: and when I have done all this, what may I do then, Antonio?'

'I am so cruel,' said he, 'that then I would have you weep a little: yet spoil not the loveliest eyes in all the world; for if you dim them, it may be that they will not shine like stars across the plain, and even into the hut where I live among the hills.'

'Do they shine bright, Antonio?'

'As the gems on the gates of heaven,' he answered; and he reined in his horse and gave her bridle into her hands. And then for many minutes neither spoke; and Count Antonio kissed her lips, and she his; and they promised with the eyes what they needed not to promise with the tongue. And the Lady Lucia went alone on her way to Firmola. But the Count sat still like a statue of marble on his horse, and watched her as she rode. And there he stayed till the gates of the city received her and the walls hid her from his sight; and the old men on the walls saw him and knew him, and asked, 'Does he come against us? But it was against the Prince of Mantivoglia that we swore to fight.' And they watched him till

he turned and rode at a foot's pace away from the city. And now as he rode his brow was smooth and calm, and there was a smile on his lips.

THE GOLD-FIELDS OF BRITISH GUIANA.

MUCH has been written of late regarding new gold discoveries, and general interest has been taken therein from the fact that gold is now probably the only raw product which has not suffered from the great decline in value brought about during the last decade. For there is an ever increasing demand for it as a standard of value, while its time-honoured partner, silver, has suffered a severe decline in common with all else, in consequence of excess of production over requirements. To such a pitch has this come, that in silver-using countries the utmost difficulty is produced by the continually diminishing value of their monetary standard. It has become a great problem for our statesmen how to cope with this difficulty in British India and elsewhere. The true solution will probably only be arrived at when the world's supply of gold will enable those countries to reduce silver to the position it occupies in England, that of a token currency only, all payments over a certain amount to be made in gold. This opens an immense market for fresh gold supplies, and just as the need of them is beginning to be most seriously felt, we hear of fresh discoveries which promise to enable us to fill up the gap in the course of time, and restore equilibrium to the distracted finances of countries which depend on silver alone for their money.

One portion of our empire has not yet had the attention directed to it that it deserves as a gold-producing country, though the presence of the precious metal there has been a tradition extending to the Elizabethan time. It was then that the well-known expedition of Sir Walter Raleigh set forth to what is now the colony of British Guiana to seek for the source of the supply of the stored-up gold found by the Spaniards in Mexico and Peru, both of which are silver-producing countries. Indian tradition pointed to the Guianas as being the territory whence it had been gathered, being midway between those two empires; and the colonists of the nineteenth century have proved that Indian tradition was right, and that British Guiana is the home of treasures which may perhaps be destined to eclipse those of other gold-producing countries, and this at no distant date. It is a truly remarkable thing that its capabilities have so long remained hidden. The Dutch, who first colonised the country, seem not to have searched for gold. The English, when they became possessors, found sugar estates formed on the low lands along the coast, which for a long series of years produced riches almost

equal to those of gold mines; and with these they were so satisfied as not to wish to penetrate into the interior. An economic change has, however, overtaken the cane-sugar-producing world, which is now in dire straits from the competition of the bounty-fed beet-sugars of the Continent of Europe. This wave has been felt in its full intensity in British Guiana, and, as is usual, necessity has brought about efforts in other directions, which in the present instance has led to most fruitful results. In 1884 a few men went into the forests of the interior, the result of their efforts being an export of two hundred and fifty ounces of gold. More followed their example, with the following results, which are the Government returns of actual exports of gold to England year by year:

	Exports in Ounces.	Value in Dollars.
1884.....	250	4,894
1885.....	939	15,596
1886.....	6,518	112,042
1887.....	11,906	213,252
1888.....	14,570	266,718
1889.....	23,282	524,323
1890.....	62,615	1,124,759
1891.....	101,298	1,801,389
1892.....	129,615	2,303,162
1893.....	142,788	2,542,995

It will be seen that the industry has a record of ten completed years during which gold has been produced and shipped to England, worth, in round numbers, one million eight hundred thousand pounds sterling, which record is far beyond that of South Africa, where seventeen years elapsed before the fields there produced gold to the value of two hundred thousand pounds.

Strange to say, there is as yet only one instance of English capital employed in the gold industry of British Guiana, and this of quite recent date. The colonists have gone into the business themselves, as is stated, to the full extent of their resources, the foregoing figures showing what has been done. Hitherto, there has been no desire shown to make the capabilities of the colony known in England; in fact, deterrent influences appear to have been brought into operation, reports of unhealthy climate being one of the principal. Facts are, however, too strong for anything of this kind in the long run. The interior has been penetrated by Englishmen straight out from home, who are enjoying magnificent health in the hilly gold region, away from the swamps of the coast. The difficulties of the rivers have been much exaggerated: while some are impeded by rapids, others form unparalleled water-ways through the dense forest into the interior; but all of them are utilised to carry supplies into the 'gold bush,' there being at present no other means of access thereto. The rivers, in fact, are a main item of the enormous natural advantages for gold-mining possessed by the colony.

The Government has recently recognised the

immense importance of this most promising industry, and a Commission is to sit having for view its encouragement and extension. A subsidy has been granted for the construction of an important link of railway to connect the Demerara and Essequibo rivers, which will avoid the rapids of the latter river, and give easy access to the country along its upper reaches. The Demerara River is receiving much attention just now. Goods are delivered at the mine-landings on that river from London at a cost of three pounds per ton. Water-carriage in other gold countries does not exist; and land-carriage in those places, according to statistics, varies from £25 to £165 per ton. This is an enormous initial advantage in favour of British Guiana. The supply of pure water in the gold regions is in excess of all requirements, in some instances affording water-power for driving the stamp-batteries, sawing timber, and furnishing electric light. All the timber required for mining is growing on the spot, and is of the best quality for the purpose, this being another potential advantage, saving the cost and carriage of same.

Government statistics show that in other countries a yield of three to four dwt. of gold per ton pays, working with steam-power, and one and a half to two dwt. is satisfactory where water-power is used. The Victorian average yield is given as ten dwt. eleven grains to the ton, the South African as twelve dwt. to the ton. Messrs Johnson, Matthey, & Co., the assayers to the Bank of England, have recently made an assay of British Guiana quartz, which gave sixty-two dwt. to the ton, and picked samples have been produced showing hundreds of ounces to the ton. These figures tell their own tale, and will make themselves felt in the financial world. The Americans are beginning to pay attention to the nascent industry, and there can be no doubt Englishmen will not be behind-hand on their own territory and under their own flag. A considerable portion of the colony is already accessible, and as the means of communication are improved, more and more will become so, to keep pace with requirements. There is abundant room for expansion, the opportunities existing being such as are not to be found elsewhere. A favourable feature of the colony is its proximity to England, fourteen days sufficing for the passage, with mail communication twice a month, and telegrams arriving every day. The length of the passage could easily be shortened to ten days, this matter being already under discussion. So little is known of the colony of British Guiana in England, that it has been lately described as an island, instead of which it is an important part of the Continent of South America, the only portion of that Continent owned by us, possessing huge rivers, immense forests, and the most favourable conjunction of natural features for the prosecution of gold-mining the world has ever seen in one place. There is nothing in the way of an immediate and immense development. Once the favourable conditions existent there are known, the other is the natural consequence. In the West Indies, British Guiana is familiarly known as the Magnificent Province. This, in truth, it is, as it teems with tropical riches, and pos-

asses gold in apparently limitless quantities, the precious product which has above all been the object of mankind's eager quest from times immemorial.

THE GOVERNESS AT GREENBUSH.

A STORY.

By E. W. HORNUNG.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

THE coach was before its time. As the Manager of Greenbush drove into the township street, the heavy, leather-hung, vermilion vehicle was the first object to meet his eyes. It was drawn up as usual in front of 'The Stockman's Rest,' and its five horses were even yet slinking round to the yards, their traces trailing through the sand. The passengers had swarmed on the hotel veranda; but the Manager looked in vain for the flutter of a woman's skirt. What he took for one, from afar, resolved itself at shorter range into the horizontal moleskins of a 'stockman' who was 'resting,' amid the passengers' feet, like a living sign of the house. The squatter cocked a bushy eyebrow, but whistled softly in his beard next moment. He had seen the Governess. She was not with the other passengers, nor had she already entered the hotel. She was shouldering her parasol, and otherwise holding herself like a little grenadier, alone but unabashed, in the very centre of the broad bush street.

The buggy wheels made a sharp deep curve in the sand, the whip descended—the pair broke into a canter—the brake went down—and the man of fifty was shaking hands with the woman of twenty-five. They had met in Melbourne the week before, when Miss Winfrey had made an enviable impression and secured a coveted post. But Mr Pickering had half forgotten her appearance in the interim, and taking another look at her now, he was quite charmed with his own judgment. The firm mouth and the deep, decided chin were even firmer and more decided in the full glare of the Riverina sun than in the half-lights of the Melbourne hotel; and the expression of the grave gray eyes, which he had not forgotten, was, if possible, something franker and more downright than before. The face was not exactly pretty, but it had strength and tenderness. And strength especially was what was wanted in the station schoolroom.

'But what in the world, Miss Winfrey, are you doing here?' cried Mr Pickering, after a rather closer scrutiny than was perhaps altogether polite. 'I'm very sorry to be late, but why ever didn't you wait in the hotel?'

'There is a man dead-drunk on the veranda,' returned the new Governess, without mincing her words, and with a little flash in each steadfast eye.

'Well, but he wouldn't have hurt you!'

'He would have hurt me more than I can say, Mr Pickering. To me, such sights are the saddest in all the world. And I have seen

more of them on my way up here than ever in my life before.'

'Come, come, don't tell me it's worse than the old country,' said the squatter, laughing, 'or we shall fight all the way back! Now, will you jump up and come with me while I get your luggage; or shall we meet at the post-office over yonder on the other side?'

The girl looked round, following the direction of the pointed whip. 'Yes, at the post-office, I think,' said she; and then she smiled. 'It may seem an affectation, Mr Pickering, but I'd really rather not go near the hotel again.'

'Well, well, perhaps you're right! I'll be with you in five minutes, Miss Winfrey.'

He flicked his horses, and in those five minutes the new Governess made a friend for life of poor Miss Crisp, the little old post-mistress. It was an unconscious conquest; indeed, she was thinking more of her new employer than of anything she was saying; but this Miss Winfrey had a way of endearing herself to persons who liked being taken seriously, which arose, perhaps, from her habit of taking herself very seriously indeed. Nevertheless, she was thinking of the squatter. He was a little rough, though less so, she thought, in his flannel shirt and wide-awake, than in the high collar and frock-coat which he had worn at their previous interview in Melbourne. On the whole she liked him well enough to wish to bring him to her way of looking at so terrible a spectacle as a drunken man. And it so happened that she had hardly taken her seat beside him in the buggy when he returned of his own accord to the subject which was uppermost in her mind. 'It was one of my own men, Miss Winfrey!'

'The man on the veranda?'

'Yes. They call him "Cattle-station Bill." He looks after what we call the Cattle Station—an out-station of ours where there are nothing but sheep, by the way—on the other side of the township. He has a pretty lonely life over there, so it's only natural he should knock down his cheque now and again.'

The Governess looked puzzled. 'What does it mean—knocking down his cheque?'

'Mean? Well, we pay everything by cheque up here, d'ye see? So, when a man's put in his six months' work, say, he generally rolls up his swag and walks in for his cheque. Twenty-six pounds, it would be, for six months, less a few shillings, we'll say, for tobacco. And most of 'em take their cheque to the nearest grog shanty and drink it up in three or four days.'

'And then?' said the girl, with a shudder.

'Then they come back to work for another six months.'

'And you take them back?'

'Of course I do, when they're good men like Cattle-station Bill! It's nothing. He'll go straight back to his hut at the end of the week. That's an understood thing. Then in another six months he'll want another cheque. And so on, year in, year out.'

Miss Winfrey made no remark. But she turned her head and looked back. And the recumbent moleskins were still a white daub on the hotel veranda, for it was hereabouts that

Mr Pickering had mistaken them for the young woman's skirt. She watched them out of sight, and then she sighed. 'It's terrible!' she said.

'You'll get used to it.'

'Never! It's awful! One ought to do something. You must let me see what I can do. The poor men! The poor men!'

Mr Pickering was greatly amused. He never meddled with his men. Their morals were not his concern. In the matter of their cheques his sense of responsibility ended with his signature. The cheques might come back endorsed by a publican, who, he knew, must have practically stolen them from his men's pockets. But he never meddled with that publican. It was none of his business. But to find a little bit of a Governess half inclined to make it *her* business was a most original experience, and it was to the rough man's credit that he was able to treat the matter in a spirit of pure good-humour. 'I rather think our brats will take you all your time,' said he, laughing heartily. 'Still, I'll let you know next time Bill comes in for a cheque, and you shall talk to him like a mother. He's a jolly good-looking young fellow, I may tell you that!'

Miss Winfrey was about to answer, quite seriously, that she would be only too glad of an opportunity of speaking to the poor man; but the last remark made the rest, from her point of view, unanswerable. Moreover, it happened to hurt, and for a reason that need be no secret. Her own romance was over. She had no desire for another. That one had left her a rather solemn young woman, with, however, a perfectly sincere desire to do some good in the world—to undo some of the evil.

The squatter repeated this conversation to his wife, who had not, however, his own good-nature. 'I don't see what business it was of Miss Winfrey's,' remarked Mrs Pickering, who had not been with her husband when he selected the Governess. 'It was quite a presumption on her part to enter into such a discussion, and I should have let her know it had I been there. But I am afraid she is inclined to presume, James. Those remarks of hers about poetry were hardly the thing for her first meal at our table. And she corrected me when I spoke about Lewis William Morris; she said they were two separate men!'

'She probably knew what she was talking about. I didn't go and engage a fool, my dear!'

'It was a piece of impudence,' said Mrs Pickering hotly; 'and after what you have told me now, James, I must say I do not feel too favourably impressed with the new Governess.'

'Then I'm very sorry I told you anything,' retorted the husband with equal warmth. 'The girl's all right; but you always were ready to take a prejudice against anybody. Just you wait a bit! That girl's a character. You mark my words: she'll make your youngsters mind her as they've never minded anybody in all their lives!'

The lady sighed; she had poor health, and an irritable, weak nature; and her 'youngsters' had certainly never 'minded' their mother.

She took her husband's advice, and waited. And such was the order that presently obtained among her band of little rebels, and so great and novel the relief and rest which crept into her own daily life, that for many weeks—in fact, until the novelty wore off—Miss Winfrey could do no wrong, and the children's mother had not words good enough for their new Governess.

The children themselves were somewhat slower to embrace this optimistic view. They came to it at last, but only by the steep and stony path of personal defeat and humiliation. Miss Winfrey had the wit to avoid the one irretrievable mistake on the part of all such as would govern as well as teach. She never tried for an immediate popularity with her pupils, which she felt would be purchased at the price of all future influence and power. On the contrary, she was content to be hated for weeks and feared for months; but with the fear there gradually grew up a love which was the stronger for the company of the more austere emotion. Now, love is the teacher's final triumph. And little Miss Winfrey won hers in the face of sufficiently formidable odds.

It was a case of four to one. Three of the four were young men, however, with whom the young woman who is worth her salt well knows how to deal. These young men were employed upon the station, and they had petted and spoiled the children pretty persistently hitherto. It had been their favourite relaxation after the day's work in the saddle or at the drafting yards. But Miss Winfrey took to playing their accompaniments as they had never been played before, and very soon it was tacitly agreed among them that the good-will of the Governess was a better thing than the adoration of her class. So the three gave very little trouble after all; but the fourth made ample amends for their poltroonery; and the fourth knew better how to fight a woman, for she was one herself.

Millicent Pickering was the children's half-sister, and the only child of her father's first marriage. She was a sallow, weedy, and yet attractive-looking girl of nineteen, with some very palpable faults, which, however, were entirely redeemed by the saving merit of a superlatively good temper. But she loved a joke, and her idea of one was quite different from that of Miss Winfrey, who, to be sure, was not a little deficient in this very respect. Millicent found her sense of humour best satisfied by the enormities of her little brothers and sisters. She rallied them openly upon the punishments inflicted by the new Governess; she was in notorious and demoralising sympathy with the young offenders. Out of school she encouraged them in every sort of wickedness; and, for an obvious reason, was ever the first to lead them into temptations which now ended in disgrace. She was, of course, herself the greatest child of them all; and at last Miss Winfrey told her so in as many words. She would have spoken earlier, but that she feared to jeopardise her influence by risking a defeat. But when the great girl took to interrupting the very lesson with her overgrown buffooneries, in the visible vicinity of the open schoolroom

door, the time was come to beat or be beaten once and for all.

'Come in, Miss Pickering,' said the Governess snavely, though her heart was throbbing. 'I think I should have the opportunity of laughing too.'

The girl strode in, and the laughter rose louder than before. But, however excruciatingly funny her antics might have been outside, they were not continued within.

'Well?' said Miss Winfrey at length.

'Well?' retorted Millicent, with mere sauce.

'You great baby!' cried the Governess, with a flush and a flash that came like lightning. 'You deserve to have your hair taken down, and be put back into short dresses and a pinafore!'

'And sent to you?'

'And sent to me.'

'Very well; I'll come this afternoon.'

And she did. When school began again, at three o'clock, Millicent led the way, with her hair down and her dress up, and in her hands the largest slate she could find; and on her face a kind of determined docility, exquisitely humorous to the expectant young eyes behind the desks. But Millicent had reckoned without her brains, and that in more senses than one. She was an exceedingly backward young person; she had never been properly taught, and no one knew this better than the little Governess. First in one simple subject, then in another, the young woman's ignorance was mercilessly exposed; first by one child, then by another, she was corrected and enlightened on some elementary point; and, finally, when they all stood up and took places, Miss Millicent sank to the bottom of the class in five minutes. The absurd figure that she cut there, however, with the next child hardly higher than her knee, quite failed to appeal to her usually ready sense of humour; seeing which, Miss Winfrey incontinently dismissed the class; but Millicent remained behind.

'I give you best,' said she, holding out a large hand with a rather laboured smile. 'Let's be friends.'

'I have always wanted to,' said the victor, with a suspicious catch in her voice; and next moment she burst into a flood of tears, which cemented that friendship once and for good.

Millicent had long needed such a friend; but this new influence was a better thing for her than any one ever knew. She happened to be fond of somebody who was very fond of her; and having one of those impulsive natures which fly from one extreme to the other, she told Miss Winfrey that very night all about it. And Miss Winfrey advised. And on the next monthly visitation of a certain rabbit inspector to Greenbush Station the light-hearted Millicent succeeded in reconciling her sporting spirit to what she termed the 'dry-hash' of a serious engagement.

But not for long. As the more solemn side of the matter came home to her, the light heart grew heavy with vague alarms, and so bitterly did the young girl resent her entirely natural apprehensions, that cause and effect became confounded in her soul, now calling, as she thought, for its surrendered freedom. Her de-

pression was terrible, and yet more terrible her disappointment in herself. She could not be in love; or, if she were, then love was not what it was painted by all the poets whose works the sympathetic Miss Winfrey now put into her hands. Thus the first month passed. Then the man came again, and in his presence her doubt lay low in her heart. But when he was gone it rose up blacker than before, and the girl went half mad with keeping it to herself. It was only the agony of an ignorant young egoism in the twilight state of the engaged, looking backward with regret for yesterday's freedom, instead of forward faithfully to a larger life. But this never struck her until she brought her broodings to her friend Miss Winfrey, when one flesh could endure them no longer.

Miss Winfrey was surprised. She had not suspected so much soul in such a setting. She was also sorry, for she liked the man. He had kind eyes and simple ways, and yet some unmistakable signs of the sort of strength which appealed to the Governess and would be good for Milly. And lastly, Miss Winfrey was strangely touched; for here was her own case over again.

The girl said that she could never marry him—that there was no love in her for any man—that she must break off the engagement instantly and for all time. The Governess had said the same thing at her age, and had repented it ever since. She turned down the lamp, for it was late at night in the school-room, and she told the girl her own story. This had more weight than a hundred arguments. Half-way through, Millicent took Miss Winfrey's hand and held it to the end. At the very end she kissed the Governess and made her a promise.

'Thank you, dear,' said the Governess, kissing her. 'That was all I wanted you to say. Only try for a time to think less of yourself and more of him! Then all will be well; and you may forget my contemptible little story. You're the first to whom I've ever told it as it really was.'

'And you never saw him again?'

'Not from that day to this.'

'But you may, dear Miss Winfrey. You may!'

'It isn't likely,' said the Governess, turning up the lamp. 'I came out here to—to forget. He is a full-blown doctor by now, and no doubt happily married.'

'Never!' cried Millicent.

'Long ago,' replied Miss Winfrey quietly. 'The worse they take it at the time the sooner they marry. That is—men; and you can't alter them.'

'I don't believe it's every man,' said the young girl stoutly. 'I don't even believe it's—your boy!'

Miss Winfrey bent her head to hide her eyes. 'Sometimes,' she whispered, 'I don't believe so either.'

'And if—you met—and all was right?'

The Governess got to her feet. Her face was lifted, and the tears transfigured it. It was white and shining like the angel-faces in a child's prayer. And her lips trembled with the trembling words: 'I should ask him to

forgive me for the wrong I did him. I would humiliate myself as I humiliated him. Yes! He should even know that I had cared—all along!’

BIRD-LIFE IN AN INLAND PARISH OF SOUTHERN SCOTLAND.

THESE can be no more pleasant pastime for those who live in the country than to pay attention in their daily walks to the comings and goings of the various feathered sojourners which, from choice or necessity, spend a portion of the year in their neighbourhood. From the earliest ages, man has noted these, and adored the Wisdom which teaches the stork to know her appointed times, and the turtle and the crane and the swallow to observe the time of their coming. Roving, restless creatures as birds are by nature, they yet in their migrations follow a constant ebb and flow. Their movements are determined by a law as binding as that which regulates the seasons. Glaring violations of it seem occasionally to take place in the appearance of certain untimely or belated sojourners, as redwing or woodcock tarrying into summer, or swallows being noticed in December and January; yet, according to the whim of the observer, these intrepid spirits may be regarded as rebels, scouts, or explorers that have temporarily broken away from the main body. During winter there is not much activity in these ‘fitting’ movements. Ere it comes, most birds have taken up their residence in localities where there is a likelihood of sufficient food-supplies being obtained. But with the spring, those which have found a home in this country during winter return to their native haunts to nest; while those which at the close of summer left our upland districts for more genial parts nearer the sea, along with others which went far south, begin to arrive and gladden with their songs the lengthening day. Thus, as one season’s visitors, whether those of summer or of winter, depart, another appears. Rejoicing as they do in light and warmth, birds follow the sun. Those reaching our coasts in spring come from southern lands, where they have found a welcome retreat from a climate too severe for their tender frames; while, on the other hand, those which pass the winter with us are seeking here the food and shelter denied them in the inhospitable lands of northern ice and snow.

To every part of the country these tiny tourists wend their way, so that even this cold upland parish, though it cannot boast the wealth of bird-life that frequents the coast-line or the more favoured climate of England, can still show a respectable variety. Comparatively few, however, remain all the year round. Throughout summer and winter, blackcock and grouse may be raised on the moorlands, pheasants and partridges on the dales; the rook and the jackdaw never desert their ancestral trees; in the woods, the soft cooing of the cushat—peacefullest sound in nature—may be heard; by the coppice, the sparrow-hawk may be seen darting after his quarry; over the hillside the kestrel hovers on the wing; the eerie screech of the heron, the mournful hoot of the owl, the

startled quack of the wild-duck, break the silence of the night. Of the smaller birds, only the snipe, blackbird, thrush, chaffinch, house-sparrow, redbreast and wren, with perhaps at intervals a solitary kingfisher, are home-staying. During winter, the number of our birds is small. But with the first clear days of early spring, when the plough is turning over the soil and the storm-cock is singing his loudest and best, there return, in sadly attenuated bands, the gulls, curlews, peewits, water-hens, plovers, starlings, larks, pipits, linnets, blackcaps and yellow-hammers, which have taken refuge elsewhere from the frosts and snows. In a few weeks the wheatear greets us from the wall, the stonechat from the furze, and by the brooks the wagtail, sandpiper, and redshank are found. When spring has fairly come and the leaves are bursting in the hedgerows, the cuckoo gladdens the ear with his song, the swallow and swift the eye with their skimming flight. Last of all spring’s visitors come the fly-catcher, the cornerake, and the redstart.

What a busy time is it now with these denizens of the open! What a happy band of minstrels are they all, as from early dawn to dark they make the welkin echo with their tuneful notes! Into these weeks of spring and early summer how much courtship, matrimony, house-building, house-keeping and family-rearing are crowded—love, pathos, tragedy—human life in miniature!

And now that they are with us in their gayest and best, what a plain, hodden-gray lot are our upland birds; not one among them with bright outstanding colours, unless it be that stray magpie, vainly seeking refuge from the keeper’s trap or gun; not one gaudy fellow with plumage a milliner would covet!

As the day begins to shorten, our silvan choir tends to break up. The cuckoo is gone before her egg is hatched in the pipit’s nest. By the end of August the swallows are in flocks, ready to depart when the first September frosts have chilled the air. One by one disappear the redstarts, wagtails, wheatears, stonechats, and warblers, until by the middle of October there are few migratory birds remaining. Then, as the robin has the concert all to himself, save for the croak of the carrion crow echoing from the young pine-woods as he gloats over a wounded hare, comes another flock of visitors. Chief among these are the redwing and the fieldfare.

An unwelcome guest is the latter—a large Norwegian thrush—for he is the harbinger of winter. Up till within a few days ago the air was soft and mild for October; then came an easterly wind, chilling and damp; and yesterday morning, when flakes of snow were falling, perched on the beeches in the lawn was a company of these immigrants, chattering complacently, as if congratulating one another upon the bad weather they had brought with them. Common as he is in winter, how few are able to recognise the fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*)! Being first-cousin to the missel-thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*), he is often mistaken for his kinsman; indeed, his name—corrupted by the country-boy into ‘feltifare’—is generally given to the missel-thrush. But who, that has once

observed our hardy Norseman, can ever mistake him again? Shy and suspicious in his habits, and not caring to be scanned at too close quarters, he is seldom met with but in flocks. Though he lacks the bold carriage of the missel-thrush and the chattering confidence of the song-thrush, his colour, as becomes a visitor, is more striking than their homely garb. The name blue-felt describes him well, as the chestnut-coloured back and the bluish gray of the wings and tail are made conspicuous by flight.

After the fieldfare, the titmouse appears. He was with us in spring and summer; but with the autumn he retired, though he cannot have been far away—probably only enjoying a little-needed change after the drudgery of rearing two large querulous families. The wonder is how so many nestlings can be stowed away in a chink of the garden wall. The lady titmouse must in the bird-world be 'the old woman who lived in a shoe.' What a forward, poking fellow is this bird-mite! Be the day ever so cold, there is the little ball of feathers, now on the ground, now on the tree-top, now hanging head downwards from an ivy leaf, now clinging to the wall, searching every cranny and corner for grub and chrysalis.

In swamp and morass the woodcock will await signs of winter's departure—or it may be the sportsman's gun. Unlike the fieldfare, he is silent, moody, and solitary; as if aware that he is 'wanted,' he does his utmost to elude the sight of man. Rarely is he seen till on the wing he is darting over the willows. If you know his haunts and approach them cautiously, you may be fortunate enough to spy him crouching close on the herbage. A dull brown mass like a clod of earth catches your eye; draw nearer, and in an instant you start, as he bursts into flight.

Down by the river, too, visitors have arrived since last you fished its waters. The sandpipers, plovers, and waterhens are gone, and in their stead the lively dipper has for companions various kinds of duck, geese, and may be a stray swan. In due time these will depart, and spring will bring its own sojourners once more; and so the constant departure and succession are kept up year by year with a regularity that never fails; and the woodlands and the fields, the bogs and the streams, are never without their guests.

UNPLEASANT REMINISCENCES OF COREA.

THE war now being waged between the Chinese and Japanese in reference to the Korean Peninsula recalls to my mind an unexpected and unwelcome visit paid by me to that coast, just when Japan was entering on that course of development that has made her a great military and naval power of modern type. It was early in September (I was then serving as apprentice on a barque named the *Star of the East*) that we left Shanghai in ballast trim with a general cargo for Passiette (or Possiet) in the Maritime Province of Siberia, between the Korean frontier and the great Russian naval station of Vladivostok. Nothing of any note occurred during the first few days; but about a fortnight after

we had set sail, we made Cape Bougarel, on the Korean coast, distant about nine miles. It was night-time, and the captain decided to stand off the land until daylight, under close-reefed topsails, the weather being thick and dirty, with violent squalls at intervals. At four A.M. breakers were seen ahead, but no land was visible; so efforts were then made to wear the ship; but failing, she soon ran ashore, when heavy seas commenced to break over her fore and aft.

When it became daylight, we found that we were stranded on a sandy beach in Gashkevitch Bay, and that the natives had assembled in great numbers on the shore. They at first appeared to be favourably disposed towards us, making signs of welcome and inviting us to land. This was just then found to be impossible on account of the heavy seas which continued to break over the vessel; but we were enabled later to launch one of our boats, which was then hauled through the surf by the natives with the aid of lines; and by this means our captain and some of the crew went ashore, and were apparently received in a most friendly manner by the Koreans, who offered them every assistance, as well as provisions and water. During that day the wind increased to a gale, which caused the vessel to bump heavily, and the seas to break violently over her. It was then found necessary to cut away the masts, to prevent her falling over on her beam ends. After this was done, a tent was rigged up on the shore and furnished with provisions. Two days later the weather began to moderate, and the sea abated; but by this time the ship had so far buried herself in the sand, that any attempt to float her would have been useless.

Finding this, the captain ordered the boats to be fitted out ready for any emergency; and at eight A.M. I was sent ashore for the purpose of obtaining, if possible, fresh meat, and shooting some of the wildfowl with which the place abounded. After an absence of about two hours I was returning well laden with spoil, when I was seized by some natives, who took me to a village a little out of my course to the ship. On reaching there I was surrounded by the inhabitants, whose attitude was very threatening. They, however, after holding a consultation, allowed me to proceed on board; and after taking away all I had shot, hustled me down to the beach, whence I proceeded to the vessel alone, with mingled feelings of disgust at my mission having thus failed, but with thankfulness at having escaped with my life.

Shortly after I had returned to the vessel, some Korean officials came on board. They were accompanied by about seven hundred men, whom we soon found to be armed with swords and short-barrelled, old-fashioned flint-lock muskets, which they attempted to conceal under their clothing. The chief was dressed in a gorgeous robe of blue silk, and wore a hat made of black horse-hair, which resembled wire-gauze, and similar in shape to the well-known Welsh steeple-crowned hat. In addition, he was bedecked with sundry amber necklaces and beads. As he sat in state with his legs crossed on the cabin table, his demeanour seemed extremely harsh, and he began, with the aid of an interpreter who accompanied him, and who under-

stood the Russian language, to inquire roughly whether we were of English, French, or American nationality, for each of which he showed unmistakable signs of disregard and contempt. As we were fortunate enough to have a passenger on board who could speak Russian, communication was rendered comparatively easy. Noting, however, with what feelings of hatred the Koreans spoke of other nations, it was deemed prudent to pass off the ship and crew as Russian, it being less likely that the natives or officials would dare to perpetrate any outrage which might provoke the hostility of that power, as we were distant only thirty miles overland from a considerable Russian settlement, Passiette, the place to which we were bound.

When addressing the Mandarin, or even when conversing with each other, we were compelled to bow our heads in token of submission; and after the officials had held a consultation together, the Mandarin peremptorily ordered us to leave the coast. Although the whole of the ship's cargo might easily have been saved, he refused to allow a single package to be landed on the beach; and also, under pains and penalties, warned us from approaching the land above high-water mark. Provisions and even water were denied us; and a request to be allowed to travel by land to Passiette, only elicited the freezing reply that any such attempt would be instantly punished by death. Neither were we permitted to remain on the coast until such time as assistance could reach us from that place.

The next day the wind again increased; but later, fearing to delay our departure, we succeeded in hauling the gig through the surf; and having provisioned her, three of the crew, accompanied by the passenger previously referred to, who was owner of the ship's cargo, left for Passiette, which place we afterwards found they had reached in safety.

The following day another visit was paid to the vessel by the Korean officials, who were again accompanied by several hundred men, armed as before. Their manner was rough and insolent, and their attitude, as well as that of the natives on the beach—who by this time had become very excited—was most menacing, and boded ill for our safety.

After the passenger, who was our only interpreter, had left, we were unable to converse with the Koreans except by signs; but we had no difficulty in gathering from this mode of communication that we should only be allowed another day in which to leave the coast—two having already elapsed—and that if we failed to make good use of the time thus left to us, we should all be beheaded.

During the night which followed this important but discomfiting interview, the natives continued to collect in groups along the beach, and beacon fires were lighted and rockets sent up at intervals from various points.

By this time our position had become more and more perilous, and demonstrations of hostility being much more marked, our captain decided, rather than trust our lives any longer in the hands of such an unfriendly tribe, to make the best of his way to Passiette at day-break in the two remaining boats, accompanied

by myself and the remainder of the crew. As soon, however, as the natives saw we were making preparations for departure, they immediately changed their demeanour, and offered us every assistance in launching our boats and getting them ready for a start. The weather was fortunately fine; but having only two boats, we were compelled, for want of space, to leave behind nearly all our effects.

On the second day after our departure we reached Passiette about noon; but although we had been subjected to such dangers and privations, and were worn out with fatigue, some Russian soldiers who came down to the beach would not allow us to land, stating as their reason that they must first obtain the permission of their commanding officer, who was then enjoying his siesta. About four P.M., when all of us, being more or less wet through, were like to perish from the cold weather then prevailing, the Russian officer quietly sauntered down, and after satisfying himself as to the cause of our appearance on the coast, decided to allow us to land. We were escorted to the soldiers' quarters, and housed in a rough shed, with permission to sleep on the floor between the soldiers' beds, there being no other building in which to accommodate us.

A few days after our arrival, a party went down from Passiette—dressed in Russian uniform and fully armed—to visit the wreck, and found everything had been taken out of her or destroyed. An attempt had also been made to burn the ship; but it being of iron, this had proved a failure. We were afterwards given to understand by the Russians that we were fortunate in being stranded so near the Siberian frontier; otherwise, they said, we should probably have shared the fate of those on board the *Hamila Michel*, a vessel which had some little time previously been wrecked about fifteen miles farther south, when all the crew were massacred.

The region in which our adventure befell is, it need hardly be mentioned, a part of the Korean coast which the Russians are believed to have long had their eye upon as a desirable addition to the Amur and Maritime Provinces. They are supposed especially to covet Port Lazareff as being an excellent harbour in yet more temperate waters than Vladivostok, where an otherwise admirable harbour is frozen from three to four months every year.

SOME FAMOUS BLASTS.

THE part played by explosives in the industrial and commercial developments of the present day is so extensive that, save under circumstances of especial magnitude, public attention fails to be interested in one of the most remarkable achievements of the many triumphs which have marked the nineteenth century.

The history of famous blasts has been contemporaneous with that of blasting agents themselves; and it is interesting to note, in reviewing blasting operations of exceptional size, how newer explosives and later inventions gradually displace earlier types and less scientific methods. The chronicle of the celebrated explosions which

attracted public attention is, in fact, the record of the discovery of blasting agents.

The earlier blasts were made with gunpowder, the only explosive then known; and the removal of the Rounddown Cliff at Dover was accomplished in 1843 by nine and a quarter tons of gunpowder, disposed in three separate charges, and fired simultaneously by a voltaic battery. Small as the blast may appear at the present day, it attracted considerable attention half a century ago, and was viewed as an engineering achievement.

In the construction of Holyhead harbour some heavy gunpowder blasts were made, one of the most extensive consisting of six tons of gunpowder, divided into several charges, and exploded simultaneously by a platinum wire, heated by a Grove battery, dislodging no less than 40,000 tons of rock.

In the Scotch granite industry, gunpowder has been employed for monster blasts in recent times, the action of this explosive being found less shattering for material which is to be used for building purposes than that of more modern and more powerful explosives. In July 1886, at the Furnace Quarry, between Craræ and Inveraray, four tons of gunpowder were fired by electricity, dislodging 100,000 tons of granite, which was estimated to supply material for dressing which would employ the workmen for two years. 'When the explosion of the powder was effected,' writes an eye-witness, 'the whole face of the mountain side began to move, and the report, which was terrific, loudly reverberated amongst the neighbouring hills.'

Blasts have their pathetic and tragic side even in industrial undertakings; and the fatal effects of a monster blast at the neighbouring quarry of Craræ, when several visitors who had been attracted by the novel spectacle ventured to approach too near to the scene of the explosion before the after-damp had dispersed, and being overpowered by the deadly fumes, succumbed to suffocation, will long be remembered in the annals of the Scottish quarrying trade.

Since dynamite was invented in 1867 by Nobel, many large blasts have been accomplished by its agency; amongst others may be mentioned the explosion of five and a half tons in 1885 in a stone quarry near San Francisco, displacing 35,000 tons of rock. The largest blasts, however, were the famous ones undertaken to clear the entrance of the East River, New York, known to the old Dutch settlers as the Hurl Gate, and to modern times as the Hell Gate, of the rocks which formed a perilous menace to navigation. A glance at the map of New York abundantly illustrates the dangerous character of these rocks. As long ago as 1848, Congress was urged to remove the Pot Rock, Frying Pan, and Ways Reef; and four years later 18,000 dollars were expended on the first-named obstruction, some two feet of additional water being obtained by the use of gunpowder.

In 1869 the Diamond Rock was attacked, and during that and the four subsequent years, this rock and the Coenties Reef and Frying Pan rock were steadily removed. Hallett's Point was dealt with in 1869 by General Newton; and on September 24, 1876, 47,781 pounds of dynamite, stored in galleries nearly a mile and

a half long, excavated in the huge rock, were exploded by Mary Newton, a child of three, the blast being clearly heard sixteen miles off.

So successful was this monster blast, that the famed and dreaded Flood Rock in mid-channel was immediately taken in hand, and no less than nine acres of rock were eventually honeycombed and charged with 75,000 pounds of dynamite, and 240,000 pounds of rackarock, which was successfully fired on October 10, 1885, constituting the biggest blast on record. An on-looker describes the scene as one of intense excitement, culminating in a rumble of muffled and distant thunder, whilst the water above the reef rose a hundred feet in the air, white and glistening in the brilliant sunlight, then changing to a brown and green hue, and finally, to black at its base. The shock lasted forty seconds, a brief interval for the accomplishment of the climax of so many years of laborious mining and tunnelling.

The situation was too dramatic not to be improved upon, and much sensational and over-coloured writing appeared at the time; whilst New York society fully enjoyed its joke at the expense of a learned New Brunswick seismologist who had devised special apparatus to minutely record the vibration of the coming monster blast. The instrument was, says a weekly contemporary in relating the story, 'of extreme delicacy, and recorded the vibrations beautifully at one minute after eleven (the appointed time), although the actual explosion occurred at 11.14, thus beating the record, and antedating the occurrence by thirteen minutes.' A curious commentary on the fallibility both of scientists and scientific instruments!

SAILING AWAY.

SAILING away with the wind abeam,
And the wide, wide sea before!
Sailing away in a lover's dream
To the port of the golden shore;
Idle hands on the rudder bands,
Hope in the sunrise fair,
And hearts as light as the sea-bird white
Afloat in the morning air.

Love! in the dawn of that far-off time,
Did you guess of the weary way?
Dearest! when life seemed a summer rhyme,
Could we tell where we went astray?
Silent tears through the coming years,
Darkness for you and me,
And doubt and dread of the wilds ahead
Fell chill as we sailed a-sea.

Sailing ashore with a waning wind
On the glass of a dreaming tide,
Leaving the dark of the deep behind
For the light of the other side:
Loosen hands from the rudder bands!
Ah! to the margin foam

Comes breath of land o'er the golden sand,
Oh! sweet is our welcome home!

WM. WOODWARD.

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A MUSICAL CURIOSITY.

By S. BARING-GOULD.

EARLY collections of music are extremely scarce, with the sole exception of ecclesiastical music. The whole character of music in the civilised—or rather European civilised world has become so altered by little and little through the last two centuries, that what was regarded as delightful in melody and harmony to the ears of our mediæval forefathers, is scarcely endurable by our modern ears. It does not follow that their music was bad, at all events that their melodies were bad, but that they are unusual, inappreciable by us, accustomed to airs and harmonies of one particular class. The field of music has been narrowed, not extended; but there has been very laborious and exhaustive elaboration of that contracted field. It may be asked whether we have not actually worked it out; whether it is possible further to exploit it so as to grow much that is fresh and original in it; whether, therefore, it will not become necessary for the musician of the future to extend his hedges, and to compose in some of the abandoned 'modes.' In that event the relics of the compositions of the early musicians will be looked at with more than antiquarian interest.

The manuscripts containing early European music may be counted on the fingers, that is to say, if we put ecclesiastical music on one side. Of that there are some fine collections in the library of the old monastery of St Gall. One of the earliest collections of secular music we have is a manuscript of the fourteenth century, contained in the Jena Library. It is a collection of the songs of the Minnesingers of the close of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century, and was made, apparently, for one of the Landgraves of Thuringia. The minstrels and Minnesingers of the twelfth and two following centuries not only composed their own verses, but also the

melodies to which their verses were set. To set their words to other tunes was regarded as a plagiarism. There were various forms of composition—the ballad, the roundelay, and the ditty—and various forms of music to suit the several structures of the verses.

In England, a curious collection of songs and carols of the period of Henry VI., that belonged originally to a wandering minstrel, words and music, was edited for the Percy Society by Mr T. Wright. Lady Nevile's Virginal Book was transcribed in 1591, but it contains many airs certainly a century earlier. The same may be said for Queen Elizabeth's Virginal Book, which did not really belong to that queen, but dates from 1603–12. William Ballet's Lute Book is a manuscript in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, and belongs to the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century. In Scotland, the Skene manuscripts have been considered to date from 1630 or 1640, but the tunes were added to by later hands.

Recently, a very great addition to our knowledge of the early music of Europe has been made by the discovery, in the Royal Library at Madrid, of a thick volume of songs with their melodies, harmonised, that dates from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The book was compiled for one of the Dukes of Alva, in fact for the grandfather of the infamous governor of the Netherlands. This was Don Garcia Alvarez de Toledo, first Count, and then Duke, of Alva, who was himself a poet and a musician, and who encouraged the arts at his court. The time was one of chivalrous adventure, the rolling back of the Moorish domination, and the reconquest of Spain. It was the period of the charming ballads relative to the achievements of the Spanish warriors in the wars with the Moors, some of which are found, with the airs to which they were composed, in this volume. It was the time, moreover, when the dramatic art began in Spain, and Encina was almost the first Spanish dramatist, and he has contributed numerous songs to the collection recently dis-

covered. He was, in fact, at the court of the Duke of Alva, and his dramatic compositions were for the sake of amusing that court. Juan de la Encina was born in 1469, and after completing his education at Salamanca, he was received into the family of the Duke of Alva. He continued in his service for many years, composing songs, lays, and dramatic pieces. In the beginning of the sixteenth century he went to Rome, where his knowledge of music made him a favourite of Pope Leo X., and he was appointed Director of the pontifical chapel. He returned eventually to Spain, and died in 1534.

His songs were already known, but not the airs to which they were sung; these had not been recovered; and this it is which makes the volume we are noticing such a find. The story of its discovery is interesting. Don Francisco Asenjo Barbieri, who has transcribed and published the volume, relates that in 1870 his friend, the librarian of the Royal Library attached to the palace at Madrid, told him that there was an old music-book on one of the upper shelves. Accordingly, he visited the library, and put a ladder against the bookcase. The librarian ascended, pulled out the dusty volume, and said: 'There it is;' and handed it down. Don Barbieri took a hasty look at it, and exclaimed: 'Here is a volume of Encina's music!' Further exploration of the manuscript disclosed the fact that it was a great song-book, containing not only Encina's compositions, but a crowd of others by known and unknown minstrels of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The value of the volume both as a collection of old songs and as a contribution to the history of music was at once seen; but various duties interfered with the transcription and publication, so that it was not till recently that the work was available to the public.

Unhappily, the manuscript was not perfect. Pages had been torn out—perhaps to cover jam-pots—and as many as ninety-one compositions have disappeared. Nevertheless, much remains—in all, five hundred pieces, of the most varied description. There are heroic ballads, love-songs, religious hymns and carols, bacchanalian songs, satirical verses, and last, but not least, nursery rhymes with their melodies. The latter article alone is sufficient to make this volume precious. Who would have dreamed of the possibility of recovering the rhymes and melodies to which the father of the persecutor of the Netherlands listened when he was a fretful baby in his cradle?

The original manuscript is a quarto volume with an index, and is simply entitled *Libro de Cantos*. All the compositions are harmonised for three or four voices, and in some cases the true melody is found in the tenor. The lengthy ballads and some of the songs are not given in full; the words could be found elsewhere, but the music is there—the book was a music-book, above all.

Encina's songs were published in his lifetime, and the ballads were first printed in the *Cancionero General* of Ferdinand del Castillo, in 1511. There are, however, in the newly discovered collection many pieces that never have been printed, and the compositions of many authors hitherto unknown. But it is as a col-

lection of early music that the volume is valuable, and from its comprehensive character unique.

It does not illustrate Spanish music alone, but also that of all Europe, for European music in the middle ages, even down to the appearance of the great masters Haydn, Handel, and Mozart, was much the same everywhere, in Scotland and in Italy, in England and in France. The instrument determined the character of a melody, on which the accompaniment was played: a bagpipe tune with its drone, a harp melody, a hornpipe, a lute air, are recognisable without much difficulty. Moreover, airs travelled like birds; they crossed the seas, and became naturalised away from where they were born. Scottish airs became familiar in England and Ireland; and English country dances and ballad airs were collected and published in the Netherlands. Spanish tunes were carried by the soldiers and hidalgos of Philip II. and Charles V. to the Netherlands, and these men on returning sang in Spain the airs they had caught up in Germany and in Belgium.

Moreover, in this interesting volume we have not Spanish songs only, but some in Italian, some in Latin, one in the strange Basque tongue. Some of the songs are certainly earlier than the volume that contains them, and the name prefixed to them indicates, not the composer of the words, not even, perhaps, that of the composer of the melody, but of the arranger of the harmonies. Thus we have in it the song in praise of wine, in Latin, beginning:

Ave color vini clari,
Ave sapor sine pari,
Tua nos inebriari
Digneris potentia.

This is attributed to Juan Ponce, of whom, however, nothing is known, though he contributed several compositions to the Duke of Alva's book. Now this song was well known in the middle ages; it was sung by the students in Germany; and it has been published by Edclstand du Méric, among the popular Latin songs earlier than the twelfth century. The ballads relative to the conquest of Granada no doubt belong to the age of the volume; but who can say what remoteness of antiquity may belong to the nursery rhymes therein stored?

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

CHAPTER III. (*continued*).

BUT when Antonio had ridden two or three miles, and came where he had left the band, he could see none of them. And a peasant came running to him in great fright and said, 'My lord, your men are gone again to aid the Duke; for the Prince has done great deeds, and turned the fight, and it is again very doubtful: and my lord Tommasino bade me say that he knew your mind, and was gone to fight for Firmola.'

Then Antonio, wondering greatly at the news, set his horse to a gallop and passed through Rilano at furious speed, and rode on

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towards Agnino; and it was now afternoon. Presently he saw the armies, but they seemed to be still over against one another. And riding on, he met Bena, who was come to seek him. And Bena said, 'The Prince and his knights have fought like devils, my lord, and the townsmen grew fearful again when you were gone; and we, coming back, have fought again. But now a truce has sounded, and the Prince and the Duke are meeting in conference between the armies. Yet they say that no peace will be made; for the Prince, taking heart from his sudden success, though he is willing to abandon the tribute, asks something in return which the Duke will not grant. Yet perhaps he has granted it by now, for his men are weary.'

'He should grant nothing,' cried Antonio, and galloped on again. But Bena said to himself with an oath, 'He has sent back the lady! The saints save us!' and followed Antonio with a laugh on his face.

But Antonio, thinking nothing of his own safety, rode full into the ranks of the Duke's Guard, saying, 'Where does my lord talk with the Prince?' And they showed him where the place was; for the Prince and Duke sat alone under a tree between the two arrays. And the Duke looked harsh and resolute, while the Prince was very courteously entreating him.

'Indeed,' said he, 'so doubtful has the day been, my lord, that I might well refuse to abandon the tribute, and try again to-morrow the issue of the fight. But, since so many brave men have fallen on both sides, I am willing to abandon it, asking only of you such favour as would be conceded to a simple gentleman asking of his friend. And yet you will not grant it me, and thus bring peace between us and our peoples.'

Duke Valentine frowned and bit his lip; and the Prince rose from where he had been seated, and lifted his hand to the sky, and said, 'So be it, my lord; on your head lies the blame. For to-morrow I will attack again; and, as God lives, I will not rest till the neck of the city of Firmola is under my foot, or my head rolls from my shoulders by your sword.'

Then Duke Valentine paced up and down, pondering deeply. For he was a man that hated to yield aught, and beyond all else hated what the Prince of Mantivoglia asked of him. Yet he feared greatly to refuse; for the townsmen had no stomach for another fight, and had threatened to march home if he would not make peace with the Prince. Therefore he turned to the Prince, and, frowning heavily, was about to say, 'Since it must be so, so let it be,' when suddenly the Count Antonio rode up and leaped from his horse, crying, 'Yield nothing, my lord, yield nothing! For if you will tell me what to do, and suffer me to be your hand, we will drive the enemy over our borders with great loss.'

Then the Prince of Mantivoglia fell to laughing, and he came to Antonio and put his arm about his neck, saying, 'Peace, peace, thou foolish man!'

Antonio saluted him with all deference, but he answered, 'I must give good counsel to my lord the Duke.' And he turned to the

Duke again, saying, 'Yield nothing to the Prince, my lord.'

Duke Valentine's lips curved in his slow smile as he looked at Antonio. 'Is that indeed your counsel? And will you swear, Antonio, to give me your aid against the Prince so long as the war lasts, if I follow it?'

'Truly, I swear it,' cried Antonio. 'Yet what need is there of an oath? Am I not your Highness's servant, bound to obey without an oath?'

'Nay, but you do not tell him'—began the Prince angrily.

Duke Valentine smiled again; he was ever desirous to make a show of fairness where he risked nothing by it; and he gazed a moment on Antonio's face; then he answered to the Prince of Mantivoglia, 'I know the man, my lord. I know him in his strength and in his folly.—Do not we know one another, Antonio?'

'Indeed, I know not all your Highness's mind,' answered Antonio.

'Well, I will tell him,' said Duke Valentine. 'This Prince, Antonio, has consented to a peace, and to abandon all claim to tribute from our city, on one condition—which is, that I, the Duke, shall do at his demand what of my own free and sovereign will I would not do.'

'His demand is not fitting nor warranted by his power,' said Antonio; but, in spite of his words, the Prince of Mantivoglia passed his arm through his, and laughed ruefully, whispering, 'Peace, man, peace.'

'And thus I, the Duke, having bowed my will to his, shall return to Firmola, not beaten indeed, yet half-beaten and cowed by the power of Mantivoglia.'

'It shall not be, my lord,' cried Count Antonio.

'Yet, my lord Duke, you do not tell him what the condition is,' said the Prince.

'Why, it is nothing else than that I should pardon you, and suffer you to wed the Lady Lucia,' said Duke Valentine.

Then Count Antonio loosed himself from the arm of the Prince and bent and kissed the Prince's hand; but he said, 'Is this thing to come twice on a man in one day? For it is but an hour or more that I parted from the lady of whom you speak; and if her eyes could not move me, what else shall move me?' And he told them briefly of his meeting with the Lady Lucia. And Duke Valentine was wroth with the shame that a generous act rouses in a heart that knows no generosity; and the Prince was yet more wroth, and he said to Duke Valentine, 'Were there any honour in you, my lord, you would not need my prayers to pardon him.'

At this the Duke's face grew very dark; and he cried angrily, 'Get back to your own line, my lord, or the truce shall not save you.' And he turned to Antonio and said, 'Three hours do I give you to get hence, before I pursue.'

Antonio bowed low to him and to the Prince; and they three parted, the two princes in bitter wrath, and set again on fighting to the end, the one because he was ashamed and yet obstinate, the other for scorn of a rancour that found no place in himself. But Count Antonio went back to his company and drew it some

little way off from both armies; and he said to Tommasino, 'The truce is ended, and they will fight again so soon as the men have had some rest;' and he told Tommasino what had passed. Then he sat silent again, and presently he laid hold of his cousin's arm, saying, 'Look you, Tommasino, princes are sometimes fools; and hence come trouble and death to honest humble folk. It is a sore business that they fight again to-morrow, and not now for any great matter, but because they are bitter against one another on my account. Cannot I stop them, Tommasino?'

'Ay, if you have five thousand men and not thirty-five—for that is the sum of us now, counting Martolo, who is back from Firmola.'

Antonio looked thoughtfully through the dusk of evening which now fell. 'They will not fight to-night,' he said. 'I am weary of this blood-letting.' And Tommasino saw that there was something in his mind.

Now the night fell dark again and foggy, even as the night before; and none in either army dared to move, and even the sentries could see no more than a few yards before them. But Antonio's men, being accustomed to ride in the dark, and to find their way through mists both in plain and hill, could see more clearly; and Antonio divided them into two parties, himself leading one, and giving the other into Tommasino's charge. Having very securely tethered their horses, they set forth, crawling on their bellies through the grass. Antonio with his party made for the camp of the Prince, while Tommasino and his party directed their way towards the Duke's bivouacs. And they saw the fires very dimly through the mist, and both parties passed the sentries unobserved, and made their way to the centre of the camps. Then, on the stroke of midnight, a strange stir arose in both the camps. Nothing could be seen by reason of the darkness and the mist; but suddenly cries arose, and men ran to and fro; and a cry went up from the Duke's camp, 'They are behind us! They are behind us! We are surrounded!' And in the Prince's camp also was great fear; for from behind them, towards where the spurs of Mount Agnino began, there came shouts of 'At them, at them! Charge!' And the Prince's officers, perceiving the cries to be from men of Firmola (and this they knew by reason of certain differences in the phrasing of words), conceived that the Duke had got behind them, and was lying across their way of retreat.

And the Duke, hearing the shouts in his own camp, ran out from his tent; and he was met by hundreds of the townsmen, who cried, 'My lord, we are surrounded!' For Antonio's men had gone to the townsmen and showed them how they might escape more fighting; and the townsmen were nothing loth; and they insisted with the Duke that a body of men on horseback had passed behind them. So the Duke sent out scouts, who could see nothing of the horsemen. But then the townsmen cried, some being in the secret, others not, 'Then they have ridden past us, and are making for Firmola. And they will do Heaven knows what there. Lead us after them, my lord!' And

the Duke was very angry; but he was also greatly afraid, for he perceived that there was a stir also in the Prince's camp, and heard shouts from there, but could not distinguish what was said. And while he considered what to do, the townsmen formed their ranks and sent him word that they were for Firmola; and when he threatened them with his Guard, they rejoined that one death was as good as another; and the Duke gnawed his nails and went pale with rage. But Count Antonio's men, seeing how well the plan had sped, crept again out from the camp, and returned to where they had tethered their horses, and mounted, each taking a spare horse. And before they had been there long, they heard trumpets sound in the Duke's camp, and the camp was struck, and the Duke and all his force began to retreat on Rilano, throwing out many scouts, and moving very cautiously in the darkness and mist. Yet when they came on nobody, they marched more quickly, even the Duke himself now believing that the Prince of Mantivoglia had of a purpose allowed the stir in his camp to be seen and heard, in order that he might detach a column to Firmola unobserved, and attack the city before the Duke came up. Therefore he now pressed on, saying, 'I doubt not that the Prince himself is with the troop that has gone to Firmola.' And all night long they marched across the plain, covering a space of eighteen miles; and just before the break of day they came to the city.

Thus did it fall out with the army of Duke Valentine. But the Prince of Mantivoglia had been no less bewildered; for when he sent out men to see what the cries behind the camp meant, he found no man; but he still heard scattered cries among the rising ground, where the hills begin. And he in his turn saw a stir in the camp opposite to him. And, being an impetuous Prince, as he had shown both in evil and in good that day, he snatched up his sword, swearing that he would find the truth of the matter, and bidding his officers wait his return, and not be drawn from their position before he came again to them; and taking some of his younger knights and a few more, he passed out of his camp, and paused for a moment, bidding those with him spread themselves out in a thin line, in order the better to reconnoitre, and that, if some fell into an ambuscade, others might survive to carry the news back to the camp. And he, having given his order, himself stood resting on his sword. But in an instant, before he could so much as lift the point of his sword from the ground, silent blurred shapes came from the mist, and were in front and behind and round him; and they looked so strange that he raised his hand to cross himself; but then a scarf was thrown over his mouth, and he was seized by eight strong hands and held so that he could not struggle; and neither could he cry out by reason of the scarf across his mouth. And they that held him began to run rapidly; and he was carried out of the camp without the knowledge of any of those who were with him, and they, missing their leader, fell presently into a great consternation, and ran to and fro in the gloom crying, 'The Prince? Have you seen

the Prince? Is His Highness with you? In God's name, has the Prince been this way? But they did not find him, and they grew more confounded, stumbling against one another, and being much afraid. And when the Prince was nowhere to be found, they lost heart, and began to fall back towards their own borders, skirting the base of Agnino. And their retreat grew quicker; and at last, when morning came, they were near the border; but the fog still wrapped all the plain in obscurity, and, robbed of their leader, they dared attempt nothing.

Now the Prince of Mantivoglia, whom his army sought thus in fear and bewilderment, was carried very quickly up to the high ground, where the rocks grew steep and close and the way led to the peak of Agnino. And as he was borne along, some one bound his hands and his feet; and still he was carried up, till at last he found himself laid down gently on the ground. And though he knew no fear—for they of Mantivoglia have ever been most valiant Princes and strangers to all fear—yet he thought that his last hour was come, and, fearing God though he feared nothing else, he said a prayer and commended his soul to the Almighty, grieving that he should not receive the last services of the Church. And having done this, he lay still until the dawning day smote on his eyes and he could see; for the fog that lay dense on the plain was not in the hills, but hung between them and the plain. And he looked round, but saw no man. So he abode another hour, and then he heard a step behind him, and a man came, but whence he could not see; and the man stooped and loosed the scarf from his mouth and cut his bonds, and he sat up, uttering a cry of wonder. For Count Antonio stood before him, his sword sheathed by his side. And he said to the Prince of Mantivoglia, 'Do to me what you will, my lord. If you will strike me as I stand, strike. Or if you will do me the honour to cross swords, my sword is ready. Or, my lord, if you will depart in peace and in my great love and reverence, I will give thanks to Heaven and to a noble Prince.'

'Antonio, what does this mean?' cried the Prince, divided between anger and wonder.

Then Antonio told him all that he had done: how the Duke was gone back with his army to Firmola, and how the Prince's army had retreated towards the borders of Mantivoglia; for of all this his men had informed him; and he ended, saying, 'For since it seemed that I was to be the most unworthy cause of more fighting between two great Princes, it came into my head that such a thing should not be. And I rejoice that now it will not; for the townsmen will not march out again this year at least, and Your Highness will scarce sit down before Firmola with the season now far gone.'

'So I am balked?' cried the Prince, and he rose to his feet. 'And this trick is played me by a friend!'

'I am of Firmola,' said Antonio, flushing red. 'And while there was war, I might in all honour have played another trick, and carried you not hither, but to Firmola.'

'I care not,' cried the Prince angrily. 'It was a trick, and no fair fighting.'

'Be it as you will, my lord,' said Antonio. 'A man's own conscience is his only judge. Will you draw your sword, my lord?'

But the Prince was very angry, and he answered roughly, 'I will not fight with you, and I will not speak more with you. I will go.'

'I will lead Your Highness to your horse,' said Antonio.

Then he led him some hundreds of paces down the hill, and they came where a fine horse stood ready saddled.

'It is not my horse,' said the Prince.

'Be not afraid, my lord. It is not mine either,' said Antonio, smiling. 'A rogue who serves me, and is called Bena, forgot his manners so far as to steal it from the quarters of the Duke. I pray you, use some opportunity of sending it back to him, or I shall be dubbed horse-stealer with the rest.'

'I am glad it is not yours,' said the Prince, and he prepared to mount, Antonio holding the stirrup for him. And when he was mounted, Antonio told him how to ride, so that he should come safely to his own men, and avoid certain scouting parties of the Duke that he had thrown out behind him as he marched back to Firmola. And having done this, Antonio stood back and bared his head and bowed.

'And where is your horse?' asked the Prince suddenly.

'I have no horse, my lord,' said Antonio. 'My men with all my horses have ridden back to our hiding-place in the hills. I am alone here, for I thought that Your Highness would kill me, and I should need no horse.'

'How, then, will you escape the scouting parties?'

'I fear I shall not escape them, my lord,' said Antonio, smiling again.

'And if they take you?'

'Of a surety I shall be hanged,' said Count Antonio.

The Prince of Mantivoglia gathered his brow into a heavy frown, but the corners of his lips twitched, and he did not look at Antonio. And thus they rested a few moments, till suddenly the Prince, unable to hold himself longer, burst into a great and merry peal of laughter; and he raised his fist and shook it at Antonio, crying, 'A scurvy trick, Antonio! By my faith, a scurvy trick by far than that other of yours! Art thou not ashamed, man?—Ah, you cast down your eyes! You dare not look at me, Antonio.'

'Indeed I have naught to say for this last trick, my lord,' said Antonio, laughing also.

'Indeed I must carry this knave with me!' cried the Prince. 'Faugh, the traitor! Get up behind me, traitor! Clasp me by the waist, knave! Closer, knave! Ah, Antonio, I know not in what mood Heaven was when you were made! I would I had the heart to leave you to your hanging! For what a story will my Princess make of this! I shall be the best-decided man in all Mantivoglia.'

'I think not, my dear lord,' said Count Antonio—'unless a love that a man may

reckon on as his lady-love's, and a chivalry that does not fail, and a valour that has set two armies all agape in wonder, be your matters for mirth in Mantivoglia. And indeed, my lord, I would that I were riding to the lady I love best in the world, as Your Highness rides; for she might laugh till her sweet eyes ran tears so I were near to dry them.'

The Prince put back his hand towards Antonio and clasped Antonio's hand, and said, 'What said she when you left her, Antonio? For with women love is often more than honour, and their tears rust the bright edge of a man's conscience.'

'Her heart is even as Our Lady's; and with tears and smiles she left me,' said Antonio, and he grasped the Prince's hand. 'Come, my lord, we must ride, or it is a prison for you and a halter for me.'

So they rode together in the morning on the horse that Bena had stolen from among the choicest of Duke Valentine's, and keeping cunningly among the spurs of the hills, they were sighted once only from afar off by the Duke's scouts, and escaped at a canter, and came safe to the Prince's army, where they were received with great wonder and joy. But the Prince would not turn again to besiege Firmola, for he had had a fill of fighting, and the season grew late for the siege of a walled town. So he returned with all his force to Mantivoglia, having won by his expedition much praise of valour, and nothing else in the wide world besides; which thing indeed is so common in the wars of princes, that even wise men have well-nigh ceased to wonder at it.

But the Princess of Mantivoglia heard all that had passed with great mirth, and made many jests upon her husband; and again, lest the Prince should take her jesting in evil part, more upon Duke Valentine. But concerning Count Antonio and the Lady Lucia she did not jest. Yet one day, chancing to be alone with Count Antonio—for he stayed many days at the Court of Mantivoglia, and was treated with great honour—she said to him, with a smile and half-raised eyelids, 'Had I been a man, my lord Antonio, I would not have returned alone from the gates of Firmola. In truth, your lady needs patience for her virtue, Count Antonio!'

'I trust, then, that Heaven sends it to her, madame,' said Antonio.

'And to you also,' she retorted with a laugh. 'And to her, trust in you also, I pray. For an absent lover is often an absent heart, Antonio, and I hear that many ladies would fain soften your exile. And what I hear, the Lady Lucia may hear also.'

'She would hear it as the idle babbling of water over stones,' said Antonio. 'But, madame, I am glad that I have some honesty in me. For if there were not honest men and true maids in this world, I think more than a half of the wits would starve for lack of food.'

'Mercy, mercy!' she cried. 'Indeed your wit has a keen edge, my lord.'

'Yet it is not whetted on truth and honesty,' said he.

She answered nothing for a moment; then she drew near to him and stood before him,

regarding his face; and she sighed 'Heigh-ho!' and again 'Heigh-ho!' and dropped her eyes, and raised them again to his face; and at last she said, 'To some, faithfulness is easy. I give no great praise to the Lady Lucia.' And when she had said this, she turned and left him, and was but little more in his company so long as he stayed at Mantivoglia. And she spoke no more of the Lady Lucia. But when he was mounting, after bidding her farewell, she gave him a white rose from her bosom, saying carelessly, 'Your colour, my lord, and the best. Yet God made the other roses also.'

'All that He made He loves, and in all there is good,' said Antonio, and he bowed very low, and, having kissed her hand, took the rose; and he looked into her eyes and smiled, saying, 'Heaven give peace where it has given wit and beauty;' and so he rode away to join his company in the hills. And the Princess of Mantivoglia, having watched till he was out of sight, went into dinner, and was merrier than ever she had shown herself before; so that they said, 'She feared Antonio, and is glad that he is gone.' Yet that night, while her husband slept, she wept.

OUR COMPETITORS IN DAIRY PRODUCE.

THE deplorable condition in which agriculture, the greatest of our industries, is placed renders any suggestions for its improvement interesting and useful. Such suggestions were to be found in the Dairy Exhibition recently held in the Agricultural Hall, Islington. Before we can fully appreciate these suggestions, we must know the causes of the present depression in agriculture. The main causes are the low price of wheat and other cereals, due to the free importation of them; and the bad seasons we have had during the last fifteen years. The evidence taken before the two Royal Commissions appointed to consider the present depression in agriculture has disclosed an alarming condition in this great industry, amounting to a crisis. It is enough when we say that the evidence has informed us that so ruinous have proprietors and tenants felt their position, that they have considered their land in many parts of England not worth cultivating, and have left it derelict, as they were unable to pay the rates and tithes leviable on it. Mr Pringle, one of the sub-commissioners appointed by the Royal Commission on Agriculture to inquire into the state of the farming interest throughout England, has reported that in Essex a great part of the land has been allowed to go out of cultivation because wheat was the principal crop cultivated, and that it cannot be produced to pay under forty-five shillings per quarter, while the price of it at present is under twenty shillings per quarter; and that the farmers have lost all their capital, and are therefore unable to change their system of farming without extraneous aid. He mentioned, however, that there was a colony of Scotch farmers who have been following the dairy system, and have thus been enabled to survive the ruin which has over-

taken the native agriculturist. What Mr Pringle has stated of Essex is true of other districts in England with a similar stiff clay soil.

The dairy, then, being the salvation of these farmers, the exhibition which took place recently, and is the nineteenth that has been held under the auspices of the British Dairy Farmers' Association, must be of the greatest advantage, and form an object lesson not only to dairy but to all farmers who may be compelled to give up corn-growing for the producing of milk, butter, and cheese. The show, at which everything connected with the dairy, and the latest improvements, were exhibited, was in itself most successful. There were the cows best adapted for dairy purposes, of which the Guernsey surpassed all others in numbers; there were the cream separators, the antiseptics specially suited for the preservation of milk, two of the most conspicuous of which were 'Anticanus' and 'Formaline'; there were the churns and the other utensils of the dairy; there were the hundred specimens of butter, some of which were most tastefully and artistically got up to represent bouquets of flowers and other devices. There were also the milk-vessels, and the spring carts to convey the milk to market—in short, everything that any one engaged in the dairy business, or who intended to commence it, might require. Of the latter class there should be not a few, when they see that the wheat-growing farmers have been ruined, while the dairy farmers have weathered the storm.

Who are our competitors in dairy produce? They are Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Holland, France, Canada, United States, Victoria, New Zealand, and some smaller countries. The gross value of the butter from these countries amounted in 1893 to £12,754,235; of cheese, to £5,160,918; of condensed milk, to £1,008,855; and we may mention, of margarine, used as a substitute for butter, to £3,656,224—all of which, except £238,847, came from Holland. Eggs amounted to £3,875,647. There has been a decline in the import of butter from Holland, France, Canada, and the United States; and of cheese from Holland and the United States. There is no cheese imported from Sweden, Denmark, and Germany. The condensed milk is imported from Switzerland; and there were shown at the Dairy Exhibition samples of sterilised French milk and cream from Normandy and from Berne—the former prepared after Pasteur's method, and kept in its natural state by the process of Dr Antefage, which, it is said, neutralises all possible fermentation from which decay or germs of disease, such as typhoid and scarlet fever and other diseases, may arise. It is admirably suited for hot climates, and has been extensively used in the French colonies. The condensed milk is reduced to one-sixth or one-seventh of its bulk by evaporation, and has to be mixed with that amount of water when used. Hence it will possess the advantage over sterilised milk by being much less in cost of carriage; while, on the other hand, the latter, if deprived of the germs or microbes of disease, will be preferred by many for its sanitary qualities, and its freedom from the risk which is run in mixing

the condensed milk with insanitary waters, particularly in hot climates. The manufacture of sterilised milk is but limited at present, and is not a formidable competitor; but it may become so in time; and it is worth mentioning here, as the process of sterilising may be applied to home-produced milk, which has been known to convey the germs of typhoid and scarlet fevers.

Two of our principal sources of butter are Sweden and Denmark, which send us a little more than the half of our imports of that article—Denmark alone sending butter to the value of £5,279,000. We may presume that it is a profitable trade with them, as it is increasing year after year. Such is the case also with Germany. There is a gradual decrease of imports both of butter and cheese from the United States, which may be attributed to the demands made by an increased population in that country; for the Americans have now found the growing of wheat unprofitable, and it is well known that since the introduction of butter and cheese factories there, the profitable exploitation of the dairy system has raised the value of land suitable for grazing cows to twice as much as that given for grain farms. France, which formerly sent us about the fourth of our supply of butter, has been gradually reducing that quantity, and also the quantity of cheese exported.

The colonies which send most dairy produce to this country are Canada, Victoria, Queensland, and New Zealand, each of which has an energetic Department of Agriculture, giving every encouragement to the production of butter and cheese. Lecturers are appointed to go about the country and teach the most economical and profitable methods of producing these articles. The Government of Victoria went farther, and offered a bounty of twopence for every pound of butter sent to this country. This had a wonderful effect in stimulating the farmers to produce and export the butter. The bounty was also offered to any individual, Association, or Company owning a butter factory or creamery which produced butter or cream from not less than twenty-six thousand gallons of milk. In 1889-90, four hundred tons of butter were exported to this country, which brought nine-pence-halfpenny per pound. This was increased to 3611 tons in 1892-93, at one shilling per pound. At the close of 1894 the mail steamer *Paramatta* alone brought from Melbourne a consignment of 720 tons, or 1,612,800 pounds of butter, of the value of £70,000. The business of butter-making and exporting is being prosecuted with an enthusiasm and energy which give good grounds for the prediction a Victorian writer has made for its future. 'An export,' he says, 'which in little more than three years expands from a value of £35,000 to £400,000, and with a well-founded prospect of increasing at the same ratio for years to come, predicts a future for Victoria which is well worthy the envy of the Old World.' The value in 1893 was £870,000.

It may be mentioned that almost all the butter exported was produced at creameries, sixty-three of which belong to the largest dairy factory in the world, at which ten tons of

butter are turned out every day in the season, and which may be said to be a Co-operative Association of the farmers, two thousand of whom are shareholders in it. The Department of Agriculture undertook in 1889 to act as shipping agents for the butter exporters, and these duties it has since continued to perform. With the further object of assisting the dairy industry in preserving surplus butter during the summer season, the Department has made arrangements to store such butter in the Government refrigerating works at Newport for any period not exceeding three months, free of charge to the owner.

When, twelve years ago, the New Zealand Government offered five hundred pounds for the best fifty tons of cheese produced in the colony on a factory or co-operative system, dairy farming received an impetus which has carried it forward to its present prosperous and important position. Now, there are over 200 cheese and butter factories and creameries, and the export of butter and cheese to this country has increased from £42,020 in 1883 to £227,162 in 1892 for butter; and from £6892 in 1883 to £91,042 in 1892 for cheese. 'It is generally conceded by all who visit New Zealand that no country possesses greater inherent advantages for the carrying on of dairy pursuits. The richness of the pastures has to be seen to be realised. All the best varieties of grasses and other green fodders thrive in a most astonishing manner, and continue to grow throughout the year with but little cessation; and in the greater portion of the colony the milch-cows are not housed summer or winter.'

The Government encourages not only Dairy Associations by liberal grants from the public Treasury for watching over the interests of the dairy industry, but it employs trained and skilled travelling instructors to visit the factories for the purpose of giving lessons in the various methods and processes, and of generally forwarding the interests of the industry.

From what we have stated, it is evident that we have more to dread from our colonies in the way of competition in the near future than from foreign countries. For the manufacture and export of dairy produce is more developed in foreign countries, while the manufacture and trade in these products are but in their infancy in the colonies, and are increasing rapidly. And so we would recommend the introduction of the dairy system on those farms now devoted to the growing of grain mainly. This change, if carried out to the extent we think it should be, would increase the supply of milk so much as to lower the price of dairy produce, unless there be an increased consumption. It is to be hoped that the lower price will be such as will induce a larger consumption of milk, for which there is great room. In many of our largest cities there are thousands of children who never taste milk, and this is the reason why so many of them are rickety, and the population of our towns is so much deteriorated physically. There may be a reduction in price temporarily; but when the milk is brought within the reach of the thousands who never drink it now, or are supplied with it in limited quantities, the price will regain its old level.

It is said that the average consumption of milk in the United Kingdom for drinking and domestic purposes is about sixteen gallons per head per annum, or a little more than a third of a pint per day; and in London it is not more than six gallons per head per annum. To bring up this quantity to that of the average of the whole country, 125,000 additional cows would be required, allowing the average annual yield of a cow to be four hundred gallons of milk. It may be mentioned that for the last forty years there has been a gradual increase in the consumption of butter and cheese per head of the population. The total amount in 1850 was ten pounds a head, and in 1890 nineteen pounds, of home-made and imported butter and cheese. In the United States, there has also been a gradual increase in the consumption of the same articles, from sixteen pounds per head in 1850 to twenty pounds per head in 1890.

With this increasing consumption per head, we need not look for any great fall in the price of milk. We may ask what is the cause of the comparatively small consumption of milk in our large towns. It is mainly the habits of the people. Some parents spend in alcoholic drinks what ought to be spent on milk and other food for the children. A dairyman kept a sufficient number of cows to supply with milk the inhabitants of a village where he resided. He was surprised to find a sudden increase in the consumption, so much so as to induce him to add to the number of his cows. On inquiry, he ascertained that the increase arose from the demand of certain families, the heads of which used to frequent the public-houses, but who had discontinued their visits after their conversion to blue-ribbonism by Mr Murphy. But let us suppose that there will be a considerable reduction in price, how is this to be met? It must be met by a reduction of expenses and an increased production from each cow. There must be a reduction of expenses by a due economy at home and the adoption of the co-operative system, as is being done so extensively with profit in our colonies and America. Why should a middleman carry off so much of the profits, when, by a combination of the farmers, the work can be done just as effectually and with more profit to themselves?

Then to increase the production, none but the best cows should be kept, and they should be fed liberally and generously. We have before us the result of an experiment where an indifferent cow was kept which received little more than what grew on the farm, and left a profit of less than a pound; while, on the other hand, there was a cow of superior quality which was generously cared for and fed with purchased nourishing food in addition to what was raised on the farm, and she left a yearly profit of upwards of eight pounds. We don't mean to say that that was the highest profit that could be obtained, for we have known much larger profits from individual cows. The total number of cows in the United Kingdom now numbers 4,000,000.

A Foreign Office Report recently published informs us that in the Garvardo district, in

the north of Italy, the small peasant proprietors occupying, some of them, not more than six acres, formed themselves into a union, which purchased improved implements and machinery, seeds, manures, &c., to be used by the members. It procured the services of a veterinary surgeon to attend to their cattle, and to instruct them in the principles of improving the breeds. It engaged also a skilled person to advise as to the management of pastures, cheese-making, vine-disease, manuring of lands, &c. A few years ago, these farmers were living from hand to mouth; now they are prosperous. This is but an example of what can be done by the co-operative system.

It is satisfactory to know that in this country schools have been established by the British Dairy Farmers' Association to instruct in everything connected with the dairy; and specimens of cheeses made at these schools were shown at the Exhibition, as successful imitations of some of the most popular of foreign cheeses imported into the country, such as Gorgonzola, Roquefort, Gruyère, and Camembert.

The National Agricultural Union (30 Fleet Street, London, E.C.) aims at establishing a produce post, by means of which dairy produce and fruit and vegetables might be sent direct to the consumer. It has many local branches, and over two hundred M.P.s in favour of its parliamentary programme.

THE GOVERNESS AT GREENBUSH.

CHAPTER II.

MISS WINFREY grew very fond of her schoolroom. There, as the young men told her, she was 'her own boss,' with a piano, though a poor one, all to herself; and a desk, the rather clumsy handiwork of the eldest boy, yet her very own, and full of her own things. She took an old maid's delight in orderly arrangement, and, for that matter, was nothing loth to own, with her most serious air, that she quite intended to be an old maid. But what she liked best about the schoolroom was its fundamental privacy. It formed a detached building, and had formerly been the station store. The old dining-room was the present store, which was entered by the 'white veranda,' so known in contradistinction to the deep, trellised shelter—which, however, Mrs Pickering insisted on calling the 'piazza'—belonging to a later building. The white veranda was narrow and bald by comparison. But the young men still burnt their evening incense upon it, while Millicent and the Governess preferred it at all hours of the day. It was just opposite the schoolroom, for one thing; for another, Mrs Pickering but seldom set foot on the white veranda, and the peevish lady was not a popular character in the homestead of which she was the mistress.

She was no longer in favour of the new Governess. Miss Winfrey's singular success with the children had been quite sufficient to alienate their mother's sympathies, or rather to revive her prejudices. Her feeling in the matter was not, perhaps, altogether inhuman. It is difficult to appreciate the expert manipulation

of material upon which we ourselves have tried an ineffectual hand. It is odious to see another win through sheer discipline to a popularity which all one's own indulgence has failed to secure. These experiences were Mrs Pickering's just deserts, but that did not lessen their sting. The lady became bitterly jealous of her children's friend, whose society they now obviously preferred to her own. With former governesses not a day had passed without one child or another coming to its mother with some whining tale. There were no such complaints now; but the mother missed them as she would have missed so many habitual caresses; for it made her feel that she was no longer everything to her children. It is easier to understand her feelings than to forgive their expression. She took to snubbing the Governess in the pupils' presence. It is true that, as the young men said, Mrs Pickering did not 'get much change' out of little Miss Winfrey. The girl was well qualified to take care of herself. But she was more sensitive than she cared to show. Her whole soul shrank from the small contentions which were forced upon her; they hurt her terribly, whether she won or she lost. Still it was best to win, and one little victory gave the Governess considerable satisfaction.

Mrs Pickering took it into her head that the children were worked too hard. So one afternoon she walked into the schoolroom and told them all that they might go—nearly an hour before the time. But not a child stirred.

'You may all run away,' repeated their mother. 'Don't you understand me? Then why don't you move?'

The eldest boy shuffled awkwardly in his place. 'Please, mother, it's poetry-hour, and we only have it once a week.'

Mrs Pickering, relying on the little ones, now called for a show of hands. But the very infants were against her; and she left the room with a bitter glance at the silent Governess, who, after a little consideration, decided to dismiss the class herself. Meantime, the irate lady had gone straight to her husband.

'Miss Winfrey is becoming unendurable,' she told him in the tone of personal reproach which had already made the unlucky squatter curse his choice of a Governess. 'The poor children are positively frightened to death of her! I went in to let them out of school; no one but an inhuman monster would keep them in on an afternoon like this; and actually, not one of them dared to move without Miss Winfrey's permission! Harry muttered something to the effect that they would rather finish the lesson, and the rest sat still, but you may be sure they knew it was either that or being punished afterwards. How I hate such severities! As for that woman herself, she just sat like a mule without saying anything.—Ah! I see she's thought better of it, and let them out herself; to show that her authority's superior to mine, I suppose. Really, that's the last straw! We must get rid of her. I will not be insulted in my own house.'

Mr Pickering met his wife judiciously, but not by any means half-way. He knew what she meant; he was not himself entirely en-

amoured of Miss Winfrey. She had spoken to him about the boys seeing too much of the men out mustering on Saturdays, a point on which the father was surely the best judge. She had too many opinions of her own; but when all was said, she was an admirable Governess. He dwelt upon the general improvement in the children under Miss Winfrey. He had the sense to ignore their very evident affection for that martinet. Another change might be a very good thing in a few months' time, but at present it would be a thousand pities. Christmas was coming on. There would be holidays until the New Year. It would be very easy to let Miss Winfrey see that her daily supervision was not required during the holidays. She could have the time to herself.

She did have the time to herself, and a very poor time it was. The parents gave out that they intended to see something of their young people while they had the chance. And to broaden the hint, as if that were necessary, they studiously refrained from inviting Miss Winfrey to join in the daily entertainment. Now it was a family visit to a neighbouring station, with four horses in the big trap; now a picnic in the scrub; and now impromptu races on the township course. But the Governess spent the days in her own schoolroom, with little intervals on the white veranda. Millicent's rabbit inspector was at Greenbush, so Miss Winfrey saw nothing of Millicent either. All was now well between those two. On the day he went, she rode with him to the boundary fence, and then joined the picnic party in the Forest Paddock.

'Where's Miss Winfrey?' cried the girl, from her saddle, as she cantered up to the little group about the crackling fire.

The children looked unhappy.

'She's at home,' said Harry.

Millicent asked why.

'Because it's holidays,' answered Mrs Pickering, looking up from the basket which she was unpacking; 'and because we've come out to enjoy ourselves.'

Millicent ran over the ring of little wistful faces, and a soft laugh left her lips. She could hear her father gathering branches in the scrub, and talking to the only young man who had not gone away for his holidays. She wondered whether she should dismount at all; her heart went out to her friend all alone at the homestead; she, too, had neglected her these last few days.

'When did Miss Winfrey spoil a day's enjoyment?' the girl demanded. 'She would have added to it.'

'You may think so. I chose not to risk it.'

'But surely you gave her a chance of coming?'

'Not I, indeed! The children see quite enough of their Governess in school.—Harry, darling, there's the water boiling at last!'

But Millicent was boiling too. 'That settles it,' she exclaimed with a quick flush. 'Good-bye, all of you!' And she was gone at a hand-gallop.

There was little love lost between the girl and her step-mother. Millicent was rather glad than otherwise to turn her back upon a party which did not include the one daily companion who

was now entirely congenial to her. And if anybody could fill at all the gaping blank left by her lover's departure, it was Miss Winfrey, who was always so sympathetic, so understanding. To that same sympathy the young girl felt that she owed her present abiding, and even increasing happiness, and again her heart went out to the little Governess, who had known no such counsellor in her own black hour of doubt and trepidation. Otherwise—Millicent sighed. She knew the whole story now. Her friend had spoken of it a second and a third time, and the speaking had seemed to do her good. It was five years ago. The young man had been a medical student then. And now his penitent false love could see him only as a thriving doctor—and a married man.

'I would give anything to find him,' thought the girl who was happy, as she stooped to open the home-paddock gate. 'I know—something tells me—that he is true!'

She cantered to the homestead, standing high and hot on its ridge of sand, with only a few dry pines sprouting out of the yard. The year was burning itself out in a succession of torrid days, of which this was the worst yet. The sky was incredibly blue, with never a flake of cloud from rim to rim. The wind came hot from the north, though luckily without much force. And Millicent's dog, with its tongue hanging out, was running under the very belly of her horse, whose shadow she could not see.

She watered both animals at the tank, and then rode on to the horse-yard; but ere she reached it, was greatly struck by the sound of a sweet voice singing in the distance. It seemed a queer thing, but the young woman from England was standing the Riverina summer far better than those who had been born there. She could sit and sing on a day like this!

On her way on foot from the horse-yard to the schoolroom, Millicent stood on her shadow to listen to the song. The Governess sang very seldom; she liked better to play accompaniments for the young men, though she had a charming, trained voice of her own. But Millicent had never heard her use it, as she was doing now, without a known soul within ear-shot save the Chinaman in the kitchen.

The heat of the sand struck through the young girl's boots. Yet still she stood, and bent her head, and at last caught a few of the words:

. in the lime-tree,
The wind is floating through:
And oh! the night, my darling, is sighing—
Sighing for you, for you.

This finished a verse. Millicent crept nearer. She had never heard such tender singing. Three or four simple bars, and it began again:

O think not I can forget you;
I could not though I would;
I see you in all around me,
The stream, the night, the wood;
The flowers that slumber so gently,
The stars above the blue.
Oh! heaven itself, my darling, is praying—
Praying for you, for you.

The voice sank very low, its pathos was infinite, yet the girl heard every word. There were no more. Millicent dried her eyes, and went

tripping over her habit through the open school-room door. There sat the Governess, with wrung face and gray eyes all intensity.

'My dear, it was divine!'

'You heard! I'm sorry.'

'Oh, why?'

'I never sing that song.'

'Why, again?'

The fixed eyes fell. 'It was—his favourite. The music is better than the words, I think; don't you? But then the words are a translation.'

The change of voice was miraculous; and, from that, even more than from the song and its singing, Millicent knew at last how some women love. To her it was a revelation which made the girl half ashamed of her really adequate affection for the honest rabbit inspector. But she said no more about that song.

One afternoon she was reclining on a deck-chair under shelter of the white veranda. The heat was still intense, and Millicent was nearly asleep. It was a Saturday, and the children were abroad in the paddocks. But their Governess was in her own schoolroom, for once as enervated as Millicent herself, who could just see the hem of her frock through the open door.

Millicent had closed her eyes. A spur clinked on the veranda, but she was too lazy to lift a lid. A voice said, 'Is Mr Pickering about, please, miss?' with a good accent, but in a curious hang-dog tone. She answered, 'You'll find him in the store,' without troubling to see which of the men it was. Then came sleep; and then her father, shaking her softly, and whispering in her ear.

'It's Cattle-station Bill,' he said. 'Wants another cheque.—Hasn't had one since that day when Miss Winfrey came. Where is she, Milly? She seemed to think she'd like to try her hand at reforming our Bill, and now's her chance. He's only gone four months this time!'

'Miss Winfrey's in the schoolroom,' replied Milly drowsily. 'She won't thank you for disturbing her any more than I do.'

Pickering stepped down into the sand and crossed over to the schoolroom, dragging a shadow like a felled pine. The man was meanwhile in the store, where his master now rejoined him in fits of soft and secret laughter. And Millicent rubbed her eyes, because her nap had been ruined, and bent them upon the schoolroom door, in which the Governess now stood reading a book.

The spurs clinked again in the veranda, the book dropped over the way, the Governess disappeared from view; and Millicent glanced from the empty door to the man beside her in the veranda. He was a handsome young fellow, with black, black hair and moustache, and a certain indefinable distinction of bearing, of which his rough clothes could not rid him. But his eyes were turned sullenly to earth, and as he snatched his horse's reins from the hook on the veranda-post with his right hand, his left crumpled up his cheque and rammed it into his pocket. And a wild suspicion flashed across Millicent at that moment, to be confirmed the next.

Last night the nightingale woke me,

sang the voice in the schoolroom;

Last night, when all was still,
It sang in the golden moonlight,
From out the woodland hill.

But Milly had never taken her eyes from the sullen, handsome stockman standing almost at her feet. His left hand was still in his pocket; his right had the reins, but was still outstretched in front of him, as though suspended in the air; while a white, terrified face was turned this way and that in quick succession, with the perspiration welling out at every pore. Yet the smooth agony of the song went on without a tremor:

And oh! the bird, my darling, was singing —
Singing of you, of you.

As the verse ended, the man shuddered from head to foot, then flung himself into the saddle, and Millicent watched him ride headlong towards the home-paddock gate. She lost sight of him, however, long before he reached it, and then she knew that Miss Winfrey was still singing her song in a loud, clear voice. Could she be mistaken? It was a sufficiently wild idea. Could there be nothing but coincidence in it, after all? Again she caught the words:

I think of you in the daytime,
I dream of you by night,
I wake, and would you were here, love,
And tears are blinding my sight.
I hear a low breath in the lime-tree—

The sweet air, the tender words, snapped short together. Millicent leaped from her deck-chair, heard a fall as she ran, and found the Governess in a dead-faint upon the schoolroom floor.

SEDAN-CHAIRS.

WHY were sedan-chairs so called? The answer seems simple and obvious, that they were named from the town of Sedan, in the north-east of France; and this is the derivation given in most dictionaries and books of reference. But no evidence has yet been produced by any propounder of this etymology to prove either that such chairs were first used at Sedan, or that they were brought to England from that town. There is, indeed, practically nothing to prove any connection whatever between the chair and the place. It is not a little curious that the real origin of the name of that once fashionable means of locomotion should be so obscure, while on the surface it appears to be so plain and simple.

Sedans were used in London by one or two private persons about the beginning of the seventeenth century; but the first person of note to use the new conveyance was the Duke of Buckingham, the favourite of King James I. and his son Charles. Prince Charles, on his return from his adventurous journey to Spain, is said to have brought back three curiously carved sedan-chairs, a fact which rather tells against the proposed derivation from the French town. Two of these chairs he gave to Buckingham, who seems to have first used one of them when suffering from illness; but this did not prevent the populace, who had no love for the royal favourite, from grumbling indignantly at

the pride of the man who employed his fellow-creatures to do the service of beasts of burden.

Among the State Papers there is a letter, dated May 1626, from a Londoner named Gabriel Browne to a priest in Spain, which was intercepted for political reasons, and in it the writer says: 'You can hardly believe how bitterly it has disgusted the multitude here that being sickely, he [the Duke of Buckingham] suffered himself to be carried in a covered chaire upon his servants' shoulders through the streets in the daie time between Whitehall and Denmarke House.' There is an echo of this feeling in Massinger's play *The Bondman*, where the dramatist satirises the pride and luxury of the ladies

For their pomp and care being borne
In triumph on men's shoulders.

At this early period the conveyance was known only as a 'covered chair;' the term 'sedan' came into use a little later. It was not many years before private persons ceased to have a monopoly of these covered chairs, and chairs for hire began to ply in the public streets. The first hackney-coach stand in London was set up in 1634 by the Strand Maypole, a few yards from Temple Bar; and in the same year Letters Patent, dated September 27th, were granted to Sir Sanders Duncombe, giving him the sole right and privilege for fourteen years to use and let for hire, within the cities of London and Westminster, covered chairs, to prevent the unnecessary use of coaches. For some mysterious reason, the authorities were greatly averse to the increase of hackney-coaches. Their numbers were strictly limited, and their use discouraged as far as possible. This policy naturally favoured the growth of the chair-system, and it was not long before the new conveyances were highly popular and in great demand.

In Duncombe's petition for the patent, there is a passage which gives some very slight support to the theory that the name of the chair was derived from the town of Sedan. The applicant represents that 'in many parts beyond seas, people are much carried in chairs that are covered, whereby few coaches are used among them.' Of course, Sir Sanders may have seen them in use in Sedan; but this is the merest conjecture, for his allusion to 'parts beyond seas' is extremely vague, nor does he mention or use the name of Sedan. A private letter of 1634, included in the Stafford correspondence, describes Duncombe as 'a traveller, now a pensioner,' and mentions that he was having forty or fifty chairs made ready for use. An early example of the use of the name 'sedan' may be found in Shirley's play, *The Lady of Pleasure*, first acted in 1635, wherein a lady, Celestina, asks:

Is my sedan yet finished,
And liveries for my men-mules, according
As I gave charge?

It has often been said, presumably on the strength of the remark in Duncombe's application, quoted above, that sedan-chairs were brought to this country from France; but, strangely enough, one or two French writers

declare that they were brought to Paris from London, and the honour of their introduction is usually accorded to the Marquis de Montbrun. The truth seems to be that sedan-chairs, or *chaises-à-porteurs*, as the French called them, appeared almost simultaneously in the two capitals, and it is hard to say which city can claim priority in their use. Probably neither borrowed from the other, but both derived the new invention from some third place, which may or may not have been Sedan; there is no evidence on the point. Chairs made their first appearance in Paris about the same time that Buckingham's unpopular use of one had attracted public attention in London; but the French were some years in advance of us in supplying chairs for public hire. A small Association, or Company, as we should now call it, was formed in Paris in 1617, which obtained the sole right of supplying *chaises-à-porteurs* on hire in all the cities of the French kingdom. Similar patents were obtained later by other individuals, and in the time of Louis XIV. chairs were extremely fashionable, and were often most luxuriously upholstered.

The palmy days of the sedan-chair in England were the earlier decades of the last century. In 1710 there were two hundred hackney-chairs in London, and the number remained much the same until the reign of George III. Besides these public chairs, there were very many which belonged to private owners, and were elaborately carved and luxuriously fitted. In Dublin, sedan-chairs were taxed for the benefit of one of the hospitals; and from registers still extant, it appears that in 1787 there were no fewer than two hundred and fifty-seven private chairs owned by wealthy people, from dukes down to rich commoners, in the Irish capital. The tax in 1798 brought the fortunate Dublin hospital as much as five hundred and forty-seven pounds.

The literature of the last century—especially that of its earlier half—is full of references to the hackney-chairs and the chairmen, who seem to have been rather a disreputable class of men. Gay, in his most interesting poem on the *Art of Walking the Streets of London*, speaks of their crowding the doors of taverns, and warns passengers against some of the dangers of chair-travelling, when the sudden gale

The drunken chairman in the kennel spurns,
The glasses shatters, and his charge o'erturns.

In those days the footpath was only distinguished from the roadway by a line of posts, which afforded some slight protection to pedestrians, and chairmen had no right to pass within the posts. Gay warns his readers against the rudeness of these men:

Let not the chairman, with assuming stride,
Press near the wall, and rudely thrust thy side;
The laws have set him bounds; his servile feet
Should ne'er encroach where posts defend the street.

Many years later, when Jonas Hanway courageously set the example of carrying an unfurled umbrella in the streets of London, the chairmen, who, like the worshippers of Diana at Ephesus, saw their craft in danger, were among the loudest and most daring of those

who vainly tried to intimidate the bold innovator by jeers, and sarcasms, and even threats.

As the eighteenth century neared its end, the number of chairs began to decrease, while the number of hackney-coaches was largely increased. The use of sedan-chairs, however, died hard. In many country towns they remained in use until a period well within the memory of men still comparatively young. In Peterborough, for instance, they were used down to at least 1860; and ten years later, one solitary survivor might have been seen in Exeter. At Newcastle one was still extant in 1885, and at Bury St Edmund's in 1890. Sir Walter Scott, in his *Diary*, mentions using a sedan-chair in February 1831; and about the same time, Lady Salisbury, who died four years later, at the age of eighty-five, was in the habit of going to evening parties and other assemblies in her old-fashioned chair. Sedan-chairs were still in common use in Bath in the early years of the present century; and extremely useful and convenient they were for invalids. The chair could be entered in the hall of the hirer's own home, and being borne to its destination, was carried right into the house, where, the hall-door being shut, the chair could be opened, and its occupant step forth into as genial an atmosphere as he or she had left. With carriages or bath-chairs, invalids were always endangered by the exposed transit between the door of the carriage and the house-door. Some six or seven years ago there were rumours of a possible revival of the old chairs at Bath.

In some places abroad they are still in use. Mention is made of such conveyances at Genoa in 1882; in 1888 the archbishop of Seville was carried forth in one. In the streets of Bahia in Brazil, sedan-chairs borne by stalwart negroes may be seen in use at the present day. A few months ago, it was said that some speculator was having chairs of the old type built in London, with a view to an attempted revival of bygone fashion; but they have not yet made their appearance in the streets of the metropolis, and it is tolerably safe to prophesy that if they do so appear, their renewed term of existence will be extremely short.

H E S T E R .

It is true; those that take the sword perish with the sword; and they that pass their lives forging instruments of destruction are not seldom themselves the first sacrifice demanded by the evil they have helped to create. My father was a workman at Grimm's Flats Powder-mills, and two weeks before I was born perished in an explosion there. My mother died of the shock two weeks after my birth; so that within a month I lost both parents. Then 'the Row' adopted me. The Row is a row of cottages attached—at a safe distance—to the Grimm's Flats Powder-mills, and inhabited exclusively by the workmen, their wives, widows, and families. Clubbing together, and helped by a donation from the proprietors, the men paid something weekly to my foster-parents

until I was old enough to earn my own salt, as they said; helping in the housework, and doing plain sewing and knitting for the Row.

We were an obscure, remote, self-contained little community. All were more or less related to each other. We had scarcely more than two surnames among us. If a man wasn't a Judge, he was almost certain to be a Bishop. And as all the Bishops were Bills by descent, and all the Judges, Toms, we were fain to distinguish them by some personal peculiarity, such as Long Tom Judge, or Big Bill Bishop; or by their ages, such as Young Tom, Old Bill, and so forth.

A danger, common to all the men, and of daily recurrence, was the bond that united us all. It spiced our lives, and gave the men and the women, too, by emulation a grim humour, a sort of pride of courage, whereby they and we showed contempt of the peril they lived in. It was not merely that every man repairing to the mills of a bright summer or dark winter's morning carried his life in his hand, but that his life was in the hand of the youngest and most careless of the workmen—if any were careless in that place. A bit of grit carried into the powder-shed on the sole of a list slipper—such as all wore when at work—might, by accidental contact, be sufficient to cause an explosion. The mills lie on a level, low-lying plateau, that is intersected in every direction by a labyrinth of sluggish waters: canals, back-waters, and channels, filled from the slow, creeping tide of the river Milway. The emerald-green level meads are connected by moss-grown, crazy, wooden bridges—often a mere plank and a hand-rail, scarce sufficient to guide any one safely over the thick ooze in the dark or gloaming. Near one of these, a woman had been drowned, either missing the plank in coming across the meads at nightfall, or else making away with herself. Anyhow, her ghost, it was said, still haunted the place, gliding pensively through the growth of alders and willows that clothed the banks, or trailing like a mist-wreath across the gray, mossy bridge.

We were seldom many days free of fog or mist. If it did not gather and rise from the ooze and beds of osiers, it came rolling down to us from the low hills that shut us in on the north and west. To dwellers on a hill, or in towns, or by the sea, Grimm's Flats might not look at first sight very attractive, perhaps. But to us, who had lived there all, or nearly all, our lives there was no place like it, for the sweetness of the flowers in the gardens, the profusion of all kinds of vegetables, the peace of its Sundays, and the joy of its Good-Fridays and Christmas days.

We were not much given to worshipping in public; Sunday mornings our men spent mostly in their front gardens, with unlaced boots, chatting in twos and threes—the pipes, so rigidly denied them all the working days, between their lips, and as free from care, as ready for harmless play, as the toddling wee things that clung about daddy's knees or climbed to his shoulder. Within doors, meantime, the women prepared the one mid-day meal of the

week to be eaten with husband and sons. A feast, indeed. In the afternoons, in fine weather, we, that is, the younger women—while our tranquil elders took their spell of rest or gossip—strolled over the meads, or attended church at Milbridge, two and a half miles distant. Whether we sauntered in the fields or walked briskly to church, we were not uncommonly attended—at a respectful distance—by the younger men of the Row; but these, like the dogs, turned tail generally at the sound of the church bells, not without promises of going farther on some future day, carrying a gold ring in their waistcoat pockets.

On these occasions, either at church, or on what the elders called 'a prowl,' I had one chosen, invariable companion, Hester Best: Hetty Betty, as she was more commonly called in the Row. Our comradeship was no case of 'like liking like;' for both in appearance, and what Old Tom Judge called our 'temperature,' no two could well be more unlike. Hester was as lively, audacious, gay, generous, and fearless, as blue-eyed, freckled, red-golden-haired as I was cowardly, nervous, black-eyed, sallow, and sad. Yet we were inseparables. At eighteen, when I was what Hetty called a confirmed old sober-sides, she was at the top of her bent for fun and mischief, a very madcap.

It happened that this year a new inmate—two new inmates—came to live in the Row. The man, as a matter of course, was a worker at the mills, and his mother lived with him. They came from a distance, and had ways of their own. None of us took to Mrs Brand; she was stiff, reserved, and proud; but good-looking, and upright as a dart. A good manager, and clean and 'sprach' as a daisy. From the first, Hetty and she could not abide each other. Jim Brand was like and unlike his mother, as good-looking, as upright, and as careful of his appearance; but not a bit stiff or proud. If his mother spoke little and smiled less, Jim had a pleasant word and smile for all. He had come to Grimm's Flats from some place by the sea where there were torpedo works, and could tell a lot about wrecks and lifeboats and war-ships. He seemed half a sailor himself, and, as Hetty said, he wasn't over head and ears in powder, like the other men. So that, what with his good looks, his pleasant ways and fresh talk, some of us just a little lost our heads about Jim Brand.

I declare, solemnly, that I never cared—I never let myself think or care about him, for I saw—I could not help seeing—the change that came over Hetty, and I guessed what it meant; until, one day, I found, to my amazement, that Jim Brand had taken a fancy to me—to me! All the pride and joy this knowledge gave me was cruelly dashed by knowing that Hester would look upon me in the light of a successful rival! Hester, who from our childhood had been to me like a twin-sister, a brighter self! Hester, who had cheered me when I was down, nursed me when I was sick, encouraged and strengthened me at every turn, and me to 'cut out' Hester! I declare that when, of an evening in the summer, Jim first began to walk out with me, and Hetty hung back and wouldn't join us, the sight of her

pale, set face at her cottage door, or window, was like a splash of ice-cold water on my newborn happiness.

In our strolls, Hetty and I had always avoided the network of water surrounding the mills, except, perhaps, just when the primroses and periwinkles were in flower in the tangled copse and brushwood on the banks. More especially we shunned the foot-bridge where the woman was found drowned, and floating under the shadow of the willows and alder-trees. But Jim took a special fancy to the meads; and there we sauntered evening after evening, listening to the thrushes, and making nose-gays of meadow-sweet—'curds and cream,' as we called the fragrant willow-herb; and the lovely forget-me-nots—large, and blue as Hester's eyes. Hetty's great blue eyes, so changed in their expression when they met mine, so involuntarily upbraiding, that I knew she avoided meeting or speaking to me, lest they, and the frank, laughing mouth, now grown so 'mim' and set, should tell too much of the struggle within her.

It was a puzzle to Jim why she, who had been my chiefest friend, should now avoid us; and because I could not tell him, I, when the time came, just wrote, and asked her, for form's sake, to go to church with us, knowing what the answer would be—as it was, an excuse; though many a time each had promised to be the other's bridesmaid. So I was married; and no Hester to help to dress me, and keep my courage up, to meet the new life—the new duties—the new home. But neither new home, new duties, nor new happiness could obliterate my regret for the coolness that had come between me and Hester. Moreover, I soon found, as human beings will, that my life, even as Jim Brand's wife, was not all sunshine. Men have a deal to say of their mothers-in-law; yet they, when they are vexed or contraried, can, and do, get away from home. A woman whose mother-in-law lives with her has no such escape, at least not in our rank of life. We had strict notions of Duty in the Row. And I should have felt myself bitterly to blame had I not done or tried to do mine, with such a husband as Jim. But, somehow, Mrs Brand managed to spoil a good bit of my happiness.

I found it very hard at first to make her out at all. She was civil when Jim was by—just civil. When he was away, she found fault—not pettishly, but commanding, as if she knew everything, and I knew nothing, from morning till night. I tried hard to please her; it being so easy to please Jim, I didn't expect to find it so hard to please his mother. That was my mistake. The more I laid myself out to do the utmost jot and tittle of my duty, the more unacceptable I seemed to be to Jim's mother. By-and-by I found out something of the reason. Mrs Brand idolised her son: a royal princess would hardly have made him a good enough wife; and yet, inconsistently, she was more impatient of me when Jim was pleased with what I did, and praised me, than at any other time. When I failed in cooking a dinner or any other household matter, she almost seemed to like me. But so sure as Jim made much of me, her jealousy boiled over,

but not often in his presence. Once, when I hinted to him something particularly irritating and unjust that she had said to me, his face clouded. 'Oh! if you two are going to disagree'—he said, and broke off. I swallowed my chagrin, and resolved that henceforth I would devour it in secret; and I kept my resolution.

I could not help being a little triumphant, and yet very sorry, when one day, just because, in passing me, Jim had caught me round the waist and kissed me, Mrs Brand burst out into scornful, upbraiding words. I stood silent, with burning cheeks, looking on the floor; and after quite a minute's dead pause, Jim said, very quiet, 'If my behaviour affronts you, mother, you are not obliged to bide with us, you know.' Those were the first undutiful words I had ever heard Jim speak; and though I knew his mother had brought them on herself, and though I was not sorry he should have a glimpse of how disagreeable she could speak, I could not help being very sorry. The peace and sacredness of the home seemed lessened by them somehow.

A few days later I was going on an errand to Milbridge, and met Hester full butt. I scarcely expected she would stop, for we often met and passed, now, with only a nod; but she did; she drew up short in front of me. 'What's up?' she said abruptly. 'Ain't you well? You don't look much!'

The old voice and way of speaking, something womanly kind, such as I hadn't heard lately, made me quiver all over. Hester turned round, drew my arm in hers, and walked slowly beside me, while I gave myself the relief of pouring my grievances into her willing ears. I did not feel how disloyal I was to Jim, till Hetty's energetic ejaculation of 'Old cat!' applied to Jim's mother, shocked me into silence. Even then I could not regret my imprudence, however; sympathy, Hetty's sympathy and partisanship, were too sweet. The intimacy thus renewed was soon in full force, as strong as ever, or stronger.

Hester, withheld by the strict, unspoken etiquette of the Row, which did not permit man or woman entrance into any house not their own, except upon invitation, had never yet crossed my threshold; now, she was a frequent visitor; and that despite the fact, plainly observable, that Hester was no favourite with Mrs Brand. Hetty's audacious laughter and frank speech were specially distasteful to her. Barely civil to her when Jim was there, no sooner was he gone, than a wordy war would break out, in which the elder woman often got worsted. Sheltered by Hester's incisive tongue, I made bold to pluck up spirit and oppose her myself upon occasion, and, to my surprise, I found that the more I asserted myself, the greater were Mrs Brand's concessions.

There is one thing we none of us know until it is too late to benefit by the knowledge, and that is, to know when we are happy. Directly the time is past, we know it, and mourn that we did not make more of the blessed season. The month or two after Hetty's and my reconciliation was such a period. Jim seemed to share my partiality for her, and

our party of an evening, either within doors or in the fields, was a merry one. However morose Mrs Brand might be, Hetty's sympathy consoled me when we were alone together; while, if Jim's mother snapped and snarled before her, Hetty's laugh and retort often drove the elder woman to sullen silence, a silence, however, in which she brooded revenge. Hers was a nature which demanded the outlet of free speech to keep her thoughts from venom.

It was after a week or two's sullen avoidance of all communication with Hester that she one day burst all bounds to me. The morning was a fine one in autumn, Jim had not long left home, and his mother and I were still occupied in putting away the breakfast things. Our cottage door stood open; across the green level meadow spiders' webs—virgins' threads we called them—caught the rays of the morning sun, making a path of silvery white. Walking to the door as I wiped a cup, I caught sight of Hetty. Her face was towards the mills; she was walking backwards, nodding and waving a hand to Jim, and exchanging merrily shouted greetings as he went on his way to work. Presently she caught sight of me, and came past our cottage, her face all aglow. We passed the time of day to each other, said a few indifferent words; and then she went on her way, nodding gaily to Jim's mother through the window as she passed. Mrs Brand made no response to her greeting, except by a muttered, 'Get along, you hussy!' Then she turned sharply on me and said through her set teeth, 'I wonder you encourage that minx! Any one that wasn't a fool could see she was over head and ears in love with your husband.' She spoke so abruptly and with such bitter intensity that in my consternation I dropped the cup I was wiping, and it smashed to atoms on the brick floor.

'There you go!' she cried, 'as if cups could be had for the picking up. Ah! you may look! but you mark my words—if anything goes wrong with you, I know who'll fill your shoes; and so does she—a hussy!'

Perhaps jealousy is infectious. Although I knew Jim's mother to be jealous, and, where Hetty was concerned, spiteful, still her words remained with me. She had made an impression, and she knew it. I began to like, to trust her more, and Hetty less; and she, too, knew it.

Gradually my pride in Jim and happiness sank lower, and I was too stupid to perceive it was all my own fault. Hester would not come to us without asking, and in my silly suspiciousness, I refrained from asking her, much as I missed her sympathy and her cheery high spirits, which had acted as an antidote to Mrs Brand's gloomy views of life. She would often say, as we sat at work together, that it would have been a good deal better if she had never been born; and sometimes I got to think she was right, except for Jim; and I dreaded my child would be deformed, or deaf and dumb, or an idiot, as she said, and I could not deny so many were. So the days went by, days when I might have been, and might have made Jim—who was very gentle and compassionate to me—so happy, and I let the opportunity,

which was never to return, slip away for ever.

One afternoon, in the October of that year, a day that had begun in a filmy veil of blue haze, and ended in a blaze of the broadest sunshine, I started to go and meet Jim coming from his work. Passing along the Row, I stopped at Tom Judge's garden. The father of the Row was busied there harvesting potatoes. He stood resting his bent back against the fence, while I remarked about the fineness of the afternoon.

'Look yender,' said the old man, pointing a crooked brown forefinger at the low hills that seemed drawn in closer to us. 'T'won't last. See how handy them hills be! They ain't no nigher, we knows, but they allus looks handier afore rain.' He had got so far, when a trembling of the earth, a vibration in the air, instantly succeeded by a deafening explosion, stopped his speech.

Mechanically and swiftly, we faced the quarter whence it came: a dense umbrella-shaped volume of smoke had risen into the rosy afternoon air. Between us and the mills, ashes, wood-splinters, shattered bricks and mortar, a whole mass of wreckage and ruins, were falling. Every door burst open in the Row, and in a moment Hester was at my side. Grasping her hand tight, we set off and ran, full speed, to the foot-bridge where the drowned woman had been found. As we crossed it, the water, all alight with reflections from the bright sky above it, was rippling, and shivering, and shuddering in its cosy bed below the plank. When we reached the other side, Hester suddenly let go my hand, caught my waist, and twisted me round. 'You mustn't go on—you must go back!' she cried authoritatively.

In vain I struggled and implored; she held me firm. Then I saw that her dilated eyes were drawn again and again to one spot in the osiers on the bank. Wrenching myself round, my eyes followed the direction hers had taken. What was it? Something flung, hurled amongst the reeds—something that had once been a man! As I stared, spellbound, it seemed to me that the blue-shirted arm, every stich in which was of my own setting, that it moved as though motioning me—a farewell.

After a long, long nightmare, in which I was tormented by succeeding visions of low hills bathed in sunshine, of black, balloon-shaped clouds, of a blue-shirted arm, through all of which rang the continual wailing of an infant, I awoke to find little Jim on my arm, and Hetty sitting beside my bed. That she had saved my life and the baby's, I could well believe. It was weeks before she left us, day or night, and when she did, it was but to find a home for us far away from Grimm's Flats. Mrs Brand lived with us till she died, and thought more, relied more on Hester than on any one else.

Little Jim shall never learn or hear of his father's trade, if Hetty and I can prevent it, lest, again, those who take the sword perish with it. Our boy, we call him, but he is more hers than mine; he will quit me for her any day; and I would not have it otherwise. Her

courage, her constancy, her bright spirits, have upheld us through many trials. She is the strong strand of our threefold cord. If I took one Jim from her, I have given her another; it is her turn now, and she loves the boy as she loved his father, as she loves me, with a love passing the love of women. God forbid that I should grudge Jim paying his parents' debts to Hester!

THE OTHER ROOM.

THIS pleasant room, you say, holds all I need;
Here are my books, my plants, my pictures; friends
Are round my hearth. Before my eyes recede
Through the broad casement, river, hill, and mead;
And better still, at evening there ascends
Twilight's one star, made to console the gloom.
There's the door where one enters; here, the fire;
What more could mortal ask or heart desire?
And there, the portal of the Other Room.

The life I lead is fair, yet here and there
Its very sweetness wakes a secret pain
For some remembered friends who unaware
Stole through that door, and left this vacant chair,
That book unread, unsung that well-known strain.
The door is closed upon their still retreat.
I call, I listen, but have never known
The far-off whisper of an answering tone,
Nor any sound of their returning feet.

Beyond that door, how dream I that they fare,
What life for them the heart left here foresees?
Whether through other windows they may share
My view of hill and stream, and everywhere
Set round them books and pictures like to these—
Sing songs like mine, and tend their rose in bloom—
Whether for them as well, when day is done,
If there be any setting of their sun,
My one star charms the twilight of their room.

Surely with purer hearts and clearer eyes,
Linked with the old life, but with ampler aims,
Fuller achievement—the old joys they prize
For joy's sole purpose—that the life should rise
Beyond the touch of any earthly shames.
All wisdom there translated into deeds—
All beauty there traced further to its source,
My life in theirs pursues its intercourse,
And theirs in mine still answers to my needs.

When I have finished here my days' routine,
For me that door shall open. May I stand
Not trembling, as the larger light serene,
With its fresh splendours seen and unforeseen,
Strikes me upon that Threshold. May my hand
Find near a hand that held it in the gloom,
A voice that speaks in a remembered tone,
So leave this humble Parlour of my own
For the broad peace of that With-drawing Room.

E. BLAIR OLIPHANT.

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WAR-CHESTS.

THE menace to the peace of Europe which the death of the late Czar was supposed to imply seems, fortunately, after all, nothing but a groundless fear, and the friendly approaches made by his successor to Germany and England—with which past relationships have not been so intimate as might be desired—would appear to foreshadow a fresh lease to the political quietude of the civilised world. But although the gunpowder may be damped, there is always danger while it is stored up in huge quantities; and while every European Government continues to make preparations for an outbreak of war, there is always the risk that unforeseen circumstances may some day occur to precipitate it. The enormous extent of the military forces is well known to everybody who takes the smallest interest in the history of the day, and their unhealthy effect upon the social life of the people is fully understood. But there is another aspect of the question which is not so apparent, except to the diligent student—the locking-up of enormous masses of treasure for military purposes exercises an enormous influence upon the course and extent of trade and industry throughout the world.

Perhaps the only instance in which gold has been withdrawn from circulation, and deliberately rendered useless by locking it up where it can neither be seen nor handled, except by a few highly-placed Government officials, is that of Germany, which maintains at the fortress of Spandau a literal war-chest. But its contents, after all, do not exceed six millions sterling, and such an amount would make little appreciable difference if returned to the general circulation of the world. It is quite different, however, with the vast sums which are stored in the various national banks of Europe. Great Britain, able to raise large sums of money at a moment's notice, admittedly has no need to make preparations of this nature. Although the trade of the country probably

exceeds that of any other in the world, the amount of gold in the Bank of England is only some thirty-five millions, far above the average of the past few years, and more than sufficient for the trade purposes for which it is required; and were gold wanted for some other country, there would not be a moment's hesitation about parting with a few millions.

Contrast with this the conditions of things on the Continent. The Bank of France has no less than seventy-seven millions sterling in gold stored in its vaults, as well as about fifty millions in silver coin, which, being legal tender, it could put into circulation to meet any demand which might arise for an increase in the currency. The Imperial Bank of Germany holds thirty-seven millions in gold, and upwards of ten in silver; the Austro-Hungarian Bank about fifteen millions in each metal. These countries have all gold currencies, and it might be maintained that their stocks of the metal were simply reserves against the issue of notes, the same as our own Bank of England. But they are far in excess of anything required for such a purpose; and if proof were wanted that there are other objects regarded as of equal or greater importance than the soundness of the currency, it would only be necessary to make the attempt on any large scale to convert the notes into gold bullion with the avowed object of taking it out of the country. The result would undoubtedly be the placing of so many obstacles in the way, that the transaction could only be effected at a loss too heavy to be faced; and while England would readily part with a few out of her thirty-five millions, France would not willingly spare one out of her seventy-seven.

The fact is that the greater part of this gold is regarded as a war reserve, and the respective Governments would not under any circumstances allow it to be parted with. Notes may be issued and circulated against it, and while promptly paid to any extent necessary for the conduct of ordinary internal business, any

attempt to melt them on a large scale would lead probably to the discovery that they were practically inconvertible currency. The accumulation in Austria is of quite recent date, and although made ostensibly for the purpose of changing the then existing silver standard into a gold one, there is little doubt that the main object was to obtain possession of a war reserve like that of their neighbours, and it is only by artificial means that the gold is to-day prevented from again flowing out of the country.

Any pretence of banking reserves completely disappears, however, when we turn to Russia, which in the State banks, the Treasury, and on deposit at call in several foreign countries, is credited with having one hundred millions sterling in gold at its disposal. Its currency is the inconvertible paper rouble, and the bullion answers no other purpose than that of maintaining the credit of the country in the money markets of Europe while peace lasts, and of giving command of a vast treasure for military purposes the moment it is broken.

We have only lately begun to realise the immense part which the formation of these war-chests has played in the commercial depression from which the whole world has been so severely suffering. It is perhaps no exaggeration to say that the amount of hard cash now reserved by the various Governments in view of a possible outbreak of war, exceeds rather than falls short of one hundred and fifty millions sterling, which would not under any circumstances be parted with, even for the most temporary object. It does not require much investigation to prove that the outcome of this must be anything but beneficial. The miser who hoards his gold injures others as well as himself, just as a landowner who deliberately permits his broad acres to lie waste is inflicting a blow upon the community which might live and thrive upon the produce of the soil. For the greater part of the last twenty years, first one nation and then another has played the part of the miser, and laid a greedy hold upon treasure which should have been allowed to circulate and increase many-fold the wealth of those through whose hands it passed. Nor could this have happened at a more unfortunate time; for while the output of silver increased by leaps and bounds, that of gold fell away rapidly. Had silver maintained the position it had always previously held in the world's currency, there would have been but a slight disturbance; for even had the gold been hoarded, there would have been ample silver to take its place. This much may be conceded to the bimetalists, that had silver remained the European standard, trade and commerce might have continued to flourish even while the gold was being withdrawn from circulation. It is, however, useless to speculate on what might have been. The gigantic efforts made to convert Europe into an armed camp have impoverished the people, not merely by demanding their labour, which would have been more profitably employed in tilling the ground and tending the mill or the loom, but by heaping upon them an almost unbearable burden of taxation, which they are so much the less able to meet. While this state of things continues, and

these war-chests are being added to, there can be little hope of any relief.

There is just a hope that the eyes of statesmen are being gradually opened, and that we may be approaching an end of this disastrous policy. Nowhere would the desire to cry 'Halt' in preparation for hostilities be more gladly welcomed than here. It is perhaps too much to hope that there will be any general disarmament, or any dispersion of the hoards which have been accumulated at so great a cost; but it would be some satisfaction to know that they would not be pushed beyond the point they have already reached. We are once more in the midst of a period of great gold discoveries, and South Africa, aided perhaps by Western Australia, promises to replenish the coffers of the world. It would be the height of folly to allow the treasure now being yielded to be swept into the secrecy of military chests, or locked up in military banks, instead of going to enrich those engaged in peaceful avocations.

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

CHAPTER IV.—COUNT ANTONIO AND THE WIZARD'S DRUG.

THE opinion of man is ever in flux save where it is founded on the rock of true religion. What our fathers believed, we disbelieve; but often our sons shall again receive it. In olden time men held much by magic and black arts; now, such are less esteemed; yet hereafter it may well be that the world will find new incantations and fresh spells, the same impulse flowing in a different channel and never utterly to be checked or stemmed by the censures of the Church or the mocking of unbelievers. As for truth—in truth who knows truth? For the light of Revelation shines but in few places, and for the rest we are in natural darkness, groping along unseen paths towards unknown ends. May God keep our footsteps!

Now towards the close of the third year of his outlawry the heart of Count Antonio of Monte Velluto had grown very sad. For it was above the space of a year since he had heard news of the Lady Lucia, and hard upon two since he had seen her face; so closely did Duke Valentine hold her prisoner in Firmola. And as he walked to and fro among his men in their hiding-place in the hills, his face was sorrowful. Yet, coming where Tommasino and Bena sat together, he stopped and listened to their talk with a smile. For Bena cried to Tommasino, 'By the saints, my lord, it is even so! My father himself had a philtre from him thirty years ago; and though, before, my mother had loathed to look on my father, yet now here am I, nine-and-twenty years of age and a child born in holy wedlock. Never tell me that it is foolishness, my lord!'

'Of whom do you speak, Bena?' asked Antonio.

'Of the Wizard of Baratesta, my lord. Ay, and he can do more than make a love-potion. He can show you all that shall come to you in a mirror, and make the girl you love rise

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before your eyes as though the shape were good flesh and blood.'

'All this is foolishness, Bena,' said Count Antonio.

'Well, God knows that,' said Bena. 'But he did it for my father; and as he is thirty years older, he will be wiser still by now; and Bena strode off to tend his horse, somewhat angry that Antonio paid so little heed to his words.'

'It is all foolishness, Tommasino,' said Antonio.

'They say that of many a thing which gives a man pleasure,' said Tommasino.

'I have heard of this man before,' continued the Count, 'and marvellous stories are told of him. Now I leave what shall come to me in the hands of Heaven; for to know is not to alter, and knowledge without power is but fretting of the heart; but'— And Antonio broke off.

'Ride then, if you can safely, and beg him to show you Lucia's face,' said Tommasino. 'For to that I think you are making.'

'In truth I was, fool that I am,' said Antonio.

'But be wary; for Baratesta is but ten miles from the city, and His Highness sleeps with an open eye.'

So Antonio, albeit that he was in part ashamed, learned from Bena where the wizard dwelt on the bridge that is outside the gate of Baratesta—for the Syndic would not suffer such folk to live inside the wall—and one evening he saddled his horse and rode alone, to seek the wizard, leaving Tommasino in charge of the band. And as he went, he pondered, saying, 'I am a fool—yet I would see her face; and thus, still dubbing himself fool, yet still persisting, he came to the bridge of Baratesta; and the wizard, who was a very old man and tall and marvellously lean, met him at the door of the house, crying, 'I looked for your coming, my lord.' And he took Antonio's horse from him and stood it in a stable beside the house, and led Antonio in, saying again, 'Your coming was known to me, my lord; and he brought Antonio to a chamber at the back of the house, having one window, past which the river, being then in flood, rushed with noise and fury. There were many strange things in the chamber, skulls and the forms of animals from far-off countries, great jars, basins, and retorts; and in one corner a mirror half-draped in a black cloth.

'You know who I am?' asked Antonio.

'That needs no art,' answered the wizard; 'and I pretend to none in it. Your face, my lord, was known to me as to any other man, from seeing you ride with the Duke before your banishment.'

'And you knew that I rode hither to-night?'

'Ay,' said the wizard. 'For the stars told of the coming of some great man; and I turned from my toil and watched for you.'

'What toil?' asked Antonio. 'See, here is money, and I have a quiet tongue. What toil?'

The wizard pointed to a heap of broken and bent pieces of base metal. 'I was turning dross to gold,' said he, in a fearful whisper.

'Can you do that?' asked Antonio, smiling.

'I can, my lord, though but slowly.'

'And hate to love?' asked Count Antonio.

The wizard laughed harshly. 'Let them that prize love, seek that,' said he. 'It is not for me.'

'I would it had been—then had my errand here been a better one. For I am come but to see the semblance of a maiden's face.'

The wizard frowned as he said, 'I had looked for a greater matter. For you have a great enemy, my lord, and I have means of power for freeing men of their enemies.'

But Count Antonio, knowing that he spoke of some dark device of spell or poison, answered, 'Enough! enough! For I am a man of quick temper, and it is not well to tell me of wicked things, lest I be tempted to anticipate Heaven's punishment.'

'I shall not die at your hands, my lord,' said the wizard. 'Come, will you see what shall befall you?'

'Nay, I would but see my lady's face; a great yearning for that has come over me, and, although I take shame in it, yet it has brought me here.'

'You shall see it then—and if you see more, it is not by my will,' said the wizard; and he quenched the lamp that burned on the table, and flung a handful of some powder on the charcoal in the stove; and the room was filled with a thick sweet-smelling vapour. And the wizard tore the black cloth off the face of the mirror and bade Antonio look steadily in the mirror. Antonio looked till the vapour that enveloped all the room cleared off from the face of the mirror, and the wizard, laying his hand on Antonio's shoulder, said, 'Cry her name thrice.' And Antonio thrice cried 'Lucia!' and again waited. Then something came on the polished surface of the mirror; but the wizard muttered low and angrily, for it was not the form of Lucia or of any maiden; yet presently he cried low, 'Look, my lord, look!' and Antonio, looking, saw a dim and shadowy face in the mirror; and the wizard began to fling his body to and fro, uttering strange whispered words; and the sweat stood in beads on his forehead. 'Now, now!' he cried; and Antonio, with beating heart, fastened his gaze on the mirror. And as the story goes (I vouch not for it) he saw, though very dimly, the face of Lucia; but more he saw also; for beside the face was his own face, and there was a rope about his neck, and the half-shaped arm of a gibbet seemed to hover above him. And he shrank back for an instant.

'What more you see is not by my will,' said the wizard.

'What shall come is only by God's will,' said Antonio. 'I have seen her face. It is enough.'

But the wizard clutched him by the arm, whispering in terror, 'It is a gibbet—and the rope is about your neck.'

'Indeed, I seem to have worn it there these three years—and it is not drawn tight yet; nor is it drawn in the mirror.'

'You have a good courage,' said the wizard with a grim smile. 'I will show you more;' and he flung another powder on the charcoal; and the shapes passed from the mirror. But another came; and the wizard, with a great cry, fell suddenly on his knees, exclaiming, 'They mock me, they mock me! They show

what they will, not what I will. Ah, my lord, whose is the face in the mirror?' And he seized Antonio again by the arm.

'It is your face,' said Antonio; 'and it is the face of a dead man, for his jaw has dropped, and his features are drawn and wrung.'

The wizard buried his face in his hands; and so they rested awhile till the glass of the mirror cleared; and Antonio felt the body of the wizard shaking against his knee.

'You are old,' said Antonio, 'and death must come to all. Maybe it is a lie of the devil; but if not, face it as a man should.'

But the wizard trembled still; and Antonio, casting a pitiful glance on him, rose to depart. But on the instant as he moved, there came a sudden loud knocking at the door of the house, and he stood still. The wizard lifted his head to listen.

'Have you had warning of more visitors to-night?' asked Antonio.

'I know not what happens to-night,' muttered the wizard. 'My power is gone to-night.'

The knocking at the door came again, loud and impatient.

'They will beat the door down if you do not open,' said Antonio. 'I will hide myself here behind the mirror; for I cannot pass them without being seen; and if I am seen here, it is like enough that the mirror will be proved right both for you and me.'

So Antonio hid himself, crouching down behind the mirror; and the wizard, having lit a small dim lamp, went on trembling feet to the door. And presently he came back, followed by two men whose faces were hid in their cloaks. One of them sat down, but the other stood and flung his cloak back over his shoulders; and Antonio, observing him from behind the mirror, saw that he was Lorenzo, the Duke's favourite.

Then Lorenzo spoke to the wizard, saying, 'Why did you not come sooner to open the door?'

'There was one here with me,' said the wizard, whose air had become again composed.

'And is he gone? For we would be alone.'

'He is not to be seen,' answered the wizard. 'Utterly alone here you cannot be.'

When he heard this, Lorenzo turned pale; for he did not love this midnight errand to the wizard's chamber.

'But no man is here,' said the wizard.

A low hoarse laugh came from the man who sat. 'Tricks of the trade, tricks of the trade!' said he; and Antonio started to hear his voice. 'Be sure that where a prince, a courtier, and a cheat are together, the devil makes a fourth. But there is no need to turn pale over it, Lorenzo.'

And when the wizard heard, he fell on his knees; for he knew that it was Duke Valentine who spoke.

'Look you, fellow,' pursued His Highness, 'you owe me much thanks that you are not hanged already; for by putting an end to you I should please my clergy much and the Syndic of Baratesta not a little. And if you do not obey me to-night, you shall be dead before morning.'

'I shall not die unless it be written in the stars,' said the wizard, but his voice trembled.

'I know nothing of the stars,' said the Duke, 'but I know the mind of the Duke of Firmola, and that is enough for my purpose.' And he rose and began to walk about the chamber, examining the strange objects that were there; and thus he came in front of the mirror, and stood within half a yard of Antonio. But Lorenzo stood where he was, and once he crossed himself secretly and unobserved.

'What would my lord the Duke?' asked the wizard.

'There is a certain drug,' said the Duke, turning round towards the wizard, 'which if a man drink—or a woman, Lorenzo—he can walk on his legs and use his arms, and seem to be waking and in his right mind—yet is his mind a nothing; for he knows not what he does, but does everything that one, being with him, may command, and without seeming reluctance; and again, when bidden, he will seem to lose all power of movement, and to lack his senses. I saw the thing once when I sojourned with the Lord of Florence; for a wizard there, having given the drug to a certain man, put him through strange antics; and he performed them all willingly.'

'Ay, there is such a drug,' said the wizard.

'Then give it me,' said the Duke; 'and I give you your life and fifty pieces of gold. For I have great need of it.'

Now when Antonio heard the Duke's words, he was seized with great fear; for he surmised that it was against Lucia that the Duke meant to use this drug; and noiselessly he loosened his sword in its sheath and bent forward again to listen.

'And though my purpose is nothing to you, yet it is a benevolent purpose. Is it not, Lorenzo?'

'It is your will, not mine, my lord,' said Lorenzo in a troubled voice.

'Mine shall be the crime, then, and yours the reward,' laughed the Duke. 'For I will give her the drug, and she shall wed you.'

Then Antonio doubted no longer of what was afoot, nor that a plot was laid whereby Lucia should be entrapped into marriage with Lorenzo, since she could not be openly forced. And anger burned hotly in him. And he swore that, sooner than suffer the thing to be done, he would kill the Duke there with his own hand or himself be slain.

'And you alone know of this drug now, they say,' the Duke went on. 'For the wizard of Florence is dead. Therefore give it me quickly.'

But the wizard answered, 'It will not serve, my lord, that I give you the drug. With my own hand I must give it to the persons whom you would thus affect, and I must tell them what they should do.'

'More tricks!' said the Duke scornfully. 'I know your ways. Give me the drug.' And he would not believe what the wizard said.

'It is even as I say,' said the wizard. 'And if Your Highness will carry the drug yourself, I will not vouch its operation.'

'Give it me; for I know the appearance of it,' said the Duke.

Then the wizard, having again protested, went to a certain shelf and from some hidden recess took a small phial, and came with it to the Duke, saying, 'Blame me not, if its operation fail.'

The Duke examined the phial closely, and also smelt its smell. 'It is the same,' said he. 'It will do its work.'

Then Count Antonio, who believed no more than the Duke what the wizard had said concerning the need of his own presence for the working of the drug, was very sorely put to it to stay quietly where he was; for if the Duke rode away now with the phial, he might well find means to give it to the Lady Lucia before any warning could be conveyed to her. And, although the danger was great, yet his love for Lucia and his fear for her overcame his prudence, and suddenly he leaped forth from behind the mirror, drawing his sword and crying, 'Give me that drug, my lord, or your life must answer for it.'

But fortune served him ill; for as the Duke and Lorenzo shrank back at his sudden appearance, and he was about to spring on them, behold, his foot caught in the folds of the black cloth that had been over the mirror and now lay on the ground, and, falling forward, he struck his head on the marble rim that ran round the charcoal stove, and having fallen with great force, lay there like a man dead. With loud cries of triumph, the Duke and Lorenzo, having drawn their swords, ran upon him; and the Duke planted his foot upon his neck, crying, 'Heaven sends a greater prize! At last, at last I have him! Bind his hands, Lorenzo.'

Lorenzo bound Antonio's hands as he lay there, a log for stillness. The Duke turned to the wizard, and a smile bent his lips. 'O faithful subject and servant!' said he. 'Well do you requite my mercy and forbearance, by harbouring my bitterest enemies and suffering them to hear my secret counsels. Had not Antonio chanced to trip, it is like enough he would have slain Lorenzo and me also. What shall be your reward, O faithful servant?'

When the Wizard of Baratesta beheld the look that was on Duke Valentine's face, he suddenly cried aloud, 'The mirror, the mirror!' and sank in a heap on the floor, trembling in every limb; for he remembered the aspect of his own face in the mirror, and knew that the hour of his death had come. And he feared mightily to die; therefore he besought the Duke very piteously, and told him again that from his hand alone could the drug receive its potency. And so earnest was he in this, that at last he half-won upon the Duke, so that the Duke wavered. And, as he doubted, his eye fell on Antonio; and he perceived that Antonio was recovering from his swoon.

'There is enough for two,' said he, 'in the phial; and we will put this thing to the test. But if you speak or move or make any sign whatever, in that moment you shall die.' Then the Duke poured half the contents of the phial into a glass and came to Lorenzo and whispered to him, 'If the drug works on him, and the wizard is proved to lie, the wizard shall die; but we will carry Antonio with us; and when

I have mustered my Guard, I will hang him in the square as I have sworn. But if the drug does not work, then we must kill him here; for I fear to carry him against his will; for he is a wonderful man, full of resource, and the people also love him. Therefore, if the operation of the drug fail, run him through with your sword when I give the signal.'

Now Antonio was recovering from his swoon, and he overheard part of what the Duke said, but not all. As to the death of the wizard he did not hear, but he understood that the Duke was about to test the effect of the drug on him, and that if it had no effect, he was to die; whereas, if its operation proved sufficient, he should go alive; and he saw here a chance for his life in case what the wizard had said should prove true.

'Drink, Antonio,' said the Duke softly. 'No harm comes to you. Drink: it is a refreshing draught.'

And Antonio drank the draught, the wizard looking on with parted lips and with great drops of sweat running from his forehead, and thence down his cheeks to his mouth, so that his lips were salt when he licked them. And the Duke, having seen that Lorenzo had his sword ready for Antonio, took his stand by the wizard with the dagger from his belt in his hand. And he cried to Antonio, 'Rise.' And Antonio rose up. The wizard started a step towards him; but the Duke showed his dagger, and said to Antonio, 'Will you go with me to Firmola, Antonio?'

And Antonio answered, 'I will go.'

'Do you love me, Antonio?' asked the Duke.

'Ay, my lord,' answered Antonio.

'Yet you have done many wicked things against me.'

'True, my lord,' said Antonio.

'Is your mind then changed?'

'It is, my lord,' said Antonio.

'Then leap two paces into the air,' said the Duke; and Antonio straightway obeyed.

'Go down on your knees and crawl;' and Antonio crawled, smiling secretly to himself.

Then the Duke bade Lorenzo mount Antonio on his horse; and he commanded the wizard to follow him; and they all went out where the horses were; and the three mounted, and the wizard followed; and they came to the end of the bridge. There the Duke turned sharp round and rode by the side of the rushing river. And, suddenly pausing, he said to Antonio, 'Commend thy soul to God and leap in.'

And Antonio commended his soul to God, and would have leaped in; but the Duke caught him by the arm even as he set spurs to his horse, saying, 'Do not leap.' And Antonio stayed his leap. Then the Duke turned his face upon the wizard, saying, 'The potion works, wizard. Why did you lie?'

Then the wizard fell on his knees, cursing hell and heaven; for he could not see how he should escape. For the potion worked. And Antonio wondered what should fall out next. But Duke Valentine leaped down from his horse and approached the wizard, while Lorenzo set his sword against Antonio's breast. And the

Duke, desirous to make a final trial, cried again to Antonio, 'Fling yourself from your horse.' And Antonio, having his arms bound, yet flung himself from his horse, and fell prone on the ground, and lay there sorely bruised.

'It is enough,' said the Duke. 'You lied, wizard.'

But the wizard cried, 'I lied not, I lied not, my lord. Slay me not, my lord! For I dare not die.'

But the Duke caught him by the throat and drove his dagger into his breast till the fingers that held the dagger were buried in the folds of the wizard's doublet; and the Duke pulled out the dagger, and, when the wizard fell, he pushed him with his foot over the brink, and the body fell with a loud splash into the river below.

Thus died the Wizard of Baratesta, who was famed above all of his day for the hidden knowledge that he had; yet he served not God, but Satan, and his end was the end of a sinner. And, many days after, his body was found a hundred miles from that place; and certain charitable men, brethren of my own order, gave it burial. So that he died that same night in which the mirror had shown him his face as the face of a dead man; but whence came the vision I know not.

ABOUT LENTILS.

SOME years ago there was quite a 'boom' in lentil soup among the Faculty, and much was heard of the nourishing qualities of this humble member of the Pulse family. Perhaps we consume more of it than we are aware, under some fanciful name or other; but as the Agricultural Department of the United States is taking steps to promote the cultivation in America—where the consumption of imported lentils is considerable—a little information on the subject may not be amiss.

Opinions, no doubt, have not always been agreed as to the food-value of the plant. Professor Johnston, of *The Chemistry of Common Life*, wrote that 'The bean, the pea, the lupin, the vetch, the lentil, and other varieties of pulse, contain, as a distinguishing character of the whole class, a large percentage of gluten mixed with a comparatively small percentage of fat. On an average, the proportion of gluten is about twenty-four, and of fat about two, in every hundred. The gluten of these kinds of grain resembles that of the oat, and does not, therefore, fit bean or pea-meal for being converted into a spongy bread. The large proportion in which this ingredient is present in them, however, renders all kinds of pulse very nutritious.'

Another writer says: 'Notwithstanding the common use of lentils in cookery, there is no doubt that they are very unwholesome. They are not only hard and difficult of digestion, but were believed to have been the cause of the severe scrofulous disorders common in Egypt, where they are largely used.' But modern authorities incline to the belief that lentils are very nutritious and wholesome when eaten along with a proper admixture of fatty foods. Smith's *Dictionary of Economic Plants* refers to the meal

of lentils as 'very nutritious,' and as sold in this country as invalid food under the name of 'Revalenta.'

There are various kinds of lentils; but what is mostly used for food is the Common Lentil (*Lens esculenta*, better known as *Errum lens*), which Smith describes as a weak, pea-like wing-leaved annual of the Bean family, cultivated in Egypt and Palestine from remote antiquity, its seeds being the lentil of Scripture spoken of in the time of Jacob, of which the red pottage given to Esau was made.

At one time the lentil was pretty extensively grown throughout most of the Continent of Europe, where the seeds have been long used by the peasants, either in the form of a thick soup, or served as a vegetable like beans. But to be a profitable crop it requires cheap land and cheap labour, as well as special conditions of soil and climate, so that the culture has come to be very much concentrated in Austria-Hungary and in Russia, though not altogether neglected in other parts.

The produce of Austria-Hungary—chiefly raised in the provinces of Moravia and Bohemia—is estimated at about half a million bushels annually. Consul Karel of Prague recently furnished the United States Department of Agriculture with some interesting information about the culture. Lentils, it seems, will not thrive in moisture, either of the soil or the atmosphere, and flourish best in a warm and dry climate, with a light sandy or loamy soil. In rich soil they yield more stalk than grain, produce more leaves and less blossom, and consequently yield fewer seeds. The soil intended for lentils is generally treated in the same way as that for pease. The ground should be manured and ploughed late in the Fall, for fresh manure is not good for the lentil. It does well in fallow soil, in soils which have been used for cereals, and especially after potatoes. Thoroughly ploughing and preparing the ground for sowing in the Fall, and then sowing in the spring, and lightly harrowing, is the best mode of cultivation. The seeds are only lightly covered. When the pods begin to grow yellow, harvesting begins, and the cutting is done with a blunt sickle.

Three varieties of lentil are grown in Bohemia—the Penny Lentil, considered the best, but which rapidly degenerates in poor soil; the Common Lentil; and the Black Lentil, small in seed, and not much in favour. The exports are to France, Germany, and the United States; but there is a large home consumption. The inferior kinds are ground into a flour called *Kraft-Mehl*, which is used as a stiffening for soups and sauces. The straw is esteemed for cattle-food, after being steeped in hot water. The best kinds are prepared for the table in a variety of ways. First, the skin is removed, as being indigestible; then they are boiled slowly for three hours till soft. After that, they are either mixed with chopped onions fried in butter, or mixed with raw *Sauerkraut*, or served up with sausage or smoked meat. In the Austrian restaurants a thick gravy is much esteemed which is made of lentils, flour, and finely chopped onions browned in butter, and is served with partridge or quail.

In Germany they seem to prefer lentils in

soup; but another favourite form is as porridge, or pottage, of a dark-brown colour, considered the best food for a long journey. According to a German authority, the lentil contains 54.78 per cent. of starch and dextrin, 24.81 per cent. of albumen, 12.51 per cent. of water, 3.58 per cent. of cellulose, 2.47 per cent. of salt, and 1.85 per cent. of oil. And both in France and Germany lentil food is frequently prescribed by doctors for their patients.

In France, the consumption is very large, though not universal, for while in some provinces and towns lentil food is used as a staple by the peasantry and working-classes as both economical and nutritious, in other parts it is used only as an accessory. One thing which popularises the lentil in poor households is that a few ounces bought at market may, by judicious cooking, be made to fill a large dish. As an item in the French *pot-au-feu*, the lentil is ubiquitous; and for nursing mothers it is believed by the peasant-women to be invaluable. Sometimes it is ground into flour and made into bread; and it is said to be even used in the manufacture of cocoa and chocolate, but to what extent we are unaware.

We have it on the authority of Monsieur Vendrou of Calais that 'the north of France cultivates a rather large quantity of lentils for animal food, especially for horses. On almost every farm people sow, in September, a mixture called *hivernache*, composed of one-half of rye, one-fourth of vetch, and one-fourth of lentils. The crop is ripe in July, and in the autumn is reported to be one of the best stimulants for horses when they have the heaviest work to do. It spares the oats at the moment when oats are scarce, the old stock being exhausted, and the new crop not fit for feed. This mixture offers great advantages, because the rye has grain at the top of the bunch, vetch in the middle, and the lentils about one foot high give rich food at the bottom of the bunch, where the straw has rarely any nutritive qualities. If it is given whole, the animals find everywhere good food; and if it is chopped, the mixture is more regular. Sometimes cows are fed with this *hivernache* when the meadow grasses are scarce and poor, and the milk at once becomes more plentiful and richer in butter.'

Why, then, only 'sometimes,' if the effects on a milch-cow are so good? Because the lentil, being highly nitrogenous, is heating, and must not be given too liberally to any animals.

It is a curious fact, that although lentils are on sale in the shops and markets of most of the towns and villages of France, and are so extensively consumed, yet the introduction of lentil-food into the French navy almost produced a mutiny. The remonstrances were so 'strong' that beans had to be substituted.

The consumption in France far exceeds the production, and supplies are drawn from Moravia, Bohemia, Spain, and Chili. There is a fair output in Alsace-Lorraine; but Germany takes it all, and has, besides, to import about twelve million pounds annually from Austria-Hungary, Russia, and Chili.

In Italy the cultivation is general, though

not extensive; and there lentils are consumed by almost everybody, either in soup or cooked with meat, or made into bread.

In Russia, lentils are grown by the peasant-farmers in preference to pease, because they require less attention, and the straw is more valuable than pea-straw. Then they leave the earth in good condition for cereals. Thus the production is considerable, and there is a large surplus for export, for the crop is found to be both economically and technically profitable. The cultivation in Russia is extending year by year, and promises to be one of the most important of the agricultural industries.

In India the lentil is most extensively cultivated in the Central Provinces and in the Presidency of Madras, but it is found almost everywhere as a winter-crop. It is grown in the Punjab up to a height of five thousand feet. In Bengal it forms what is known as an inundation crop, sown in December and January, and reaped (not pulled) in March and April. In the North-west Provinces it is often sown while the rice-stalks are standing, and is allowed to grow up among them. While it is largely cultivated in the Central Provinces, a curious fact is that the Satnamic Chamars will have nothing to do with it because, they say, its red colour makes it resemble flesh!

The Indian ryot finds the lentil an easy crop to work, yielding—with irrigation—up to 960 pounds an acre from eighty pounds of seed, with little preliminary working and little attention. He eats it as *dal*, and flavours it with the aromatics dear to the Asiatic palate. He considers it the most nutritious of all the pulses, but not to be eaten too freely because of its heating qualities. He will even eat the young pod as a vegetable, while he preserves the dry leaves and stalks as fodder for his cow.

But it is in Egypt that the lentil crop is of most value, for in the Land of the Pharaohs the lentil forms one-sixth of the food of the people, besides being extensively exported to other countries. It is well suited to the soil and climate, as it requires little irrigation save what the Nile provides. The Egyptian lentils are reputed the best and most nutritious in the world. From Cairo to Assouan, the farmers of the Nile Valley regularly rotate the crop with wheat or maize, gathering it in about the end of April. Every peasant grows enough for his own consumption, making it into porridge, which he finds both wholesome and sustaining, and the cheapest food he can obtain. In Cairo, Alexandria, Ismailia, Suez, Port Said, and the other towns, the consumption in soup is very large. Most of the export goes to London, there to be converted into invalid or 'patent' food, under some fanciful name at a fanciful price.

In an article on the 'Lentil in Scotland' in this *Journal* for 1851, it was mentioned that a Frenchman resident in Edinburgh had succeeded in sowing a crop and bringing it to perfection near Queensferry. But in Great Britain the lentil has hardly yet taken the place to which its high food value entitles it. Still, considerable quantities are used like split peas to make lentil soup, than which there can be no more cheap or nourishing food for the people. Lentil meal, or ground lentils, may be used with

advantage; prepare like corn-flour, boil twenty minutes, and eat with stewed fruit. For the sake of those who may not have already tried lentil soup, we give the following plain receipt. To one pound of lentils add ten breakfast cups of water, one onion, and a small piece of carrot and turnip; pepper and salt, and a small piece of butter, fresh dripping, or ham bone. Boil two and a half hours and strain. Some further receipts were given in an article in this *Journal* for 1879, entitled 'Lentils—Cheap Cookery.'

THE GOVERNESS AT GREENBUSH.

CHAPTER III.

'WHAT did he do?'

They were the first faint words that fell from the bloodless lips, and Millicent was much too thankful to think twice of their meaning. Besides, she had things to ask the Governess. How was she now? Was her head too low? Had she hurt herself as she fell?

'What did he do?' repeated the faint voice, a little less faintly.

'Dear, I will tell you in a minute'—

'Tell me now. What did he do? Did he—remember?'

Millicent did her best to describe the effect of the song upon the man. She omitted nothing.

The Governess gave a great sigh. 'Thank God!' she said. 'There was no time to think. It was all on the spur of the moment. But I knew that you were there, and would see. And you saw all that; it was there for you to see!' She closed her eyes, and her lips moved in thanksgiving.

'Yes, I saw—his soul,' said Milly timidly; 'it is not dead. I saw more—I saw his love!'

The fair head shook. 'No; that must be dead.'

'Then why did it move him so? Why did he mind? What could the song be to him, if you were nothing? You are everything! Nothing—nothing is dead. But oh, my dear, what can have brought him to this?' The foolish question slipped out unguarded.

Miss Winfrey met it with a dumb, bewildered look, and then climbed feebly to her feet. 'I have,' she replied at length. 'I have brought him to this. But I'll bring him back from it, so help me Heaven!' And as she stood there, head on high, making the most of her last inch, Millicent again beheld the white, keen face touched for an instant with all the radiant exaltation of the Hosts of God.

'I might have known it,' continued Miss Winfrey, in a calmer, more contemplative tone. 'I knew him; I might have guessed the rest. Such troubles come and go with the ordinary young man, but Wilfred was never that. His name is Wilfred Ferrers, Milly—your Cattle-station Bill! As I have told you, his father was a country clergyman; and clergymen's sons are always the worst. Willie had been rather

wild before I knew him; he used to tell me all about it, for he was the most open-hearted boy in all the world, and could keep nothing to himself. If he could, he wouldn't; for sail under his true colours he must, he used to say, even if they were the black flag. But they weren't. His wildness was one-half high spirits, and the other half good-nature. But it showed the man. He had once—I almost smile when I remember how he was once before the magistrates for some reckless boyish folly at the hospital! He would stick at nothing; but he used to say that I could do what I liked with him, make what I would of him. And what have I made?' cried the unhappy girl, with a sudden storm of sobs. 'A broken heart—a broken life!' She sank down at one of the desks, threw her arms upon the slope, and wept passionately. But suddenly again she sat up, rapped the desk with her knuckles, and looked resolutely, masterfully at Millicent, out of her streaming eyes.

'What am I saying? I've said more than I mean. What I have done, I can undo; what I have ruined, I can redeem. This is no coincidence, Milly. Never tell me that! It is God's plan. He in His mercy means me to repair my wrong. He has given me this chance. . . . I am going to my own room, Milly. I want you to leave me alone, dear. I want to thank Him on my knees. And then—and then—the good God will teach me how to act!'

She was entirely unstrung. Millicent led her to her room and made her lie down. Then the younger girl brought luncheon on a tray, and the Governess ate without seeming to know what she did. The afternoon she spent alone with her emergency. The homestead was very quiet. The young men were still away. The first sounds that penetrated to the darkened room were the merry voices of the returning children. By this time Miss Winfrey had broken the back of her dilemma. She now arose, and going forth in her right mind, found Millicent hovering near the door. The girls linked arms, and sauntered in the home-paddock till dinner-time.

'Here are his tracks,' cried Millicent, stopping as they intersected her road. 'His galloping tracks!'

The Governess had not the bush-girl's eye for a trail. To her, one hoof-mark was like another, and they honeycombed the road in millions. But she followed Milly's finger with thoughtful eyes, and presently she put a question: 'How far is it to the cattle station?'

'Fourteen miles.'

'Five to the township, and'—

'Nine beyond. You turn to the left, and take the bridle-path to the right. Then you come to a gate. Then you cross a five-mile paddock; and it's half-way across the next one, close to the left-hand fence.'

'Thank you. I shall go and see him.'

'When he gets back?'

'Gets back! Where from?'

'The township,' said Milly reluctantly.

'Did he look to you as though he were going there?'

'I—I thought so; but I daresay I was wrong. I'm sure I was!' cried Millicent.

'I wish I were sure,' said Miss Winfrey with a sigh. 'Yes, dear,' she added, 'I shall wait until he gets back.'

A voice said close behind them: 'The dinner is getting cold!'

The voice was Mrs Pickering's. In the soft sand they had heard no step. Both girls changed colour, and in Mrs Pickering's eye there was a curious light. But she had never been more civil to Miss Winfrey than at dinner that night; and after dinner she clamoured for a song. This was almost unprecedented. And the song she wanted was the song which she had heard in the distance that afternoon. But the Governess made her excuses, and went early to her own room.

An hour later there was a tentative, light knock at Miss Winfrey's door; and no answer. Mrs Pickering knocked again and louder. She carried a lighted candle; her hand trembled, and the hot grease spattered the floor. There was still no answer, so the lady tried the door. It was unlocked. She walked in. 'I thought so!' muttered Mrs Pickering, in a triumphant tone. She passed her candle over the untouched bed; she poked it into the empty corners; and it was some minutes before she could bring herself to quit the deserted room that filled her with so shrewd a sense of personal satisfaction.

Her satisfaction was only too well founded. It was then just eleven, and at that very hour the indomitable Miss Winfrey was tramping into view of the township lights. These were few enough at such an hour. The grog-shanties alone were still lit up. But the grog-shanties were precisely the places which Miss Winfrey intended to reconnoitre, and she began with the one which enjoyed the coaching patronage. It was here that she had seen him—little dreaming whom she saw—lying face downward, on the very day of her arrival. It was here that she might find him now.

She approached the hotel with a tardy access of reasonable caution. The veranda was empty—as empty as the township street—and that was fortunate. The girl's heart was failing her for the first time. But though it beat and beat, it did not beat her out of an idea that scared her even as she prepared to act upon it then and there. She slipped off her shaking shoes; she took them in her trembling hand, and she crept along the dark veranda to the flaring, noisy bar, and peeped through the open door to make sure that he was not there.

He was not. There was no man whom she recognised, save a Greenbush rabbitier, a hulking blackbeard, widely known as Fat Frank. Fat Frank was dangerously drunk. He was ruling that bar with a rough, roystering humour but indifferently reflected on the other faces which passed the Governess's quick scrutiny. A belated thought now stung her: suppose her old lover had been there, what could she have done? Gone in among that godless crew? At the bare idea, her head swam, an involuntary cry escaped her lips, and in the deadly stillness that followed she heard her heart thump once. Before its next beat she had taken to her stockinged heels, fled from the veranda, and doubled to the back of the hotel.

But a drunken voice was after her. It called on her to stop; it gained upon her; it pressed her with horrid protestations shouted out for all the township to hear. In the yard there stood a haystack in the angle of two wire fences. The girl squeezed through the wires and hid behind the stack. Again she heard her own heart; it was a dark night; she had perplexed her pursuer, and silenced his voice.

Suddenly, to her horror, she heard the wires jingling to her left: instantly she got through those on her right; but she left them jingling too, and the drunken voice, storming and blaspheming now, followed in full cry as she reached the open street. Moreover, it was alone. The fraternity in the bar had been glad to get rid of Fat Frank.

Yet the unhappy girl could not take refuge in the hotel. She would be recognised—the thought was insupportable. She had but one friend in the township—Miss Crisp, the post-mistress—an early acquaintance with whom the girl had since forgathered more than once after riding in with some of her pupils for the mail. So to the post-office she sped like an arrow; but Fat Frank sang after her like a round-shot; and the nearer she came, the clearer was it that Miss Crisp was in bed and asleep. Yet the voice was gaining on her. And even if the door was locked, there was more safety on that friendly door-step than in the middle of the empty street.

The chase had a singular termination. As the girl pushed open the wicket-gate in front of the post-office, her ears told her that her pursuer had suddenly dropped behind.

'You old hag!' shouted the thick voice hoarsely. 'I've a mind to smash you! To run like that! Who'd have thought it was you?'

At the same instant the post-mistress unlocked the front door, and stood on the threshold with a lighted lamp in her hand, and her kind face wrinkled with surprise and concern. 'Come in, come in,' she said. 'Thank goodness, I heard the brute!—What—bless the lot of us!—it's never Miss Winfrey?'

'It is,' said the Governess, with a wan smile and a hand on her heart. 'And I don't want you to ask what I'm doing here, please; I want you only to—help me!'

The post-mistress pushed her pale visitor into a chair; she had already locked the door again. 'Miss Winfrey, I won't mention this to a soul.'

'Thank you.'

'But I'll make you some tea this minute!'

'God bless you!'

'No, no; save your breath, my dear. Let's call it the middle of the afternoon; let's say you've just popped in for five-o'clock tea! It won't take long, my dear, it won't take long.'

It took exactly five minutes. Meantime, the girl recovered—put on her shoes—and made up her mind. Her hand was on the plough; she might not take it away; but to proceed with success, she must be disingenuous now. Her woman's wit discerned the way. 'Was that—was that Cattle-station Bill who was running after me?'

'Bill? Not it. I know Bill; he wouldn't do such a thing, drunk or sober.'

The girl's heart leaped. 'But he's in the township, isn't he?'

'Not he.'

'Are you positive?'

'Quite. He's back at his hut, for I saw him go—galloping like a mad thing!'

'What time was that?'

'Between four and five.'

'And you think he's safe at his hut?' said Miss Winfrey, who knew that the cattle station was nothing more.

'I'm convinced he is; he was going that way, at all events.'

'Then I'll go back to mine,' said Miss Winfrey, smiling; and she rose and took leave of her benefactor with a grateful kiss. 'Poor thing,' she thought, as she walked away; 'I am a nice one to accept her kindness! But there was no reason to tell her anything now; and what was there to tell? Nothing has happened—yet!' and she gazed at the white southern stars, and felt that the gorgeous night was big with her fate.

She made an elaborate *détour*, and struck the main road once more considerably to the left of the township. That amounted to the same thing as turning to the left through the township street. She now stood still to rehearse the remainder of Milly's directions, which she had by heart. She was to take the bridle-path to the right, which would bring her to a gate; she was then to cross a five-mile paddock; and—and that was enough for the present.

The bridle-path was easily found. It brought her to the gate without let or panic. But by this time the girl had walked many miles, and her feet were very sore. So she perched herself upon the gate, and watched an attenuated moon float clear of the inhospitable sand-hills, and sail like a silver gondola on a sombre sea. But as the ache left her feet, it crept into her heart with all the paralysing wonder as to what she should say and do when at last she found her poor love. And immediately she jumped down and continued her tramp; for she was obliged to do what she was doing, only it was easier to walk, than to look, ahead.

The thin moon was much higher when its wan rays shone once more upon the wires of a fence running right and left into the purple walls of the night. There were no trees now. The vague immensity of the plains was terrifying to the imaginative girl, who had felt for some time as if she were walking by a miracle upon a lonely sea: a miracle that might end any moment: a sea that supported her on sufferance capriciously. But with the fence and the gate came saner thought, and a clear sight of the true occasion for fear and trembling. She was now within two or three miles of the hut. What was she to do when she got there? She did not know, she would not think. She would get there first, and trust in her God.

She went through this gate without resting; she was no longer conscious of bodily pains. She followed up the fence on the left, according to Milly's directions, walking at the top of

her speed for half an hour. Then all at once she trembled and stood still: there was the hut. It was as though it had risen out of the ground, so sudden was the sight of it, standing against the fence, end-on to her, scarce a hundred yards from where she was. She got no further just then; the courage of her act forsook her at the last. She had no more strength of heart or limb, and she sank to the ground with a single sob. The slip of a moon was sickening in a sorrowful sky when the girl stood up next.

The dawn put new life in her will. She would wait till sunrise before she made a sound. Meanwhile, if the hut door was open, she would perhaps peep in. The door was open; there was a faint light within; she could see it through the interstices of the logs as she approached; it also fell in a sickly, flickering beam upon the sand without. And after a little, she did peep in: to see a 'slush-lamp' burning on the table, and, in the wretched light of it, the figure of a man, with his bare arms and hidden face upon the table too. He seemed asleep; he might be dead.

'Wilfred!'

He was alive. The white face flashed upon her: the wild eyes started and stared: the bare arms rose, and then the man himself, unsteadily, to his feet. 'Then it was you I heard—singing that song!'

'Yes, Wilfred.'

'It is unbelievable. I've dreamt it often enough, but— Yes, it's you! You've found me out.'

'By accident, yes; I had no idea of it until to-day.'

She was terrified at his eyes: they hungered, and were yet instinct with scorn. He stuck his spurred foot upon the box which had been his seat, and leaned forward, looking at her, with his brown arms folded across his knee. 'And now?' he said.

She took one step, and laid her warm hands upon his arms, and looked up at him with flaming face, with quivering lips, with streaming eyes. 'And now,' she whispered, 'I am ready to undo the past'—

'Indeed!'

'To make amends—to keep my broken word!'

He looked at her a moment longer, and his look was very soft. He had heard her singing, but neither the song nor the voice had done more than remind him of her. And yet the mere reminder had carried him through the township with a live cheque in his pocket—had kept him sitting up all night with his false love's image once more unveiled in his heart. Here by a miracle was his love herself; she loved him now—now that she had made him unworthy of her love! Little wonder that he looked softly at her for a moment more; and the next, still less wonder that he flung those hot hands from him, and kicked the box from under his foot, and recoiled with a mocking laugh from the love that had come too late.

'Keep what you like,' he cried out with a brutal bitterness. 'Only keep your pity to yourself! I don't want it now; but I reckon you may!'

And the girl was still staring at him, in a dumb agony, an exquisite torture, when the smack of a riding-whip resounded on the corrugated roof, and the eyes of both flew in amazement to the door.

PLOUGHING OXEN.

How fast the world moves! We have on us the steam-plough, destined, maybe, to supersede the horse as the motive-power, and it is only comparatively recently that the horse has displaced the ox. One of the lovely little sculptures on Giotto's campanile at Florence represents a ploughman driving a pair of oxen; and the ox at the plough may be seen still on the Continent very generally, but has been universally supplanted in England by the horse.

Among the numerous representations of the months that figured in medieval sculpture, stained glass, and drawing in manuscript, the plough drawn by oxen is sometimes the symbol of January. The earliest of these is in the series engraved by Strutt, from a manuscript calendar of the tenth century. In that, January is represented by men ploughing with four oxen. One man in front drives; another holds the plough; and another behind scatters seed. On the sides of the façade of the cathedral of Lucca, however, the ploughing operation with oxen is the symbol for November; and it is so also in a curiously engraved calendar of the fifteenth century in the writer's possession.

There can be little doubt that the ox was the earliest beast employed for the plough. A white bull and a white cow were yoked together to draw the furrow for making the walls of Rome. Greeks and Romans employed oxen in ploughing; asses only for sandy soils. When the ploughman had finished his day's labour, he turned the instrument upside down, and the oxen went home dragging its tail and handle over the surface of the ground—a scene described by Horace. The yoking together of ox and ass was expressly forbidden by the law of Moses, and is made the ground of a ludicrous comparison by Plautus. Ulysses, when he feigned madness in order to avoid going on the Trojan expedition, ploughed with an ox and a horse together.

In the west of England the custom of yoking oxen to the plough went out at the beginning of this century; a very few old men can remember how, as boys, they were employed with the goad to urge on the oxen; hardly any recall having held the plough to them.

One evening, four years ago, I was sitting in winter in an inn kitchen on Dartmoor, in the settle, beside a huge fire of heaped-up and glowing peat. Several moormen were present, having their ale, talking over politics, the weather, the condition of the turf harvest the preceding season, the cattle, the horses that ran wild on the moor, when one old fellow said: 'I reckon there's none o' you here ever seed oxen yoked to a plough.' None had. He continued: 'Ay, but I ha' driven them when I were a mite o' a boy—

With my hump along! jump along!
Here drives my lad along,

Pretty, Sparkle, Merry,
Good-luck, Speedwell, Cherry!
We are the lads that can follow the plough!

This he sang with a robust voice, to a pleasant fresh snatch of melody.

'What is that you are singing?' said I.

'It's an old song of us ploughboys. Six oxen we drove, and that's their names—Pretty, Sparkle, Merry, and the rest.'

'Do you know any more of the song?'

'Let me see—for, bless me, it's miles o' years since I were a little chap and could sing it. But you see when the horses came in and oxen went out, there was no call for the song any more.' And then, again, he added in a plaintive tone: 'I reckon ploughmen ain't as merry as they used to be. Us used to sing like larks; now, us grumbles and growls like bears.'

'Come, give us the old song.'

The old fellow passed his hand through his gray hair and screwed up his lips. His face, exposed to moor-storms, was brown as a chestnut. Presently he shook his head: 'It begins somehow like this:

Prithee, lend your jocund voices,
For to listen we're agreed;
Come and sing of songs the choicest,
Of the life the ploughboys lead.'

Then he broke down. 'I can do no more,' he said sorrowfully. 'It's more than sixty years since I've sung that song, and now it's gone from me.'

The old man was right in what he said of the cheerfulness of the ploughman in former days. There are a good many folk-songs in England relative to the occupation of the agriculturist, not one that has in it a note of repining over his lot. All are buoyant with happiness, sparkling with delight in Nature and in their occupation. In vain does a collector go among the labouring class to find some song indicative of discontent. I remember an old fellow asking me one day if I knew *The Poor Man's Lament*. I pricked up my ears. Now, thought I, for the proletariat's wail of dissatisfaction. But the song was about a henpecked man. The only complaint the poor man had was that his wife gave him too much of her tongue.

For four years the snatch of the song of the ploughboys with their six oxen had haunted me. I went in search of that song everywhere, among all my old cronies of 'songmen.' Hardly a man of the age of seventy to ninety but had heard it when he was a boy; but none could recollect it in its entirety, melody and all the verses, and their memories were faulty; they could not give the scraps of melodies alike.

Another day I was in a cottage where were two very old men: a little thatched cottage, in a dell overshadowed by trees, the hazels growing as tall as the cottage, with their nuts browning and ready to fall. Above the woods towered granite crested sides—the spurs of the moor. The cottage was beautifully clean, though very spare of furniture. In one corner, in the dark, sat an old man with inflamed eyes. He had suffered much in them, and almost lost his sight; then had had an operation performed, that had failed. He sat, accordingly, in the dark, every now and then putting his blue-spotted kerchief to his

cheeks to wipe off the involuntary tears that ran from his eyes. In the great fireplace, on a three-legged stool, sat another old man with a round childish face. These two aged men lived in the cottage together. They were brothers-in-law; the wife or wives were dead, and they had no children to care for them. The parish allowed each half-a-crown a week, and on this they subsisted. We talked about old times and old songs, and they sung me, in their feeble quavering notes, some ballads. Then I asked if by chance they knew the song of the Oxen ploughing.

'My brother-in-law does,' said the nearly blind man. Then the round-faced one looked into the pot of potatoes that was boiling over the peat-fire, and having satisfied himself that progress was being made in the stew, he began to cudgel his brain. He was half-childish, and when he began to think, his face assumed a distressed expression. Presently he began :

'In the heat of the daytime
It's but little we can do;
We lie by our oxen
For an hour, or for two,
By the banks of sweet violets
I take my noontide rest.'

Then he came to a pause.

'Go on, John,' said his brother-in-law encouragingly.

The childish old creature shook his head.

'Go on—you know it :

And I can kiss a pretty girl
As hearty as the rest.'

'I cannot do it!—I cannot do it!' said the old fellow, and leaned his gray head disconsolately against the granite jamb of the fireplace.

Again and again have I been balked in trying to get the song. Perhaps my worst disappointment was this. I was assured that there was a man at Liskeard, in Cornwall, who knew the song, and could sing it through. He had been a bell-ringer, and had sung this song annually at the ringers' feast. So I packed my portmanteau and went to Liskeard after him. After some search I found his house, to learn that he had been speechless for three days, and that his death was momentarily expected.

However, to those who hold to a purpose, what they want comes at length. There was, I heard, in a certain parish in Cornwall, a wise man; that is to say, one who charmed warts, who stanch'd blood, struck ulcers and white swellings, and told where lost articles were to be found. He had no other fixed occupation, but he did a little scratch work now and then for farmers. As I was staying in the same place, I thought I would visit the man and have a chat with him. He lived entirely alone, and when I went to his cottage, I found it locked; but a woman informed me he was reaping bracken at the edge of a wood not far off; so I went after him in the direction indicated, and found a patriarchal man, with hair as white as snow, a long white beard, bright dark eyes, and a hawk-like nose. After some talk together, I happened to mention the song of which I was in quest.

'Oh!' said he quickly, 'I know and can sing it.'

So I got it at last. Leaning back in the sun among the tall fern, with the burnished-backed flies buzzing round, I learned of him both words

and air, and here at length are the words complete :

Prithee, lend your jocund voices,
For to listen we're agreed;
Come sing of songs the choicest,
Of the life the ploughboys lead.
There are none can live so merry
As the ploughboy does in spring,
When he hears the sweet birds whistle,
And the nightingales to sing.
With my hump along! jump along!
Here drives my lad along!
Pretty, Sparkle, Berry,
Good-luck, Speedwell, Cherry!
We are the lads that can follow the plough.

For it's, O my little ploughboy,
Come awaken in the morn,
When the cock upon the dunghill
Is allowing of his horn.
Soon the sun above Brown Willy*
With his golden face will show;
Therefore, hasten to the linney [cowshead],
Yoke the oxen to the plough.
With my hump along! &c.

In the heat of the daytime
It's but little we can do;
We will lie beside our oxen
For an hour, or for two,
On the banks of sweet violets
I'll take my noontide rest,
And I can kiss a pretty girl
As hearty as the rest.
With my hump along! &c.

When the sun at eve is setting
And the shadows fill the vale,
Then our throattles we'll be wetting
With the farmer's humming ale;
And the oxen home returning,
We will send into the stall.
Where the logs and turf are burning,
We'll be merry ploughboys all.
With my hump along! &c.

Oh, the farmer must have seed, sirs,
Or I swear he cannot sow;
And the miller with his mill-wheel
Is an idle man also;
And the huntsman gives up hunting,
And the tradesman stands aside,
And the poor man bread is wanting;
So 'tis we for all provide.
With my hump along! &c.

THE TRINIDAD TREASURE,

AND HOW IT WAS FOUND.

By C. J. CUTCLIFFE HYNES.

THERE may be others of the trade practising on this planet, but I don't think it. There are amateurs certainly, and mighty expensive and unprofitable their efforts have proved; but if there were another professional besides myself, I fancy his operations must have come to my ears. So I take it that I am the only man now living who makes an exclusive occupation of Treasure-hunting, and I am thankful for the monopoly. Competition wouldn't stimulate me. The excitement of the chase is quite enough to string up my nerves to full concert pitch as it is; and in case of organised competition, I should promptly retire from business. There isn't enough lost and hidden

* The highest mountain in Cornwall.

treasure existent to make it worth while for two men to work at it as systematic hunters.

My terms are these: An entirely free hand; all outlay prepaid; and eighteen per cent. of the proceeds in case of success. I was not brought up to the profession. Indeed, I invented it myself. Originally, I was in the wool business; had worked up to the grade of Continental and American traveller in Bradford manufactured goods; and was making fifteen hundred a year when I switched off into the new sphere. Perhaps it isn't so steadily profitable, but it's much more to my taste.

The first client I worked for was a woman, and it was she who first gave me an idea of turning Treasure-hunting into a regular expert business. We met on the *Laconic* coming East from New York, and it was a tip, the head-steward, and the purser which together combined to change my fate. For a great wonder, I had no acquaintances on board; but there was a good-looking girl who had caught my eye, and I backsheeshed the head-steward to fix matters so that I might be placed next her at table—accidentally. It was cheap at two dollars. Her name was Perugini.

We were in easy conversation before the entrées came. It was her first whiff of salt water, the weather was rough, and she was naturally proud of being one of the few to turn up at the first day's dinner. We chummed a good deal, Miss Perugini and I, and she stood in with me over two pools on the run, which brought us in a small matter of fifty dollars; but it was not till we were half-way across that we got on the treasure-hunting tack. Then it was quite by accident. A Wall Street man, our *vis-à-vis*, who had that day put in his first appearance at luncheon, brought up the subject of Trinidad. Whilst lying on his back, he had been reading up a parcel of newspapers, and seemed anxious to give us a *précis* of their contents. He reeled off accounts of several lynchings, and some fires, and a yacht-race or two; and then touched a new topic.

'Another expedition to Trinidad, so I see by the *World*,' he said. 'The story of that buried treasure from Chili, or wherever it was, is a just elegant bait. The *World* says this makes the fourth gang of adventurers who have beaten a way out there, and landed through the surf and tried to realise those effects.'

Miss Perugini laughed. 'Four, sir? Say twenty-four, and you'll be nearer the mark. I guess only a few have written a history of their escapade: the majority concluded to go and come *incognito*. Their reason was mighty obvious. If they were successful, they would have to face the question of getting the treasure across the borders of some civilised State. It wouldn't quite suit their ticket to sail into the Custom-house with such a cargo, and fill in a paper of origin; because Government claims would waltz in; and if the finders were given a few odd nickels for their pains, they might think themselves mighty lucky. On the other hand, if they were unsuccessful, I guess they could do for themselves all the ridicule they'd any use for without the newspapers chipping in to help.'

When we had gone out upon the bridge deck, and were stowed in a couple of steamer-chairs which I had dragged under the lee of one of the boats, I tackled the subject again.

'You seem to know something about this Chilian treasure?'

'Probably more than any person alive, Mr Clough. But to begin with, the treasure wasn't Chilian at all. It came from Lima, which is in Peru, in the days when Lima was called the City of Kings. At the beginning of this century that country was in revolution against Spain, and loot to the tune of twenty millions of your English pounds was gathered in the cathedral and churches, and shipped from Callao. Most of it fell into the hands of your Lord Cochrane and his squadron. But one schooner managed to give his ships the slip, and she ran south round the Horn, made up-coast, and then got wrecked on Trinidad, a small island seven hundred miles off the Brazilian coast. There her crew buried the treasure. Afterwards, they were taken off by a man-of-war, and because they couldn't give a good account of themselves, they were hanged as pirates. All, that is, with the exception of one boy, who was spared because he was young, but who afterwards became old, and on his death-bed told a Newcastle sea-captain about the spot where the treasure was buried. Directly and indirectly that boy is responsible for many fruitless expeditions. Adventurers went to Trinidad at much pains and cost, often looked in the right place, but none of them found the loot. And I guess they'd be pretty tearing wild if they knew why.'—Miss Perugini raised her eyes to the greasy coils of reek which were coming out of the smoke-stack, and laughed.

'Wasn't it there?'

'Nossir. I guess every knob had been carefully toted away years before those later heroes put spade into the landslip which they say has swamped the *cacahu*.'

'Then do you know where the stuff went to?'

'I ought to,' she said slowly. 'My own Gram-pà got it; and what's left belongs to me.' Only thing is, I don't know where it's stowed away.'

I stared at her in a good deal of astonishment, she still watching the smoke which billowed out from the furnaces below. Suddenly she turned her glance down and looked me squarely in the face.

'See here, Mr Clough; I was warned against steamer-acquaintances; but I believe you're a white. You did well for me in that pool deal, and you're a business man besides. Will you help me in something else? There's pretty nearly half a million dollars' worth of jewels hoarded up for me if I can find them. If they keep hid, I shall be about broke. I ante'd up all I'd left to get a saloon passage over here; and if that hoard doesn't show, I guess I shall have to go back to Virginia and roll cigarettes in Richmond for a living. That's not an unladylike employment, and the cigarette girls usually marry well. But I don't hanker after it: I guess I'd rather you found me that pile—on commission, of course.'

'My dear young lady,' I said, 'as you mentioned just now, I'm a business man, and therefore you mustn't expect me to pin myself

to anything in the dark. But if you care to explain further, and if I find that I can help you, why, then, I will with all the pleasure in life.

'That's sense; and I like you better for not jumping at once. See here, Mr Clough, I'm going to begin telling you about my affairs right away, and then you can judge whether it's worth your while to stand in.

'Grampà was the first of our crowd to be mixed up with this treasure. He grabbed it, and he hid it. Grampà was an Italian, who found it convenient to live in the West Indian Islands because of political complications in other countries. He called himself a sculptor; but I fancy he wasn't much account at his trade. Father let on to me once he was one of those sculptors who tote round plaster hogs and cathedrals stuck to a soft-wood platform over their heads, and peddle them down side-blocks. That's what Grampà was. You see he was two generations back, so I don't mind telling you. Father's enough ancestry for me.

'Well, to go on; some pirates were hanged on one of the islands—Jamaica, I think it was—and Grampà and some other men got to know where they'd a big hoard put by; and after a bit he and three friends got a slip of a schooner and went over to Trinidad and dug it up. One of the lot was a Spanish *padre*, and I guess he must have got the secret from a scared pirate in the confessional, and found it too big to carry under his own girdle. But that doesn't matter. Grampà and the other gentlemen shared the news and got the treasure on to their schooner; and then their difficulties began. There was hardly a dollar of it in money: there wasn't a shin-plaster in notes. It was all in gold candlesticks, and jewelled crucifixes, and bars of silver, and goldsmiths' "notions;" and if Grampà and his friends tried to negotiate boodle of that kind at a Custom-house, they knew they might anticipate trouble. You see, they were none of them gentlemen with unimpeachable connections: they were all more known than respected.

'Each had his own ideas as to the best course of procedure, and each put them forward with warmth. Whilst they were arguing, the *padre* tumbled overboard, and I fancy he must have had some lead put into him, which made him sink. So there were only three of them left to split the plunder—and, by way of preliminary, they picked all the jewels from their settings. Then they melted up all the saints and the crucifixes and the ewers and other trifles into ingots, which would be far less easily sworn to. By which time, being fairly starved off the high seas, they put into St Thomas's and revictualled.

'Getting safely out of there, they ran north across the Gulf, heading for Mobile, in Alabama, where Grampà had political friends; but I'm afraid they must have gone at the corn whisky too freely, because one night two of them woke up to find that the other had piled up the schooner. She was hard on a reef of coral near the Dry Tortugas at the end of Florida; and as they couldn't get her off, they sat down for a hand of poker to fill in time. The game was slow for a while, but it

finished up excitingly. Grampà was lucky enough to deal both his friends fours at one time. That made them raise all they were worth; and when they found he held a royal straight, it was very natural that guns should come out.

'Grampà wasn't touched himself; but both his friends were hurt; and in consequence, when he took the small boat, with the bundle of jewels inside his shirt, and most of the gold under the floor-boards for ballast, neither of them could prevent him leaving them. But they said things as he rowed away which kinder put a scare into him after he'd got ashore, and cramped his future efforts.

'Perhaps that's why he didn't blossom out into a millionaire right away. As it was, he got to Charlotte Harbour, then to Tallahassee, and tried back at his old trade. For the next two years Grampà sculpted for all he was worth, and he peddled plaster saints and lapdogs till there wasn't an empty bracket left in all Florida or Southern Georgia. He just made that sculpture business boom.

'The dollars he made at this seemed to put confidence into him again; and at the end of those two years he worked North, and began to realise on his ingots. He didn't do it all at once, you understand; and he didn't walk at the tail of a brass band whilst he was hawking those melted-up candlesticks and alms-dishes. Nossir; I guess Grampà was the most uncommunicative man in the United States whilst he was getting that gold off his hands. And even when it was gone, and represented only by stocks and shares and bankers' balance, he didn't feel easy. The thought of those two partners he'd left perforated on the schooner kinder haunted him. He felt America was too noisy for his nerves. So he packed his trunks and went to England, where he married and settled down. The gentleman who afterwards became my father was his only child.'

'And in prosaic England,' said I, 'all danger naturally ceased?'

'Nossir. Grampà thought so, and that's where he made his big mistake. It was thirty years after that argument on the Florida coral reef that those gentlemen called on him; and because he wasn't ready for them, he got killed.

'After that, the rest of the family concluded to try the States. They weren't in very flourishing circumstances, because Grampà had spent up pretty clean all he'd made out of the gold. He'd never realised upon the jewels; but where they were stowed none of the family could discover. After the other gentlemen had knifed him, and he lay on the grass gasping, he tried to tell father all about it; but by the time he'd assured him that the stones were all close by and untouched, he was just through with this life, and couldn't communicate further. Father hunted, you bet; but the job was too big for him. He couldn't knock the bottom out of that *cache*; and when funds failed him, he concluded to run over to the States and recuperate. He took on the dry-goods line, but he never got much above clerking, and never had a chance of ferreting out that secret. I guess he wasn't much account at business.

'And now poor father's dead, Mr Clough, and

I'm his heiress, I guess the tangle's a bit too steep for me as well. So I come to you. If you've *savvy* enough to pull dollars out of an operation on steamer pools, I guess you can make this other mine pan out a good dividend, if you'll only put Try into the workings.'

I shook my head. The story was interesting enough; but she had dropped not the vaguest clue as to where the jewels could possibly be stowed. One couldn't go and dig up the whole surface of England systematically. To begin with, people live on certain patches of it, and might resent having their castles and acres disturbed. I put this to Miss Perugini delicately.

'If,' she replied dryly enough, 'the loot was to be had for the picking up, I guess, sir, I should have gone and fingered it myself, and not asked anybody's help.'

I laughed. 'That's likely. But still, can't you bring the limits of the search a bit narrower?'

'Why, yes. I take it that the stones are hid somewhere on the place which my Grampà bought in Lincolnshire. In fact, he said that much before he died.'

'Come, this is better already. And do you still own this estate? And, by the way, where is it?'

'Dangay Fen, near Boston. But it isn't mine now. Father sold it when he left for the States. He felt he needed capital to start on.'

This was another facer. I'd a very elementary notion of the law of treasure-trove in those days; but I imagined if this hoard did by any chance turn up, it would either belong to the present holder of the soil, or else revert to the Crown. Indeed, so confident was I that the whole thing was a bubble, that I shouldn't have entertained it seriously for a moment ashore. But on an Atlantic steamer one acts differently. Time is apt to drag, and a fixed interest is a distinct boon—especially when there is a remarkably pretty girl linked with it, whose manners are to say the least of them *piquant*. So I asked her to describe this place which proved to be Dangay Fen, near Boston.

'Describe? I guess I can go better than that. Look here.' She produced a bunch of photographs strapped with an india-rubber band. There must have been eighty of them. 'A gentleman who was touring over in Britain last fall, took these for me.'

Now, to tell the truth, it was these photographs and not Miss Perugini which gave me my first real deep interest in the pursuit.

On the run between Queenstown and Holyhead a light began to dawn upon me; and as the pilot took us up through the shipping and shoals of the Mersey beyond, I saw my way to making Miss Perugini a definite proposal of terms. But we had many talks together before it came to that. Photographs in hand we went over the estate of Dangay Fen inch by inch; and my first client told me how her father had rummaged the whole place from cellar to rafter; had sounded the walls and probed the bureaux; had raised floors and flagstones; had cut down and split the timber of the park; had wrenched the very roof-tiles from their lodgments. He had even—in memory, I suppose, of the Persian monarch—drained the pond round

the fountain in front of the house, in the vain hope of finding a concealed treasure-chamber beneath its weedy waters. But the floor of the pond was plebeian mud, and the effort was his last one. At that point he gave up the quest, and sought fortune dry-goods-wise elsewhere, as has been already stated.

Now it struck me that father had been prosecuting his search upon an entirely wrong principle. He felt English himself, and he acted as though his worthy parent were an Englishman also. A man of England, if he wants to hide something valuable, would very naturally dig in the ground, or delve a hole in a tree, or burrow in the walls of his house, or hoist a particularly heavy hearthstone and grovel out with the tongs his hoarding-place under that. Englishmen are not apt to dabble in the finer niceties of imagination.

On the other hand, the average Italian may be weak when it comes to the technique of secreting, but in the plotting and planning part he will be very much all there. (I used to travel for my firm a good deal in Northern Italy, so I can speak appreciatively.) Moreover, the original Signor Perugini of Trinidad, Jamaica, and elsewhere, was, as his grand-daughter frankly admitted, a violent professional conspirator. Finesse was part of his nature.

Having arrived at this conclusion, I began to see my way more clearly. As I proved many a time in my after-practice, it helps one vastly when you can gauge accurately the character of your hider.

I worked through the photographs again, putting myself in the standpoint of Perugini senior, arguing over each, and discarding one after another. I fined them down to half-a-dozen, then to three, and then, with a start, I found myself holding one of the prints, wondering why ever I had not thought of something before which came before me so vividly then. We were just making our number to the signal station on Holyhead when I told Miss Perugini that I fancied pretty strongly that I could locate her hidden treasure to a matter of eight or nine inches.

'Say,' she exclaimed, 'you mean that?'

'If things are as they were, and if the loot hasn't been relooted, I'm going Nap on what I told you.'

'Mr Clough,' she observed, 'you're just the nicest man I know.'

There was delay after this, because I had to go to Bradford to report on business, and it was a week before I could slip away to Lincolnshire. Miss Perugini was at the Dangay Fen waiting for me; and as we dined together in the growing dark, we saw across the fenland the lamplight kindle in the windows of the Hall.

'There's only a caretaker in charge,' she explained to me. 'We won't disturb him if we can help it. We'll stay here till midnight, and then go.'

'We?' I questioned. 'My dear young lady, it wouldn't be proper at that time of night, and it mightn't be safe. You must stay behind.'

I tried to say more on this point, but it was no use. Miss Perugini was firm—not to use a stronger word—and it ended in her coming with me.

We set out like a pair of poachers into a black moonless night, finding our way along the sloppy roads with a bull's-eye lantern. When it came to the point, excitement notwithstanding, I must confess I didn't like the job one little bit. It smacked so abominably of common midnight burglary. True, Miss Perugini was the real robber-in-intent, and I was only an agent; but that didn't absolve me from being an accessory before the fact. Moreover, I had not her incentive.

At last we came to the dividing dike of the estate, and hushed our voices as we crossed it on a railway sleeper. Gaunt willow-trees whispered around us mournfully, and the ground beneath the coarse grass squelched under foot. The place had run very much to seed. Through two plantations we made our way, and then across an acre of rank herbage which had once been a trim lawn. Beyond was the house, dark-windowed and silent, amongst straggling elms. Between us and it was a pond, wherein a green-slimed Venus upheld a feebly bubbling fountain.

It was a photograph of this last over which I had spent so many thoughtful hours on board the *Laconic*, studying its ill-balanced proportions from every point of view, gazing at it in detail through the magnifying lens of a ship's telescope. Why was it there, I had asked myself, this monstrous ill-shapen thing? At first the answer seemed to be plain. I remembered the bent of the owner's mind towards statuary, and I remembered also how I had been told that 'Grampà was no account as a sculptor.' But by degrees I noticed that the chief thing which made the Venus look grotesque, was her pedestal. I drew other pedestals on paper, and set them beneath her: with each she looked many per cent. better. Why, then, had she been set on this skimpy cylinder of stone an inch above the water's brim, which had originally been made to carry a water-pipe and nothing more? Perugini senior, though a bad sculptor, would not be utterly ignorant of effect in statuary. The obvious answer seemed to be that the Venus was put up hurriedly, and never afterwards meddled with for fear of calling undue attention to her.

From that point to assuming that the gems were stowed within the goddess's ill-shapen curves was a short step. Granted this, other matters became plain which were otherwise unexplainable. Where were the jewels stowed during those two years in Florida and Southern Georgia, when the original Perugini went about in daily fear of his injured compatriots? Where were they when he went North, getting rid little by little of these suspicious ingots of precious metal? And how were they smuggled untaxed beneath the eyes of the British Custom-house officer? And there were also other points which I will not bore you with, because on the data in these pages you can easily think them out for yourself.

There was no plank to be found near, and I was too scared, when it came to the point, to search far for one. So I stepped into the slime of the pond, and waded knee-deep across to the middle. I grasped the ill-shapen Venus by the neck, and the slop of water from her

upraised hands splashed coldly into my face. Then I pulled and pulled, and at last she came reluctantly away, leaving one foot and some leaden tubing behind her. In my arms I carried her to the bank of the pond.

Then—there was a tinkle as of breaking pottery, and quick withdrawal of a kicking foot, and a blaze of rainbows shone in the glow of the lamplight. The jewels were there before us, reset in a white matrix behind the breasts of the Venus. On our knees we crouched beside them, and quarried them out till none were left. With the gray breaking dawn, we passed the finely powdered dust of the Venus through finger and thumb, to make sure that not so much as a humble sapphire remained; and then we looked at the hoard, which sparkled in my handkerchief amongst the dewdrops on the grass blades. At a very rough guess there must have been the value of sixty or eighty thousand pounds lying there on the earth between us.

'I'm going to pick out the best diamonds to wear,' said my companion, 'because I'm an American woman and love diamonds. The rest of the stones shall go to Hatton Garden. My! won't I have a just elegant time when I get back to our country. Mr Clough, I think you're just the cleverest gentleman I ever met, and if you'll come back to the house, I'll hand you over your commission right now.'

Then she picked up my handkerchief by the four corners, and led the way back through the planting and over the railway sleeper to the road. As we walked back to the village, she told me more about Richmond (Virginia), but forbore all mention of the cigarette industry. She said the Richmond men were delightful, especially some of those who were of recent English importation, and worse off as regards mere dollars than some of their neighbours.

At this point, as we had reached the inn, I ventured to ask her if she had any particular one in her mind's eye; but that brought her back to business at once. We went into the cold smoky coffee-room, and she counted out my commission there and then on the spot.

I have often wondered since, what did happen when Miss Perugini got back to Richmond, in the State of Virginia, with her fortune.

D A W N.

Low sobbing waves upon a shadowed shore,
Within the mead a scent of sleeping flowers,
A waning moon behind the hill-top towers,
And darkness darker than it was before.

(Gray stretch of ocean 'neath a sky of gray,
Within the pearl'd East a far faint light,
A wind among the grasses on the height;
Below, the distant murmur of the bay.

Dim light that trembles o'er the sombre sea,
Pale sky that flushes suddenly to rose,
Then golden bright the sun his glory shows —
And lo! a bird is singing from the lea.

LYDIA M. WOOD.

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POLITENESS.

It is rather a favourable sign of character when we are willing to take on trust the experience of those who have gone before us; yet probably there have been many popular opinions in the world, taking even the stamp of proverbs, which, like spurious coin, long passed current till the hour of detection arrived. First, they were suspected, and then rigidly examined, and proved to be worthless. Surely the notion that habitual politeness is more or less allied to insincerity of character is one of these fallacies. Those rough-natured people who insist on saying unpleasant things solely because they are true, generally depreciate urbanity of manner and habits of courtesy. In season and out of season they clamour about 'deeds, not words,' as if good deeds and kind words were not in reality closely allied. We have said, in season and out of season, the phrase being an idiomatic expression for frequent occurrence; but probably the occasions are very rare when it is necessary to divorce kind words from kind deeds.

A good action, if performed in a kindly and gracious manner, is doubly valued; and in default of the power to render a service, words of sympathy are very sweet to one in trouble. Shakespeare, whose word we may take, says, 'Assume a virtue if you have it not;' and when lovers of harsh frankness scoff at the adage, they fail to fathom the depths of its moral teaching.

If the darts of a hasty, and, therefore, probably an unfair judgment, and the fire of a quick temper, are constantly crushed down by habitual urbanity of manner, they lose a great deal of their harshness; for a moment's reflection may soften the judgment and cool the temper. At any rate they have not raised that spirit of antagonism which only produces evil.

It has been truly said that 'politeness is the oil which allows the wheels of society to turn easily,' and it is an aphorism worth bearing in

mind. It may safely be said that the habit of politeness is a very subtle and fine thing; and for it to last and wear well, and be as productive of happiness as it is capable of being, it must never be laid aside, even in the most intimate relations of life; nay, it is in them that it is most valuable. Children who in their nursery have been taught politeness—which is the outward sign of consideration for the feelings of others—have through life an advantage over their less fortunate contemporaries. They are liked by their elders—perhaps without much reasoning why—at the age when the good feeling of elders is most precious; and if they rise in the world, they bear about them that stamp of 'good breeding' which fits them for an exalted station. Brothers do not always respect their sisters in the same sort of way as the true gentleman respects all womanhood; and girls may be rude too, though this is generally from the want of a better example. Manners are very contagious, and possibly the feminine nature is a trifle more imitative than that of man. A flat contradiction, in which unmannerly people are rather apt to indulge, often provokes some equally harsh retort, while a real difference of opinion may be expressed in courteous language and gentle tones.

Perhaps, however, it is in the closest relation of social life that the habit of politeness is most essential. The more truly womanly a woman is, the more quick she is to detect the careless negligence which sometimes replaces the assiduity of other days, or the rough instead of the tender manner of fault-correcting. We should all beware of letting our politeness be only a varnish of manner easily rubbed off, instead of something ingrained by early training and habitual practice. The want of habitual courtesy in domestic life has too often occasioned that 'rift in the lute' which prevents complete harmony. When women fail in politeness, and show a coarse nature beneath the 'varnish,' they place themselves at even a greater dis-

advantage than men do, for they break the spell of their influence, which is sometimes as potent as visible control.

Undoubtedly, there are people so happily constituted that courtesy of manner seems natural to them: the present writer has met with it in people of very humble station, who somehow elevated menial employment by the manner in which it was performed. After all, politeness of manners is only carrying out the Divine precept of doing as we would be done by, for we all like civility from others, whatever our own shortcomings in that particular may be. There is a daring expression in one of the old Elizabethan dramas which it might be deemed profane to repeat here, but which some readers may recall to mind, as to Who was the first gentleman that walked the earth; but undoubtedly the self-sacrifice which habitual 'politeness' may sometimes entail, the generous thought of others before ourselves—altruism, according to modern phraseology, and readiness to protect the weak and aid the struggling, are Divine attributes which go far to mould the heroic character.

Of course, changes of manners are among the social changes which are always at work; and it would not be possible, even if it were desirable, to return altogether to the stately manners of a past generation.

'Mamma, dear,' is a more loving phrase to a mother's ear than 'Honoured Madam,' though it would have astonished our great-grandmothers; and the spontaneous caresses of a child are very sweet. Yet it is possible so to err on the side of familiarity both with the young and with subordinates, that the sense of reverence for elders and superiors is undermined. But human nature is slow to adopt the happy medium in any of its ways, and elderly people declare that manners are daily deteriorating. Only the very old can fully realise the order of things which prevailed up to the early years of the present century; but it has left a leaven behind it which we recognise among the thoroughly well-bred members of society.

It would not suit our railway, steamship, telegraphic days to return to the stately bearing of our forefathers; but we may look back with something like artistic interest and admiration on the days when

Fine manners were among the well-born class
 Implanted at such early date, they grew
 To be but second nature; never seemed
 The gilded fetters, awkward in their fit,
 But rather polished staves to lean upon,
 Suggesting rest and ease in daily life,
 Suppression of harsh tempers and rude speech.
 Our stately grandams with their curtseys low,
 Who practised deference with a gentle grace,
 That had no servile touch of cringing mien,
 Would be amazed at half our modern ways,
 Curt speeches, with a something from the lips
 That hits the ear like pebbles lightly flung,

And is the stony, mindless flow of slang
 Which springs from idleness, that will not delve
 For fitting phrase in that rich mine of words
 Which yields its wealth to them who clearly
 think.

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

CHAPTER IV. (*continued*).

THEN the Duke set Antonio again on his horse, and the three rode together towards Firmola, and as they went, again and again the Duke tested the operation of the drug, setting Antonio many strange, ludicrous, and unseemly things to do and to say; and Antonio did and said them all. And he wondered greatly that the drug had no power over him, and that his brain was clear and his senses all his own, nor did he then believe that the Duke had, in truth, slain the wizard for any reason save that the wizard had harboured him, an outlaw, and suffered him to hear the Duke's counsels: and he was grieved at the wizard's death.

Thus they rode through the night; and it was the hour of dawn when they came to the gates of Firmola. Now Antonio was puzzled what he should do; for having been in a swoon, he knew not whether the Duke had more of the potion; nor could he tell with certainty whether the potion would be powerless against the senses of a weak girl as it had proved against his own. Therefore he said to the Duke, 'I pray you, my lord, give me more of that sweet drink. For it has refreshed me and set my mind at rest from all trouble.'

'Nay, Antonio, you have had enough,' said the Duke, bantering him. 'I have another use for the rest.' And they were now nearing the gates of Firmola. Then Antonio began to moan pitifully, saying, 'These bonds hurt my hands;' and he whined and did as a child would do, feigning to cry. The Duke laughed in bitter triumph, saying to Lorenzo, 'Indeed it is a princely drug that makes Antonio of Monte Velluto like a peevish child!' And being now very secure of the power of the drug, he bade Lorenzo loosen the bonds, saying to Antonio, 'Take the reins, Antonio, and ride with us into the city.'

And Antonio answered, 'I will, my good lord.'

'It is even as I saw when I was with the Lord of Florence,' whispered the Duke in exultation.

'Yet I will still have my sword ready,' said Lorenzo.

'There is no need; he is like a tame dog,' said the Duke carelessly.

But the Duke was not minded to produce Antonio to the people till all his Guards were collected and under arms, and the people thus restrained by a great show of force. Therefore he bade Antonio cover his face with his cloak; and Antonio, Lorenzo's sword being still at his breast, obeyed; and thus they three rode through the gates of Firmola and came to the Duke's Palace; and Antonio did all that the Duke ordered, and babbled foolishly like a

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bewildered child when the Duke asked him questions, so that His Highness laughed mightily, and, coming into the garden, sat down in his favourite place by the fish-pond, causing Antonio to stand over against him.

'Indeed, Antonio,' said he, 'I can do no other than hang you.'

'If it be your pleasure, my lord.'

'And then Lucia shall drink of this wonderful drug also, and she will be content and obedient, and will gladly wed Lorenzo. Let us have her here now, and give it to her without delay. You do not fret at that, Antonio? You love not the obstinate girl?'

'In truth, no,' laughed Antonio. 'She is naught to me!' And he put his hand to his head, saying perplexedly, 'Lucia? Yes, I remember that name. Who was she? Was she aught to me, my lord?'

Then Lorenzo wondered greatly, and the doubts that he had held concerning the power of the wizard's drug melted away; yet he did not laugh like the Duke, but looked on Antonio and said sadly to the Duke, sinking his voice, 'Not thus should Antonio of Monte Veluto have died.'

'So he dies, I care not how,' answered the Duke. 'Indeed, I love to see him a witless fool even while his body is yet alive. O rare wizard, I go near to repenting having done justice on you! Go, Lorenzo, to the officer of the Guard and bid him fetch hither the lady Lucia, and we will play the pretty comedy to the end.'

'Will you be alone with him?' asked Lorenzo.

'Ay; why not? See! he is tame enough,' and he buffeted Antonio in the face with his riding-glove. And Antonio whimpered and whined.

Now the officer of the Guard was in his lodge at the entrance of the Palace, on the other side of the great hall; and Lorenzo turned and went, and presently the sound of his feet on the marble floor of the hall grew faint and distant. The Duke sat with the phial in his hand, smiling at Antonio, who crouched at his feet. And Antonio drew himself on his knees quite close to the Duke, and looked up in his face with a foolish empty smile. And the Duke, laughing, buffeted him again. Then, with a sudden spring like the spring of that Indian tiger which the Mogul of Delhi sent lately as a gift to the Most Christian King, and the king, for his diversion, made to slay deer before him at the *château* of Blois (which I myself saw, being there on a certain mission, and wonderful was the sight), Count Antonio, leaping, was upon the Duke; and he snatched the philtre from the Duke's hand and seized the Duke's head in his hands and wrenched his jaw open, and he poured the contents of the phial down the Duke's throat, and the Duke swallowed the potion. Then Antonio fixed a stern and commanding glance on the Duke, nailing his eyes to the Duke's, and the Duke's to his, and he said in a voice of command, 'Obey! You have drunk the potion!' And still he kept his eyes on the Duke's. And the Duke, amazed, suddenly began to tremble, and sought to rise;

and Antonio took his hands off him, but said, 'Sit there, and move not.' Then, although Antonio's hands were no longer upon him, yet His Highness did not rise, but, after a short struggle with himself, sank back in his seat, and stared at Antonio like a bird fascinated by a snake. And he moaned, 'Take away your eyes; they burn my brain. Take them away.' But Antonio gazed all the more intently at him, saying, 'Be still, be still!' and holding up his arm in enforcement of his command. And Antonio took from the Duke the sword that he wore and the dagger wherewith the Duke had killed the Wizard of Baratesta, the Duke making no resistance, but sitting motionless with bewildered stare. Then Antonio looked round, for he knew that Lorenzo would soon come. And for the last time he bent his eyes again on the Duke's eyes in a very long gaze, and the Duke cowered and shivered, moaning, 'You hurt me, you hurt me.'

Then Antonio said, 'Be still and speak not till I return and bid you;' and he suddenly left the Duke and ran at the top of his speed along under the wall of the garden, and came where the wall ended; and there was a flight of steps leading up on to the top of the wall. Running up them, Antonio stood for a moment on the wall; and the river ran fifty feet below. But he heard a cry from the garden, and beheld Lorenzo rushing up to the Duke, and behind Lorenzo, the Captain of the Guard and two men who led a maiden in white. Then Count Antonio, having commended himself to the keeping of God, leaped head foremost from the top of the wall into the river; and his body clove the water as an arrow cleaves the wand.

Now Lorenzo marvelled greatly at what he saw, and came to the Duke crying, 'My lord, what does this mean? Antonio flies!' But the Duke answered nothing, sitting with empty eyes and lips set in a rigid smile; nor did he move. 'My lord, what ails you?' cried Lorenzo. Yet the Duke did not answer. Then Lorenzo's eye fell on the fragments of the phial which lay broken on the rim of the fish-pond where Antonio had flung it; and he cried out in great alarm, 'The potion! Where is the potion?' And the Duke did not answer. And Lorenzo was much bewildered and in sore fear; for it seemed as though His Highness's senses were gone; and Lorenzo said, 'By some means he has drunk the potion!' And he ran up to the Duke, and caught him by the arm and shook him violently, seeking to rouse him from his stupor, and calling his name with entreaties, and crying, 'He escapes, my lord; Antonio escapes! Rouse yourself, my lord—he escapes!' But the Duke did no more than lift heavy dull eyes to Lorenzo's face in puzzled inquiry.

And, seeing the strange thing, the Captain of the Guard hurried up, and with him the Lady Lucia, and she said, 'Alas, my lord is ill!' and coming to His Highness, she set her cool soft hand on his hot throbbing brow, and took perfume from a silver flask that hung at her girdle, and wetted her handkerchief with it and bathed his brow, whispering soft soothing words to him, as though he had been a sick woman. For let a woman have what grudge she may against

a man, yet he gains pardon for all as soon as he becomes sick enough to let her nurse and comfort him; and Lucia was as tender to the Duke as to the Count Antonio himself, and forgot all, save the need of giving him ease and rousing him from his stupor.

But Lorenzo cried angrily, 'I at least have my senses!' And he said to the Captain of the Guard, 'I must needs stay with His Highness; but Antonio of Monte Velluto has leaped from the wall into the river. Go and bring him here, dead or alive, and I will be your warrant to the Duke. But if he be as when I saw him last, he will give you small trouble. For he was like a child for weakness and folly.' And having said this, he turned to the Duke again, and gave his aid to Lucia's ministrations.

Now the gentleman who commanded the Duke's Guard at this time was a Spaniard, by name Corogna, and he was young, of high courage, and burning to do some great deed. Therefore he said, 'I pray he be as he is wont to be: yet I will bring him to the feet of my lord the Duke.' And he ran swiftly through the hall and called for his horse, and, drawing his sword, rode alone out of the city and across the bridge, seeking Antonio, and saying to himself, 'What a thing if I take him! And if he slay me—why, I will show that a gentleman of Andalusia can die'—yet he thought for an instant of the house where his mother lived. Then he scanned the plain, and he beheld a man running some half-mile away; and the man seemed to be making for the hill on which stood the ruins of Antonio's house that the Duke had burnt. Then Corogna set spurs to his horse; but the man, whom by his stature and gait Corogna knew to be Antonio, ran very swiftly, and was not overtaken before he came to the hill; and he began to mount by a very steep rugged path, and he was out of sight in the trees when Corogna came to the foot. And Corogna's horse stumbled among the stones, and could not mount the path; so Corogna leaped off his back and ran on foot up the path, sword in hand. And he came in sight of Antonio round a curve of the path, three parts of the way up the hill. Antonio was leaning against the trunk of a tree and wringing the water out of his cloak. Corogna drew near, sword in hand, and with a prayer to the Holy Virgin on his lips. And he trembled, not with fear, but because fate offered a great prize, and his name would be famed throughout Italy if he slew or took Antonio of Monte Velluto; and for fame, even as for a woman's smile, a young man will tremble as a coward quakes for fear.

The Count Antonio stood as though sunk in a reverie; yet, presently, hearing Corogna's tread, he raised his eyes, and smiling kindly on the young man, he said, 'Very strange are the ways of Heaven, sir. I think that the Wizard of Baratesta spoke truth, and did not lie to the Duke. Yet I had that same power which the wizard claimed, although the Duke had none over me. We are children, sir, and our game is blind-man's buff; but all are blinded, and it is but the narrowest glimpse that we obtain now and again by some clever shifting of the handkerchief. Yet there are some things clear

enough—as that a man should do his work, and be clean and true.—What would you with me, sir? For I do not think I know you.'

'I am of Andalusia, and my name is Corogna. I am Captain of His Highness's Guard, and I come to bring you, alive or dead, to his presence.'

'And are you come alone on that errand, sir?' asked Antonio, with a smile that he strove to smother, lest it should wound the young man's honour.

'David slew Goliath, my lord,' said the Spaniard with a bow.

Then Count Antonio held out his hand to the young man and said courteously, 'Sir, your valour needs no proof and fears no reproach. I pray you suffer me to go in peace. I would not fight with you, if I may avoid it honourably. For what has happened has left me more in the mood for thinking than for fighting. Besides, sir, you are young, and, far off in Andalusia, loving eyes, and maybe sparkling eyes, are strained to the horizon, seeking your face as you return.'

'What is all that, my lord?' asked Corogna. 'I am a man, though a young one; and I am here to carry you to the Duke.' And he touched Antonio's sword with his, saying, 'Guard yourself.'

'It is with great pain and reluctance that I take my sword, and I call you to witness of it; but if I must, I must;' and the Count took up his position and they crossed swords.

Now Corogna was well taught and skilful, but he did not know the cunning which Antonio had learned at the school of Giacomo in Padua, nor had he the strength and endurance of the Count. Antonio would fain have wearied him out, and then, giving him some slight wound to cover his honour, have left him and escaped; but the young man came at him impetuously, and neglected to guard himself while he thrust at his enemy: once and again the Count spared him; but he did not know that he had received the courtesy, and taking heart from his immunity, came at Antonio more fiercely again; until at last Antonio, breathing a sigh, stiffened his arm, and, waiting warily for the young man again to uncover himself, thrust at his breast, and the sword's point entered hard by the young man's heart; and the young man staggered, and would have fallen, dropping his sword; but Antonio cast away his own sword and supported him, stanching the blood from the wound and crying, 'God send I have not killed him!'

And on his speech came the voice of Tommasino, saying carelessly, 'Here, in truth, cousin, is a good prayer wasted on a Spaniard!'

Antonio, looking up, saw Tommasino and Bena. And Tommasino said, 'When you did not come back, we set out to seek you, fearing that you were fallen into some snare and danger. And behold, we find you nursing this young spark; and how you missed his heart, Antonio, I know not, nor what Giacomo of Padua would say to such bungling.'

But Antonio cared not for his cousin's words, which were spoken in the banter that a man uses to hide his true feelings; and they three set themselves to save the young man's life;

for Tommasino and Bena had seen the better part of the fight, and perceived that he was a gallant youth. But as they tended him, there came shouts and the sound of horses' hoofs mounting the hill by the winding road that led past Antonio's house. And Tommasino touched Antonio on the shoulder, saying, 'We can do no more for him; and if we linger, we must fight again.'

Then they laid the young man down, Antonio stripping off his cloak and making a pillow of it; and Bena brought the horses, for they had led one with them for Antonio, in case there should be need of it; and they were but just mounted when twenty of the Duke's Guard appeared three hundred yards away, ascending the crest of the hill.

'Thank Heaven there are so many,' said Antonio, 'for now we can flee without shame;' and they set spurs to their horses and fled. And certain of the Duke's Guard pursued, but only two or three were so well mounted as to be able to come near them; and these two or three, finding that they would be man to man, had no liking for the business, and each called out that his horse was foundered; and thus it was that none of them came up with Count Antonio, but all, after a while, returned together to the city, carrying the young Spaniard Corogna, their Captain. But as they drew near to the gates, Corogna opened his eyes and murmured some soft-syllabled name that they could not hear, and, having with failing fingers signed the cross, turned on his side and died. And they brought his body to the great hall of the Duke's Palace.

There in the great hall sat Duke Valentine: his face was pale and his frown heavy, and he gazed on the dead body of the young man and spoke no word. Yet he had loved Corogna, and out of love for him had made him Captain of his Guard. And he passed his hand wearily across his brow, murmuring, 'I cannot think, I cannot think.' And the Lady Lucia stood by him, her hand resting on his shoulder and her eyes full of tears. But at last the strange spell which lay on the senses of the Duke passed away: his eyes again had the light of reason in them, and he listened while they told him how Antonio had himself escaped, and had afterwards slain Corogna on the top of the hill where Antonio's house had stood. And the Duke was very sorry for Corogna's death: and he looked round on them all, saying, 'He made of me a log of wood, and not a man. For when I had drunk and looked in his eyes, it seemed to me that my eyes were bound to his, and that I looked to him for command, and to know what I should do, and that he was my God, and without his will I could not move. Yes, I was then to him even as he had seemed to be to me as we rode from Baratesta. And even now I am not free from this strange affection; for he seems still to be by me, and if his voice came now bidding me to do anything, by St Prisian, I should arise and do it! Send my physician to me. And let this young man lie in the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin in the Cathedral, and to-morrow he shall be buried. And when I am well, and this strange affection is passed from me, and hangs no more

like a fog over my brain, then I will exact the price of his death from Antonio, together with the reckoning of all else in respect of which he stands in my debt.'

But the Lady Lucia, hearing this, said boldly, 'My lord, it is by your deed and through your devices that this gentleman has met his death, and the blame of it is yours, and not my lord Antonio's.'

At her bold and angry words Duke Valentine was roused, and the last of his languor left him; and he glared at her in wrath, crying, 'Go to your house;' and he rose up suddenly from where he sat and went into his cabinet, Lorenzo attending him. And on the day after he walked first behind the bier of Corogna, and his face was very pale, but his air composed and his manner as it was wont to be. For the spell had passed and he was his own man again.

But Count Antonio heard with great grief of the death of the young man, and was very sorry that he had been constrained to kill him, and took great blame to himself for seeking counsel of the Wizard of Baratesta, whence had come death to the young man no less than to the wizard himself.

Such is the story of the drug which the Wizard of Baratesta gave to Duke Valentine of Firmola. To me it seems a strange tale, but yet it is well attested, and stands on as strong a rock of testimony as anything which is told concerning the Count. The truth of it I do not understand, and often I ponder of it, wondering whether the Wizard of Baratesta spoke truth, and why the drug which had no power over Count Antonio bound the senses and limbs of the Duke in utter torpor and helplessness. And once, when I was thus musing over the story, there came to my cell a monk of the Abbey of St Prisian, who was an old man and very learned; and I went to walk with him in the garden, and, coming to the fountain, we sat down by the basin; and knowing that his lore was wide and deep, I set before him all the story, asking him if he knew of this strange drug; but he smiled at me, and taking the cup that lay by the basin of the fountain, he filled it with the clear sparkling water and drank a little, and held the cup to me, saying, 'I think the Wizard of Baratesta would have wrought the spell as well with no other drug than this.'

'You say a strange thing,' said I.

'And I do not marvel,' said he, 'that the Duke had no power over Count Antonio, for he knew not how to wield such power. But neither do I wonder that power lay in Count Antonio to bend the mind of the Duke to his will. I warrant you, Anselm, that the wonderful drug was not difficult to compound.'

Then I understood what he meant; for he would have it that the drug was but a screen and a pretence, and that the power lay not in it, but in the man that gave it. Yet surely this is to explain what is obscure by a thing more obscure, and falls thus into a fault hated of the logicians. For Heaven may well have made a drug that binds the senses and limbs of men—has not the poppy some such effect? And the ancients fabled the like of the lotus plant.

But can we conceive that one man should by the mere glance of his eye have such power over another as to become to him, by this means and no other, a lord and master? In truth I find that hard to believe, and I doubt whether a man may lawfully believe it. Yet I know not. Knowledge spreads, and men grow wiser in hidden things; and although I who write may not live till the time when the thing shall be made clear, yet it may be God's will to send such light to the men of later days that, reading this story, they may find in it nothing that is strange or unknown to their science and skill. I pray that they may use the knowledge God sends in His holy service, and not in the work of the devil, as did the Wizard of Baratesta.

But Count Antonio being, by his guile and adroitness, and by that strange power which he had from the drug or whence I know not, delivered out of the hands of Duke Valentine, abode with his company on the hills throughout the cold of winter, expecting the day when he might win the hand of the Lady Lucia; and she returned to her house, and said nothing of what had befallen the Duke. Yet the Duke showed her no tenderness, but rather used more severity with her. It is an evil service to a proud man to aid him in his day of humiliation.

(To be continued.)

A JAPANESE INFERNO.

DOES it not seem to you, who have a sensitive mind and love to dream of the fitness of things, that the gentle moon is distinctively a Japanese orb, whose especial pleasure it must be to shine on a gentle land, through the graceful stems of bamboo; to kiss the snowy brow of Fuji-yama, cold as chastity; to glimmer in the dusky rice-fields, where the sleeping heron stands like a huge dark flower on its slender stalk?

To me, standing at midnight in this lone valley, it seems so congruous that its strange shapes of leaf and rock, its little misshapen Buddhas, its quaint prayer-writings brushed here and there on to the smooth stones, should be revealed only in these soft subduing beams. Here the gaudy sun seems too harsh, too prosaic in its pitiless revelation of the commonplace and the ugly.

An old Japanese poet, unknown, but loved, has yielded to the charm of moonlight in words that suggest a delicate monochrome on scroll or fan: 'The moon, on an autumn night, rendering visible even the number of the wild geese as they fly past, their dark wings intercrossed on the white clouds!' Thus he presents the thought that rises within him, alone, without initial or tail-piece; even as his fellow-artist traces a shadowy circle and lightly throws across it the wings of a stork, or a few shivering reeds, careless of horizon or middle-distance, contemptuous of a posturing observer in the foreground.

Slowly floating across the night, the moon pauses to peep through the parted lips of the great volcano Osamiyama—lips that are always breathing forth a smoke-cloud, dimly lit by a dull glare from the centre of the earth; then

throws her pitying glance on this lonely village of Kusatsu, as it sleeps in a cup formed by volcanic hills. This is the abode of woe; this the Japanese *citta dolente*, whose daily scenes seem to invoke the spirits of the mighty Florentine and his Virgil, to gaze upon the tortures of the damned.

For to Kusatsu flock, from all parts of Japan, men and women whom retributive nature has visited with her deadliest scourges. No fashionable watering-place is here, no pleasure-cure for sauntering convalescents, but a hard, grim round of pain—pain such as few Europeans could voluntarily undergo, be their hope and their fortitude ever so high.

This is the vision of the past day. Picture to yourself a little Japanese town whose situation, steep streets, and overhanging red roofs, suggest memories of some village in the Tyrol. In the centre a large square, from which rises a perpetual cloud of steam; for here, within a vast wood-lined tank, are collected the seething waters of the hot sulphur-springs that bubble forth from the surrounding hills. The stain of the sulphur is thick on the woodwork; the stench of it fills the air; yea, the whole hollow is clogged with the suffocating odour. Yet there is beauty in the scene; in the wondrous glittering of the waters; the deep red roofs glowing in the morning sun; the faint purple hills beyond; the great yellow square, flecked with those bright clinging draperies that render every Japanese crowd a perpetual feast of colour and line.

Eight o'clock is the first hour for bathing in the central bath-house near the great tanks. A low-pitched horn winds dismally through the streets and across the echoing hills, and slowly there appear from all sides the poor wretches who form the first batch of bathers. Many of them are terrible to look upon as they troop into the bath-house.

Entering with them, one makes out through the thick, rolling vapours a dozen baths—rectangular pits about five feet deep and six or eight feet long—which are contrived in the wooden flooring. Standing on planks round these baths are a crowd of naked youths, each of whom grasps a wooden board, with which he churns up the seething waters. They all keep time in a swaying, up-and-down motion; through the noise of the plunging boards and the rush of water is heard their lugubrious chant. Their purpose is benevolent—namely, to make the smoking pits yield up a few degrees of their heat. Yet the dark, grimacing faces, the naked, swaying figures half shrouded in steam, the suffocating smell, the wailing voices mingling with the general din of waters—all this renders it difficult not to believe that a crowd of gibbering demons are preparing new tortures for the shivering victims who stand behind them, watching with lack-lustre eyes the scene that they know so well as preliminary to their sufferings.

Suddenly, with a loud shout, all the boards are jerked out and dragged away out of sight. At once the bathers crouch down at the edges and begin to bathe their scalps and necks in the fiery liquid, to obviate a rush of blood to the head. This done, they coil long linen rags,

wringing wet, round their brows, and await the next signal.

Now, as the vapours grow less dense, one perceives at the far end of the building a hatchet-faced, gap-toothed man, standing with folded arms, grasping in one hand a rod of office. Above him is a clock with a large second-hand. Slowly his gaze travels round the naked figures who are standing and kneeling by the baths, intently watchful of his movements. The rod is lifted; instantly they begin to lower themselves into the water, each in his or her allotted place. One bath can contain four or five bathers, standing upright; and oh! how slowly, how almost imperceptibly, do their feet, legs, bodies, and arms sink beneath the smoking surface! The pain is excruciating; the least ripple caused by a hasty movement would be beyond human endurance. One or two poor wretches can hardly force themselves below.

At last they touch the bottom; all are immersed up to the chin; nothing is visible save a crowd of bandaged human faces, motionless, almost expressionless, the eyes staring dully in front; here and there a brow wrinkled in pain; the wreathing vapours wind slowly up. . . . Silence reigns.

Watching so much pain, one suffers too, knowing its extremity. For the water of these baths stands, after cooling, at the incredible temperature of from 125 to 130 degrees Fahrenheit, and contains moreover fifteen per cent. of natural sulphuric acid.

Only by submitting to regimental discipline can this marvellously resolute people compel their bodies to such anguish. I was told of one European—only one—who was courageous enough to undergo the penance.

All at once the lean-visaged form that presides calls harshly to the crowd below—his voice cuts the stillness like a knife—'One minute has now passed!' And the sea of motionless heads answer him back—'Ha-a-ai!' in a long, loud, unearthly wail, that echoes round the building.

How weirdly impassive is the Mongolian type! Though in these nearer faces the swollen veins are bursting through the dull yellow skin, yet one can detect no tension of feature, no writhing of lips, no setting of teeth hard, to conquer the torment. Their heavy jaws droop, their eyes are half-closed; there is no speculation in those dull, narrow orbs.

Slowly the reluctant hand drags itself afresh round the dial; never were seconds so prolonged, never minutes so interminable. Then again the harsh voice comes through the mist—'Two minutes have now passed!' And again rises the answering 'Ha-a-ai!'

A small child appears at one of the doors and asks some question in a pretty, pleading voice. One of the heads murmurs in answer; a woman's head—its mother's. The child flutters off with a pleased smile.

The third minute passes; at the last second of the fourth the leader exclaims, 'Condescend now to leave the honourable water!' His words are drowned in the universal leap of the tortured bodies, as they swing themselves out of their Stygian pits on to the slippery planking.

Five times a day this gruesome scene is repeated.

But to see it once is enough; outside, the sun is bright and the streets are full of picturesque life. Brightly clad children are running about like flower-petals chased by the wind. Yet, it is a joyless sight. On many of the throng are only too plainly writ the reasons of their presence here; and, as one gazes round, there recur involuntarily to the mind certain terrible lines from Tennyson's *Vision of Sin*.

One part of the village is a leper settlement, and the appearance of these unfortunates is hideous beyond belief. Their legs, arms, and faces are covered with deep brown spots, caused by burnings with *moxa*—a plant similar to our mugwort; pieces of which are rolled into a cone, applied to the skin, and ignited. The faith in this torture seems to be as strong as in the medicinal power of the hot springs.

Descartes might have said, 'Je souffre, donc je suis.' And though, by curious imaginings, one may persuade one's self of many things, and of the unreality of most, yet Pain looks on with a grim sneer at the would-be soarer in ecstatic clouds, knowing that one breath from her hot lips will shrivel up the poor fool's wings and stretch him, abject and quivering, at her feet.

Nevertheless, mercy is vouchsafed us in the magic of the night.

Standing now, at this late hour, in the midst of the high valley that pours its sulphur-laden waters down to the reservoirs, the past day seems an evil dream. The moonlit rills bubble along like veins of silver in the pale sand. From the thick bushes on the hill-sides comes the *crik-crik* of a few drowsy cicadas. Farther up the valley loom the strange shapes of the 'children's pillars'—small rocks and stones piled up in columns by pious mothers in memory of their dead offspring. And the little town and all the encircling hills are bathed in the comforting moonlight.

To gaze at the pale, heavenly face that gazes back so benignly—to watch the myriad stars as they 'attain their mighty life,' floods the mind with a great joy, in whose depths all grosser memories seem vain and unreal. Let us yield to the spell; let suffering be but as an evil day-dream, born of a cynical, distorting sun; and gentle night, that nurses the senses to sleep, be the only true reality. C. H. F.

THE GOVERNESS AT GREENBUSH.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

A HORSE'S mane and withers, rubbed by the rider's beard as he stooped to peer into the hut, deepened the gray dusk within and made the lamp burn brighter. Then came the squatter's voice, in tremulous, forced tones, as of a man who can ill trust himself to speak: 'And so, Miss Winfrey, you are here!'

The Governess came close to the threshold and faced her employer squarely, though without a word. Then her song had awakened a memory, but nothing more! So ran her thoughts.

'Your explanation, Miss Winfrey?'

'We knew each other years ago.' And she

waved with her hand towards the man who would not stand beside her in her shame.

'When did you find that out, Miss Winfrey?'

'Yesterday afternoon.'

'Ah, when he came in for his cheque. I may tell you that I saw something of it from the store; and my wife happened to overhear some more when she went to fetch you and my daughter in to dinner.'

'That was very clever of Mrs Pickering!'

'It was an accident; she couldn't help hearing.'

'I daresay!' cried the Governess, flaring up all at once. 'But I shall tell her what I think of such accidents when I see her again!'

There was no immediate answer; and the girl took a cold alarm; for a soft meaning laugh came through the door; and either behind her, or in her imagination, there was an echo which hurt her ten times more.

'May I ask,' said Mr Pickering, 'when you expect to see my wife again?'

'Never!' said the girl, as though she had known that all along; but she had not thought of it before, and the thing stunned her even as she spoke.

'Never,' repeated the squatter, with immense solemnity. 'You've treated her very badly, Miss Winfrey; she feels it very much. You might at least have consulted her before going to such a length as this. A length which has nothing to do with me, mark you; but I must say it is one of the most scandalous things I ever heard of in all my life. I'm sorry to speak so strongly. I'm sorry to lose you for the children; but you must see that you're no longer quite the sort of person we want for them. You will find your boxes on the coach which leaves the township this evening, and your cheque'—

'Stop!' said a hoarse voice fiercely. At the same moment Miss Winfrey was forced to one side, and Wilfred Ferrers filled her place: she had never admired him so much as now, with his doubled fists, and his rough dress, and the cold dawn shining on his handsome, haggard face. 'You've said quite enough,' he continued; 'now it's my turn, Mr Pickering. Miss Winfrey hasn't been at the hut ten minutes. She came because we were old friends, to try and make me the man I was when she knew me before. Unfortunately it's a bit too late; but she wasn't to know that, and she's done no wrong. Now apologise—or settle it with me!' and he laid hold of the bridle.

'You may let go those reins,' replied Pickering. 'I'm not frightened of you, though you have the better of me by twenty years. But I think you're on the right side in a more important respect than that; and if I've done Miss Winfrey an injustice, I hope I'm man enough to apologise in my own way.' He slid from his horse, and walked into the hut with his wideawake in one hand, and the other outstretched. 'I beg your pardon,' he said.

'I don't blame you,' she replied.

He kept her hand kindly. 'Perhaps we shall meet again,' said he. 'I hope so! I don't know how it stands between you two, but I can give a guess. You're a good girl;

and we've always known what Bill was underneath. Good luck to you both! I shall send another man out here to-night.'

The girl stood still and heard him ride away. The soft words stung worse than the harsh, she hardly knew why. She was bewildered and aching in heart and body and brain. On some point she should have enlightened Mr Pickering, but she had let it be, and now what was it?

Ferrers had accompanied the squatter outside; had seen him off; and yet now he was standing in front of her with a look she remembered in his sunken eyes. 'Two men have insulted you this morning,' he was saying. 'One has apologised; it is the other's turn now. Forgive me, Lena!'

It was his old voice. The tears rushed to her eyes, and she stepped out blindly for the door. 'I have nothing to forgive!' she cried. 'Let me go. Only let me go!'

'Go where?'

'To the township—anywhere! I should have told Mr Pickering. Call him back!—Ah, he's so far away already! What am I to do? What am I to do?'

Ferrers pushed the wooden box into the doorway, where she stood leaning heavily against the jamb. 'Sit down on that,' said he, 'while I brew you some tea. You're tired to death. Time enough to think of things after.'

The girl sat down, and for a while she cried gently to herself. Her physical fatigue was enormous, rendering her perfectly helpless for the time being, with a helplessness which she resented more bitterly than the incomparable mental torments of the situation. These she deserved. If only she could get away, and turn this bitter page before it drove her mad! If only she could creep away, and close her eyes for hours or for ever! But it was impossible; and that was at once the refinement of her present punishment, and, surely, the ultimate expiation of her early sin.

The red sun burst out of the plains, as it were under her very eyes, blinding them. But she would not look round. She heard matches struck, sticks crackling, and later, the 'billy' bubbling on the fire. She knew when the 'slush-lamp'—a strip of moleskin in a tin of mutton fat—was put out; her sense of smell informed her of the fact. She heard a rasher frizzling at the fire, and the cutting of the damper on the table; but not until Ferrers touched her on the shoulder, telling her that breakfast was ready, would she turn her head or speak a word. The touch made her quiver to the core. He apologised, explaining that he had spoken thrice. Then they sat down; and the girl ate ravenously; but Ferrers did little but make conversation, speaking now of the Pickerings, and now of some common friends in London; the people, in fact, who had brought these two together.

'They knew I had come out here; didn't they tell you?'

'I never went near them again.'

This answer set Ferrers thinking; and, after refilling the girl's pannikin and cutting more damper, he took a saddle from a long peg. He must catch his horse, he said; he would come back and see how she was getting on.

He did not come back for nearly an hour: the horse was a young one, and the horse-paddock, which was some little distance beyond the hut, was absurdly large. He returned ultimately at a gallop, springing off, with a new eagerness in his face, at the door of the hut. It was empty. He searched the hut, but the girl was gone. Then he remounted, and rode headlong down the fence; and something that he saw soon enough made his spurs draw blood. She was lying in the full glare of the morning sun, sound asleep. He had difficulty in awakening her, and greater difficulty in dissuading her from lying down again where she was.

'Have you spent half a summer up here without learning to respect the Riverina sun? You mustn't think of going to sleep in it again. It's as much as your life is worth.'

'Which is very little,' murmured Miss Winfrey, letting some sand slip through her fingers, as if symbolically.

'Look here!' said Ferrers. 'I shall be out all day, seeing to the sheep and riding the boundaries. There's a room at the back of my hut which the boss and those young fellows use whenever they stay there. They keep some blankets in it, but I have the key. The coach doesn't go till eight o'clock to-night. Why not lie down there till five or six?'

'I'm not a fool in everything,' said the girl at length, with a wan smile. 'I'll do that.'

'Then jump on my horse.'

'That I can't do!'

'I'll give you a hand.'

'I should fall off!'

'Not at a walk. Besides, I'll lead him. Recollect you've nine miles before you this evening!'

She gave in. The room proved comfortable. She fell asleep to the sound of his horse's canter, lost in a few strides in the sand, but continuous in her brain. And this time she slept for many hours.

It was a heavy, dreamless sleep, from which she at last awoke refreshed, but entirely non-plussed as to her whereabouts. The room was very small and hot. It was also remarkably silent, but for the occasional crackling of the galvanised roof; and rather dark, but for the holes which riddled that roof like stars, letting in so many sunbeams as thin as fingers. Miss Winfrey held her watch in one of them, but it had stopped for want of winding. Then she opened the door, and the blazing sun was no higher in the west than it had been in the east when last she saw it.

On a narrow bench outside her door stood a tin basin, with a bit of soap in it, cut fresh from the bar; a coarse but clean towel; and a bucket of water underneath. The girl crept back into the room, and knelt in prayer before using these things. In the forenoon none of them had been there.

Going round presently to the front of the hut, the first thing she saw was the stock-rider's boots, with the spurs on them, standing just outside the door; within, there was a merry glare, and Wilfred Ferrers cooking the chops in his stocking soles before a splendid fire.

'Well!' she exclaimed in the doorway, for she could not help it.

'Awake at last!' he cried, turning a face

ruddy from the fire. 'You've had your eight hours. It's nearly five o'clock.'

'Then I must start instantly.'

'Time enough when we've had something to eat.'

The first person plural disconcerted her. Was he coming too? Mr Pickering had taken it for granted that they would go together; he was sending out another man to look after the outstation; but then Mr Pickering was labouring under a delusion; he did not understand. Wilfred was very kind, considering that his love for her was dead and buried in the dead past. The gentleman was not dead in him, at all events. How cleverly he managed those hissing chops! He looked younger in the firelight, years younger than in the cold gray dawn. But no wonder his love of her was dead and gone.

'Now we're ready,' he cried at last. 'Quick, while they're hot, Lena!' His tone had changed entirely since the early morning; it was brisker now, but markedly civil and considerate. He proceeded to apologise for making use of her Christian name; it had slipped out, he said, without his thinking. At this fresh evidence of his indifference, the girl forced a smile, and declared it did not matter. 'Surely we can still be friends,' said she.

'Yes, friends in adversity!' he laughed. 'Don't you feel as if we'd been wrecked together on a desert island? I do. But what do you think of the chops?'

'Very good for a desert island.'

She was trying to adopt his tone; it was actually gay; and herein his degeneracy was more apparent to her than in anything that had gone before. He could not put himself in her place; the cruel dilemma that she was in, for his sake, was evidently nothing to him; his solitary dog's life had deprived him of the power of feeling for another. And yet the thought of those boots outside in the sand contradicted this reflection; for he had put them on soon after her return, thus showing her on whose account he had taken them off.

Moreover, his next remark was entirely sympathetic. 'It's very hard on you!' he exclaimed.

'What do you mean to do?'

'I suppose I must go back to Melbourne.'

'And then?'

'Get another place—if I can.'

He said no more; but he waited upon her with heightened assiduity during the remainder of their simple meal; and when they set out together—he with all his worldly goods in a roll of blankets across his shoulders—she made another effort to strike his own note of kindly interest and impersonal sympathy. 'And you,' she said as they walked; 'what will you do?'

'Get a job at the next station; there'll be no difficulty about that.'

'I'm thankful to hear it.'

'But I *am* in a difficulty about you!'

He paused so long that her heart fluttered, and she knew not what was coming. They passed the place where her resolution had given way in the dark hour before the dawn; she recognised that other spot, where, later, he had found her asleep in the sun; but the first fence was in sight before he spoke.

'I can't stand the idea of your putting in

another appearance in the township,' he exclaimed at last, thrilling her with the words, which expressed perhaps the greatest of her own immediate dreads. 'It won't do at all. Things will have got about. You must avoid the township at all costs.'

'How can I?'

'By striking the road much lower down. It will mean bearing to the right, and no more beaten tracks after we get through this gate. But the distance will be the same, and I know the way.'

'But my trunks'—

'The boss said he would have them put on the coach. They'll probably be aboard whether you are or no. If they aren't, I'll have them sent after you.'

'I shall be taking you out of your way,' objected the girl.

'Never mind. Will you trust me?'

'Most gratefully!'

She had need to be grateful. Yes, he was very kind; nevertheless, he was breaking her heart with his kindness: her heart, that she had read backward five years ago, but aright ever since. It was all his. Either the sentiment which was one of her inherent qualities, or the generosity which was another, or both, had built up a passion for the man she had jilted, far stronger than any feeling she could have entertained for him in the early days of their love. She had yearned to make atonement, and having prayed, for years, only to meet him again, to that end, she had regarded her prayer now as answered. But answered how cruelly! Quite an age ago, he must have ceased to care; what was worse, he had no longer any strong feelings about her, one way or the other. This, indeed, was the worst of all. His first hot scorn, his momentary brutality, had been better than this. She had made him feel then. He felt nothing now. And here they were trudging side by side, as silent as the grave that held their withered love.

They came to the road but a few minutes before the coach was due. Ferrers carried no watch; but he had timed their journey accurately by the sun. It was now not a hand's-breadth above the dun horizon; the wind had changed, and was blowing fresh from the south; and it was grateful to sit in the elongated shadows of two blue-bushes which commanded a fair view of the road. They had been on the tramp upwards of two hours; during the second hour they had never spoken but once, when he handed her his water-bag; and now he handed it again.

'Thank you,' she said, passing it back after her draught. 'You have been very kind!'

'Ah, Lena!' he cried, without a moment's warning, 'had you been a kinder girl, or I a stronger man, we should have been happy enough first or last! Now it's too late. I have sunk too low. I'd rather sink lower still than trade upon your pity.'

'Is that all?'

'That's all.'

He pointed to a whirl of sand half a mile up the road. It grew larger, giving glimpses of half-harnessed horse-flesh and heavily revolving wheels. The girl's lips moved; she could hear

the driver's whip, cracking louder and louder; but the words came hard.

'It is not true,' she murmured at last. 'That is not all. You—do not—care!'

He turned upon her his old, hungry eyes, so sunken now. 'I do!' he said hoarsely. 'Too much—to drag you down. No! let me sink alone; I shall soon touch bottom.'

She got to her feet. The coach was very near them now, the off-lamp showing up the vermilion panels; the bits tinkling between the leaders' teeth; the body of the vehicle swinging and swaying on its leather springs. The Governess got to her feet, and pointed to the coach with a helpless gesture.

'And I?' said she. '*What's to become of me?*'

The south wind was freshening with the fall of night; at that very moment it blew off the driver's wideawake, and the coach was delayed three minutes. A few yards farther it was stopped again, and at this second exasperation the driver's language went from bad to worse; for the coach was behind its time.

'What now? Passengers?'

'Yes.'

'The owner of the boxes?'

'Yes.'

'And you too? Where's your cheque?'

There was a moment's colloquy between the two dusky figures in the road; then the man took a slip of paper from the left-hand pocket in his moleskins, and held it to the off-lamp for the driver's inspection. 'The two of us,' he said.

'All right; jump up!'

And with his blankets round her, and her hand in his, the little Governess, and her lost love who was found, passed at star-rise through the Greenbush boundary-gate, and on and on into another life.

MIRRORS, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

ACCORDING to the learned Beckmann, it is highly probable that a limpid brook was the first mirror. Primitive man, or rather woman, was not content for long with that inconvenient looking-glass, and it is very likely that early in the Stone Age vanity and ingenuity found an artificial substitute for the meandering brook. Some stones answer fairly well for the purpose, and, in fact, we read in ancient writers of stone mirrors. Pliny mentions the obsidian stone or agate in this respect, and we know that the ancient Peruvians, besides mirrors of silver, copper, and brass, possessed some which slightly astonished their Spanish conquerors. These were made of a black and opaque stone, which was susceptible of a fine polish. The earliest written records we have refer to metal mirrors; but the opinions as to time, place, and composition seem to be as numerous and various as the antiquaries and commentators themselves. The endeavours to trace their origin remind one of the arduous labours of another body of students—namely,

Those learned philologists who chase

A panting syllable through time and space;

Start it at home, and hunt it in the dark
To Gaul—to Greece—and into Noah's ark!

Some, following Cicero, conjecture that Æsculapius was the inventor of mirrors; while others point out that the old Roman alludes to a probe, an invention more in the line of the reputed father of medicine.

The Greeks were at an early period possessed of small mirrors, chiefly of bronze, and occasionally covered with a thin coating of silver. Besides its use at the toilet table in the preparation of Psyche knots and graceful drapery, it was also used in divination. The practice was to let one down into a well by means of a string to within a few inches of the water, when it was pulled up, and, after a few minutes, was expected to show the face of the sick person in whose behalf the ceremony was performed. Roman writers like Pliny and Seneca, in declaiming against increasing luxury, state that it was the ambition of every foolish woman to possess a silver mirror. Examples of these Greek and Roman articles are to be seen in collections of antiquities at towns wherever those old civilisations had spread; and from a specimen found in Cornwall, it is supposed that the Celtic population of England copied the form and substance of the Roman mirror. It was not, however, till the early part of the sixteenth century that they became common as articles of furniture and decoration. Previously, they were carried at the girdle, being merely small circular plaques of polished metal fixed in a shallow box. The outsides were often of gold, enamel, ivory, or ebony, and much ingenuity and art was expended in their decoration with relief representations of love, domestic, hunting, and other interesting scenes. As early as 625, we find Pope Boniface IV. sending Queen Ethelberga of Northumberland a present of a silver mirror. After the method of covering glass with thin sheets of metal was discovered—sometime during the middle ages, it is vaguely supposed—steel and silver mirrors were still cherished, to the neglect of the new-fangled glasses. Their manufacture on a commercial basis was first developed in Venice about the year 1507, and in England, early in the seventeenth century, the business was started by Sir Robert Mansell.

Mirrors of metal are still common in Oriental countries among people not afflicted with that malady styled progress. Bronze is the favoured substance in Japan, and the first mirror ever made in that charming country is religiously preserved at Isé as an object of the highest veneration; while that said to be presented by the Sun goddess at the foundation of the empire is an important item in the Japanese regalia.

In addition to the historical and utilitarian interest, the mirror is famous in the wide realms of mystery and superstition. According to Brand, mirrors were used by magicians 'in their superstitious and diabolical operations.'

The great and mythical Prester John possessed a mirror which showed him everything that took place in his dominions. The celebrated magic mirror which Merlin gave to King Ryence—it was called 'Venus's looking-glass'—revealed to its holder anything that a friend or foe was doing, and other interesting incidents usually associated with the detective's profession. Britomart, King Ryence's daughter, saw in it her future husband, and also his name—Sir Artagal. According to the old mythology, Vulcan made one which revealed the past, present, and future. Sir John Davies, in his poem entitled *The Orchestra*, declares, with a delicate poetical and courtier-like fancy, that Cupid once handed it to Antinoüs when he was in the court of Ulysses, and Antinoüs gave it to Penelope, who held therein the Court of Queen Elizabeth and all its grandeur!

Vulcan, the king of fire, that mirror wrought. . . .
As there did represent in lively show
Our glorious English Court's divine image
As it should be in this our golden age!

Another famous mirror was that belonging to Kelly, the speculator or seer in the service of Dr Dee. It resembled a piece of cannel coal, and is thus celebrated in *Hudibras*:

Kelly did all his feats upon
The devil's looking-glass, a stone.

There is a tradition that the Gunpowder Plot was discovered by Dr Dee and his wonderful mirror. In a Prayer-book printed by Baskett, is a curious engraving representing the discovery through its agency. 'The plate,' says a correspondent in *Notes and Queries*, 'would seem to represent the method by which under Providence—as is evidenced by the eye—the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot was at that time seriously believed to have been effected. The tradition, moreover, must have been generally believed, or it never could have found its way into a Prayer-book printed by the king's printer.'

In the pleasant regions of folklore the mirror holds a fairly prominent place. To break one is considered an unlucky affair, a notion which is one of the most prevalent and persistent bits of modern superstition. In many parts of England, seven years of trouble is considered the penalty for such an accident; but the still more serious Scottish people regard it as a sign that a member of the family will soon die. In the south of England it is looked upon as a bad omen for a bride on her wedding morning to take a last peep at the glass before starting for church, and the struggle between superstition and vanity is no doubt very keen. The Swedish girls are afraid to look in the glass after dark, or by artificial light, lest they should forfeit the good opinion of the other sex. Most people still appear to regard it as a bad omen to see the new moon for the first time through a window pane or reflected in a mirror. In some districts the practice of covering the looking-glass, or removing it, in the presence of death still exists. The reason for this is not very obvious, though Mr Baring Gould says there is a popular notion that if a person looks into a mirror in the chamber of death, he will see the corpse looking

over his shoulder. Such superstitions seem to suggest a near approach to the primitive modes of thought of the men who found mirrors in stones and glasses in the running brook.

'BLACKFOOT': A TRUE STORY.

'WELL, laddie,' said the old schoolmaster, carefully stopping his time-honoured briar with the tobacco he had just cut and carefully rubbed, 'it's a right interesting thing to hear your exposition of Socialism; but I'm no that sure how the universal brotherhood will turn out after a'. Did I ever tell you how I was sworn brother to a mason?'

I said nothing, but looked interested. Mr Whackbairn settled down in his chair, took several puffs, and began :

It was thirty years ago, when I was a young callant like yourself, that I was also much taken with the notion of universal brotherhood. I was just three months out of Glasgow College, and had been going up and down Scotland, and walking to and fro in it, looking for a school wherein to display my talents, when the heritors of Colston offered me the parochial school, twenty pounds a year, fees, a furnished house, and the privilege of a 'cow's gang' on the Hill of Colston. As I did not propose to take unto myself a cow, this last allurement counted for little; but nevertheless I accepted Colston.

And Colston accepted me! I am bound to say that the hearty kindness of those Lanarkshire farmers and miners was a great deal more than I deserved. I ceased to regret that inestimable privilege the 'cow's gang,' when I found that the goodwives were quite willing to keep the 'maister' in butter, eggs, and cheese.

But very lonely I should have found life in that upland village, if it had not been for the evening class of young men to whom I taught what I called land-surveying, though they declined to recognise it by any name except 'lan'-mizzerin'. With one of these young fellows I contracted a friendship on the very best Brotherhood-of-man principles. James Robertson was a mason by trade, with an aspiration after a croft, which accounted for the 'lan'-mizzerin'. He was a young giant of six-foot-three, and his bashfulness was even greater than his size. It was popularly believed that he would go two miles out of his way at any time to avoid speaking to a girl. Yet there was *one* girl for the privilege of speaking to whom he would cheerfully have gone twenty miles out of his way, even though all she said was to ask if he would be at the kirk the morn, which he was sure to be—but whether Katie Gray or the minister's excellent discourse on Jeremiah was the attraction, is open to question.

Katie Gray, the local beauty, lived at the croft of Burnbraes along with her father and her twin-sister Nellie, the other local beauty. Indeed, the two girls were so like that it was difficult to distinguish them, except that Nellie's eyes were brown, and Katie's a dancing hazel. But the little puss rarely gave one an oppor-

tunity of studying her eyes, so mistakes between the sisters were not infrequent. But it was reserved for me to make the monumental mistake.

Many an evening after school was closed, a tap would come to the door, and James would enter, at first with the excuse of some problem concerning 'chains' and 'acres,' afterwards ostensibly to have a 'crack,' which always sooner or later resolved itself into a monologue on the perfections of Katie Gray. Now, I could not see why James should despair; for it is not every swain who is allowed to see the lady of his affections and her sister home from 'the practising' every Friday night, and occasionally further permitted the bliss of singing with her thereafter; for James had a very good bass voice, and nourished wild aspirations after the position of precentor; and Katie sang like a liltie. I constantly heartened him up to press his suit. James was willing and even anxious so to do, but somehow the affair hung fire. At last, in an access of despairing bashfulness, he explained his laxness and the reason which made him a laggard in love.

'Eh, guid kens it's no that I dinna want the lassie! Ower an' ower have I gane doon to Burnbraes to tell her sae; but jist whan I've led up to it, an' my heart's thumpin' like my ain hammer, in comes Nellie, an' there have I to ask about her auntie's neuralgy or the like, an' then say I maun be steppin'. I'm no sayin' onything against Nellie; Nellie's a bonny lassie when Katie's no there' (James was nothing if not generous); 'but if she could only be keepit oot o' my way for twa hoors some Friday night, I'd maybe screw up courage to ask Katie!' And the perplexed lover came to a stand-still.

Who would not have sympathised with a good fellow in such a whimsical plight? I gallantly threw myself into the breach by proposing that he should take me to Burnbraes, and introduce me to the sisters, when I would do my best to keep Nellie from disturbing the *tête-à-tête* of James and his fair one. Never was a proposal received with such sincere though semi-articulate gratitude, and we fixed on the following Friday evening at seven.

James was punctual; and we walked down the 'loan' together almost in silence. My friend was, I conjecture, considering the phrases in which he was to put his fate to the test, and win or lose it all; while I was remembering that even James admitted that Nellie was a bonny lassie when Katie wasna there. We entered under a honeysuckle arch and tapped at the door. It was opened by the neuralgic aunt.

'Hoo's a' wi' ye the nicht? An' ye've brocht the maister wi' ye. Come ben the hoose, sir, an' see the lassies!' and she bustled in before us.

Katie and Nellie were named; and after some polite conversation, dealing mostly with the crops, the cat, and the window-geranium, I asked Miss Nellie to take me outside, professing a wild desire for some of the gooseberries which were hanging in red ovals of sweetness on the bushes at the foot of the garden.

It is an absorbing business gathering goose-

berries, especially if you get a thorn into your first finger during the process. How can a man get it out with his left hand? We were obliged to sit down on the seat, while my pretty companion produced a needle, and taking my hand, began to make those frantic little dabs with which even the most charming of women attacks a thorn or splinter in the hand of masculinity. Somehow, that thorn took half-an-hour to extract, and at the end of the half-hour we felt justified in sitting another half-hour. The pair in the window seemed not to be saying much, and I thought it my duty to give James as long as possible. In fact, I would have gone on sacrificing myself nobly till ten o'clock, if it had not been that my land-surveying class began at nine, and I had reluctantly to go.

We walked up the garden walk together, and I saw my friend in the window heave himself to his feet. He emerged from the door just as Miss Nellie was pinning one of the monthly rosebuds into my button-hole—you see, I was afraid of getting another thorn in my finger, if I did it myself. We were both invited to come back soon, made our adieux, and departed.

My pupil did not say a word to me as we went down that walk. His brow wore a distinct scowl, and I judged that the case called for sympathy. Whenever we were out of eyeshot and earshot, he suddenly stopped short, and shook me—*me*, the schoolmaster of Colston—in a way that made me feel as if every tooth was loose in my head. There are moments, as Carlyle tells us, when the overwrought human being loses all respect for church-clothes. James certainly seemed to have lost all respect for the educational collar.

'What garred you do you?' he demanded savagely.

'Whatever do you mean? Haven't I done just what you asked?' I gasped.

'When did I ask you to hold my lassie's han' for half-an-hour?' and another attack seemed imminent.

I had been sedulously keeping the wrong girl out of James's way! Was ever such a funny mistake? I am a very near-sighted man, and had confused the names of the two sisters, so that while I had been sitting with Katie on the seat, my luckless pupil had been left for an hour to the society of Nellie and the cat!

On thinking the matter over, I magnanimously forgave the shaking, feeling that under the circumstances I should have done the same. Furthermore, after the class was over for the evening, I aided and abetted James in writing Katie a formal proposal of marriage, addressed in full to Miss Katherine Gray, to prevent mistakes.

His next visit was not paid to me in the capacity of schoolmaster, but in the equally onerous position of session-clerk. He requested me to 'put in the cries,' announced that they were to be married Friday three weeks, and asked my attendance, which I agreed to give, in the capacity of best-man only.

A year after, I attended a christening in the same family; but long before that happy event James had let the story of that evening leak out, and I do believe every bashful lover in

Colston parish had been exhorted by scoffing friends to 'ask the maister to be blackfoot.' But this was my first and last appearance in this character of proxy.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

IN No. 556 (page 540) we recorded a case of accidental charring of a fabric by contact with the bulb of an electric glow-lamp. From experiments lately made by Captain Exler it is shown that a sixteen-candle lamp sunk in paraffin reaches a maximum temperature of 94 degrees C., while a twenty-five-candle lamp will reach 101 degrees C. Gunpowder and gun-cotton are not ignited, but when spread upon wood or other material opaque to heat rays, the powder will be decomposed and the cotton darkened. Cotton-wool, cloth, and black silk will all char when bound round a glow-lamp, but will not actually take fire unless saturated with india-rubber solution. The breaking of a lamp did not ignite gun-cotton, but fired an explosive gaseous mixture.

Billiard players will be interested to hear that balls of steel have recently been made for this popular game at Stockholm. They are about the same weight as ivory balls of the same size, but cost about a quarter the price of the latter. Cast steel is employed in the manufacture, but the balls are afterwards turned in the lathe, after which they have a thickness of one-sixteenth of an inch. We are not told whether these balls possess the same amount of elasticity as those of ivory. In connection with this matter we may mention that billiard balls of a composition of which celluloid forms a chief part have been in use for some time.

M. Marey, whose name is widely known as an investigator who has made much use of photography in obtaining records of animal movements, has lately been busying himself with trying to solve the problem why a cat always falls on its feet, even though it be dropped down with its paws upwards. The photographs show precisely by what succession of motion the cat gets its feet undermost.

In response to a deputation which lately waited upon the President of the Board of Trade, that official expressed the hope that it might be in his power to introduce a Bill in Parliament for dealing with the question of immature fish. The importance of preventing the capture of fish under a useful size has again and again been urged by those who are in the best position to know what injury is done to our fisheries under the present fool-hardy system. We may hope now that something definite will be done before it is too late. With reference to the limit of size, the general feeling seems to be in favour of the example which has been set by most Continental countries. This fixes the limit for soles and plaice at eight inches, and for turbot and brill at ten inches. At present it is a common thing to see fish for sale far under these sizes.

In the meantime valuable work is being done at Dunbar under the auspices of the

Fishery Board for Scotland. Here has been established a large hatchery for the artificial propagation of the more valuable marine food-fishes. It is proposed to hatch here every season hundreds of millions of the eggs of plaice, turbot, sole, and other fishes, and to place the fry in the various fishing-grounds round the coast. Curiously enough, this work is carried on within the confines of the old castle of Dunbar. The arrangements include a tidal pond for brood-fishes, a concrete tank in which the spawn is deposited, and an incubating room capable of containing at one time eighty million fish-eggs. The pond has been formed in a space under the castle which at one time formed a dungeon, and the fish confined in it are fed daily. This experiment in marine pisciculture is attracting great attention, not only in our own country but abroad.

It is curious to note that modern workers, with all their boasted improvements of manufacture, will occasionally revert to very old methods and discover much that is good in them. A case in point is presented by certain trials of mortar batteries at Sandy Hook. Now a mortar is a stumpy little gun whose mission it was to throw a shell high in the air so that it might drop upon the enemy. Of late years it has hardly been seen except in museums; but now it has once more come to the front, and has been proved to be of considerable value. In the trials referred to it was desired to ascertain the value of mortars in repelling an enemy, and more particularly to find out whether the missiles could be thrown with sufficient accuracy to perforate the deck of a ship. The shots were made to hit a floating target repeatedly, and it was shown that when four shots were fired simultaneously, they fell so near together that they made but one splash.

The discoloration of flowers when they are preserved and dried as botanical specimens is said to be due to ammonia in the atmosphere. In order to prevent this action, it has recently been recommended to use for pressing absorbent paper which has been baked in a one per cent. solution of oxalic acid and dried. The use of such paper enables specimens to be preserved with their colours unimpaired.

A French doctor has pointed out that several fallacies are common with regard to the weight of the human body. The man who congratulates himself on his gain of several pounds in weight over a given period, may have no cause for rejoicing, for he may be under a delusion. Very few people, says this French investigator, have any correct idea of their own weight. As a rule, the correctness of his scales may be doubted, the weight of the clothing not taken into account, the time which has elapsed since eating, &c. As a matter of fact the weight of the body is continuously changing, owing to innumerable influences. On a warm day after breakfast a man will lose more than a third of a pound per hour. Seventy per cent. of the body consists of water, and thus its weight must vary with the transpiration of moisture. Therefore the inferences drawn from the loss or gain of a pound or two may be mistrusted. Fluctuations of a few ounces

per day are a sign that the body is in a healthy state.

The Medical Officer of Health attached to the large parish of Islington, in the streets of which ice-cream vendors are numerous, has been making some inquiry into the quality of the delicacy which these swarthy sons of Italy are dispensing to the youth of the metropolis. He has discovered countless microbes in this compound of flour, milk, eggs, and flavouring essences, as well as in the water for washing the glasses. One is a deadly microbe commonly found in sewage. The officer laconically attributes this state of things 'to the dirty conditions under which the creams are manufactured, to the dirt of the vessels, and the uncleanly habits of the men engaged in the industry.'

The war between China and Japan is recognised by all as a valuable object lesson to the European powers, for the combatants are fighting with modern ships and modern weapons. So far the great value of quick-firing guns on shipboard has been abundantly made manifest. So also has the awful destruction possible by one well-directed shot from a weapon of heavy calibre. One such shell was received on board the Japanese flagship at the battle of the Yalu, with the result that a heavy barbette gun was dismantled and thrown into the sea, great havoc was caused in the ship's fittings, and no fewer than fifty-one men were killed and wounded. If it had not been for this terrible shot, the Japanese loss on that occasion would have been insignificant. It is noteworthy that many of our British ships are still armed with muzzle-loading guns, and possess none of the quick-firing variety in their armament.

The teaching of medicine and philosophy in the University of modern Japan has long been mainly under the influence of German Professors. But till of late, English was not merely the principal foreign language in general use, but at all governmental schools, colleges, and the University took the first place, while German was second, and French third in standing. By a recent decree of the Japanese Minister of Education this arrangement is definitively altered: English takes now only the second place, and all students coming from the advanced schools to the University who propose to study medicine, literature, history, philosophy, or law, must have proved their mastery of German. At present there are seven German Professors in the University of Tokio.

Eight millions a year seems a fearful sum for the afflicted farmers of the United Kingdom to lose, not by bad weather or American competition, but by the industry of the warble fly or ox bot. That amount, however, is believed by the best authorities not to exceed the loss caused by this insect pest, which, rather like a small humble-bee, lays its eggs on or in the skin of cattle. The maggot grows to a chrysalis in the skin or flesh of the animal; and the damage caused by its presence to the marketable value of the hide, to the health of the animal, and to the milk-production, may be guessed when it is known that five hundred maggots have been found in one cow. Miss Ormerod, already so well known for her labours on injurious insects, has published (Simpkin,

Marshall, & Co.) a pamphlet which fully describes the warble fly and its development, with careful illustrations; and indicates how, by simple, harmless, and efficacious methods, the damage caused by it may be checked or wholly prevented.

Brick-dust mortar as a substitute for hydraulic cement, where the latter cannot be obtained, has been lately recommended, and experiment shows that the mortar will, after setting and immersion in water for several months, bear an extraordinary amount of pressure without giving way. It is also stated that an addition of ten per cent. of brick dust to ordinary mortars prevents that disintegration which is so commonly experienced. In Spain a mixture of brick dust, sand, and lime is used in preference to cement in culverts, drains, &c.; and the proportions recommended as giving the best results are one part brick dust and one part lime to two of sand. The ingredients are mixed together in a dry state, and are afterwards tempered with the necessary amount of water.

A rat is credited with having caused a strange accident which recently occurred on the electric-lighting system at Baltimore. Without any warning, a large number of the city lamps were suddenly extinguished, owing to a rat stepping from one copper terminal to another, and thus short-circuiting the current. The rat's skin is supposed to have been wet at the time, thus helping it to be a good conductor of the current. Its hair was burnt off, and the body had become quite rigid. Much damage was done to the attached switchboard and other fittings, owing to the great heat generated by the accidental contact.

The value of Anti-toxic serum as a remedy for that terrible disease diphtheria seems to be established beyond reasonable doubt. Dr Woodhead, Director of the Research laboratories of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, in lecturing upon this new curative agent, said that a great deal of nonsense had been written about the danger of injecting organic fluids into the human body, from a horse which might be suffering from glanders or tuberculosis. He pointed out that the presence of such ailments in a horse could be predetermined with the greatest accuracy, and therefore that the danger was non-existent. It was also pointed out by another speaker, Lord Playfair, that the system advocated by the lecturer was not attended by any suffering to the animals from which the serum was obtained. 'All the pain caused was less than that of a single lash of the whip.' See article in this *Journal*, No. 572 (Dec. 15, 1894).

Notification has been made that the seeds of hardy plants which have been gathered at Kew Gardens during the past year will be available for distribution—by way of exchange—with the colonial, Indian, and foreign botanical gardens. A list of the seeds is published in the *Kew Bulletin*, and requests should be forwarded to the Director of the Gardens as soon as possible.

In many districts, domestic water cisterns are practically done away with, the household water being drawn direct from the main. This is as it should be, for the cistern is a source of danger

of a very grave nature. In a recent Report by the Medical Officer of a large London parish, the results of examining the cisterns of forty-one 'model' dwellings is given. These water receptacles were mostly at the top of the houses, were imperfectly covered, and in dangerous proximity to drain-pipes, &c. The contents were frequently filthy, the water being covered with snuts, and in some instances decayed vegetable matter lay two inches thick on the bottom of the cistern. Private dwellings in the district were no better; and it has been resolved to put in force certain by-laws which exist for dealing with the matter. But the enforcement of such laws is a somewhat difficult matter, particularly with a class of persons to whom cleanliness is not a matter of grave consideration.

A few weeks ago the Church of St Columb, Cornwall, was struck by lightning just at the commencement of morning service. The current seems to have struck the tower, stunning the ringers in its progress through the belfry, and appearing in the body of the church as a ball of fire. The glass of the belfry window was blown to pieces, and a slight explosion occurred through injury to the gas meter. The church was not protected by a lightning-conductor.

On some of the American railways compressed air is being used by the carriage cleaners for removing dust from the interior of the vehicles. A rubber hose is carried to any part of the car, and is used just like a garden hose, only that it discharges air instead of water. A powerful stream of air is said to be far more effective than dusters or brushes, and will remove all dry dirt from cloth, and even from glass and wood. It has the further recommendation that it searches into all crevices and corners, and effectually cleanses them of the dirt which they harbour.

In the course of a recent lecture at Owens College, Manchester, Professor S. J. Hickson described several of the fishes which were found in the Museum there. In alluding to the gorgeously coloured fish of the coral reefs, he pointed out that the bright and variegated tints of the immediate surroundings on the reef rendered similar colours on the fish a protective necessity. Were the fish dull or sombre-coloured, they would be readily detected by their enemies. He also pointed out that although the 'fish out of water' had become a recognised expression for any one in an uncomfortable position, many fish lived a considerable portion of their lives in the air. Such were the flying-fish, the climbing perch of the Indian Archipelago, and others. The lecturer considered that the Manchester Museum collection was a good one, but that it required many additions. He trusted that those who made use of the new Ship Canal would bring some specimens from foreign ports which they might visit.

The inconvenience which arises on many of our railways through the names of the stations becoming indistinguishable amid the crowd of advertisements which adorn those buildings, has led to the introduction on the District (London) Railway of what is known as the Station Indicator. Upon the ceiling of each carriage there is a kind of glass case, and within it

appears the name of the next station at which the train will stop, while at the same time a bell rings. This notification does not take place until the train is within about one hundred yards of the stopping-place. The system has been thoroughly tested with successful results, and will soon be adopted throughout the District Company's system. It may be mentioned that the Great Northern Railway is also adopting special means to make the names of their stations more prominent by placing them on all lamps, station windows, &c.

A 'new method,' distinct from any mere surface schemes—trapping, poisoning, tinning, and the like—having for its object the complete extermination of the rabbit pest, is, we learn from a correspondent, being adopted in New South Wales and Victoria with much success. Inextinguishable cartridges generating copious and penetrating volumes of deadly smoke or poisonous gas are placed in the burrows, the apertures of which are then closed. Thus are suffocated and buried by one process the old and young together, a scheme said to be that of a Liverpool competitor for the prize offered for the best means of extermination.

People think of France as a wine-drinking country, and understand in a general way that in the wine-growing districts wine is consumed more largely than, say, in French Flanders. But it is not commonly known how very widely one part of France differs from another in regard to the standard beverage and the quantities consumed. At Nice, in the south, for example, the consumption of wine is at the rate of four hundred and twenty-five English imperial pints a year per head of the population! At Cherbourg, on the other hand, the quantity of wine used is only eighty-four pints per head; at Rennes, in Brittany, less than sixty pints; and at Lille, only fifty-six pints. But at Rennes, cider is taken to the amount of eight hundred and fifty-one pints per head of the population; and at Lille, beer to the amount of six hundred and sixty pints per head; while at Cherbourg they drink spirits in the formidable proportion of thirty-two pints per head annually. These figures are selected from a large list in an official Report, which proves conclusively that where the consumpt of spirits is large, the use of what in France are reckoned 'hygienic drinks'—namely, wine, cider, and beer—is proportionately decreased, or nearly so. And in this regard it is at present proposed to regulate and modify this tendency in the liquor trade by legislation and administrative measures—one plan proposed being to abolish or largely reduce the taxation on the hygienic drinks, while greatly raising the duties on all kinds of spirits, treated most justly as vastly more dangerous to the public health and well-being than the milder beverages. Paris is mainly a wine-drinking town, but, like Marseilles and Lyons, does not consume so much as many of the smaller towns; though when examined in detail, the provision seems to be on a sufficiently generous scale. In Paris the annual rate per head is three hundred and forty pints of wine, sixteen of cider, twenty-one of beer, and rather over twelve pints per head of spirits. In whisky-drinking Scotland the annual rate per head of whisky

consumption was, in 1892-93, just a little over twelve and a half pints—little more than the proportion of spirits demanded by the Parisians, without regard to the large quantity of wine also required there for their annual wants. In view of this, it is strange that travellers still report that drunkenness—as we unfortunately know it in Great Britain—is a thing of very rare occurrence. The Parisians are represented as temperate drinkers though they drink just about as many glasses of spirits as the Scotch (the largest consumers of spirits in Britain), besides nearly thirty times as many glasses of wine as they do of spirits, not to speak of a fair allowance of cider and beer! And at Cherbourg the inhabitants take two and three-quarter times as much spirits as the Scotch, not to speak of cider, beer, and wine. As it is to be hoped and presumed that women and children have little or nothing to do with the figures for the consumpt of spirits, and as very many men take none at all, some folks must take pretty large doses. If French toppers can without visible and unpleasant consequences carry such quantities of liquor, this must be one of the 'things they do better in France.'

EVERLASTING SUMMER.

It needs not woods with violets paved,
Nor roses in the lane,
Nor lilies by cool waters laved,
Nor gorses on the plain,
Nor song of birds in bush and brake,
Nor rippling wavelets' chime,
Nor blue and cloudless skies, to make
For me the summer-time.

My lady's cheeks twin roses are,
That bloom the whole year round;
My lady's throat is whiter far
Than whitest lily found;
When thick and fast fall hail and sleet,
The blue of summer skies
I find whene'er my glances meet
My lady's azure eyes.

When blackbirds' notes shake not the dew
From lilac blooms away—
When larks sing not in heaven's blue
At dawning of the day—
When orioles no more rejoice
High in the chestnut tree—
My lady's sweet and joyous voice
Brings summer back for me.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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THE ANGEL OF THE FOUR CORNERS.*

BY GILBERT PARKER,

AUTHOR OF 'PIERRE AND HIS PEOPLE;' 'MRS FALCHION;' 'THE TRAIL OF THE SWORD,' &c.

IN FOUR PARTS.

I.—THE DANCE OF THE LITTLE WOLF.

'WHAT is the good?' said Babette. 'There is no one to play—no fiddle—no music. What is the good?'

'Truly!' replied Antoine. 'Here it is New-year's Day—snow three feet deep—the house so hot you can't breathe—thirty pair of feet waiting—lots of *tabac*—of cold pork—plenty of cider behind the door—and no music! So droll—that! Pshaw! I'll stand on a tub and whistle.'

Babette laughed. 'See Alphonse. Watch how he shakes his black head, and his eyes dance so! Ah, poor Alphonse! He would give his neck for Marie; but she sits with a half-dozen *galants* beside her; she flash her big brown eyes over at Alphonse, and they drive him mad. You think she care for him, with his purty eyes and black hair? No, no. You see! You hear her feet tap the floor! She long to dance like us all; and Alphonse, he long for her.'

'So,' rejoined Antoine, 'I do not understand that Marie. Why is't all get on their knees to her, and she care for no man?'

'You think that?' asked Babette. 'Pish! you are only a man with a man's eyes. You think because she not care for you, she care for nobody. That's like a man. He is so vain. When a woman care not for him, he is so happy when she care not for any one else.'

Antoine bristled up. 'Come, come, Babette. You think I care for Marie? No; only for you. You are the one great woman in the world!'

Babette laughed merrily, her little white teeth flashing. She tapped him on the arm. Oh, you foolish—foolish! A man can never see, when it is a woman. He think her great when she's very little. He think he understand him-self, and he know nothing. There is Marie! What do you know? You think her all coquette. You think I'm better. If I were in the same way as Marie, I'd be like her.'

Antoine ran his fingers through his hair, knotted his forehead, and smiled in a quaint way. 'I do not understand,' he said. 'Who is there Marie loves? You can see she play the game with them all; but there is no one. She has them—Jacques, Adrien, Jules, Alphonse, and the rest! They are on their shins, and she put her little foot on them all. What does she care? Ah, Babette, what does she care? There's no one.'

Babette suddenly became grave, and her eyes watched Antoine with a wondering kind of sadness. She was younger than he, yet she was wiser, for every good woman is wiser than any man. She wondered why he did not know that, when love first stirs in a woman's heart, she begins to be wise; when in a man's, he begins to be foolish; for the one becomes unselfish, and the other vain.

After a moment she said, with a serious little twist of the head: 'Antoine, I do not know who 'tis, but there's some one Marie loves. Do you think I'm a woman, and not know the look of love in another? There is,

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some one—somewhere, and it is all unhappy. I know that! Do you think if 'twas all right, she would play with them like that—so cold, so heartless? No; but she must do something. A woman will go mad unless.—Poor Marie! Perhaps the man does not love her. I cannot tell. Perhaps he loved her, and should not. Perhaps something prevents. *Bien*, it is all the same. She is as you see.'

Antoine was a little nervous, facing Babette's seriousness. He had not the care of life—only the shanties in the winter, the river in summer, the little farming in the autumn, and courting Babette in a happy, irresponsible fashion all the time. But take it seriously—life—love! Watch how his feet tap the floor impatiently. He is wild for the dance.

It was New-year's Day, the time of festivity, beyond all others, in a French Canadian home; and the young people of the parish were gathered, ready to dance until the morning; but to the house of Marie's father, old Vigord the fiddler had not come. For the last hour there had been nothing but 'Vigord! Vigord! Why doesn't Vigord come?' Every one seemed troubled save Marie. She did not worry. Perhaps that was because she had been a year at school in Quebec City, and therefore had got a kind of manner, was playing the self-possessed lady, or that if she could not enjoy herself in one way she could in another. There was something in her different from the other girls in the room. You felt that you did not know her as you knew them. All that they thought or were flashed in their brown eyes, on their red careless lips, and in the loose softness of their hair; but in Marie's strong chin, dark coquettish eyes, and strong brow, there hid something which had little to do with the life moving at the moment. Perhaps, as Babette had said, there was a man somewhere in the world whose love, or lack of love, had given her wisdom; but she said herself that she was only a trifler, that she cared only to enjoy herself.

Antoine, to relieve the situation, which was becoming strained, started a song. That did very well for a little time. It was a pretty fantasy of love and wild life, dashed with a spice of devilry; but it soon lost its effect, for the spirits which it raised sent a mad sprightliness into the feet of all, which only the rasp of a fiddle or the breath of a concertina could appease or command. At last, tall Medallion—whose ways were those of the blessed of this world, and who had his fingers on all the little comedies and tragedies of the parish—stood up in the middle of the floor and proposed a game. Every one was still in a moment, for Medallion had great resources and whimsical ideas. His was the gift of making men and women laugh, not so much at himself as at themselves. Besides, he had a heart. Protestant though he was, even the curé trusted him, and the little chemist worshipped him.

'See, my children,' he said, with his sharp eyes twinkling, 'since Vigord is late, let's have something agen his coming. Give him a half-hour longer; then, if he isn't here, I'll play the fiddle myself. Let's have now "The Dance of the Little Wolf." I'll whistle. Well, whoever at the end shall stand alone in the centre

must tell a very fine story. It must be of love. It must be like a play, and it must be true.'

At this, every one laughed. 'M'sieu' Medallion was so droll!' they said. 'The Dance of the Little Wolf, and then a true story of love.—Certainly, M'sieu' Medallion was amusing.'

They all came to their feet, eager for the dance, keen to see on whom the mantle of romance would fall. Hand in hand with tripping step they wound in and out of the room, Medallion, standing in the centre of the floor, having changed his whistling to a sing-song kind of chant. The long, waving, loving line presently began to twine in and out, linking like chains, curving into circles, parting, joining again, first slowly, then faster and faster, now, suddenly, in a pretty column, back and forth, the men together, then the women—flashing eyes, waving black hair, the warm breath of youth filling the room with an ecstasy, wherein every little care and alarm of life was swallowed up; and at last there came a sudden moment of confusion, and the hurlyburly of laughter, as the hazard of the dance grew.

Presently all parted, and Marie stood alone in the centre of the floor, with Antoine on one side not far, and Alphonse on the other. There was laughter and a storm of clapping. 'Marie! Marie!' they all cried. 'The story—the true love-story!'

Antoine ran his fingers through his hair, shook the little gold rings in his ears, and grinned at Marie, then at Babette. Alphonse was nervous, and his eyes had a kind of wild hunger as he also looked at Marie.

Marie glanced round the room, smiling naïvely, gave Alphonse a quick side-long glance of torturing coquetry, and then caught Medallion's eyes. He was looking at her with a whimsical suggestive smile. She flashed one back. Suddenly something defiant swept over her face—a wave of emotion which seemed to lift her all at once into an atmosphere apart from them all, independent of them all. Some inherent, dramatic strain in her mastered her for the moment. She was alive to her finger-tips. She stepped back a little from Alphonse and Antoine. They drew back on either side; but Medallion folded his arms, and watched her from under his bushy brows, steadily, kindly.

'The story—the story, Marie!' they called.

The moment before, Marie was lost to everything around her, now she was back again, conscious of their presence, but still in the atmosphere where her inspiration was born. A smile, too brilliant, too airy, played on her lips. Her voice had a feverish lightness. Her eyes, though, were burning with a look hard to read.

'I will tell you a wonderful, sad, beautiful, dreadful story,' she said. 'Once upon a time'—at this they all laughed—'once upon a time,' she repeated very lightly, 'there was a girl, and she thought herself beautiful. She used to dream of a great Prince who would come one day and tell her that his houses, his lands, and all the riches of his kingdom, were for her. She only lived in a cottage in a village—but that didn't matter. She rode in a tiny cariole, and she had only a little Indian pony to take

her to mass and to market—but that didn't matter. She was a woman, and a woman is like a bird—she has wings, and she flies where she will in the dreams of the night, and in the quick hours of the day, when her hands work and her tongue is busy. A man may stoop, but a woman always soars—till a man breaks her heart.

'And so this girl watched for her Prince; and when the mist was sweet, and flashed in the violet light of summer upon the river, he did not come that way; and when all the fields were white with snow in winter, and all the world was waiting like the girl, he did not come that way. And since he did not come to her, she would go to him. So, one morning she filled a bag with meat, honey, and dried fruits; and she put on her thickest mittens, her little fur cap, her greatcoat of dog-skin fur, and a woollen cloud about her throat—under which was the little gold brooch her mother gave her, which she would wear before the Prince, that he should see she was born for the fine things of this world. She had braided a hand with a bow and arrow on one moccasin, and a hand with a sword upon the other. She started forth all alone. She travelled on and on through thick woods, and the wild hills, and over plains; and when the winds blew hard, she laughed back at them; and when at night something cried in the trees like spirits begging her to speak to them, she sang the song of the "Scarlet Hunter," and the chant of the "White Swan," for she had no fear. The birds are not afraid till a shot from the hunter's gun, or an arrow from his bow, strikes into the heart. When that comes to a girl, she is afraid if she lives, and if she dies—it is no matter.

'It is no matter.' She paused, and stood looking straight before her, repeating the phrase still again, as though, having learned the tale by heart, she had forgotten something. But she was merely lost for a moment in scenes which were flashing before her mind, having for the time passed beyond her audience to the world where, in despair, one's own soul flees, and the Angel of the Four Corners can show us no right of way as we travel.

Some girl in the crowd giggled nervously. Another, she knew not why, gave a quick gasping sob. Babette, who was next her, said: 'You goose, it's only a story.'

This brought Marie back. She took up the thread again, lightly but plaintively too. 'By-and-by she came to a city. It stood high on a great hill. It had splendid houses, churches, and palaces; and beneath, at the foot of the mountain, there flowed a fine wide river. Every stone of that city was made of gold, and every drop of that river was a sweet white wine. Whenever the girl looked at the city, she knew it was so. Whenever she looked at the river, she knew it was so. And when she looked in the eyes of her Prince, she knew it was so; for they were all gold and wine also, and she could have lived just ever and ever looking at those eyes, till the Scarlet Hunter blindfolded her, and led her out on the lonely Trail of the White Valley, from which no man returns. Yes, she had found

her Prince. It does not matter where she saw him first, in a palace, or a house, or a church, for she saw him—that was enough!

'She was only a poor peasant girl; but he was a great man, so wise, so splendid, so kind. He said that she was beautiful, and she believed him; he said that he loved her, and she trusted; but when she threw herself on his breast and cried that she would never leave him, there came into his face a strange, pitiful look. That look broke her heart, for it couldn't be—it couldn't! She was only a foolish peasant girl, or she would have known that a Prince could never be her husband. Yet she knew that he loved her.

'Then there came a sad, terrible day, when all the great men of the kingdom came together, and decided that she must go away, or the Prince would lose his kingdom as well as lose her. What could she do? She could not wait about the palace gates. She could not defy all the great men, who were so strong, and who could make happy or destroy as they wished. What could she do? But she saw him once again. It was at the altar of a great church. Oh, a church like none any of you ever saw; with a beautiful Calvary above the altar, and angels with large flaming wings, and a thousand candles burning, and such wonderful, sweet music. It was so she saw him, and that was their good-bye. She looked into his eyes, and they had the same look as when she first heard him tell his love; and she got upon her feet and called out to him, but he raised his hand at her as though to say, "No—no! Never—never!"

'And that was the end. She left the great city; and as she went, she saw that it was only built of stone, and not of gold; and that the river was only bleak, dark water, and not wine, after all. Her eyes were not the same, and they would never be the same, never—never—never.'

The strange, searching pathos of her voice filled the room, like the eerie music of a violin, and Medallion felt his face flush and his fingers tingle, for he was reading the story of a girl's life in the allegory. Perhaps only he and one other understood, and that other was the simple Babette. She pinched Antoine's arm. 'Can't you understand?' she said.

Antoine shifted from one leg to the other, ran his fingers through his hair, and said only: 'It's a good story—very good! *Bien*, she could go on the stage. Ah! once when I was in Montreal, I saw a play. *Voilà*, that was a good play. Well, she could act in such a play, that Marie.'

Babette sighed, shrugged her shoulders, lifted her eyes, and caught Medallion's, and each knew of what the other was thinking.

Marie now almost breathlessly hurried her story. 'So the poor girl came back over the plains and over the hills to her little home. But she was never the same again. She laughed when others laughed, and she was gay, and she danced, and everybody said that she had good times in the world. But you—do you think she had? Because, when she thought of the city now, it was no longer of gold; and when she thought of the river, it was black

and wicked; and when she remembered—the man, she saw the great rulers of his kingdom frowning at her, and the hand of her Prince raised as if it said, “No—no! Never—never!”

When she finished, there was silence for a moment, so deep, that only the breathing of her audience was heard. They could not read the thing. They took her story literally, and it did not seem so strange to them, for they were a simple people; but they were romantic too, having in their veins—nor did they know this—the feeling of an antique time. So they applauded heartily, grandly. They called ‘Bravo!’ and said there was no one in the parish, not in ten parishes, who could tell a fine true love-story like Marie. And Alphonse looked at her with his hungry eyes as though to say that were he that Prince, he would have followed her from that city, and have lost his kingdom—and his soul—for her.

AMONG THE MOORS IN SPAIN.

FOR some reason, Spain is not so popular with the travelling public as many other countries in Europe which could be named. It may be that Spanish scenery, although there are notable exceptions, is not remarkable for beauty; or that travelling in the Peninsula is rather behind the age. The hotels in the main thoroughfares are generally speaking comfortable; but in out-of-the-way places this is not always so, and in these a knowledge of the language is almost essential. So that upon the whole the ordinary British tourist, who likes comfort and shuns trouble, gives Spain a wide berth. In this he is wrong. There are things in Spain which should be seen, and the recollection of which will always be a source of pleasure, such as the Museum at Madrid; the Mosque at Cordova; the Alcazar, Giralda, and Cathedral at Seville; and not least, the Alhambra and Generalife at Granada.

Madrid is probably as uninteresting a capital as could well be conceived, and its climate is detestable; but its Museum is worth going from the ends of the earth to visit. In no other country in the world, not excepting France and Italy, can such a collection of the Spanish, Italian, Dutch, and Flemish schools be found. There are 64 pictures in it by Velasquez, 46 by Murillo, 62 by Rubens, 53 by Teniers, 10 by Raphael, 22 by Van Dyck, 42 by Titian, 34 by Tintoretto, 23 by Paul Veronese, 34 by Breughel, 23 by Snyder, 19 by Poussin, 10 by Wouverman, 55 by Giordano, 58 by Ribera, 10 by Claude Lorraine; besides smaller numbers by such artists as Guido Reni, Domenichino, Andrea del Sarto, Correggio, Albert Dürer, Holbein, Salvator Rosa, Watteau, Rembrandt, and Antonio Moro. Those who love fine art should certainly visit Madrid; and if they do, they will not be disappointed.

Madrid has nothing to do with the Moors in Spain; but undoubtedly Cordova has. Cordova

is now an almost dead city; but it contains an old Moorish Mosque which, though sadly marred by its conversion into a Christian Cathedral, is even yet a wonder to all beholders, and surpasses any similar building either at Cairo or Damascus. We enter the Mosque through a court planted with orange-trees, palms, and cypresses, and having a marble fountain in the centre, where, of old, the Moslems made their ablutions before entering their sanctuary. Passing through the door of the Mosque, the visitor is literally staggered by the forest of beautiful pillars of marble, jasper, and porphyry which he sees before him, and which at first sight seem to be placed without order and without design. There are between a thousand and eleven hundred of these pillars; their lines cross each other, and this at first gives rise to the idea of want of plan. The eye cannot detect the end of the long avenues which they form. After the conquest of Cordova, in 1236, by the Spaniards, the Mosque was, without any alteration of importance, changed into a place of Christian worship, and so it remained till 1532, when the very foolish Chapter of Cordova of the day resolved to erect a coro or choir in the centre. In spite of all opposition, they levelled sixty columns, and built up a hideous erection which greatly disfigured the Mosque. When King Charles V. saw what had been done, he gave his opinion to the monks perhaps more plainly than politely. He said: ‘You have built here what you or any one might have built anywhere else; but you have destroyed what was unique in the world. You have pulled down what was complete, and you have begun what you cannot finish.’ Even in its degradation, no one ever yet regretted a visit to the Mosque of Cordova.

From Cordova to Seville is but a short journey, but it is a passage from death to life. There is no want of life in the gay Andalusian city, and in it there is much to interest the traveller. The Cathedral is not a Moorish edifice, but it is a wonderful work of art. It is, or was till recently, probably the most beautiful church in the world; but a few years ago, some of the enormous pillars that support the roof showed signs of giving way; in consequence, the interior is now boarded up, and is a thing of beauty no more. Whether it will ever again be restored to its former state is a question time alone will answer. Had it been in any other country, we should have had no doubt; but being in Spain, all we can say is, ‘¿Quien sabe?’ The pictures, however, remain; and the famous one of ‘St Antony of Padua’ by Murillo—which our readers may recollect was some years ago mutilated and the principal figure cut out of the frame and mysteriously removed; but it has been recovered, and skilfully replaced in its former position. The Giralda—now used as a belfry or campanile of the Cathedral

—is entire. It, at least, is Saracenic to the top of the square tower. In the sixteenth century, a belfry, in a totally different style of architecture, was added, and which certainly does not conduce to the beauty of the original. Every one visiting Seville should ascend to the top of the Giralda. Although 350 feet in height, the walk up is so gradual and easy, that one scarcely realises when at the top how far he has come; and the view is worth all the trouble. The chief glory of Seville, however, is the Palace of the Alcazar, with its gardens. The Alcazar is, next to the Alhambra, the best specimen of Moorish architecture in Spain, and those who have not seen the Alhambra will doubt if anything can be finer. It was not, indeed, built in the time of Moorish supremacy, but in the reign of Don Pedro I. (1362); but it was constructed by Moorish architects; and we have in it the same pillars, arches, and decorations as in the Alhambra.

To visit the Alhambra at Granada is excuse sufficient, if that were needed, for a journey to Spain. The three cities last mentioned, and more particularly the last, Granada, contain the most perfect relics of the Moors in Spain; and the traveller wonders, as he looks at the beautiful architecture, if this can be the work of a people now believed to be only a little removed from the savage. The city of Granada is not remarkable for beauty, and would pass for an ordinary Spanish city; but climb the hill round the base of which it clusters, and enter the enclosures of the Alhambra, and the gardens of the Generalife, and what a change! A sudden transition from a city of the living to a city of the dead; from the modern commonplace, bustling town to the stillness and repose of the long-distant past, and the wonderful creations of architects who then lived and laboured. There are few who are not familiar with the Alhambra, either from having visited it, or from the pages of Washington Irving, or in pictures of its salient features, such as the Court of the Lions, the Hall of the Ambassadors, the Court of the Myrtles, and many others which might be mentioned. The wonderful beauty of the architecture, with its horse-shoe arches, its light and graceful pillars, its mosaic groundwork and exquisite carvings, has attracted the attention of visitors for centuries that are past, and will do so for centuries that are to come; while those who have not seen it with the bodily eye have yet, in the pictured page of the American writer, or in the numberless sketches from the pencil of the artist, to some extent realised it. The work is a thing of beauty; but who were the builders? Moors still exist, as any one can see for himself by crossing the narrow strait between Gibraltar and Tangier; but can there be any connection, remote or otherwise, between the fierce-looking ruffians who frequent the market-place of the African city and the skilful architects who have left such imperishable monuments in Spain?

The narrative of the Moorish conquest of Spain is so wrapped up in monkish legends, that it is now difficult to say with any certainty what is history and what is fiction. Possibly,

something of the same kind may be said for much that elsewhere passes for history, but of the fact itself there can be no doubt. The probability is that about the year 711 the army of the invaders crossed the strait under their leader Tarik, landed at Tarifa, and first established themselves in Gibraltar. This famous rock was originally called Calpe; but after its conquest by the Moors, it was called, in honour of their leader, Gebel-el-Tarik, or Hill of Tarik; and from this the present name of Gibraltar is derived. Having thus established a footing on the Spanish soil, the army of the invaders commenced a career of conquest almost unexampled in its speed, so that in about two years, over the whole land, with some trifling exceptions, the Crescent superseded the Cross. The Moors were by no means harsh governors, and both Christian and Jew enjoyed tolerable freedom. It was while they held the country that the works to which we have referred at Cordova, Seville, and Granada were executed, and particularly the crowning glory of all, the Alhambra.

Although the Moors were practically masters of all Spain, the period of their peaceful occupancy of the country did not long continue. The native races were too warlike to allow the infidel to hold their country in undisturbed possession. Dissensions, too, broke out among members of the different tribes into which the conquerors were divided; and this, weakening, as it did, their strength, finally led to their entire overthrow and expulsion from the land. It would be tedious to give here a chronological account of the places taken from the Moors; suffice it to say that one after another of the districts into which Spain was divided were recaptured, until at last nothing remained to them except Granada. This, too, must fall; and as we stand on the rocky height on which their king turned his last look upon his lost kingdom, and which to this day is called 'El ultimo Suspiro del Moro' (the last Sigh of the Moor), the lines of the poet occur to us while looking at the proud Alhambra:

Look on its broken arch, its ruined wall,
Its chambers desolate, and portals foul:
Yes, this was once ambition's airy hall,
The dome of thought, the palace of the soul:
Behold through each lack-lustre, eyeless hole,
The gay recess of wisdom and of wit,
And passion's host, that never brooked control:
Can all saint, sage, or sophist ever writ,
People this lonely tower, this tenement reft?

Deprived of their power, the Moors were yet for a time tolerated in Spain; but as the power of the Spaniard increased, it soon became evident that the days of toleration were drawing to a close. First, the Jews suffered, and hosts of them were driven from the land. The Moors' turn came next, and they, too, were driven out. These were uncalled-for and unwise acts, and they have left their mark on Spain to-day in a thinly populated country, a decaying exchequer, and the loss of arts which would have raised a nation. If evidence were needed as to the deplorable state of the national finance, it will be found in the premium paid on British gold—the par value of an English sovereign is twenty-five pesetas; but thirty pesetas, and sometimes more,

are now given for it—that is, a profit of four shillings and upwards on the pound. The agriculture, too, is primitive to a degree, and more nearly resembles patriarchal times than the nineteenth century. In travelling through Andalusia we saw the grain trodden out, not indeed by oxen, but by mules or mares. In all our journeyings we only once saw the flail used, and that being near Gibraltar, probably owed its inspiration to British ideas. And if it be so with Spain, what of the Moors? Where are the descendants of the architects who erected these glorious buildings, which to this day are unrivalled? But only Echo answers. Where? Their ancestors have left their mark in Spain on everything, except religion, which makes a nation great, and now, you seek for their descendants in vain. It may be that the advancing tide of Western civilisation swallowed them up and carried them for ever away. We must recognise the fact, and we perhaps rejoice in a higher civilisation. But while we do so, let us not altogether forget what we owe to these early pioneers.

Before concluding these desultory notes, it may not be out of place, especially if we have awakened in any a desire to see the works of those departed artificers, to indicate the easiest mode of gratifying it. Travellers may visit Spain either by land or water. If they prefer land, the railway through Paris, Orleans, Tours, and Bordeaux will take them to Madrid, Cordova, Seville, and Granada. If good sailors, they can go to Gibraltar by one of those sumptuous floating hotels despatched weekly from London by the Peninsular and Oriental and the Orient lines. From Gibraltar, or rather from Algeciras, a short sail across the bay, the railway system now connects with Seville and Granada, and from Granada with Cordova and Madrid. One advantage of going by sea, at least one way, is that in an hour or two from Gibraltar the traveller can cross the narrow strait to Africa, and in the old city of Tangier see the Moor of the present day. Spring is perhaps the best time for such a visit; summer is too hot in Spain for comfort; but in spring, everything is lovely. In Madrid, Cordova, Seville, Granada, Gibraltar, and Tangier, comfortable hotels will be found; and in Granada there are two such on the top of the hill on which the Alhambra stands, and at its very gates. In the Spanish hotels, as a rule, there is a fixed charge per day, which covers everything including wine, unless the traveller desires special vintages, and the charge is moderate. This certainly is a great convenience to the inexperienced traveller, who in other countries is often puzzled by the elaborately detailed hotel bills. As regards the currency, in Spain there is no difficulty, at all events to those who have travelled in France. In France the current coin is called a franc, in Spain a peseta, but the par value of each is the same.

We have confined ourselves to the Moors in Spain, and what they have left behind; but it need scarcely be added that there are many most interesting places in Spain we have not spoken of, and many things to see which, in the connection in which we are writing, we have not mentioned. The churches are very beauti-

ful; and for those who desire that characteristic kind of amusement, there is the bull-fight. No doubt, the day usually selected for the performance is Sunday, and there does seem a certain grim irony in selecting that day for an entertainment of so brutal and debasing a character. However, it is a national institution, and one very highly prized, especially by the gentler sex in that country; indeed, as a Spaniard said to us of his countrymen: 'Nowadays, they care for nothing except churches and bull-fights.'

As we have already indicated, there are some disadvantages in Spanish travelling, but these are met with more or less in other lands. Perhaps in Spain they are more conspicuous. But travellers will find much to interest them not only in the towns and country, but in the manners and habits of the people. There is a calm dignity about the Spaniard of every class which will strike a stranger; even the beggars—of whom, goodness knows, there are plenty—seem to stand on a higher platform than their confrères in other lands. In our country, the statutory address is, 'Could you spare me a copper?' but a Spanish beggar thus addressed us at a railway station, and we give his address as typical of his class: 'O Señorito, da me una limosnita, y rogaré por su feliz viaje!' which may be translated into English thus: 'O little gentleman, give me an alms, and I will pray for you a happy journey.'

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

By ANTHONY HOPE, Author of *The Prisoner of Zenda*.

CHAPTER V.—COUNT ANTONIO AND THE SACRED BONES.

THERE is one tale concerning Count Antonio of Monte Velluto, when he dwelt an outlaw in the hills, which men tell with fear and doubt, marvelling at the audacity of his act, and sometimes asking themselves whether he would in very truth have performed what he swore on the faith of his honour he would do, in case the Duke did not accede to his demands. For the thing he threatened was such as no man of Firmola dares think on without a shudder; for we of Firmola prize and reverence the bones of our saint, the holy martyr Prisian, above and far beyond every other relic, and they are to us as it were the sign and testimony of God's enduring favour to our country. But much will a man do for love of a woman, and Antonio's temper brooked no obstacle: so that I, who know all the truth of the matter, may not doubt that he would have done even as he said, braving the wrath of Heaven, and making naught of the terror and consternation that had fallen on the city and the parts round about it. Whether that thought of his heart was such as would gain pardon, I know not: had the thing been done, I could scarce hope even in Heaven's infinite mercy. Yet this story also I must tell, lest I be charged with covering up what shames Antonio; for with the opinions of careless and faithless men (who are too many in this later age)

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I have no communion, and I tell the tale not to move laughter or loose jests, but rather to show to what extremity a man by nature good may be driven by harshness and the unmerited disfavour of his Prince.

In the third year, then, of Count Antonio's outlawry, His Highness the Duke looked upon the Lady Lucia and found that she was of full age for marriage. Therefore he resolved that she should be wed, and, since Robert de Beauregard, to whom he had purposed to give her, was dead, he chose from among his lords a certain gentleman of great estate and a favourite of his, by name Lorenzo, and sent word to Lucia that she had spent too much of her youth pining for what could not be hers, and must forthwith receive Lorenzo for her husband. But Lucia, being by now a woman and no more a timid girl, returned to His Highness a message that she would look on no other man than Antonio. On this the Duke, greatly incensed, sent and took her, and set her in a convent within the city walls, and made her know that there she should abide till her life's end, or until she should obey his command; and he charged the Abbess to treat her harshly, and to break down her pride: and he swore that she should wed Lorenzo; or, if she were obstinate, then she should take the vows of a nun in the convent. Many weeks the Lady Lucia abode in the convent, resisting all that was urged upon her. But at last, finding no help from Antonio, being sore beset and allowed no rest, she broke one day into passionate and pitiful weeping, and bade the Abbess tell His Highness that, since happiness was not for her in this world, she would seek to find it in Heaven, and would take the vows, rendering all her estate into the Duke's hand, that he might have it, and give it to Lorenzo or to whom he would. Which message being told to Duke Valentine, weary of contending with her, and perchance secretly fearing that Antonio would slay Lorenzo as he had slain Robert, he cursed her for an obstinate wench, and bade her take the vows, and set a day for her to take them: but her estate he assumed into his own hand, and made from out of it a gift of great value to Lorenzo. And Lorenzo, they say, was well content thus to be quit of the matter. 'For,' said he, 'while that devil is loose in the hills, no peace would there have been for the lady's husband.'

But when it came to the ears of Count Antonio that the Lady Lucia was to take the veil on the morrow of the feast of St Prisian, his rage and affliction knew no bounds. 'If need be,' he cried, 'I will attack the city with all my men, before I will suffer it.'

'Your men would all be killed, and she would take the veil none the less,' said Tommasino. For Antonio had but fifty men, and although they were stout fellows, and impossible to subdue so long as they stayed in the hills, yet their strength would have been nothing against a fortress and the Duke's array.

'Then,' said Antonio, 'I will go alone and die alone.'

As he spoke, he perceived Martolo coming to him, and, calling him, he asked him what he would. Now Martolo was a devout man,

and had been much grieved when Antonio had fallen under a sentence of excommunication by reason of a certain quarrel that he had with the Abbot of the Abbey of St Prisian in the hills, wherein the Count had incurred the condemnation of the Church, refusing, as his way was, to admit any rule save of his own conscience. Yet Martolo abode with Antonio from love of him. And now he bowed and answered, 'My lord, in three days it is the feast of St Prisian, and the Sacred Bones will then be carried from the shrine in the church of the saint at Rilano to the city.' For it was at Rilano that Prisian had suffered, and a rich church had been built on the spot.

'I remember that it is wont to be so, Martolo,' answered the Count.

'When I dwelt with my father,' said Martolo, 'I was accustomed to go forth with all the people of my village and meet the Sacred Bones, and, kneeling, receive the benediction from the Lord Archbishop as he passed, bearing the bones in their golden casket. And the like I would do this year, my lord.'

'But are you not excommunicated in company with Count Antonio and me?' asked Tommasino, lightly smiling; for Tommasino also stood condemned.

'I pray not. I was not named in the sentence,' said Martolo, signing the cross.

'Go in peace, Martolo; but see that you are not taken by the Duke's men,' said Count Antonio.

'But few of them go with the Archbishop, my lord. For who would lay hands on the Sacred Bones? The Guard is small, and I shall easily elude them.' So Martolo departed, and told the man they called Bena what had passed; but Bena was a graceless fellow and would not go with him.

Now when Martolo was gone, Count Antonio sat down on a great stone and for a long while he said nothing to Tommasino. But certain words out of those which Martolo had spoken were echoing through his brain, and he could not put them aside; for they came again and again and again; and at last, looking up at Tommasino, who stood by him, he said, 'Tommasino, who would lay hands on the Sacred Bones?'

Tommasino looked down into his eyes; then he laid a hand on his shoulder; and Antonio still looked up and repeated, 'Who would lay hands on the Sacred Bones?'

Tommasino's eyes grew round in wonder: he smiled, but his smile was uneasy, and he shifted his feet. 'Is it that you think of, Antonio?' he asked in a low voice. 'Beside it, it would be a light thing to kill the Duke in his own Palace.'

Then Antonio cried, striking his fist on the palm of his hand, 'Are dead bones more sacred than that living soul on which the Duke lays hands to force it to his will?'

'The people reverence the bones as God Himself,' said Tommasino, troubled.

'I also reverence them,' said Antonio, and fell again into thought. But presently he rose and took Tommasino's arm; and for a long while they walked to and fro. Then they went and sought out certain chosen men of

the band—for the greater part they dared not trust in such a matter, but turned only to them that were boldest and recked least of sacred things. To ten of such Antonio opened his counsel; and by great rewards he prevailed on them to come into the plan, although they were, for all their boldness, very sore afraid lest they, laying hands on the bones, should be smitten as was he who touched the Ark of the Covenant. Therefore Antonio said, 'I alone will lay hands on the golden casket; the rest of you shall but hold me harmless while I take it.'

'But if the Lord Archbishop will not let it go?'

'The Lord Archbishop,' said Tommasino, 'will let it go.' For Tommasino did not love the Archbishop, because he would not remove the sentence of excommunication which he had laid upon Antonio and Tommasino on the prayer of the Abbot of St Prisian's.

Now when the feast of St Prisian was come, the Lord Archbishop, who had ridden from the city on the eve of the feast, and had lodged in the house of the priests who served the church, went with all his train into the church, and, the rest standing afar off and veiling their eyes, took from the wall of the church, near by the High Altar, the golden casket that held the bones of the Blessed St Prisian. And he wrapped the casket in a rich cloth and held it high before him in his two hands. And when the people had worshipped, the Archbishop left the church and entered his chair and passed through the village of Rilano, the priests and attendants going first, and twelve of the Duke's Guard, whom the Duke had sent, following after. Great was the throng of folk, come from all the country round to gaze upon the casket and on the procession of the Lord Archbishop; and most devout of them all was Martolo, who rested on his knees from the moment the procession left the church till it was clear of the village. And Martolo was still on his knees when he beheld go by him a party of peasants, all, save one, tall and powerful men, wearing peasants' garb and having their faces overshadowed by large hats. These men also had knelt as the casket passed, but they had risen, and were marching shoulder to shoulder behind the men of the Duke's Guard, a peasant behind every pikeman. Martolo gazed long at them; then he moistened his lips and crossed himself, murmuring, 'What does this thing mean? Now God forbid!—' And, breaking off thus, he also rose and went to the house of his father, sore vexed and troubled to know what the thing might mean. But he spoke of it to none, no, not to his father, observing the vow of secrecy in all matters which he had made to Count Antonio.

At the bounds of the village the greater part of the people ceased to follow the procession of the Sacred Bones, and, having received the Archbishop's blessing, turned back to their own homes, where they feasted and made merry; but the twelve peasants whom Martolo had seen followed the procession when it set forth for the next village, distant three miles on the road to Firmola. Their air manifested great devotion, for they walked with heads bent on

their breasts and downcast eyes, and they spoke not once on the way; but each kept close behind a pikeman. When the procession had gone something more than a mile from the village of Rilano, it came where a little stream crosses the highway; and the rains having been heavy for a week before, the stream was swollen and the ford deeper than it was wont to be. Therefore the officer of the Guard, thinking of no danger, bade six of his men lay down their pikes and go lift the Archbishop's chair over the ford, lest the Archbishop should be wetted by the water. And on hearing this order, the tallest among the peasants put his hand up to his hat and twisted the feather of it between his thumb and his forefinger: and the shortest of them whispered, 'The sign! The sign!' while every man of them drew a great dagger from under his habit and held it behind his back. Now by this time the priests and attendants had passed the ford; and one-half of the Guard had laid down their pikes and were gone to raise the Archbishop's chair, the remainder standing at their ease, leaning on their pikes and talking to one another. Again the tallest peasant twisted the feather in his hat; and without speech or cry, the peasants darted forward. Six of them seized the pikes that lay on the ground; the remaining six leaped like wild-cats on the backs of the pikemen, circling the necks of the pikemen with their arms, pulling them back and coming near to throttling them, so that the pikemen, utterly amazed and taken full at disadvantage, staggered and fell backward, while the peasants got on the top of them and knelt on their breasts and set the great daggers at their hearts. While this passed on the road, the remainder of Antonio's band—for such were the peasants—rushed into the stream and compelled the unarmed pikemen to set down the Archbishop's chair in the midst, so that the water came in at the windows of the chair; and the pikemen, held at bay with their own pikes, sought to draw their poniards, but Antonio cried, 'Slay any that draw!' And he came to the chair and opened the door of it, and, using as little force as he could, he laid hands on the casket that held the Sacred Bones, and wrested it from the feeble hands of the Archbishop. Then he and his men, standing in line, stepped backwards with the pikes levelled in front of them till they came out of the water and on to the dry road again; and one pikeman rushed at Antonio, but Tommasino, sparing to kill him, caught him a buffet on the side of the head with a pike, and he fell like a log in the water, and had been drowned, but that two of his comrades lifted him. Then all twelve of the band being together—for the first six had risen now from off the six pikemen, having forced them, on pain of instant death, to deliver over their pikes to them—Antonio, with the casket in his hands, spoke in a loud voice, 'I thank God that no man is dead over this business; but if you resist, you shall die one and all. Go to the city; tell the Duke that I, Antonio of Monte Velluto, have the bones of the Blessed St Prisian, and carry them with me to my hiding-place in the highest parts of the hills. But if he will swear by these bones that I hold, and by his princely word, that he

will not suffer the Lady Lucia to take the vows, nor will constrain her to wed any man, but will restore her to her own house and to her estate, then let him send the Archbishop again, and I will deliver up the Sacred Bones. But if he will not swear, then, as God lives, to-morrow, at midnight, I will cause a great fire to be kindled on the top of the hills—a fire whose flame you shall see from the walls of the city—and in that fire will I consume the Sacred Bones, and I will scatter the ashes of them to the four winds. Go and bear the message that I give you to the Duke.'

And, having thus said, Antonio, with his men, turned and went back at a run along the road by which they had come; but to the village of Rilano they did not go, but turned aside before they came to it, and, coming to the farm of one who knew Antonio, they bought of him, paying him in good coin of the Duchy, three horses, which Antonio, Tommasino, and Bena mounted; and they three rode hard for the hills, the rest following as quickly as they might; so that by nightfall they were all safely assembled in their hiding-place, and with them the bones of the Blessed St Prisian. But they told not yet to the rest of the band what it was that Antonio carried under his cloak; nor did Martolo, when he returned from Rilano, ask what had befallen, but he crossed himself many times and wore a fearful look.

But Tommasino came to Antonio and said to him, 'Why did you not ask also pardon for all of us, and for yourself the hand of Lucia?'

'A great thing, and a thing that troubles me, I have done already,' answered Antonio. 'Therefore I will ask nothing for myself, and nothing may I ask for you or for my friends. But if I ask nothing save that right and justice be done, it may be that my sin in laying hands on the Sacred Bones will be the less.'

Now after Antonio and his men were gone, the Archbishop's train stayed long by the stream on the road, lamenting and fearing to go forward. Yet at last they went forward, and, being come to the next village, found all the people awaiting them at the bounds. And when the people saw the disorder of the procession, and that the pikemen had no pikes, they ran forward, eagerly asking what had befallen; and learning of the calamity, they were greatly afraid and cursed Antonio; and many of them accompanied the Archbishop on his way to the city, where he came towards evening. A great concourse of people awaited his coming there, and the Duke himself sat on a lofty seat in the great square, prepared to receive the Sacred Bones, and go with them to the Cathedral, where they were to be exposed to the gaze of the people at High Mass. And they set the Archbishop's chair down before the Duke's seat, and the Archbishop came and stood before the Duke, and his priests and the pikemen with him. And the Duke started up from his seat, crying, 'What ails you?' and sank back again, and sat waiting to hear what the Archbishop should say.

Then the Archbishop, his robes still damp and greatly disordered, his limbs trembling in anger and in fear, raised his voice; and all the

multitude in the square were silent while he declared to His Highness what things Count Antonio had done, and rehearsed the message that he had sent. And when the Archbishop told how Antonio had sworn that as God lived he would scatter the ashes of the Sacred Bones to the winds, the men caught their breath with a gasp, and the women murmured affrightedly, 'Christ save us;' and Duke Valentine dug the nails of his hand, whereon his head rested, into the flesh of his cheek. For all the city held that, according to the words St Prisian himself had uttered before he suffered, the power and prosperity of the Duchy and the favour of Heaven to it rested on the presence among them and the faithful preservation and veneration of those most holy relics. And the Archbishop having ended the message, cried, 'God pardon my lips that repeat such words,' and fell on his knees before Duke Valentine, crying, 'Justice on him, my lord, justice!' And many in the throng echoed his cry; but others, and among them a great part of the apprenticed lads, who loved Antonio, muttered low one to another, 'But the Duke has taken his sweet-heart from him,' and they looked on the Duke with no favourable eye.

Then Duke Valentine rose from his seat and stood on the topmost step that led to it, and he called sundry of his lords and officers round him, and then he beckoned for silence, and he said, 'Before the sun sets to-morrow, the Lady Lucia shall take the vows;' and he, with his train, took their way, the pikemen clearing a path for them, to the Palace. And now indeed was silence; for all marvelled and were struck dumb that the Duke said naught concerning the Bones of St Prisian, and they searched one another's faces for the meaning of his words. But the Archbishop arose, and, speaking to no man, went to the Cathedral, and knelt before the altar in the chapel of St Prisian, and there abode on his knees.

Surely never, from that day until this hour, has such a night passed in the city of Firmola. For the Duke sent orders that every man of his Guard should be ready to start at break of day in pursuit of Antonio, and through the hours of the night they were busied in preparing their provisions and accoutrements. But their looks were heavy and their tongues tied, for they knew, every man of them, that though the Duke might at the end take Antonio, yet he could not come at him before the time that Antonio had said. And this the townsmen knew well also; and they gathered themselves in groups in the great square, saying, 'Before the Duke comes at him, the Sacred Bones will be burnt, and what will then befall the Duchy? And those who were friendly to Antonio, foremost among them being the apprenticed lads, spread themselves here and there among the people, asking cunningly whether it concerned the people of Firmola more that the blessing of St Prisian should abide with them, or that a reluctant maiden should be forced to take the veil; and some grew bold to whisper under their breath that the business was a foul one, and that Heaven did not send beauty and love that priests should bury them in convent walls. And the girls of the city, ever most bold by

reason of their helplessness, stirred up the young men who courted them, leading them on and saying, 'He is a true lover who risks his soul for his love;' or, 'I would I had one who would steal the bones of St Prisian for my sake, but none such have I;' with other stirring and inflaming taunts, recklessly flung from pouting lips and from under eyes that challenged. And all the while Duke Valentine sat alone in his cabinet, listening to the tumult that sounded with muffled din through the walls of the Palace.

Now there was in the city a certain furrier, named Peter, a turbulent fellow, who had been put out of his craft-guild because he would not abide by the laws of the craft, and lived now as he best could, being maintained in large measure by those who listened to his empty and seditious conversation. This man, loving naught that there was worthy of love in Count Antonio, yet loved him because he defied the Duke; and about midnight, having drunk much wine, he came into the square and gathered together the apprentices, saying, 'I have a matter to say to you—and to you—and to you,' till there were many scores of them round him: then he harangued them, and more came round; and when at last Peter cried, 'Give us back the Sacred Bones!' a thousand voices answered him, 'Ay, give us back the bones!' And when the pikemen would have seized him, men, and women also, made a ring round him, so that he could not be taken. And sober men also, of age and substance, hearkened to him, saying, 'He is a knave, but he speaks truth now.' So that a very great throng assembled, every man having a staff, and many also knives; and to those that had not knives, the women and girls brought them, thrusting them into their hands; nay, sundry priests also were among the people, moaning and wringing their hands, and saying that the favour of St Prisian would be lost for ever to the city. And the square was thronged, so that a man could not move unless all moved, or raise his hand to his head save by the favour of his neighbour. Yet presently the whole mass began to move, like a great wave of water, towards the Palace of the Duke, where the pikemen stood in ranks, ready now to go against Antonio. Suddenly arose a cry, 'The Archbishop comes!' and the venerable man was seen, led through the crowd by Peter and some more, who brought him and set him in the front ranks of the people; and Peter cried boldly, 'Where is the Duke?' But the Captain of the Guard came forward, sword in hand, and bade Peter be still, cursing him for insolence, and shouted that the people should disperse on pain of His Highness's displeasure. 'Where is the Duke? Let him come out to us!' cried Peter; and the Captain, despising him, struck him lightly with the flat of his sword. But Peter with a cry of rage struck the Captain a great blow with his staff, and the Captain staggered back, blood flowing from his head. Such was the beginning of the fray; for in an instant the pikemen and the people had joined battle: men cried in anger and women in fright: blood flowed, and sundry on both sides fell and rose no more; and the

Archbishop came near to being trodden under foot till his friends and the priests gathered round him; and when he saw that men were being slain, he wept.

THE DOCKISATION OF THE RIVER AVON.

At a very early period of English history Bristol held the proud position of the second port of the kingdom. It was the centre of an English slave-trade with Ireland which was as flourishing as it was shameful, and laid the foundation of the commercial prosperity of the port. Centuries later, Bristol plunged with avidity into the African slave-trade, and grew in wealth and importance on the proceeds of this inhuman traffic. It was from the port of Bristol that John and Sebastian Cabot started on the voyages which resulted in the discovery of the coast of North America from Labrador to Florida. The sieges of Bristol form a separate and most important chapter of the civil wars between Charles I. and his Parliament. During the period of the prosperity of the West Indian colonies, Bristol was the chief seat of the West Indian trade. It is a curious circumstance that the *Great Western* steamship, the first steamer which crossed the Atlantic in 1838, was built in Bristol, for it was to the enormous development of the Atlantic traffic which has come about during the present century that the port of Liverpool owes its extraordinary rise in a comparatively short time to the position of the second port and city in the kingdom.

The deposition of Bristol from the place which it had occupied for so many centuries is relatively quite recent. The southern city has neither accepted nor forgiven its discomfiture. It has been the dream of every citizen who has come to the front since that day to restore to Bristol the substance of her former greatness, and it has been agreed by generations of municipal politicians that this can only be effected by wresting from the competing ports a very considerable portion of the rich Atlantic traffic, which occupies such an enormous fleet of the biggest ships that have yet been launched. Of the various proposals which have been brought forward for this purpose, decidedly the most ambitious, and the one which seems to bear most promise of success, is that which is locally known as 'the dockisation scheme,' which is at present occupying the attention of the town-council and the citizens, even to the extent of influencing the municipal elections. In order to grasp the full bearing of this scheme, it is necessary to have a clear notion of the geographical position and advantages of the town of Bristol.

Though it is a seaport, Bristol is not situated on the sea. It stands seven miles inland, on the estuary of the river Avon, which flows into the estuary of the river Severn, commonly known as the Bristol Channel. Now the Bristol Channel is a great wedge of water which has split a great crack in the land, up which big ships can sail to towns which would be inland cities if the contour of the coast were more

regular. The estuary of the Avon is similarly a long thin wedge of tidal water which splits an opening into the land even through a chain of rocky downs which lie between Bristol and the Bristol Channel. The result is that at high-tide, when the estuaries of the Severn and the Avon are flooded by the sea, Bristol is connected with the Atlantic by a great natural ship-canal many miles in extent, up which big ships can sail into the very heart of Bristol, and unload their cargoes under the windows of the warehouses.

Bristol, moreover, lies at the junction of three great highways—the road from London, the road from the North, and the road from Devonshire and Cornwall. It was therefore naturally marked out to be a mart and a centre of traffic, even if nature had not further designed it for a seaport. The traders by sea and the traffickers by land met there quite naturally. It was the line of least resistance for both. Bristol, in short, possessed in a minor degree many of the advantages which have rendered London the principal port and market of the world, and which are not united in any other town in the south of England. It was natural that Bristol with these advantages should for centuries hold the position of the second port in the kingdom. On the other hand, it was as natural that she should lose this place when the East Indian and galleon of ancient days were replaced by the 'liner,' 'trooper,' and other gigantic structures of our own time.

The explanation is, that while enjoying many of the advantages which have made London what it is, Bristol is hampered by disadvantages from which the capital does not suffer at all. At low-tide, the Avon estuary is nothing but a gaping trench with black precipitous sides, at the bottom of which rushes a narrow stream just deep enough to permit of the passage of a row-boat; while the Severn estuary is transformed into an archipelago of mud-banks, split up by winding deep-water channels. Bristol is then an inland town, cut off entirely from the sea by many miles of solid land, and this state of geographical blockade lasts for quite half the day, in two periods. Ships which have missed the flood have to wait outside in the Bristol Channel for the return of the tide; and vessels may be detained in the floating harbour at Bristol by lack of the tide several hours after they are ready to sail. Deep, moreover, as the river-channel undoubtedly is, it does not admit of the passage of the bigger kind of Atlantic liners, still less of the larger ones which are in course of construction. Bristol is therefore completely closed against the Atlantic service, and it is easy to understand that, putting aside all other considerations, a port is not likely to be popular among the biggest class of vessels if there is a chance of a wait of several hours before it is possible to get into port, or a risk of running aground in the narrow, winding channel of the approach owing to the unexpected failure of the tide.

It was a keen consciousness of the extent to which their port is handicapped by this physical defect that induced the citizens of Bristol to spend nearly a million on the improvement of

the dock at Portishead—which is situated on the Bristol Channel a few miles to the south of the embouchure of the Avon—and the construction of a deep-water dock at the Avon mouth itself, so that big ships might enter and discharge their cargoes there without waiting for the tide to take them up to Bristol. The results of this expenditure have been satisfactory so far; but it has not assisted Bristol at all towards the realisation of its favourite dream—namely, successful competition with Liverpool and Southampton. Avonmouth does not possess the advantages which Bristol offers. It is neither a well-known mart, nor a great railway junction, nor a manufacturing centre where cargoes can be taken in from the hands of the shippers. It is, moreover, at the wrong end of the seven miles of Avon estuary. It is necessary, therefore, that everything embarked or disembarked at Avonmouth should travel over the line of local railway which connects that dock with the great railway junction at Bristol; and as land-carriage is proportionally more expensive than water-carriage, there is a clear increase in the cost of conveyance by the exchange. Between the additional expense involved by the Avonmouth route and the possible delay attendant on the river route, the result is that the port of Bristol is given the go-by entirely by a great deal of heavy traffic.

It is at this point that the advocates of 'dockisation' come forward with their plans. There are many of them; but the differences consist mainly of structural details and total cost. The object of all is to render the Avon estuary entirely independent of the tides, and to maintain it perpetually full of water of a sufficient depth to admit of the passage of the biggest ships up to the quays at Bristol. The main proposal of all, in fact, is to construct a huge dam across the mouth of the Avon of a sufficient height to ensure the retention of the necessary depth of water within the channel; and to pierce this dam at one point by an entrance furnished with stop-gates, which will admit or discharge ships early on the tide by the ordinary processes of a lock, and at another point by sluices which will let out the overflow of the river when the required depth of water within has been obtained. One scheme proposes that the lock should be quite independent of the existing dock at Avonmouth. Another, that the existing dock with its lock-entrance should be deepened and connected with the river so as to form the entrance to the dockised river. A third conjoins both of the above schemes, and would give the dockised river two entrances—one by a new lock, and the other by the existing dock. A fourth—which is the most ambitious of all—would have two entrances—one by a new lock, and the other by a practically new dock, which would be constructed by enormously increasing the area and depth of the present dock. There are also various alternative proposals with regard to graving-docks, deep-water entrance channels from the Bristol Channel, piers, breakwaters, improvements in the course and bed of the river, and other subsidiary works. In this connection it may be added here that the estimated cost is proportional to the size and extent of the undertaking, and it varies

from about one million four hundred thousand pounds to over two millions.

For the purposes of the present article, however, the dockisation scheme may be roughly generalised as a proposal to construct a dam across the mouth of the Avon of sufficient height to transform the estuary into a deep-water floating-dock nearly seven miles long, and furnished with a lock entrance, either single or double, of sufficient width and depth to admit ships of the greatest draught as yet achieved or projected, which may be fixed at not less than thirty-two feet. It is urged in favour of this scheme, that it would restore to Bristol all her lost advantages, would attract a very large increase of general traffic to her quays, and would enable her to offer such facilities to the Atlantic steamers as could not fail to make her the principal depôt of the passenger-service, and the station for the American mails. Dockisation, it is claimed, would make her reap once more to the full the advantage of her geographical position and her vicinity to the capital; and the result would be such a development of the wealth and prosperity of the port as would enable the authorities to pay the interest on the debt incurred for the construction, and eventually to liquidate the debt itself without imposing any burden on the rates.

Whether this would actually be the case can only be proved by experience, and, unluckily, half-measures would be of no avail for this purpose. A thorough test could not be taken until the scheme was completely executed, for the full advantage offered by it could not be reaped until the dam and the lock were put into perfect working order. The utmost that can be said is that the balance of probability is strongly in favour of a considerable increase of the trade of the port.

On the other hand, it must be borne in mind that nothing less than a very extensive development of the traffic up the Avon would enlarge the revenues of the port sufficiently to permit of the payment of interest on the heavy debt incurred; and that, if the enterprise failed to achieve the results anticipated, the ratepayers of Bristol would find themselves burdened with an annual payment of something like £80,000 for ever. This is an important consideration, which may well give pause to the authorities of the town and harbour. It must be remembered that the true success of the scheme really depends upon the prospect of diverting a good portion of the Atlantic steamers from their present goal. This is only likely to be effected if Bristol is able to offer greater advantages than those presented by Liverpool now, for the cost of altering their present arrangements is not likely to be incurred by the steamship Companies unless there is some decided gain thereby. The question of the moment, therefore, is, Would dockisation place Bristol in a position so much superior to Liverpool that it would become worth while for the Government and the Atlantic lines to change their station for the American service from the northern to the southern port? In the opinion of a number of nautical and engineering experts, the answer to this question is, 'Yes.' In the opinion of a similar body of equal distinction, the reply

should be a negative. Where doctors disagree, the patient has to decide for himself, and this is what the town of Bristol is engaged in doing.

There is one point, however, in which the watering-place of Clifton, with its villas, schools, and college, is even more interested than Bristol, which is already accustomed to evil odours from its sluggish floating harbour and reeking factories. Would the outfall of the river from the sluices be strong enough to create a current sufficient to prevent this immense body of water from becoming stagnant, and consequently foul, a begetter of smells which would transform Clifton into a pest-stricken wilderness of empty houses? In the opinion of a learned authority, Mr John McCurich, the official engineer of the Bristol docks (to whose careful Report on the various schemes, and personal information on the subject, the writer is glad to express his debt here), the current created by the outfall would be quite sufficient to avert such a calamity, provided efficient steps were taken by the various towns on the Avon—Bristol, Bath, Trowbridge, and Bradford—to prevent the discharge of their sewage into the Avon and its tributaries. In this connection, it may be mentioned that Bath is at present engaged in diverting its sewage from the river, with the view of improving its own sanitary condition, which has been seriously impaired by the drainage which is discharged into the Avon during its passage through the town. This is an example which Bristol might well follow at once, for even if dockisation should not be undertaken, the result of such a purification would be to considerably abate the odours from the mud which is exposed in the channel of the Avon at low-tide. Thus cleansed from sewage, the dockised river might be regarded as a lake—the outfall at the sluices fulfilling the office of the effluent river which prevents a lake from becoming stagnant. Examination, moreover, will show that enormous masses of water are kept in a pure and wholesome state by very small currents. If we compare the body of water in the Lake of Geneva, and the volume of the Rhone at its point of departure from the lake, with the body of the Avon in its dockised state and the discharge from the sluices at Avonmouth, the advantage as regards motion will be largely in favour of the latter.

'BIRIBI'

SIDELIGHTS ON THE DISCIPLINE OF THE TROOPS
EMPLOYED BY FRANCE IN HER COLONIAL
CONQUESTS.

By JOHN DILL ROSS.

BIRIBI, a word unknown to most Englishmen, is one of dread to the whole French army. Biribi represents to the French soldier a long term of dangerous foreign service, made subject to the most extraordinary conditions of discipline, and such savage punishments as that of the *crapaudine*. When France is bent on a policy of colonial conquest, she is careful not to risk the lives of too many of her more cherished sons, and the corps that is sent to carry the tricolour to the most distant parts of

the world is largely made up of men whom society can well spare, and who are, in fact, considered as being best 'expended' in such service.

It was doubtless observed by many that when the Madagascar question came before the French Chamber, an effort was made to limit the choice of the Minister for War to 'Colonial Troops,' certain disinterested deputies insisting that at all events no Parisians should be drafted from their regiments for service in Madagascar. But although General Mercier claimed a free hand in the matter, the expedition to Madagascar will doubtless be composed of the same elements as the army which subjugated Tonkin. Black troops such as the Turcos will be mingled with the motley soldiers of the Foreign Legion, while the famous *Compagnies de Discipline* will certainly send a strong contingent. These men will be sent to bear the brunt of the fighting; any especially dangerous work will be thrust upon them if it is possible to do so; and to render justice to these troops, and to say at the same time all the good that can be truthfully said about them, they fight well, and certainly are not wanting in courage. Still, such troublesome, dare-devil regiments have never been brought together under any flag. Half the time the men are a perfect terror to their officers; while, on the other hand, the officers are allowed to punish their men with a savage severity which would never for a moment be tolerated in the regiments of the line or any other branch of the service.

Whilst admitting that these troops generally fight well, it must be said that they are most difficult to keep in hand, and they seldom fail to become a terrible scourge to the unfortunate country on which they are let loose. The Foreign Legion is from its very origin a most extraordinary body of troops. No questions are asked of the man who wishes to become a *Légionnaire*. Provided he is physically fit, he is enlisted under any name he may choose to give, whatever his nationality may be. The Legion naturally becomes a refuge for the *déclassé*, the deserter from other flags and the adventurer of every degree. It is said that there are highly educated men of good family in the Legion, and in this there is nothing improbable. In Tonkin I once saw one of my own countrymen, wearing the dismal uniform of the Legion, quarrelling with a German belonging to the same regiment. They came to blows, and were finally beaten into something like order by an officer who struck them with the flat of his sword.

If, however, the Foreign Legion embodies some very questionable elements, how much worse must be the *Compagnies de Discipline*, which are entirely composed of what are really military convicts! These luckless soldiers, the *zéphirs* and the *joyeux* of French military slang, are the refractory and criminal cases of the whole army. When a hardened offender becomes too much of a nuisance in his regiment, he is tried before a special military tribunal; his *livret matricule*—a sort of personal register of his deeds and misdeeds, which every French soldier is bound to produce at any moment—is put in, and his long list of punishments is

read out for the edification of the Court. The trial almost invariably ends in the man being sentenced to serve for a term of years in one of the *Compagnies de Discipline*. Our *zéphir* is then shipped off to Africa, where he joins his new regiment under the charge of a *gendarme*, and with his wrists shackled in handcuffs, a befitting commencement to the career in store for him.

The convict companies are scattered over the dreariest and most desolate districts of the French African possessions, in which they are often employed in road-making and constructing buildings for military purposes. Harassed, moreover, with constant drills under a burning sun, badly fed, isolated from all but their own miserable society, and punished with the most relentless severity for the slightest offence, the unhappy soldier realises what it is to be *envoyé à Biribi*. The derivation of the word *Biribi* appears to be obscure, but its meaning soon becomes clear enough to the victim of the system.

We, of course, have nothing like it in our own diminutive army; but if we had over half a million of men with the colours in times of peace, we should find ourselves confronted with a good many problems which we are not at present called upon to study; and it is a more or less recognised fact that the African campaigns of the French have had a rather brutalising effect on their troops, who have borrowed much that is undesirable from their Arab foes.

To the soldiers of the convict companies, active service is a pleasant relief from the well-nigh intolerable bondage in which they are held, and considering that they suffer such terrible punishments as the *crapaudine*, which can easily be prolonged to a fatal issue, it is small wonder that they are merciless men. They are perfect adepts at 'eating up a country,' and leave a trail of desolation and ruin behind them wherever they go. But in commenting upon any excesses committed by the French troops in Tonkin, it must be remembered that they were frequently subjected to intolerable provocation. The Chinese with their fiendish barbarity inflicted the most atrocious tortures on their wretched prisoners; and the French on more than one occasion came upon the bodies of their unhappy countrymen who had been actually and literally skinned alive! Men flushed with the heat of battle and with arms in their hands cannot look calmly upon such things; and if the Japanese under similar circumstances took vengeance upon the Chinese at Port Arthur, it is impossible to justify them; but that they did take vengeance will be readily understood by fallible human nature in every part of the world.

It would, of course, be no easy matter for France to conquer any country with troops composed entirely of the soldiers of the Foreign Legion, the *Fusiliers de Discipline*, and her African regiments. In all her colonial campaigns, a most honourable part is borne by the regiments of the *infanterie de marine*, than whom it would be hard to find better and steadier soldiers anywhere. They are really the backbone of the whole expedition, and, apart from their services in the field, they are

much in demand as a military police to keep the turbulent irregulars in something like order. The navy is another mainstay of France in her colonial conquests, and French sailors, both officers and men, must be acknowledged to be very fine fellows. Nothing, for instance, could have been much better done than the way in which the *Inconstant* and *Comète* recently passed and fought the Paknam batteries through a shallow and obstructed channel laid with mines and torpedoes, in the teeth of a fleet of Siamese ships which ought to have swept them out of existence. The dash and pluck with which these two little gunboats were handled deserved the success they achieved. The French blue-jackets, with their machine guns and light artillery, will no doubt contribute their full share to the successes of the columns invading Madagascar.

There is seldom much scope for cavalry in these colonial enterprises; but during the Tonkin War, the French sent some *Spahis* from Algeria; and amongst other troops, I noticed a very fine Zouave regiment at Hai-fong, which I once saw employed in restoring order. Although, at the time to which I refer, the war was in full swing, General de Négrier having just been defeated at Langson, the French in Hai-fong were in full enjoyment of a theatre—that is to say, a ramshackle barn, with a stage at one end of it, constructed of planks laid over a number of empty barrels. Notwithstanding the primitive nature of the stage and its accessories, the acting of the adventurous little troupe which ran the theatre was excellent; and such pieces as *Le Piano de Berthe* were played to the intense satisfaction of crowded houses of soldiers and sailors. The theatre stood near what is now a fine square, surrounded by handsome buildings, but which was then a howling wilderness, known as the *carrefour des écrasés*, around which were scattered the miserable *pailloles* or attempts at huts in which such of us lived as were fortunate enough to go in for 'housekeeping' at all.

During a performance one evening, I heard the sounds of a row going on outside; and quietly creeping out of the theatre, I saw surely enough a regular pitched battle going on between a number of blue-jackets from the fleet in the river and a crowd of men belonging to the Foreign Legion. Before long, the rapid regular tramp of troops coming up at the double was heard—it was a company of Zouaves sent to put things straight. The way in which they wheeled into line and charged across the open ground was a sight worth seeing. They simply swept everything before them with the butts of their rifles, and were formed up and marched off again almost as rapidly as they had come. Then everything was quiet again—especially quiet were the dark recumbent forms which dotted the surface of the suggestively named *carrefour des écrasés*, but they were picked up before morning, and very little was said about it next day.

There were a good many executions amongst the troops in Tonkin. Some of the unfortunate rogues—more to be pitied than punished—deserted, with the idea that they would actually find gold lying about the country, which they

could take away with them. The famous stories floated about the *pépites d'or* to be found in Tonkin made a few victims in this way; nor was I at all astonished to read the other day of a gentleman in Madagascar having gone for a morning ride, and finding on his return that a nugget of gold had obligingly embedded itself in his horse's hoof. Why not? In fact, such occurrences appear to be inevitable in a country about to be invaded by France.

Much worse things happened, however, than the desertion of soldiers in search of gold. There was the case of an officer of one of the *Compagnies de Discipline* being shot dead on parade. He had been a bit too hard on his men, and four of them had settled by means of a pack of cards which of them was to kill him; and the loser availed himself of the first opportunity he had of murdering his unfortunate officer. To men of this stamp, death has very few terrors if they are simply to be shot by a firing party; and I believe that these four men endured the tortures of the *crapaudine* until they died under them.

The French are, of course, at liberty to maintain discipline in their own army in any way they please; but the punishments to which their irregular troops are subjected are certainly very cruel. Take the case of a man sentenced to the *cellule avec fers*. The *cellule* may be any hut or tent, or, for that matter, the open air will serve. The irons consist of two heavy rings on a bar about eighteen inches long; the whole thing screws up, and is fastened by a padlock. The man's ankles are shackled by the rings to the bar, and the contrivance is more fit for chaining up a wild beast than a man. In addition to this, however, the man's hands are brought behind his back, and fettered by two rings moving on an iron rod worked by a powerful screw, so that any pressure desired may be brought to bear on the man's wrists. This also is secured by a padlock. The man thus put in irons is placed on his stomach; he gets his *gamelle* of soup once in thirty-six hours, and a *litre* of water every twenty-four hours, which he has to lap up like a dog if he wants it.

The *crapaudine*—obviously derived from the word *crapaud*—is simply this punishment made much more severe and dangerous by having a rope rove through a ring provided for the purpose in the wrist shackles. One end of the rope is made fast to the bar to which the man's ankles are ironed, and then a good pull on the rope running through the ring at the man's wrists brings his hands and feet together, when all is made fast, and the sufferer is left in that position. If he cries out, he is immediately gagged. Should the man not be released in time, he generally dies in convulsions, it is said; but a man thus treated may die from any cause, and at times he has been known to quit this world when it has not been the intention of his officers that he should do so.

It is not astonishing that the *zéphirs* should try to desert when they think they have a chance. Not so very long ago, about half-a-dozen of them jumped overboard from a French hired transport as she was leaving Singapore harbour. The sentries on board im-

mediately opened a hot fire on the fugitives, of whom but two reached the shore; the bodies of the others were swept out to sea by the currents of New Harbour, and whether they were shot or drowned matters but little. They at least will fight no more to extend the colonial empire of France.

N I C O T I A N A .

Sublime tobacco! which from east to west
Cheers the tar's labour or the Turkman's rest.

A GENIAL Professor once remarked to his students: 'Smoke away, gentlemen; it does not annoy me in the least. I look on tobacco in the same light as on hay. I don't eat it myself, but I like to see others enjoy it.' There is a neatly veiled hint behind the Professor's seemingly affable observation, that in his opinion the youths were merely making beasts of themselves by indulging in this seductive habit; for habit it undoubtedly is, and a curious one too, since we are quite unable to tell in the dark whether our pipe is alight or not; or, for that matter, our cigar or cigarette either, except for its glowing tip. However, could every one regard the weaknesses of his fellow-men in the same unselfish light as this Professor, what a happy world this would be!

The first account of tobacco was published in 1496, by a Spanish monk, Romanus Pane, who had accompanied Columbus to America; but it does not seem that Europeans smoked it until 1535. It is, however, a question whether it did not find its way into Europe, like everything else, from the East rather than from the West, for we find in Ulloa's *Voyage to America*: 'It is not probable that the Europeans learnt the use of tobacco from America; for, as it is very ancient in the Eastern countries, it is natural to suppose that the knowledge of it came to Europe from those regions by means of the intercourse carried on with them by the commercial States of the Mediterranean Sea. Nowhere, not even in those parts of America where the tobacco plant grows wild, is the use of it, and that only for smoking, either general or very frequent.' Some seed of the plant was sent from Portugal to Paris by Jean Nicot, then French envoy to Queen Catherine de' Medici in 1559; hence the name Nicotine. Its importation into this country is ascribed to Sir Francis Drake, about 1560; and the practice of smoking it to Sir Walter Raleigh, some twenty-four years later, when it was a luxury that could only be indulged in by the most wealthy. John Aubrey says that it was sold for its weight in silver, and that men preserved their biggest shillings to lay in the scales against the tobacco.

The chemical qualities of the plant are peculiar. It owes its active character to the presence of a vegetable alkali not found in any other plant, which has been named Nicotine, as stated above, and, as will be noticed from its equivalent ($C_{10}H_N$), it differs from most others in the absence of oxygen; as also in its liquid condition at the ordinary temperature. Another peculiarity of the plant is the very large quantity of ash that it leaves when burnt,

about one-fifth the weight of the dried leaf; while a further distinguishing property is the great amount of nitrate of potash present, to which is due its peculiar smouldering combustion.

Scientists are much exercised nowadays as to whether smoking is injurious, for, except in rare cases, it cannot be either necessary or beneficial; and even then, it must be indulged in with caution. A Major Chalmers died recently at Southampton under remarkable circumstances. For some years he was afflicted asthmatically, and sought relief in smoking tobacco steeped in turpentine. One day on applying a match an explosion occurred. His beard was burnt off, and serious injuries in the region of the chest sustained, with a fatal result. Since we are told that the enormous sum of fourteen million pounds is puffed away each year in tobacco smoke, the question of its influence for good or ill on the world's health is of considerable importance. On one point there appears to be little doubt—namely, that Nicotine is fatal to a large number of the microbes that cause some of our most serious sicknesses. In our issue of February 23, 1889, we noticed the results of investigations on this head by an Italian Professor, Dr Vincenzo Tassinari; and the results of the intended further experiments therein alluded to have recently appeared in the *Italia Termale*. He finds (1) That the smoke of the Cavour, Virginia, and Tuscan cigars, and all black and chopped tobaccos, possesses a very pronounced bactericide power, especially against the bacillus of Asiatic cholera. (2) This microbicide action may in all probability be attributed to the products of Nicotine. (3) In epidemics of cholera and typhus, the use of tobacco may be rather useful than hurtful. (4) Tobacco smoke merits special consideration on the hygiene of the mouth as a prophylactic means of combating microbial affections of the buccal cavity:

Non-smokers have hitherto fumed, and declared
That the succus of baccy will kill us;
But what say they now Tassinari has proved
That the sucking it slays the bacillus?

Sucking or drinking tobacco were the terms applied to smoking on the first introduction of the plant into England. The native of India to this day says, 'Tamaku pita hai' (He is drinking tobacco), which forms another link in the chain of argument that the weed came to us from the East, and not from the West.

The earliest pipes were nothing but long leaves rolled up into the shape of a funnel, still much in use among the natives of Hindustan. Those employed at first by Sir Walter Raleigh and other young men of fashion were exceedingly rude and simple, consisting of half a walnut-shell with a straw inserted. The first clay pipes were made in this country about 1585, copied from those used by the natives of Virginia; while to a Hungarian shoemaker, named Kaval Kowates, is accredited the manufacture of the first meerschaum pipe, in 1723, which has been preserved in the Museum at Pesth.

Means of rendering tobacco harmless to the consumer have been given to the world at frequent intervals. As long ago as 1670, glass globules were attached to pipes to intercept the tobacco juice and Nicotine; and in 1689 Jacob Francis Vicarius, an Austrian physician, recommended the insertion of a small piece of sponge in the tube for a like purpose. Vigier recommended citric acid, which, however, has the serious disadvantage of spoiling the taste of the tobacco. Dr Gautrelet of Vichy asserts that a piece of cotton-wool steeped in a solution (five to ten per cent.) of pyrogallic acid, and inserted in the pipe or holder, will neutralise all possible effects of the Nicotine; while the number of patented pipes designed with a like view increases day by day. And now, on the principle that prevention is better than cure, a smoker comes to the rescue of slaves to the weed. He says that chewing *calamus* root allays the craving for tobacco; further, that it is a harmless substance and a beneficial tonic. Another ascribes a like virtue to a plentiful consumption of watercress two or three times a day; but doubtless many, feeling with Hamlet's father that

Diseases, desperate grown,

By desperate appliance are relieved,
Or not at all,

will prefer the disease to the suggested remedies.

Like all innovations, the introduction of tobacco met at first with much opposition, our King James I. being one of its principal enemies; and throughout Europe, severe penalties and punishments were inflicted on those who ventured to indulge in the blowing of it; and in 1624, Pope Urban VIII. issued a decree of excommunication against any person found taking snuff in church. However, its charms, sung by Byron

Divine in hookahs, glorious in a pipe,
When tipped with amber, mellow, rich, and ripe;
Like other charmers, wooing the caress
More dazzlingly when daring in full dress:
Yet thy true lovers more admire by far
Thy naked beauties—Give me a cigar!—

have proved too strong for all its opponents; and what a firm hold the habit gets on its devotees is forcibly illustrated in the following case. 'When I was an officer,' writes a naval man, 'in Messrs Money Wigram's ship the *Keut*, in 1857, on a voyage to Melbourne and back, we found that by some mistake no tobacco had been shipped, so, being on the high seas, the men could get none till we fell in with some vessel (meeting other ships was rarer then than now). A curious thing happened. First, the topmen, and then the rest of the crew, lost in a great measure the use of their hands, which trembled as if palsied; they grew so nervous that we were quite afraid to order them to do anything. On a strict inquiry being made, we found out that they had been smoking their rations of tea. Old rope being substituted, they recovered; and, falling in with a Dutchman just after we got round the Horn, we were able to get some tobacco from her.'

The plant has afforded abundant food for legislation, and its adulteration must have been rampant during the reigns of the Georges to

call for the stringent laws that were enacted, one example of which will suffice: 'If any person shall mix any fustic, or other wood, or any leaves, herbs, or plants (other than tobacco), or any earth, clay, or tobacco-sand, with any snuff-work or snuff; or shall colour the same with any sort of colouring (water tinged with colour only excepted), he shall forfeit two hundred pounds. And if any manufacturer or dealer in snuff shall sell, or expose for sale, or have in his entered premises, any fustic, yellow ebony, touchwood, logwood, red or Guinea-wood, Braziletto or Jamaica-wood, Nicaragua-wood, or Saunders-wood; or any walnut tree, hop, or sycamore leaves; or shall have in his possession any of the aforesaid articles; or any other wood, leaves, herbs, plants, earth, clay, or tobacco-sand, mixed with any snuff-work or snuff, he shall forfeit fifty pounds, and the same shall be forfeited, and may be seized.' (29 Geo. III. c. 68.)

The following epigram may fitly find a place in these stray notes:

Of lordly men, how humbling is the type,
A fleeting shadow, a tobacco pipe!
His mind the fire, his frame the tube of clay,
His breath the smoke so idly puffed away,
His food the herb that fills the hollow bowl
Death is the stopper. Ashes end the whole.

At least once in history the 'devil's weed,' as a certain king called it, played an important part in a political movement. When the revolution of 1848 came on, the Austrian government enjoyed a monopoly of the manufacture and sale of tobacco in those parts of Italy under its control. The Liberals, resenting the tyranny of the Austrians, and disliking to see so large a revenue pouring into the Austrian treasury from the sale of cigars and tobacco, left off smoking—a patriotic method of resenting the Austrian domination. The Austrian Government thereupon supplied its troops with cigars, and the men of the garrisons went about the streets of Italian towns puffing smoke into the faces of the non-smoking Italians. The insult was warmly resented. The Milanese rose in rebellion, and expelled the Austrians; Venice did the same; and thus was the revolution begun, which ended in the loss to Austria of all the Italian possessions.

THE DIAL AT NIGHT.

I SAID unto my soul: 'The whole long night
The Dial skyward turns how blank a space!
How purposeless it tarries in its place!
Though moon and star and meteor-glance unite
In vain their shadowy message there to write,
Till the Sun shines in glory on its face,
Making all lesser glories pale apace—
The faithful Dial waits the larger light.'

Thou Sun of faith! who tarriest to shine out—
To light my life, and make its meaning plain,
What am I here without Thee? Look on me!
I wait Thy message in the night of doubt,
Whose alien glories visit me in vain—
Loyal in darkness to my thoughts of Thee.

E. BLAIR OLIPHANT.

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EASTER IN RUSSIA.

IN Russia, Easter constitutes the greatest festival of the year, and not only the greatest religious festival, but also the most important national holiday. For a whole week all places of business are shut, all banks and public offices, and the whole country gives itself up to pleasure and amusement.

Simple, light-hearted, and hospitable to a degree, a Russian when he takes holiday surrenders himself to the full enjoyment of it with all the eagerness and abandonment of a child. Not that plenty of opportunity is denied him. In his case, familiarity certainly does not breed contempt, for the public holidays in Russia amount to one-quarter of the year. But he welcomes each and every one with the same zest, though to none does he look forward with such happy anticipations as to Easter.

During the long cold winter months, this season of hope and joy has shone out like a beacon in the distance, the herald of spring, telling that summer with her sunshine and warmth is near. Sometimes it does happen that the great feast arrives in the midst of snow and frost. What does that matter? Spring must soon be there; and in a little while, with the marvellous rapidity which is one of the wonders of the Russian climate, all will be changed, and in the place of frost and snow, the tender blades of grass will show themselves above the hard ground; the violets will peep from under their green shelter, filling the air with their sweet fragrance; the trees will bow down beneath their load of white and pink blossoms; and nature will seem only to speak of a joyful resurrection and life.

The joy and happiness of Easter would appear to be only increased by the long fast which precedes the festival. Perhaps in no other country is Lent kept so strictly; not only is all meat forbidden, but milk, eggs, cheese, butter, and fish. Caviare, dried fish, and shellfish are allowed, and on Sundays and

Saturdays the rigour is a little lessened. The fast is kept usually most strictly by the peasants during the whole period it lasts; but the rich, unless very old-fashioned, only keep it during the first and last weeks.

The season of abstinence and mortification is ushered in by what is called the 'Butter-week,' corresponding somewhat to the Carnival—the last week in which butter is supposed to be allowed. During this time, every one eats 'blivnes,' a kind of pancake served with sour cream or melted butter and caviare. Festivities and merry-makings of all kinds are in full swing, to prepare for the dull period to follow. Lent always commences on a Monday, and from then till Easter the only break is Palm-Sunday, or, as it is called, Willow-Sunday. If the weather happens to be fine and warm, then the streets on the eve of Willow-Sunday present a pretty appearance. Peasants, with huge bundles of willow and palm branches, line the sides of the road. Peasant girls in their bright skirts and head-dresses stand at the church doors with baskets of artificial flowers, made by themselves, which they offer for sale to the passers-by. Every one must be provided with some flower or branch to carry into the church to be blessed by the priest. There is a curious custom among the peasants on this night, which gives rise to no little amount of rough play—namely, that whoever strikes another with the sacred flowers earns the right to a salute like that connected with our mistletoe at Christmas. On Sunday, when every one is exempt from fasting, the whole town seems to turn out of doors; and the people in their bright dresses, with the bunches of gaily-coloured flowers and fresh twigs, create an agreeable relief to the monotony of the preceding weeks.

The next six days are a universal fast, most rigorously kept. Visits are not paid; no amusements may take place; all are preparing for the solemn duty of confession and of partaking of the Holy Communion. Confession in

Russia is a duty enforced by the civil law upon every one at least once a year. So much importance is attached to this duty, that the first question put to a witness, after that respecting his name, is, 'When did you confess last?' Passion-week presents a curious contrast. A great deal of time is spent in church, and what is left is taken up with shopping, in anticipation of the great feast. Immense stores of eatables of all descriptions have to be bought in. Every one gives and receives presents, and much time and thought are expended in the preparation and colouring of the eggs, without which no Easter would be complete. These eggs are of all sorts, real eggs hard-boiled and coloured brightly, or wooden eggs, made and sold by the peasants. Indeed, one of the principal sights during Passion-week is the shops filled with eggs, not only the confectioner's with its chocolate and sugar wares, but the silversmith's with its lovely little egg-shaped cases, enclosing rings and other pretty articles.

At Easter, everybody considers it essential to appear in new clothes; so the milliners' and drapers' shops are crowded, and scarcely a single person can be seen who is not loaded with parcels—generals of high rank, 'popes' or priests, ladies of fashion; indeed, it would be strange to meet any one without some square, oblong, or round package in his hand. On Saturday the 'dvorniks' or porters struggle along the streets, weighed down by huge sacks of groceries, sweetmeats, and fruits of all kinds. In the houses, all is turmoil and confusion; for everything must be turned out, and every corner cleaned, the kitchen floors made as white as possible, and the tables spread. All this must be done on Saturday; Friday is too sacred. No work is done. All persons who possibly can are in church. Many even go into deep mourning. Then commences one of the most peculiar services—namely, the 'Burial of Christ.' During the usual vespers, the 'tomb of Christ' is brought from the holy place and set in the centre of the church; after which, at the head of a solemn procession of choir-boys and 'popes,' the representation of the 'body of Christ'—an oblong piece of silk having the painting of the dead Saviour upon it—is brought from the altar and laid upon the tomb. At night, a solemn service is held; and amidst the tolling of bells, and the soft, low chanting, the icon representing the body is placed in its last resting-place, the lights are put out, and it is left in the darkness.

On Saturday towards evening the streets become quiet; the shops are closed, so that at nine o'clock you wonder where all the busy throngs can be gone. But wait another hour, and what a change! All is again alive, but with this difference, that every one now has on his best things, has bathed, even to the poorest peasants, and is hurrying along to join in the wonderful midnight service, preparing for Easter, which is called the 'Splendour-bearing Sunday,' the 'Great and Holy Sunday,' the 'Opener of the Gates of Paradise,' the 'Sanctifier of the Faithful,' the 'Passage from Darkness to Light.'

We spent this memorable night with some

Russian friends. Meeting them about ten o'clock at their own house, we found them in elaborate evening dress, which must be either white or of a very light colour, with flowers and jewellery. A little before eleven we drove off, having elected to witness the ceremony in a chapel belonging to a large boys' school or 'gymnasium,' the cathedral being so crowded.

We found the finely decorated chapel filled, many officers in their uniforms, ladies and children beautifully dressed, giving almost the appearance of a ballroom. As in all Russian churches, there were no seats, every one being required either to kneel or stand, which makes the services very fatiguing. In the centre of the nave stood the tomb of Christ, covered with a black pall, and surrounded by lighted candles, showing a dim light over the rest of the chapel, which was not yet lit in any other way. The altar or sanctuary was hidden by the 'iconostasis,' which derives its name from the 'icons' or holy pictures depicted on it. It has three doors. On the right of the centre door on entering is always the icon of our Lord; on the left, that of the Virgin Mary; the rest those of saints, according to the devotion of the founder. In front of all the icons were ranged huge candelabra, holding great numbers of unlit candles, and having many little holes, in which the devotee could place other candles.

At a quarter to twelve, one priest appeared, then others; then the chanting, low and soft, commences with the 'Gospodi pomilni' (Lord, have mercy upon us) constantly repeated in chorus; and at every repetition the people cross themselves three times and bow to the ground. The effect was truly impressive: the dimly lighted chapel; the priests, just to be seen standing round the tomb in their robes of pure white and dazzling silver; the silent crowd around holding each one an unlighted taper in the hand; and the solemn chant, with no accompaniment—for organs are not allowed in the Eastern Church. Just before the midnight hour, the presiding priest came from behind the 'iconostasis,' where he had been praying inside the sanctuary, and advancing to the tomb, stooped, and discovered that the body of Christ was no longer therein. Raising himself, he announced the fact to the people; and then, in solemn procession, followed by the priests bearing the censers, and swinging them as they went, left the chapel to seek the place 'where they have laid Him.'

Through all the rooms they go, the solemn chant never ceasing, till, having searched everywhere and not found what they seek, the procession again reaches the chapel just on the stroke of twelve. All at once is heard in the distance the clear boom of the cannon announcing the hour of midnight. The priest, standing on the steps of the altar, swings his censer, and announces in tones which penetrate to the farthest corners of the edifice, 'Christós voskrés' (Christ hath risen), and the people answer him with one voice: 'Vo istinó voskrés' (In truth, He hath risen). The woman standing nearest the priest lights her taper at the consecrated one presented to her by him; her neighbour in turn receives the light from her; and so on, till in a minute, as it were, the

chapel was illuminated with a hundred lights. Fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, friends and relations, embraced one another, kissing three times on the forehead and either cheek and exchanging the Easter greeting. With all boys belonging to the 'gymnasium' the head-master exchanged the Easter kiss and greeting. The whole congregation, then passing before the priest, did the same with him, and high-mass now followed.

As we drove home through the streets, the illuminations were hardly necessary, so beautiful and clear was the moonlight. Along the sides of the roads, placed upon low posts, were small earthenware dishes containing a lighted wick floating in melted tallow, and producing a weird and singular effect.

Arriving home, we found the tables spread with a sumptuous repast, decorated with pots of beautiful flowers; cold joints of every description, ham and roast sucking-pig, regular Easter dishes which never fail. Then the servant enters, bringing with him the 'paskel' cheese, made from sour-milk; and the 'kulitch' or Easter cake, which is something like bread-cake with raisins in it. These, the cake and cheese, as well as a great bowl full of coloured eggs, have been taken down to the church to be blessed by the priests. In large establishments, a priest is invited to supper, in order that he may bless the whole table; indeed, some priests spend the whole night going from house to house performing this duty.

Before we sat down to supper, the servants came in, and were saluted by their mistress with the Easter greeting and presented with an egg. We sat talking and laughing far into the morning, and listening to the merry peals of bells ringing from the steeples of the numerous churches, almost deafening at times with their volume of sound.

The servants are never forgotten: they receive handsome presents, besides a large ham, several joints, a cheese and cake, and about twenty eggs each. They decorate their own table, after the fashion of peasants, with branches of willow, and place above it the holy picture, beneath which a lamp is kept burning. Then, till the holiday is over, the kitchen is the meeting-place of all their relations and friends; and no mistress dares put any restriction on the most unbounded hospitality.

Easter-Sunday morning broke fine and clear as we made our way home about nine o'clock. Not a soul was to be seen; the whole city seemed sleeping after the exertions of the night. By-and-by the streets will be again crowded; carriages with their gaily-dressed occupants and splendid black horses will come dashing along; visits must be paid, cards left, and congratulations offered to all the highest officials. Balls and parties, concerts and theatres, are the order of the day now; and when the week is over, life will gradually return to its ordinary routine. But, as we stood on one of the heights overlooking the sleeping city, the cupolas and domes of its many churches glittering in the morning sunshine—for it was in the old city of Kieff that we spent this Easter—the deep silence seemed eloquent of praise; and the warm air, the tender green, the sweet

scent of spring, to whisper to each other the beautiful words, 'Christ hath risen;' the soft breeze bringing back the answer, 'In truth, He hath risen indeed.'

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

CHAPTER V. (continued).

THEN the lord Lorenzo hastened to the cabinet of the Duke, whom he found pacing up and down, gnawing his finger-nails, and told him of what was done outside.

'I care not,' said the Duke. 'She shall take the vows! Let the pikemen scatter them.'

Lorenzo then besought him, telling him that all the city was in arms, and that the conflict would be great. But the Duke said still, 'She shall take the vows!' Nevertheless he went with Lorenzo, and came forth on to the top-most step of the portico. And when the people saw him they ceased for a moment to assail the pikemen and cried out, 'Give us back the Sacred Bones!'

'Scatter these fellows!' said the Duke to the Captain of the Guard.

'My lord, they are too many. And if we scatter them now, yet when we have gone against Count Antonio, they may do what they will with the city.'

The Duke stood still, pale, and again gnawing his nails; and the pikemen, finding the fight hard, gave back before the people; and the people pressed on.

Then Peter the furrier came forward, and the hottest with him, and mocked the pikemen; and one of the pikemen suddenly thrust Peter through with his pike, and the fellow fell dead; on which a great cry of rage rose from all the people, and they rushed on the pikemen again and slew and were slain; and the fight rolled up the steps even to the very feet of the Duke himself. And at last, able no longer to contend with all the city, he cried, 'Hold! I will restore the Sacred Bones!' But the people would not trust him, and one cried, 'Bring out the lady here before us and set her free, or we will burn the Palace.' And the Archbishop came suddenly and threw himself on his knees before the Duke, beseeching him that no more blood might be shed, but that the Lady Lucia should be set free. And the Duke, now greatly afraid, sent hastily the Lieutenant of the Guard and ten men, who came to the convent where Lucia was, and brooking no delay, carried her with them in her bedgown, and brought and set her beside the Duke in the portico of the Palace. Then the Duke raised his hand to heaven, and before all the people he said, 'Behold, she is free! Let her go to her own house, and her estate shall be hers again. And by my princely word and these same Holy Bones I swear that she shall not take the vows, neither will I constrain her to wed any man.' And when he had said this, he turned sharply round on his heel, and, looking neither to the right nor to the left, went through the great hall to his cabinet and shut the door. For his heart was very sore that he must yield to

Antonio's demand, and, for himself, he had rather a thousand times that the Bones of St Prisian had been burnt.

Now when the Duke was gone, the people brought the Lady Lucia to her own house, driving out the steward whom the Duke had set there, and, this done, they came to the Archbishop and would not suffer him to rest or to delay one hour before he set forth to carry the Duke's promise to Antonio. This the Archbishop was ready to do, for all that he was weary. But first he sent Lorenzo to ask the Duke's pleasure; and Lorenzo, coming to the Duke, prayed him to send two hundred pikes with the Archbishop. 'For,' said he, 'your Highness has sworn nothing concerning what shall befall Antonio; and so soon as he has delivered up the bones, I will set upon him and bring him alive or dead to your Highness.'

But the Duke would not hearken. 'The fellow's name is like stale lees of wine in my mouth,' said he. 'Ten of my pikemen lie dead in the square, and more of the citizens. I will lose no more men over it.'

'Yet how great a thing if we could take him!'

'I will take him at my own time and in my own way,' said the Duke. 'In God's name, leave me now.'

Lorenzo therefore got from the Duke leave for but ten men to go with the Archbishop, and to go himself if he would. And thus they set out, exhorted by the people, who followed them beyond the bounds of the city, to make all speed. And when they were gone, the people came back and took up the bodies of the dead; while the pikemen also took up the bodies of such of their comrades as were slain.

Yet had Duke Valentine known what passed on the hills while the city was in tumult, it may not be doubted, for all his vexation, that he would have sent the two hundred whom Lorenzo asked: never had he a fairer chance to take Antonio. For when the Count and those who had been with him to Rilano were asleep, Antonio's head resting on the golden casket, a shepherd came to the rest of the band and told them what had been done, and how all the country was in an uproar. Then a debate arose amongst the band, for, though they were lawless men, yet they feared God, and thought with great dread on what Antonio had sworn; so that presently they came altogether, and roused Antonio, and said to him, 'My lord, you have done much for us, and it may be that we have done somewhat for you. But we will not suffer the Sacred Bones to be burnt and scattered to the winds.'

'Except the Duke yields, I have sworn it, as God lives,' answered Antonio.

'We care not. It shall not be—no—not though you and we die,' said they.

'It is well: I hear,' said Antonio, bowing his head.

'In an hour,' said they, 'we will take the bones, if you will not yourself, my lord, send them back.'

'Again I hear,' said Antonio, bowing his head; and the band went back to the fire round

which they had been sitting, all save Martolo, who came and put his hand in Antonio's hand.

'How now, Martolo?' asked Antonio.

'What you will, I will, my lord,' said Martolo. For though he trembled when he thought of the bones of St Prisian, yet he clung always to Antonio. As for Bena and the others of the ten who had gone to Rilano, they would now have burnt not the bones only, but the blessed saint himself, had Antonio bidden them. Hard men, in truth, were they, and the more reckless now, because no harm had come to them from the seizing of the bones—moreover, Antonio had given them good wine for supper, and they drank well.

Now the rest of the band being gone back to their fire, and the night being very dark, in great silence and caution, Antonio, Tommasino, Martolo, Bena, and their fellows—being thirteen in all—rose from their places, and taking naught with them but their swords (save that Antonio carried the golden casket), they stole forth from the camp, and set their faces to climb yet higher into the heights of the hills. None spoke: one following another, they climbed the steep path that led up the mountain side; and when they had been going for the space of an hour, they heard a shout from far below them.

'Our flight is known,' said Tommasino.

'Shall we stand and meet them, my lord?' asked Bena.

'Nay, not yet,' said Antonio; and the thirteen went forward again at the best speed they could.

Now they were in a deep gorge between lofty cliffs; and the gorge still tended upwards; and at length they came to the place which is now named 'Antonio's Neck.' There the rocks came nigh to meeting and utterly barring the path; yet there is a way that one man, or at most two, may pass through at one time. Along this narrow tongue they passed, and, coming to the other side, found a level space on the edge of a great precipice, and, Antonio pointing over the precipice, they saw in the light of the day, which now was dawning, the towers and spires of Firmola very far away in the plain below.

'It is a better place for the fire than the other,' said Antonio; and Bena laughed, while Martolo shivered.

'Yet we risk being hindered by these fellows behind,' said Tommasino.

'Nay, I think not,' said Antonio.

Then he charged Tommasino and all of them to busy themselves in collecting such dry sticks and brushwood as they could, and there was abundance near, for the fir-trees grew even so high. And one of the men also went and set a snare, and presently caught a wild goat, so that they had meat. But Antonio took Bena and set him on one side of the way where the neck opened out into the level space; and he stood on the other side of the way himself. And when they stretched out their arms, the point of Bena's sword reached the hilt of Antonio's. And Antonio smiled, saying to Bena, 'He had need to be a thin man, Bena, that passes between you and me.'

And Bena nodded his head at Count Antonio,

answering, 'Indeed this is as strait as the way to heaven, my lord—and leads, as it seems to me, in much the same direction.'

Thus Antonio and Bena waited in the shelter of the rocks, at the opening of the neck, while the rest built up a great pile of wood. Then, having roasted the meat, they made their breakfast, Martolo carrying portions to Antonio and to Bena. And, their pursuers not knowing the path so well, and therefore moving less quickly, it was but three hours short of noon when they heard the voices of men from the other side of the neck. And Antonio cried straightway, 'Come not through at your peril! Yet one may come and speak with me.'

Then a great fellow, whose name is variously given, though most of those whom I have questioned call him Sancho, came through the neck, and, reaching the end of it, found the crossed swords of Antonio and Bena like a fence against his breast. And he saw also the great pile of wood, and resting now on the top of it the golden casket that held the Sacred Bones. And he said to Antonio, 'My lord, we love you; but sooner than that the bones should be burnt, we will kill you and all that are with you.'

And Antonio answered, 'I also love you, Sancho; yet you and all your company shall die sooner than my oath shall be broken.'

'Your soul shall answer for it, my lord,' said Sancho.

'You speak truly,' answered Antonio.

Then Sancho went back through the neck and took counsel with his fellows; and they made him their chief, and promised to be obedient to all that he ordered. And he said, 'Let two run at their highest speed through the neck: it may be they will die, but the bones must be saved. And after them, two more, and again two. And I will be of the first two.'

But they would not suffer him to be of the first two, although he prevailed that he should be of the last two. And the six, being chosen, drew their swords, and with a cry rushed into the neck. Antonio, hearing their feet, said to Bena, 'A quick blow is as good as a slow, Bena.' And even as he spoke the first two came to the opening of the neck. But Antonio and Bena struck at them before they came out of the narrowest part or could wield their swords freely; and the second two coming on, Bena struck at one and wounded him in the breast: and he wounded Bena in the face over the right eye; and then Bena slew him; while Antonio slew his man at his first stroke. And the fifth man and Sancho, the sixth, coming on, Antonio cried loudly, 'Are you mad, are you mad? We could hold the neck against a hundred.'

But they would not stop, and Antonio slew the fifth, and Bena was in the act to strike at Sancho, but Antonio suddenly dashed Sancho's sword from his hand, and caught him a mighty buffet, so that he fell sprawling on the bodies of the five that were dead.

'Go back, fool, go back!' cried Antonio.

And Sancho, answering nothing, gathered himself up and went back; for he perceived now that not with the loss of half of his men

would he get by Antonio and Bena; and beyond them stood Tommasino with ten whom he knew to be of the stoutest of the band.

'It is a sore day's work, Bena,' cried Antonio, looking at the dead bodies.

'If a man be too great a fool to keep himself alive, my lord, he must die,' answered Bena; and he pushed the bodies a little farther back into the neck with his foot.

Then Sancho's company took counsel again; for much as they revered the Sacred Bones, there was none of them eager to enter the neck. Thus they were at a loss, till the shepherd who had come along with them spoke to Sancho, saying, 'At the cost of a long journey, you may come at him; for there is a way round that I can lead you by. But you will not traverse it in less than twelve or thirteen hours, taking necessary rest by the way.'

But Sancho counting the time, cried, 'It will serve! For although a thousand came against him, yet the Count will not burn the bones before the time of his oath.'

Therefore he left fifteen men to hold the neck, in case Antonio should offer to return back through it, and with the rest, he followed the shepherd in great stealth and quiet; by reason of which, and of the rock between them, Antonio knew not what was done, but thought that the whole company lay still on the other side of the neck.

Thus the day wore to evening as the Archbishop with the lord Lorenzo and the Guards came to the spur of the hills; and here they found a man waiting, who cried to them, 'Do you bring the Duke's promise to the Count Antonio?'

'Yes, we bring it,' said they.

'I am charged,' said he, 'to lead the Archbishop and one other after the Count.' But since the Archbishop could not climb the hills, being old and weary, Lorenzo constrained the man to take with him four of the Guards besides; and the four bore the Archbishop along. Thus they were led through the secret tracks in the hills, and these Lorenzo tried to engrave on his memory, that he might come again. But the way was long and devious, and it was hard to mark it. Thus going, they came to the huts, and, passing the huts, still climbed wearily till they arrived near to the neck. It was then night, and, as they guessed, hard on the time when Antonio had sworn to burn the Sacred Bones; therefore they pressed on more and more, and came at last to the entrance of the neck. Here they found the fifteen, and Lorenzo, running up, cried aloud, 'We bring the promise, we bring the promise!'

But scarcely had he spoken these words, when a sudden great shout came from the other side of the neck; and Lorenzo, drawing his sword, rushed into the neck, the fifteen following, yet leaving a space between him and them, lest they should see him fall, pierced by Antonio and Bena. And Lorenzo stumbled and fell over the five dead bodies which lay in the way of the neck. Uttering a cry, 'What are these?' he scrambled again to his feet, and passed unhurt through the mouth of the neck, and the fifteen followed after him, while the Guards supported the Archbishop in their

hands, his chair being too wide to pass through the neck. And when they all thus came through, wild and strange was the sight they saw. For it chanced that at the same time Sancho's company had completed their circuit, and had burst from behind upon Antonio and the twelve. And when the twelve saw them, they retreated to the great pile and made a ring round it, and stood there ready to die rather than allow Sancho's men to reach the pile. It was then midnight, and the time of Count Antonio's oath. Count Antonio stood on the top of the great pile; at his feet lay the golden casket containing the Sacred Bones, and in his hand was a torch. And he cried aloud, 'Hold them, while I fire the pile!' and he leaped down and came to the side of the pile and laid his torch to the pile. And in an instant the flames shot up, for the pile was dry.

Now when Sancho's men saw the pile alight, with shouts of horror and of terror they charged at the top of their speed against the twelve who guarded the pile. And Lorenzo and his men also rushed; but the cries of Sancho's company, together with the answering defiance of the twelve, drowned the cries of Lorenzo; and Antonio and the twelve knew not that Lorenzo was come. And the flames of the pile grew, and the highest tongue of flame licked the side of the golden casket. But Antonio's voice rose above all, as he stood, ay, almost within the ambit of the fire, and cried, 'Hold them a moment, Tommasino—a moment, Bena—and the thing is done!' Then Lorenzo tore his casque from his head and flung down his sword, and rushed unarmed between Antonio's men and Sancho's men, shouting louder than he had thought ever to shout, 'The promise! the promise!' And at the same moment (so it is told—I but tell it as it is told) there came from heaven a great flash of lightning, which, aiding the glare of the flames, fully revealed the features of Lorenzo. Back fell Sancho's men, and Antonio's arrested their swords. And then they all cried as men cry in great joy, 'The promise, the promise!' And for a moment all stood still where they were. But the flames leaped higher; and, as Antonio had said, they were seen by the great throng that gazed from the city walls; and they were seen by Duke Valentine as he watched from the wall of his garden by the river; and he went pale, gnawing his nails.

Then the Count Antonio leaped on the burning pile, though it seemed that no man could pass alive through it. Yet God was with him, and he gained the top of it, and, stooping, seized the golden casket and flung it down, clear of the pile, even at the lord Lorenzo's feet; and when Lorenzo sought to lift it, the heat of it blistered his hands, and he cried out with pain. But Count Antonio, choked by the smoke, his hair and his eyebrows scorched by the fire, staggered half-way down the pile and then sank on his knees. And there he had died, but that Tommasino, Bena, and Sancho, each eager to outstrip the other, rushed in and drew him forth, and fetched water and gave it to him, so that he breathed again and lived. But the flames leaped higher and higher; and they said

on the city walls, 'God help us! God help us! The Sacred Bones are burnt!' And women, ay, and men too, fell to weeping, and there was great sorrow, fear, and desolation. And the Duke gnawed his nails even to the quick, and spat the blood from his mouth, cursing Antonio.

But Lorenzo, having perceived that the greater number were against Antonio, cried out to Sancho's men, 'Seize him and bring him here!' For the Duke's promise carried no safety to Antonio.

But Sancho answered him, 'Now that the Sacred Bones are safe, we have no quarrel with my lord Antonio;' and he and his men went and laid down their swords by the feet of Antonio, where he lay on the ground, his head on Tommasino's lap. So that the whole band were now round Antonio, and Lorenzo had but four with him.

'He asks war!' growled Bena to Tommasino. 'Shall he not have war, my lord?'

And Tommasino laughed, answering, 'Here is a drunkard of blood!'

But Count Antonio, raising himself, said, 'Is the Archbishop here?'

Then Lorenzo went and brought the Archbishop, who, coming, stood before Antonio, and rehearsed to him the oath that Duke Valentine had taken, and told him how the Lady Lucia was already free and in her own house, and made him aware also of the great tumult that had happened in the city. And Antonio listened to his tale in silence.

Then the Archbishop raised a hand towards heaven and spoke in a solemn and sad voice, 'Behold, there are ten of the Duke's Guard dead in the city, and there are twelve of the townsmen dead; and here, in the opening of the neck, there lie dead five men of those who followed you, my lord. Twenty-and-seven men are there that have died over this business. I pray more have not died in the city since I set forth. And for what has this been done, my lord? And more than the death of all these is there. For these Sacred Bones have been foully and irreligiously stolen and carried away, used with vile irreverence and brought into imminent hazard of utter destruction: and had they been destroyed and their ashes scattered to the four winds, according to your blasphemous oath, I know not what would have befallen the country where such an act was done. And for what has this been done, my lord? It has been done that a proud and violent man may have his will, and that his passion may be satisfied. Heavy indeed is the burden on your soul, my lord; yes, on your soul is the weight of sacrilege and of much blood.'

The Archbishop ceased, and his hand dropped to his side. The flames on the pile were burning low, and a stillness fell on all the company. But at last Count Antonio rose to his feet and stood with his elbow on Tommasino's shoulder, leaning on Tommasino. His face was weary and sad, and he was very pale, save where in one spot the flame had scorched his cheek to an angry red. And looking round on the Archbishop, and on the lord Lorenzo, and on them all, he answered sadly, 'In truth, my

Lord Archbishop, my burden is heavy. For I am an outlaw, and excommunicated. Twenty-and-seven men have died through my act, and I have used the Sacred Bones foully, and brought them into imminent peril of total destruction, according to my oath. All this is true, my lord. And yet I know not. For Almighty God, whom all we, whether honest men or knaves, men of law or lawless, humbly worship—Almighty God has His own scales, my lord. And I know not which thing be in those scales the heavier—that twenty-and-seven men should die, and that the bones of the Blessed St Prisian should be brought in peril, ay, or should be utterly destroyed—or again that one weak girl, who has no protection save in the justice and pity of men, should be denied justice and bereft of pity, and that no man should hearken to her weeping. Say, my lord—for it is yours to teach and mine to learn—which of these things should God count the greater sin? And for myself I have asked nothing; and for my friends here, whom I love—yes, even those I have killed for my oath's sake, I loved—I have dared to ask nothing. But I asked only that justice should be done and mercy regarded. Where, my lord, is the greater sin?

But the Archbishop answered not a word to Count Antonio; but he and the lord Lorenzo came and lifted the golden casket, and, no man of Antonio's company seeking to hinder them, they went back with it to the city and showed it to the people; and after that the people had rejoiced greatly that the Sacred Bones, which they had thought to be destroyed, were safe, the Archbishop carried the golden casket back to the shrine in the village of Rilano, where it rests till this day. But Count Antonio buried the five men of his band whom he and Bena had slain, and with the rest he abode still in the hills, while the Lady Lucia dwelt in her own house in the city; and the Duke, honouring the oath which he had sworn before all the people, did not seek to constrain her to wed any man, and restored to her the estate that he had taken from her. Yet the Duke hated Count Antonio the more for what he had done, and sought the more eagerly how he might take him and put him to death.

THE GREAT INDIAN SURVEY.

IN the last official decennial Report on the Progress and Condition of India (1882-92), issued from the India Office, it is incidentally mentioned that the great Trigonometrical Survey was approaching its centenary. It is now almost complete, only the triangulation of outlying parts of Burma and Beluchistan remaining in progress; and as it is one of the most remarkable works ever undertaken, and is renowned in other countries for the extent of the operations and the boldness of their conception, we propose to give a brief account of the scheme.

Up to the beginning of the present century the geography of the interior of the Indian Peninsula was little known. Rather more than a hundred years ago, Major Rennell, of the Hon-

ourable East India Company's service, did, as Surveyor-general of Bengal, survey and map out a large portion of the province; but for the most part, knowledge of the topography of the interior was derived only from the route-maps of travellers and of armies in the field. Route-surveys, however, are necessarily inaccurate; and about the beginning of the present century, one William Lambton, Captain and afterwards Colonel in the Company's service, drew up a plan for the measurement of a long 'arc of the meridian,' and for a Trigonometrical Survey of the whole of the southern portion of India. It is said that Lambton elaborated this plan on the suggestion of Colonel Wellesley (afterwards Duke of Wellington) in or about 1800. However this may be, the project was warmly supported by the Governor of Madras, and was sanctioned by the Government, with Colonel Lambton as Director of operations, and two Lieutenants of the Company's service as assistants. The first proceeding was to obtain a base-line, and this was obtained, after long and patient experiments, on a stretch of land about seven and a half miles long, near Madras, in April 1802. This, then, was the beginning of the Trigonometrical Survey of India, which has proceeded without cessation—except during the Mutiny—ever since, and is still going on.

But what is a Trigonometrical Survey? We will endeavour to explain.

It is easy enough to measure the distance from one place to another; but it is a complicated process to combine all the measurements and lay them down so accurately on paper as to form a perfect map, exact in all its proportions and dimensions. For such a purpose the method usually adopted is the Trigonometrical one, and Trigonometry, as every school-boy knows, is the measurement of triangles.

In preparing to map out a new country, then, the first thing to do is to form a base-line. Before this can be done, a good deal of superficial, or ocular, surveying is needed—the surveyors examining the ground carefully within an agreed radius, so as to gain a general idea of its main features and prominent marks. A place is then selected on which can best be drawn a long straight line within sight of flags placed at various points in such a way that lines drawn from one to the other will form a series of triangles. At least two of these flag-stations must be visible from the base-line, which has to be measured with the extremest accuracy.

Everything depends on the accuracy of the measurement of this base-line, for the slightest error in it will make all the rest of the work wrong. If possible, the ground at the base is levelled; but if this is impracticable, uprights are fixed, between which the measuring-chain can be stretched tight and true. Each end of the base-line is marked with a flagpost, and the

thing to determine within the minutest fraction of an inch is the exact distance between these flagposts. The measuring chain is first carefully tested and checked with a 'standard' chain, to which it must be exactly adjusted. This is a very troublesome job, because the variations of the temperature necessarily affect the metal of the chain. For this reason, one measuring does not suffice; but many measurements are taken along the base-line, back and forward, and day after day. No two of these measurements will agree absolutely, in spite of all the care taken; but after a great number of measurements have been noted of the same line, they are all added together, and divided by the number of times the measurement has been made. This gives what is known as the 'mean measurement,' and it is as near to the true length as can be obtained. The mean measurement of the base-line, then, forms the basis of the triangular survey.

Having obtained the dimensions of the base-line, the surveyor now brings into operation the theodolite, which is an instrument for measuring angles. With this instrument at one end of his base-line, he sights one of the distant flagposts, and measures the angle formed by it with the other end of the base-line. Then he goes over to the other end and measures the angle formed with the second distant flagpost. He is thus able to calculate the two sides of his triangle from the known length of the base, and the calculation is even more accurate than if each side were measured with the chain separately.

The third side of his first triangle gives him a base-line for a second triangle (formed by other flagposts, on hill-tops or other elevated ground where possible); and so he goes on laying down a network of triangles, which he carefully records on paper by drawing the plots on a fixed scale. On reaching the limit of the land to be mapped, or at some suitable point, he will test the accuracy of the work done by applying the measuring-chain to one side of the last triangle at which the stoppage is made. If the measurement by the chain agrees exactly, or sufficiently closely, with the measurement given by the triangular calculation, then it is all right, and a fresh start is made from the new base-line. But if the measurements do not correspond, then there has been some mistake somewhere, and the whole thing has to be gone over again from the very beginning, until perfect results are obtained.

In this way the face of a country is covered with a network of accurately measured triangles, which form the skeleton on which can be built up the body and details of the topography. To fill up the triangles is the work of the local surveyors, who within each triangle may form a series, or several series, of smaller triangles. To lay down, for instance, the line of a mountain-range, or of a river, or of a coast, the surveyor will measure the distances from the side of his triangle to the chief points of irregularity in the line of the river, coast, &c. These side measurements are called 'offsets,' and are carefully drawn on the triangular plan. To

complete the configuration, all that is needed is to draw lines between the outer ends of the 'offsets.' By means of these 'offsets,' and of smaller triangles and measured lines within the main triangles, the local surveyor fills in the details of the map.

This, in brief, is the process of triangulation, or Trigonometrical Survey. But in a large country like India, to form a continuous network of triangles from south to north would have made the progress too slow. Instead of a network, therefore, what is known as the 'gridiron' system has been adopted. The 'gridiron' means a series of chains of triangulation, running north and south, with cross connections east and west. These chains or strings of triangles leave large interior spaces to be filled up by the local surveyors, while the main survey goes on. The main triangles necessarily vary much in size with the character of the country, and in India have ranged from fifteen to thirty miles or so of base. Such long distances required the most perfect instruments, and involved great physical exertion. It will be obvious that to measure for checking purposes a base-line of several miles, must be a very much more difficult and arduous task than to measure one of, say, one mile.

A thing always aimed at in trigonometrical surveys is to have neither very acute nor very wide angles—never 'sharper' than thirty degrees, nor wider than a right angle (ninety degrees). For a base-line as great a length as possible is desirable, but in fact it is seldom practicable to get one of more than seven or eight miles in length, for the surface must be level and unencumbered enough to leave each end perfectly visible from the other, and to leave the signal-stations to form the first triangle visible from both ends. But when only a short base-line can be measured by the chain, there are methods of elaborating from it, by triangulation, lines as long as may be necessary.

When Colonel Lambton succeeded in laying down his base-line in 1802 near Madras, with the Observatory as a sort of starting-point, he used a chain similar to what some of us have seen used by the Ordnance Surveyors in this country. It was supported on tripods twenty feet high, and was adjusted and tightened by a delicate screw-arrangement. On each tripod was placed a thermometer, to determine the temperature of the chain, and the necessary corrections were made according to the rate of expansion. The steel chain was regulated by a standard chain, whose length had been fixed at a temperature of fifty degrees. Every degree Fahrenheit in the temperature required a correction of $\cdot 00725$ inch in the chain. It took forty-two days to measure the Madras base-line, before the first angle could be taken. Some thirty years later, Colonel Colby of the Irish Survey invented a self-correcting method of measuring lines by using bars instead of chains. These bars are composite of brass and iron, and so joined that movements of contraction and expansion take place evenly at the extremities. When this new apparatus was introduced, the old base-lines were re-measured with it, and the calculations revised.

From Madras, Lambton carried his triangles

inland, westward to Bangalore. This distance of one hundred and sixty miles occupied two years to cover, and then it was determined to measure with the chain a base of verification, as already explained. The measurement revealed a difference of only three and three-quarter inches from the calculation founded on the Madras base-line. The Bangalore line was then made the base of a fresh series of triangles right across to the west coast, at Mangalore. The distance across from Madras was then found to be three hundred and sixty miles, and not four hundred miles, as had up till then been given on the maps.

The new base-line at Bangalore was taken as the foundation of a long 'meridional' series of triangles to be carried right through the heart of the country from Cape Comorin, in the extreme south, to the Himalayas, in the extreme north. This is called, technically, the 'Great Arc Series,' and it is 1540 miles in length. Lambton first carried the triangulation southwards to Cape Comorin, where a base of verification was measured; and then, in 1811, began to work northward from Bangalore. But he was also working east and west, and by the year 1815 had laid down a complete network of triangles between Madras, Bangalore, and the Godavery River, although he was kept very short of money, and was constantly being harassed by Government officials, who could not be made to understand the utility of his operations.

Lambton had not only pecuniary difficulties and official opposition to contend with. The country was in a state of political disturbance. Yet he succeeded in demonstrating not only that the accepted breadth of the Peninsula at Madras was forty miles wrong, but also that Arcot was ten miles out of place on the maps; and that Hyderabad was eleven minutes in latitude and thirteen minutes in longitude wrong. The disturbed condition of Central India caused a suspension of the 'Great Arc' series of surveys for a while, and Lambton went south again to complete the network of triangles there. Later, he resumed the 'Great Arc,' and broke down under the severe exertion and exposure on the survey between Hyderabad and Nagpore. He died at a lonely spot in the Central Provinces, on the 20th of January 1823, and a modest pillar now marks the place where lies the body of the Father of the Great Indian Survey.

Colonel Lambton died at the age of seventy, and he had been twenty-one years engaged exclusively on this great work. His operations comprised a triangulation of 165,342 square miles, at a cost of £83,537. He was succeeded by Colonel Everest, whose memory is perpetuated in the name of one of the highest summits of the Himalayas. Everest, indeed, had been for some years Lambton's chief assistant, and had carried the 'gridiron' along the Bombay coast. When appointed Superintendent, he at once took up the 'Great Arc,' which in 1824 he carried up to Sironj, where he measured a base-line. Then he had to go home to recruit, and was absent for five years, during which the assistants carried on a chain of triangles east and west, known as the 'Calcutta Longitudinal' series. This series was completed on a measured base-

line of verification at Calcutta in 1832. This was, however, after Everest had returned to the head of affairs, and had taken out with him the new Colby measuring apparatus, which was for the first time in India applied to the Calcutta base-line.

Then the 'Great Arc' series of triangulations was resumed with ardour, as forming the main axis of the Trigonometrical Survey. A great deal of the work had to be done during the rainy season, for the sake of the clearer atmosphere then, but at the cost of much loss of health and life to the surveying party. In traversing the plains, permanent towers had to be erected to gain the necessary elevation, and this involved tremendous labour and delay. There were between Sironj and the hills seventeen of these towers, each fifty feet high, and each containing a stone platform, on which the instruments might rest without vibration. They were at great distances apart, and a special system of signalling, both for day and night, had to be devised.

A party was sent on ahead to prepare a site for a terminal 'base of verification' to complete the 'Great Arc' series. The site was selected in the Dehra Doon Valley, between the Sewalik hills and the Himalayas. When the calculations were corrected, the difference at the base-line as between triangulation and actual measurement was only seven inches and one-fifth. This shows how careful was the work, and how accurate the instruments. But some other verifications had to be made; and it was 1841 before the 'Great Arc,' the central meridional survey of India, was completed. It is a stretch of 1540 miles; it comprises an area of triangulation about 57,000 square miles, and the triangulation had occupied nearly forty years.

In the same year (1841) the Bombay longitudinal series was also completed, extending a distance of 315 miles, and comprising an area within the triangulation of 15,198 square miles.

Now had to be undertaken a series of parallel meridional chains to the 'Great Arc' with cross-connections, to complete the 'gridiron.' Colonel Everest retired in 1843, broken down in health; and it was he who introduced the gridiron or intersecting chains of triangles, in preference to the continuous network with which operations began in the south.

The work of the several chains, or arcs, has been carried on by different parties, and under successive leaders, from year to year. The mortality among the officials of the Survey has been very heavy; and the swamps and jungles of India have exacted fearful tribute for the imposition of the measuring-chain. It would take too long, and would be too tedious to name all the technical and territorial divisions of the work; but we may say that the 'North-eastern Himalayan' series formed a sort of cap to the whole, by connecting the northern ends of the several chains of triangles, and forming a sort of framework for the gridiron. This Himalayan series includes some of the highest mountains in the world, whose heights and distances had to be determined—including Mount Everest, 29,000 feet above the sea. East and west, north and south, the work of triangulation has proceeded since the completion of the 'Great Arc' without

intermission, save during the Mutiny; and in 1883, the main triangulation, or gridiron, was completed over an area of a million square miles. But since then, the chains have been extended eastwards into Burma, and westwards towards Beluchistan and Afghanistan; while all the time, as the framework was being built up, and since, the work of filling up the triangles with details has been industriously going on. The gridiron is the skeleton upon which every contour and feature of the country has to be impressed. The whole system of the Indian Survey now rests upon ten measured base-lines, all now revised with the Colby apparatus—namely, at Cape Comorin, Bangalore, Beder, Sironj, and Dehra Doon; at Calcutta and Sonakoda; at Attock, Karachi, and Vizagapatam.

The Great Indian Trigonometrical Survey has been a marvel of patient persistence and of resolute grappling with obstacles of the most stupendous kind. It remains a model of precision and accuracy, certainly not the least noble of the monuments to British skill, energy, and devotion to duty.

THE ANGEL OF THE FOUR CORNERS.*

II.—THE COMING OF THE FIDDLER.

THE dance of the Little Wolf had been a success, and now Medallion bustled in and out among them, breaking them up into groups, while they kept calling for another dance. As he passed Marie, he whispered to her: 'Well done, Ma'n'selle, well done! But you must find another Prince, *toute suite!*'

She shook her head at him, laughing in a plaintive kind of way, but said nothing.

Just then, there was a bustle at the door. 'Vigord! Is it Vigord?' some cried.

It was not Vigord, but the crowd parted, making way for a young man, tall, with a handsome, clean-shaven face, warm, keen, dark eyes, and a strong brow above them. He smiled in a grave kind of way on them, turning his face from right to left, as though looking for some one. He carried under one arm a violin. Every one knew the old battered box. It was Vigord's.

'Why, it's Vigord's, it's Vigord's fiddle!' said Antoine.

'Yes, it's Vigord's fiddle,' said the young man, still looking round. 'Vigord is down at the house of Big Babiche. He was taken sick. I saw him there, and told him I would fetch the fiddle and play for you—and here I am!'

He tossed his hand up in a gay, free fashion. Just then he saw a face looking out at him from behind half-a-dozen others—a pale, half-frightened, bewildered face, with the eyes full of an anxious questioning, and a smile, too, struggling for life about the lips—just such a smile as might falter at the lips of one condemned to death, who thought he saw the bearer of a reprieve. God gives even the poor, the laborious, and the foolish of this world, whose brains are set to shine under gray skies, moments of wisdom and of feeling so deep, that all the

rest of their lives, in days and months and years, are as nothing beside those moments; as a guarantee that, at the end, as at the beginning, all souls are the same, and the rest is according to the Angel of the Four Corners, who wards the thousand paths of life.

Something in the young man's look warned her, and she dropped her eyes, while he came on, the crowd still gathering around him.

'You will play for us, then? you will play for us?' they cried.

'Yes, I'll play for you,' he answered, his eyes wide open and shining like two black diamonds. 'But see,' he continued. 'I must have the prettiest girl in the parish to supper, and at every fourth dance she must sit beside me while I play.' He laughed as he said it, and tossed his fingers again in an airy, gallant fashion. It was strange, too, this buoyant manner, for, in spite of his flashing eyes and smiling lips, there was a grave, ascetic expression behind all—something of melancholy, too, in the turn of his straight, manly body.

Medallion, standing apart, watched him musingly. He had not seen that first glance at Marie, or Marie's glance in return, but he felt there was something strange and uncommon in the man. He had the bearing of a gentleman, and his voice was that of education and refinement. The girls simpered and whispered among themselves, and the men turned with one consent to Marie.

'Well, it must be Marie,' said Antoine. 'She's the prettiest girl in the parish.'

'Yes, Marie! Marie!' said others.

Alphonse had a mind to speak, but he dared not, for he saw that he could not contradict Antoine, and he also saw that Marie would be handed over to this handsome stranger.

'Good!' said the stranger. 'Then, let it be Marie—not looking toward her. 'That is,' he added, 'if Marie—is willing.'

Now they made way for her to come forward, and said: 'Here—here she is.'

Marie came down slowly, not looking at the stranger, and his eyes did not dwell upon her face. They rose no higher than her neck, where she wore a little cross of gold.

'Good!' he said again—'good!' Then, as she came nearer, he continued, in an off-hand way: 'My name is Camille—Marie.'

She did no more than whisper the words 'Monsieur Camille,' and held out her hand, still not raising her eyes to his face.

He took her hand and clasped it. As he did so, a sound almost like a moan broke softly upon her lips. There was so much noise and chattering, that perhaps no one noticed it except Babette and Medallion, but they were watching—watching.

All at once Marie broke away with a wild, little laugh. 'Chut!' she said, as she danced in among the other girls, changed all in an instant; 'he'll be tired of me before the thing's over.'

'Yes,' said Medallion under his breath, 'as he was before. Yet I'm not so sure, either.' However, Medallion was only speculating.

Ten minutes after, Monsieur Camille was seated on a little platform at the end of the room, raised about six inches from the floor,

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playing for the dancers. Marie was dancing with Alphonse. 'You think he's handsome?' asked Alphonse fervently.

'Oh, he's so vain!' she said. 'Look at the way he switches the bow!'

'And listen how he calls off the dances,' continued Alphonse, delighted—not half so good as Vigord, and such airs! such airs!—'Who's he, anyhow? We don't know. Likely some scalliwag from Quebec.'

'Perhaps he's a Prince!' said the girl, laughing.

'Prince? Bosh! Where's his moustache?' Alphonse stroked his own carelessly, one arm around Marie's waist. 'Why, he's shaved like a priest.'

Something peculiar flashed into Marie's eyes, and she looked for a moment inquiringly at Alphonse. 'Yes, just like a priest,' she said.

The dance went on. Monsieur Camille's clear, resonant voice rang out over the heads of the dancers: 'Ladies' chain—there you go—right and left—balance to partners—promenade all! And so on; the words bending and inflecting to the music like a song, with here and there a laughing phrase thrown in at a stumbling *habitant*, or a pretty compliment to some blushing girl, whose eyes, as well as her feet, danced a reply to the Master of the Revels. Never was such music heard in the parish of Pontiac. Vigord's sun had gone out in darkness, and Monsieur Camille's was at high noon. Already had Medallion made friends with the fiddler, and had become at once Monsieur Camille's lieutenant in the jocund game. For Medallion had no vanity, and he knew a man of parts when he found him, and loved the man for the parts.

In the third dance, Marie took her place on a chair beside Monsieur Camille. The crowd gave a little cheer for her—for them both—before the dance began, and then they were all hard at it, heel and toe, knee and elbow, warm shoulder to warm shoulder, enjoyment panting through the room. Suddenly Monsieur Camille's voice was heard as he paused at the beginning of a set.

'It's my turn to talk. Who'll call off the dance? Will you?' he added, looking at Medallion.

Medallion nodded, and took up the parable. The music was riotous, and Medallion's voice abundantly cheerful, as he danced with Babette.

And now behind the joyous riot there passed a little drama.

'Do you wonder why I've come—Marie?' said the Master of the Revels.

'Why have you come?' she asked.

'Have you forgotten my name?' he urged reproachfully.

'Why shouldn't I?'

'That's so—that's so!' he answered.

'You told me to forget it,' she added.

'That's true!' he agreed sorrowfully.

There was a pause, in which nothing was said between them, and then, in an awed, shrinking kind of voice, she said: 'Are you—a priest—now?'

His voice in reply had a kind of disdainful recklessness. 'Do you think I'd be here if I

was?' He drew the bow across the E string with a vigour more raw than sweet.

'How should I know?' she answered. 'Am I—my brother's—keeper?' He winced, and the bow rasped on the E string, so that the dancers looked up wonderingly; but Monsieur Camille's head was only nodding to the music, and the dancing went on the same. Still, her arrow had gone home; for he remembered when, in the shadow of the great Cathedral in Quebec, one Christmas eve, he had bid her forget him as Camille, her lover, and think of him only as Camille, her brother, who was vowed to become a priest.

Sorrow and pain had sharpened her mind, as only these things can sharpen the mind of a woman. This was not the simple, loving girl from a country village, who had stolen his heart while he studied in Laval Seminary. This was a little woman, grown, oh! so bitterly wise. And when a woman grows bitter and wise, the bravest should be humble, for she needs the help of neither gods nor men to aid her tongue.

'When did you become a priest?' she asked, with slow inquisition.

'A fortnight,' he said, 'is the time fixed.'

'Then, as I said, why do you come?' she asked sharply.

'Can't you understand?' he replied with a strong rush of feeling.

'Shouldn't a priest be about his Father's business, not at a dance?' she replied scornfully.

'Marie, Marie! aren't you glad to see me?' he said—'running all this risk, as I do?' He had his eyes on the little cross at her throat. He had once given it to her.

'I have my own confessor,' she replied—'the good Father Fabre. I don't need another.' Her fingers felt for the cross, then suddenly dropped it. She got to her feet.

'Marie, Marie!' he whispered.

But with a laugh she sprang down from the little platform among the dancers and caught Medallion's arm.

With rollicking laughter, Medallion swung both her and Babette through the flirting changes of a cotillon.

POISONS AND THEIR ANTIDOTES.

'DEATH by poisoning!' How often that heading attracts our attention to some paragraph in the daily paper. We are not much impressed, perhaps, the case seems so far removed from our own individuality. It is only when some one near and dear to us inadvertently takes an overdose of poison, that we suddenly realise the awful fear, pain, and anxiety, attendant upon death by poisoning. What is to be done? The first thing is to send for a doctor; then, while waiting for his arrival, try and find out the sort of poison which has been taken. If the patient is too ill to give any details for himself, watch the symptoms, for by them it is quite possible to judge which antidote will be best under the circumstances.

Poisons may be divided into three classes:

Corrosives, Irritants, and Neurotics. In poisoning by corrosives, of which sulphuric acid, nitric acid, and hydrochloric acid are the chief, pain and discomfort follow immediately after swallowing. The action of these acids in burning and destroying everything with which they come in contact is so prompt and so fatal that it is impossible to give an antidote in time. A little calcined magnesia beaten up in water or milk is the best thing, and helps to alleviate the acuteness of the pain. Or, if no magnesia should be handy, a little whiting, or even common plaster from the wall ground up in water, is a good remedy. It is frequently the very simplest things which are the most efficacious.

Irritants are known by the violent purging and sickness which commence almost immediately after the dose. Encourage the vomiting by every means in your power; a tablespoonful of salt, or the same quantity of mustard in lukewarm water, will produce the necessary sickness. The chief irritants are salts of zinc, tin, silver, iron, as also croton oil, and, in large doses, scammony and gamboge.

Neurotic poisons act directly upon the nerves, and opium is the chief of this class. The symptoms differ widely from those following poisoning by acids. The patient has only one desire—to be allowed to sleep, and that is precisely what he must on no account do: sleep in this case means death. The stomach pump is the best thing to be used, but only a doctor can use it, therefore, while awaiting his arrival, give the patient a strong emetic and keep him awake somehow. If the first few hours can be safely tided over, there is much less danger; and twenty-four hours will generally see him practically restored to health. A cup of strong black coffee is an excellent antidote; and a galvanic-battery shock, if obtainable, would be most useful.

So much for poisons in general; now for a few details about some of those we are most in the way of hearing of as causing illness or death. Nuxvomica and strychnine may be placed together, inasmuch as their symptoms are similar and the same antidote can be used in each case. These poisons cause violent convulsions and spasms closely resembling tetanus or lockjaw. An emetic must be given at once. Powdered charcoal in a little water is the best antidote. The action of the poisons is so rapid, and the results so fatal, that it is almost useless to hope for recovery after a strong dose. The most that can be done—after the emetic and charcoal—is to keep the patient as quiet as possible by giving him an occasional whiff of chloroform or ether to allay the spasms and deaden the pain.

Aconite is really the plant monkshood, found in nearly every garden, and is one of the most fatal poisons known. One form in which it may be inadvertently taken is in mistaking the root, in winter, for that of horse-radish, which

it closely resembles. When taken, it causes a tingling sensation in the mouth, quickly followed by the feeling known as 'pins and needles' in the hands and feet; this again being succeeded by numbness. An emetic must be given at once, followed by some charcoal, or a strong cup of tea or coffee, the tea to be boiled a minute or two, that all the tannin may be extracted.

Arsenic is frequently used in medicines, and in small doses is of great use for skin diseases. One also hears of it being used by ladies for the improvement of their complexions. The results at first are very good, but soon the skin looks puffy and opaque, the eyes smart, and the eyelids thicken; the hair also looks dull and lifeless. In cases of poisoning by arsenic, an emetic must be given first, then raw eggs beaten up in milk, charcoal, or hydrated oxide of iron (from a chemist).

Belladonna is a poison obtained from the deadly nightshade, which flowers in England during the months of June and July. Children especially are attracted by the pretty berries. The patient is inclined to sleep, but not quietly, as in the case of opium-poisoning; on the contrary, he is violent and delirious. Give an emetic at once, and do not let him sleep. Use the battery if possible, and give strong black coffee.

Prussic acid is so speedy and so fatal in its action, that there is rarely time for an antidote to be administered. A little ammonia may be given; and if the dose has been small, hydrated oxide of iron may be used, as for arsenic.

Mercury resembles the corrosive poisons in its symptoms. Albumen is the best antidote; white of egg should therefore be given, beaten up in milk.

Oxalic acid must be treated as the other acids, with magnesia in water or milk, or common chalk. Always give the calcined magnesia (the oxide); the carbonate generates too much carbonic acid, which would only aggravate the evil.

Laburnum seeds are often eaten by children, and produce vomiting, purging, and cramp. An emetic of mustard and warm water or of ipecacuanha wine, half an ounce for the dose, must be given at once; the patient must also be made to take a little brandy or ammonia, after the emetic has acted, to ward off all fear of collapse.

It is very rare that a case of acute lead-poisoning comes under one's notice; the illness is gradual in its onset. Painters are most liable to suffer from it, though cases have been known arising from people sleeping in newly painted rooms, or from taking snuff which has been wrapped up in lead paper. The first noticeable symptom is acute pain in the stomach; and if the mouth of the patient be examined, there will be found a faint blue line along the gum where it joins the teeth. If not treated at once, the whole body suffers, becoming thin and emaciated. The muscles in the arms and shoulders lose their strength, and are useless, so that the patient is unable to lift the smallest things. One's first endeavour must be to get rid of the poison. Give frequent doses of Epsom salts—half an ounce to the dose—and allow the

patient to have a warm bath. After the salts have acted, a quarter of a grain of belladonna may be given to relieve pain. The salts must be continued in small doses, while full doses of iodide of potassium should be given to try to remove all the lead still in the system. The weakened muscles must be treated by electricity and massage.

Copper-poisoning is caused by allowing verdigris to accumulate in kettles or saucepans used for cooking. Great care should be taken to thoroughly clean and dry these vessels after using. In cases of poisoning, vomiting must be induced by large draughts of warm water containing tannic acid.

Mackerel and mussels are distinctly poisonous to some people, and when that is the case, and vomiting does not result from the eating of them, it must be induced by an emetic of mustard and warm water. The symptoms are violent pain in the head and stomach, and a feeling of nausea. In most cases, sickness and purging commence almost immediately after eating, and must on no account be stopped until all the poisonous matter has been expelled. Afterwards, the patient will be found very much exhausted, and must be given a little brandy and soda water and allowed to sleep as long as possible.

THE MEN IN STONE.

By C. J. CUTCLIFFE HYNÉ.

It is not always a desirable thing to come into possession of a large and beautiful estate. I used to think otherwise; but when I came to learn how, by your English laws, landed property could be hobbled by mortgage, and second mortgage, and third mortgage, and other mortgages, then I had to change my opinion. An active and fatal hereditary curse which I was forced to take up with the rest of the succession also helped in part to warp my mind to this unorthodox opinion. My upbringing had been in the Western States of the American Union; and when I landed in Liverpool, I was as firm a disbeliever and as eloquent a scoffer on the matter of family curses as any man in the Eastern hemisphere. Afterwards, I came to change opinion; but that was not until I learned how this ban had horribly deprived no fewer than four of my own progenitors of life, and had seen with my own eyes what was left of their mortal bodies, monstrous in death.

My inheritance of the estate was a thing of blank surprise to me. I had almost forgotten its existence, so remote was my collateral relationship to the last owner. But when the lawyer's letter came which announced the succession, I gladly gave up nothing in Seattle, Washington State, and shipped to England, where I fancied a very considerable something awaited me.

I must confess, however, that after landing, my spirits were damped from the outset. The rambling Elizabethan house was gloomy as a cave. The family man of business who received me was a glum old file, whose talent lay in bringing up the darkest side of everything. I

thought at first that he resented me as practically a foreigner: looked upon me as an interloper. But this was not so. Dismalness as regards the affairs of the Devlin estate was the man's chronic attribute; and when I came to know more about my predecessors in the holding, I began to understand why this should be so. The lives and the ends of the men who had been before me as heads of that ill-starred family were not conducive to mirth on the part of any one who was paid to overlook them.

We were dining when Mr Field, the lawyer, gave me a first brief outline of how my ancestors had fared, and I account it that I am stout-hearted when I say that the recital did not take away my appetite. Of nine men who had sat where I sat then, in the high carved chair at the head of the black oak dining-table, no more than three had died peaceably in their beds. Of the rest, one had been slain in a brawl brought on by his own savagery; another had been done to death by some unknown marauder who would have despoiled him of his papers; and of other four, who should say how Fate had dealt with them? They were here to-day: to-morrow, they were not; and no man could say whence they had gone, or of what nature was their end.

'Of all of these unfortunate gentlemen, except one,' said Mr Field in conclusion, 'I only know through the hearsay of history. But of the last victim of this mysterious ban, Mr Godefroy Devlin, to whom you, sir, succeeded, I can tell you a little more. I warn you that the little I know is meagre and unsatisfactory; but I think right that you should hear it. Who can say but what, joined to other knowledge which you will acquire from the iron box of family papers marked "Private," it may help you (in some manner which I myself cannot discern) to avoid the fate which has befallen Mr Godefroy and so many of his forebears?

'You must know then, sir, that the estate in Mr Godefroy's time was, as it always had been, desperately encumbered. Mr Godefroy was a thoughtful man; careful almost to nearness; and deeply impressed with his responsibility of putting the family affairs on a more sound financial basis. To this end he lived with the utmost quietness, and put aside every penny he could spare; I regret to say, without much visible avail. Monetary fortune seemed always against him. He left the estate as he found it fifteen years earlier, still heavily encumbered, as you will discover when to-morrow you go into the accounts.

'Please mark, then, that it was not till after fifteen years of ineffectual struggle—or, to be more precise, fifteen years and four months—that he made up his mind to attempt another course. He did it with a heavy sense of impending misfortune, and nothing but so protracted a series of dismal failures could have nerved him to the essay. And believe me here, sir, that I do not speak without the book. Mr Godefroy told me all this himself; told me also that he had known of the venture he was now going to put to the test throughout all his period of possession; and nothing short of despair could have shouldered him

into it. I sought to restrain him, considering it my duty to do this. He waived my suggestions impatiently aside. "Mr Field," he said, "I have been a coward now for fifteen years, and have despised myself afresh every morning I woke. Life on these terms is no longer endurable. If I succeed in restoring this estate, why, then, I do succeed; if I fail, I shall have died in an honourable attempt."

"What you tell me, Mr Godefroy," said I, "is—pardon the comment—vague and mysterious. Surely some practical method could be found of avoiding the danger you so feelingly hint at. We live now in the nineteenth century, and I myself value nothing a wordy curse propounded in the year of our Lord sixteen ninety; and I fancy that most other men are of my way of thinking. I cannot, of course, compel your confidence; I am speaking in a measure through the dark; but I cannot help thinking that if you shared this gloomy secret of yours with some responsible person, a means might be found whereby the dangers you allude to might be sensibly counteracted."

"He broke out at me passionately. "Do you imagine," he cried, "that I have not already thought this out a hundred score of times myself? Do you think me dolt enough to run into a horrible unknown danger if I could take with me a companion who could shield that danger aside?"

"Yes, sir, those were Mr Godefroy's very words—"Horrible unknown danger;" and I judge from them that he was as ignorant of what he felt himself called upon to face as you and I are this moment. But I had no more from him. He curtly informed me that he was shortly about to make his attempt, and that if he disappeared, I was to "presume" his death in the ordinary legal course, and put myself in communication with the next-of-kin."

The old lawyer prosed on till deep into the night, but I must confess that his droning tones well-nigh sent me into a doze. You see, I was American bred, and thought little then of ancestral curses, and vague dangers that could stand against a pocket weapon of '38 calibre.

As I have told you, later on I had my eyes opened; and an inspection of the papers in that iron box marked 'Private' began the process.

It was with a preliminary feeling of eeriness that I made the key grate through the rusty wards of the strong-box's lock. Sooner than let the papers which I was going to view pass into alien hands, one of my ancestors had delivered up life itself. The stiff hinges screamed as the lid swung back, and I was astonished to find the interior was well-nigh empty. It contained but one slim yellow packet, bound about with a thong of leather, and nothing beside, unless one takes account of some gray flue, and a blotch or so of ancient spider's web.

The packet was labelled on the outside in a mean cramped handwriting: 'To my son, Anno 1690, Chaucer d'Evlin;' and underneath were docketts by the various holders—'Read by me, George d'Evlin, 1709.' 'By me, Armytage

Devlin, 1723;' and so on down, and the signature of Godefroy Devlin, who had made perusal some sixteen years before myself.

Curiosity did not permit me to linger long over the exterior. Unknottng the thong, I dashed at once amongst the contents. Here, however, my haste was stayed. The crabbed old penmanship, the queer dead forms of expression, made a puzzle which I was many a weary hour in disentangling; and even when the task was completed, and a fair copy of what I judged to be the just translation lay on the desk before me, the import of it bewildered me much. The letter was merely a long vague rambling statement of fact. About this much-threatened curse there was no more mention than one finds in a table of logarithms.

Paraphrased, the contents amounted to this: The old gentleman who in 1620 put quill to that yellow paper, had by one means and another scraped together a goodly inheritance. But knowing the ways of the world, he foresaw it possible that some of his descendants, either through personal extravagance, or political uproar, or some other cause, might dissipate this, and stand in need. On which account he here spoke of a treasure hidden away, to be broached only in case of the most urgent necessity. To discourage its being unhoarded without due cause, he warned any raider that the approach was a matter of trouble and much personal danger.

This made up the contents of the first two folios. The remaining sheet gave directions for unearthing the booty; and I had a sort of vague fancy that it was in a different hand of writing, as if (perhaps) it had been penned at some subsequent time.

The searcher was directed to a certain moor in the neighbourhood (giving the name) 'at a time when a low-flying moon shall cast the shadow of Wild Boar Pike into the fall of Stanton's Ghyll. At the point where the rim of this shadow cuts the midway line between the great stone monuments which uprear from the floor of the moorland, there lies a mossy cleft which receives a runlet of water. Within, this mouth widens, leading to the lip of a prodigious deep pit, which in turn gives entrance to the bowels of the mountain. In the depths below this lies that which if brought to shrewd use shall reset up this my house, which thou (my son) hast made to totter. Yet guard against being overlooked in that thy search, for should human eye espy thee, so surely shall this treasure which is buried for thy maintenance be reft entirely from thee.'

Now it was the very plainness and simplicity of these instructions which troubled me. In this original document there was no mention of curse whatever; yet current gossip spoke confidently of an active ban, and the mysterious disappearance of those four Devlins (all of whom had read precisely what I read then) seemed to give definite ground for the rumour.

I puzzled over this point for many days, making neither head nor tail out of it, and at last resolved to go the one step further. Money I must have, or else return to the old drudging life on the Pacific slope. The estate was

dipped to the neck, and because of the cursed entail, I could not sell the acreage of a penny piece. I wrote to the next heir, telling him how matters stood. But he did not feel the pinch. He was a sordid fellow, rich himself, and gunmaker in Birmingham; and he refused to break the entail. To remain as I was, meant common starvation, neither more nor less. The warning of what had happened to my four predecessors in the quest was grim enough, Heaven knows. But my needs were great, and they rode it down.

Too impatient to wait for moonlight, I set out there and then in the full glare of day for the upper ground. I found a wide upland plateau walled in on either side by steep gray cliffs of limestone. One of these ran up to Wild Boar Pike, a bare grim crag of stone that was an eminence for miles round. The Pike made a sky-line running up at a gentle slope from the north-east, till it finished in a little nipple of rock, and then being cut away vertically for a thousand feet as stunt as the end of a house.

The fall of Stanton's Ghyll was a patch of noisy whiteness two miles away in a slantwise direction on the opposite hill face; and the 'great stone monuments' were two jagged outcrops of rock, which sprouted in bare loneliness from the flat floor of the valley.

It seemed to me at first blush that old Chaucer d'Emlin's cross-bearings were simple enough to work out, despite the slightly fantastic way in which they were written; and congratulating myself that I had no cause to blunder about the moor in the night-time, I hazarded a guess at the course of the shadow, and set about searching for the cleft which received the little stream. All around me was rough bare brown moorland, patched here and there with pea-green plateaus of bog, and here and there with conical pits, where some cave in the limestone beneath had broken in. The place was noisy with the screams of curlew and the crowsings of startled grouse.

I searched that day, and the next, and for many days afterwards, but found no trace of entrance to the regions beneath. And then I took to poacher-prowlings by night; but many a weary black hour passed before a moon threw the Pike's shadow on to the waterfall.

Yet at last a chance was given me. The night was windy and full of noise; cold besides; and clouds were riding in the heavens at racing pace. The walk was a long and a rough one, and I sat down under the lee of a rock to wait. At times, the ring of the moon glared out with crisp distinctness, crawling along low in the sky below the Wild Boar's haunch. More often, the drift of cloud-banks eclipsed it. Then in its creeping progress it drew behind the upward slope of the Boar's back, and I lost sight of it altogether. I knew only of its presence from now and then a reflected glow from an upper stratum. But as it drew ahead, a fan of light stole out from the vertical wall of the Pike, and spread up the valley; and as the moon swept on, the edge of this light-fan drifted backwards down the valley, driving the black swathe of shadow before it.

At last the creeping shadow of the Pike with

the first moon-ray on its heels swung into the little gorge of the waterfall, and the valley floor was ruled in half by a clean line of inky black. I glanced up. One of the jagged stone 'monuments' was brilliant in moonlight; the other bristled through the gloom behind me like some great uncouth beast; I was standing in the direct line between the two. The mark of the shadow cut this not a score of yards from my feet in the centre of a patch of oozy green.

A cloud drifted over the moon then, and the moorland was filled with cold rustling gloom. But I had learned enough to find out if old Chaucer d'Emlin's words were true. I had marked down the spot, and ran to it, with the dark bog-water squelching over my boots. But in the middle of the patch the water drained away; and listening, I could hear a silvery tinkle which came to my ears between the gusts of the gale.

With growing excitement I tore the moss away eager-handed. Beneath was wet shining rock, cleft with a two-foot gash that was floored with pebbles. Dropping down upon these away from the draught of the gale, I lit my lantern and found before me a gallery sloping gently downwards with the strata. It was partly earth-fissure—partly water-worn; and it led me along for forty yards. Then I stopped, and saw before me evidence of those who had been before.

In the rock-floor was a shaft, fluted and smoothed, descending vertically downwards towards I knew not what abysses. It was a formation common enough in limestone, and known as a Pot.

Across the mouth of this was a new-cut beam laid, and from the beam depended a knotted rope which hung lankly and wetly down till my lantern's glow could trace it no farther in the heavy darkness. Down that rope Godefroy Devlin had met his fate; down other similar ropes three of his forebears had preceded him into eternity.

Shall I be written coward if I confess that standing there in that still black silence, a heavy chill came over me as I gazed downwards, which not even the cold of the cave would account for?

Now it seemed to me that, if I waited, my courage would ooze still further away. So I made a dash at the attempt with all the blind haste of fright. I had with me a rope, and tied that fast to the beam alongside the knotted rope of Godefroy Devlin, watching with a shudder the snaky coils as they disappeared in the blackness of the Pot. Then I seized the two. I had descended two man-lengths when I remembered the light. In my hurry and scare I had left it behind. Ascending once more, I tied it to my neck, but finding it inconvenient there, slung it by a string round my ankle. The change saved my life.

Fathom after fathom I descended, the smooth stone sides of the shaft always keeping their precise distance—and then a vague dreaminess crept over me—and the candle in the lantern burnt dimmer—and I drew nearer towards sleep—and then the candle went out.

The loss of light roused me. I stopped my descent, sagging the twin ropes back and for-

wards like a man of lead. My hands weighed tons; my feet and head hundreds of tons. Instinctively I hauled myself upwards again, with perilous slowness at first, faster afterwards, with the speed of terror when nearing the top.

I did not faint when my feet were once more on the solid rock. I should have been happier if I had done, for, as it was, my heart was like to have burst an alley through my ribs. Heavy poisonous gas—carbon dioxide—lay in a layer at the bottom of the shaft. If it had not been for the warning lantern, I should have descended amongst it and dropped into death, even as had done those four others who preceded me.

You can be sure I was fit for little else that night besides tottering homewards as best I was able; and I thought never to visit the horrid spot again. But a day or two's rest changed this view, and I transported to the moor a small rotary blower from a portable blacksmith's forge, and a long length of rubber tubing, and exorcised the heavy gas from below till a candle would burn there as clearly as it would in the open. Then I descended again, and instead of the few shattered bones and other poor relics of humanity which I expected to find, saw as wonderful a sight as man's eyes have fallen on through all the ages. Water fell in a small spray from all around, and the lime in it had been deposited on the bodies of the four Devlins who had fallen there. Decay had never commenced. The shell of stone had begun to grow from the very moment of their arrival. The undermost man was a shapeless heap. The next was but a vague outline. Of the third, I could but make out that he had once been human, nothing more. But the last comer had fallen on his back resting against this ghostly pile, and the thin layer of stone which crusted him was transparent as glass. I could trace every fibre of his clothes; every line of his careworn face. He must have passed into death without pain. His features were more peaceful than those of a man asleep.

For a while this rocky horror fascinated me, and then I tore myself away, passing into a great jagged cave, which burrowed amongst the very entrails of the living rock. And here was the Treasure which had been kept so long inviolate, and at such a cost: not jewels or gold, as I had fondly anticipated, but a vein of galena—glittering lead ore—which when afterwards I bought up royalties and set on miners to work, made me richer by far than that old D'Evlin who had first discovered it, and had left it so contemptuously as a spare nest-egg for his posterity.

I found, too, something besides which showed how terribly one man's faults may be visited on his descendants, and showed, moreover, how a vengeance may be transmitted with many lethal blows down many centuries. There was a flask on the rock floor beside the sparkling vein of ore, a queer-shaped wine-vessel of glass stoppered with crimson wax. Inside were papers. I drew them out and read them by the shifting light of the lantern. The hair rippled on my scalp as I spelled through the crabbed sentences. The words were written by

one Thomas Field, steward to the D'Evlin who founded my family. They began with a description of the writer's station, and then there followed a list of his woes, and hate glowered from each faded letter.

'... in every carnal thing' (so the letter ran) 'has this man, Chaucer D'Evlin, done me wrong. He has gained cattle and horses that I should have possessed, farms that I should have had, and that by rights was mine. He stripped me of moneys till I had no dirt left. He made me his servant who should have been his master. Yet these things could have been forgiven. But for one matter wherein he ousted me, the man has earned my hate undying. He won for himself the woman I loved, and made her his wife who should have been mine.

'For this I write here my curse against him and against his till they are worms and dust as he is now. For this I have taken away the last sheet of the writing in the iron box, wherein he told how to draw away the noxious vapours which fill this Pot, and have left in their place other writings which shall form a snare. Hereby I know my soul is damned to all eternity. But I care not. Through Chaucer D'Evlin I have known my hell in this life; and so that this my curse may spread on all his spawn which is to follow, I willingly take the portion of Flames which will be mine in just recompense.

'Oh Duna, my love, my lost love, through memory of thee alone I do this thing. . . .'

In that weird mysterious cavern I read these words, and the thought of that awful vengeance which Thomas Field's dead hand had carried out bit into me like a knife. My chest grew cramped; my head throbbled; the whispering noises of the place increased to clamour. It seemed to my frightened nerves that the steward's tortured spirit hovered and gibbered in the black vault above me.

I could not wait there longer. I fled to the shaft, treading on that mound of men in stone, and then leaped up the rope to air and daylight.

Dead Duna, your faithlessness—or your coercion, was it?—has been fearfully avenged.

A M U R M U R.

I WROTE her name on the soft, shifting sand,
For Love had written it within my heart.
Th' incoming tide with its incessant flood
Dashed o'er the letters, leaving level sand;
But as the expended foam crept slowly back
Into the seething waves, it bore her name,
And mingled it for ever with the surge.
The billows murmur it along the shore;
The wild waves echo it in every beat;
The tempest shrieks it 'neath the midnight sky;
While jealous mermaids wonder whence it came;
And seamews, as they sport upon the waves,
Hear it, and call their mates by that sweet name;
And I for ever hear within my heart
The murmur of her name borne from the sea.

J. K. L.

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THE STATE AND THE TELEGRAPHS.

It is now twenty-five years since the telegraphs of the United Kingdom passed into the hands of the State, and the changes which have taken place during that period in the volume of the business transacted, the rapidity in the transit of messages, and the charges made for sending telegrams, are little short of marvellous. It was in the year 1852 that the acquisition of the telegraph system by the State was first suggested, but not until late in the year 1867, when Mr Disraeli was Chancellor of the Exchequer, did the Government definitely determine to take the matter up. At that time, as Mr Baines, C.B., tells us in his recently published book (*Forty Years at the Post-office: a Personal Narrative*, by F. E. Baines, C.B. 2 vols. London: Richard Bentley & Son), 'Five powerful telegraph Companies were in existence—The Electric and International, the British and Irish Magnetic, the United Kingdom, the Universal Private, and the London and Provincial Companies. There were others of less importance. Terms had to be made with all of them. The railway interest had to be considered, and the submarine Companies to be thought of, though not bought.' With strong and well-organised interests like these fighting hard to secure for themselves the very best possible terms, the Government had not naturally to submit to a hard bargain before they could obtain from Parliament the powers which they required. However, after a severe struggle, the necessary Bill was successfully passed, and the consequent Money Bill became law in the following session. As the result of this action, the telegraphs became the property of the State upon the 29th of January 1870, and upon the 5th of the following month the actual transfer took place. The step seems to have been taken none too soon, for under the Companies the telegraphs had been worked in a manner far from satisfactory to the public. Many districts had been completely neglected,

and even between important centres the service had been quite inadequate. Moreover, charges had been high, and exasperating delays of frequent occurrence.

Six million pounds was the sum first voted by Parliament for the purchase of the telegraphs, and this was practically all swallowed up in compensation. The Electric and International Company received £2,938,826; the Magnetic Company, £1,243,536; Reuter's Telegram Company, £726,000; the United Kingdom Company, £562,264; the Universal Private Company, £184,421; and the London and Provincial Company, £60,000. But large as these amounts were, they only made up about one half of the expenditure which the Government had to incur, and the total cost ultimately reached the enormous sum of eleven millions. Some idea of the manner in which the extra five millions was expended may be gathered from the fact that between October 1869 and October 1870 about 15,000 miles of iron wire, nearly 2000 miles of gutta-percha-covered copper wire, about 100,000 poles, and 1,000,000 other fittings were purchased and fixed in position, 3500 telegraph instruments and 15,000 batteries were acquired, and about 2400 new telegraphists and temporary assistants were trained. The total expenditure was so vast that the Treasury eventually took fright, and in 1875 a Committee was appointed 'to investigate the causes of the increased cost of the telegraph service since the acquisition of the telegraphs by the State.'

This Committee found that the following were the three main causes of the increase: (a) The salaries of all the officials of the telegraph Companies had been largely increased after their entry into the Government service; (b) the supervising staff maintained by the State was much more costly than that formerly employed by the Companies; and (c) a large additional outlay had been forced upon the Government in connection with the maintenance of the telegraph lines. 'It would not,' they say in their Report, 'be possible, in our opinion, for various

reasons, for the Government to work at so cheap a rate as the telegraph Companies, but . . . a reasonable expectation might be entertained that the working expenses could be kept within seventy or seventy-five per cent. of the gross revenue, and the responsible officers of the Post-office Telegraph service should be urged to work up to that standard. Such a result would cover the cost of working, and the sum necessary for payment of interest on the debt incurred in the purchase of the telegraphs.' In regard to this question of cost, Mr Baines most truly remarks that the real stumbling-block of the Department was, and still is, 'the interest payable on £11,000,000 capital outlay, equal at, say, three per cent. to a charge of £330,000 a year.'

The transfer of the telegraphs to the State was immediately followed by a startling increase in the number of messages sent. In fact the public, attracted by the shilling rate, poured in telegrams so fast, and were so well supported by the news-agencies, who took full advantage of the reduced scale, that there was at first some danger of a collapse. Fortunately, however, the staff was equal to the emergency, and after the first rush was over, everything worked with perfect smoothness. The figures relating to 1870, as set out week by week in the Postmaster-general's Report, seem, it is true, small enough when compared with those appertaining to later years, but it must be remembered that in those early days circumstances were entirely different. The following may be taken as examples of the numbers of messages forwarded per week in that year from postal telegraph stations in the United Kingdom—in the week ending 5th February, 11,918; in the week ending 12th February, 128,872; in the week ending 18th June (Ascot week), 200,294; and in the week ending 31st December (Christmas week), 144,041.

During the next four years the enlargement of business was simply extraordinary. In 1875 the rate of increase was not maintained at quite so high a level, but nevertheless nearly 1,650,000 more messages were dealt with than during the previous year. The quantity of matter transmitted for Press purposes was also much greater than it had ever been before, and amounted to more than 220,000,000 words. The number of post-offices open for the transaction of telegraph business was at the close of the year 3730, being an addition of thirty-one during the twelve months; and there were also 1872 railway stations at which public telegraph business could be transacted. Through the five succeeding years work continued to grow rapidly. In 1880 the messages sent reached 29,966,965, exceeding the number of the previous year by 3,419,828. The number of new offices opened during the year was 107, the total number at its close being 5438.

The Postmaster-general's Report for the year 1885-86 called attention to the great change effected by the introduction of the reduced rate for inland messages. The new rate came into

operation on the 1st of October 1885; consequently, there were during the financial year six months under the old rate, and six months under the new one. These two periods may fairly be compared with one another on equal terms, for while the first six months of the financial year see, as a rule, the transaction of considerably more telegraphic business than the second six months, the latter period had on this occasion the advantage of a general election. The number of inland messages sent during the first six months, when the old rate was in force, was 11,314,423, and this number produced £604,436. In the last six months, under the new rate, the number was 16,787,540, and the amount produced £564,203. There was therefore an increase of forty-eight per cent. in the number of messages, but a decrease of £40,233 in the revenue. 'If, however,' says the Report, 'we add the sum of £18,214 received on account of the large additional number of abbreviated telegraphic addresses, the actual loss of revenue involved in the introduction of the reduced rate was only £22,019.' Moreover, it was shown that in three months following the close of the financial year such a considerable further improvement in the receipts had taken place, that in June the revenue was actually £2800 in excess of the amount received in the corresponding month the year before. On the 8th of April in the year dealt with in this Report, the introduction of the Home Rule Bill occasioned great pressure at the Central Telegraph Office, the number of words sent out from London being 1,500,000. The greatest number previously sent out on any one day had been only 860,000.

The Report for 1890-91 informs us that the ordinary inland telegrams numbered 54,116,413, as against 50,813,354 during the previous year, and that the increase of receipts from this source was £90,125. This year some improvements are noted as having been made in the Wheatstone automatic receiver in use on fast-speed telegraph circuits. 'These instruments,' the Report stated, 'as improved by the Department, can now, under experimental conditions, record no less than 600 words a minute, transmitted over a single wire, while a speed of about 400 words a minute can be conveniently and safely used in practical working—a very satisfactory result compared with the modest rate of sixty or seventy words a minute which obtained in 1870.'

The last Report issued deals with the year which ended on the 31st of March 1894. In it the number of telegraph offices at post-offices is given as 7028, in addition to 2182 at railway stations, or a grand total of 9210. The number of ordinary inland messages sent during the year was 1,189,563 in advance of the number sent during the previous twelve months—an increase of two per cent.—and the receipts from that source had increased by £22,691. Press messages, on the other hand, showed a decrease of 9472, but this falling off in number did not affect the revenue derived from such telegrams, which had in fact increased by £5471. Though post-office and telegraphs, taken collectively, bring profit to the national exchequer, the telegraph department, if

the interest on the debt be included, shows a large deficiency. For the year 1893-94 parliament voted for posts and telegraphs, £10,264,607; the actual receipts from the post-office, after all necessary deductions, Mr Baines puts at £10,250,000, and from telegraphs £2,500,000—collectively £12,750,000, and showing on the department as a whole a profit of £2,500,000 in round numbers.

In regard to the great increase of pace in the transmission of telegraphic messages, Mr Baines tells us that, 'looking back fifty years, we see wires working at the rate of eight words a minute, or an average of four words per wire per minute, over relatively short distances. Now, there is a potentiality of 400 words—nay, even 600 or 700 words—per wire per minute, over very long distances. As the invention of duplex working has been supplemented by the contrivances for multiplex working (one line sufficing to connect several different offices in one part of the country with one or more offices in another part), it is almost impossible to put a limit to the carrying capacity of a single wire.' In 1866 the time occupied in sending a telegram between London and Bournemouth was two hours, and between Manchester and Bolton two hours and a quarter; while in 1893 the times occupied were ten minutes and five minutes respectively.

Press telegrams have enormously increased in number and length since the purchase of the telegraph system by the State. When the Companies owned the wires, the news service from London to the provinces was ordinarily not more than a column of print a night. At the present time the news service of the Press Association alone over the Post-office wires to papers outside the metropolis averages fully 500 columns nightly. Since 1870 this Association has paid the Post-office £750,000 for telegraphic charges, and in addition to this, very large sums have been paid by the London and provincial daily papers for the independent transmission of news and by the principal journals in the country for the exclusive use, during certain hours, of 'special wires.' Some of the leading papers in the provinces receive ten or more columns of specially telegraphed news on nights when important matters are under discussion in Parliament; and from this some idea may be formed of the amount of business now transacted between the Press and the Telegraph Department.

Want of space has prevented any reference being made to the telephone in this article, and even in regard to the telegraphs it has not been possible to give, within such narrow limits, more than the merest sketch of the work accomplished during the past twenty-five years. Probably, however, enough has been said to show with tolerable clearness how vastly telegraphic business has grown during that period, and how successfully the Telegraph Department has contended with difficulties and dangers. Whether the old Companies, if they had been allowed to continue in existence, would have been able to show a record anything like so good, is more than doubtful; and, be that as it may, the public may well be content with things as they are, for State telegraphy most

certainly gives them at the present time 'cheap, extensive, swift, and accurate service, and in the transmission of news for the Press has done wonders for the general benefit.'

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

CHAPTER VI.—COUNT ANTONIO AND THE HERMIT OF THE VAULT.

AMONG the stories concerning the Count Antonio which were told to me in answer to my questioning (whereof I have rejected many as being no better than idle tales), there was one that met me often and yet seemed strange and impossible to believe; for it was said that he had during the time of his outlawry once spent several days in the vault of the Peschetti, and there suffered things that pass human understanding.

This vault lies near to the church of St John the Theologian, in the suburb of Baratesta, on the banks of the river; and the Peschetti had a palace hard by, and were a family of high nobility, and allied by blood to the house of Monte Velluto. But I could find no warrant for the story of Antonio's sojourn in the vault, and although many insisted that the tale was true, yet they could not tell how or why the Count came to be in the vault; until at length I chanced on an aged woman who had heard the truth of the matter from her grandmother, and she made me acquainted with the story, pouring on me a flood of garrulous gossip, from which I have chosen as much as concerns the purpose. And here I set it down; for I believe it to be true, and I would omit nothing that touches the Count, so I can be sure that what I write is based on truth.

When Count Antonio had dwelt in the hills for the space of three years and nine months, it chanced that Cesare, last of the Peschetti, died; and he made a will on his death-bed whereby he bequeathed to Count Antonio his lands and also a store of money, and many ornaments of gold, and jewels; for Antonio's mother had been of the house of the Peschetti, and Cesare loved Antonio, although he had not dared to give him countenance for fear of the Duke's anger; yet, knowing himself to be dying, he bequeathed everything to him; for the Duke's wrath could not hurt a dead man. And so soon as he was dead, his steward Giuseppe sent secretly and in haste to Antonio, saying, 'My lord, you cannot take the lands or the house; but, if you will be wise, come quickly and take the money and the jewels; for I hear that His Highness the Duke, declaring that an outlaw has no right and can inherit nothing, will send and seize the treasure.' Now Antonio, though grieved at the death of Cesare, was glad to hear of the treasure; for he was often hard put to it to maintain his company and those who depended on him for bread. So he pondered anxiously how he might reach the palace of the Peschetti and lay hands on the treasure and return safely; for at this time Duke Valentine had posted above a hundred

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of his Guard in the plain, and this troop watched all the approaches to the hills, so that the band could not ride forth in a body unless it were prepared to do battle with the Guards. Nor did Antonio desire to weaken the band, lest the Guards, learning that the bravest were away, should dare an attack. Therefore he would not take Tommasino or Bena or any of the stoutest with him; but he took four young men who had come to him from Firmola, having fallen into the Duke's displeasure through brawling with his Guards. These he mounted on good horses, and, having made a circuit to avoid the encampment in the plain, he came to Cesare's house on the day before that appointed for the funeral. Giuseppe came to meet him, and led him where the dead man lay, and, after the Count had gazed on his face and kissed his forehead, they two went to the treasury, and Giuseppe delivered the treasure to Antonio; and Antonio made him a present of value and confirmed him in his stewardship, although it was not likely that the Duke would suffer him to exercise any power, inasmuch as His Highness had declared his intention of forfeiting the estate into his own hand.

Now it chanced that one of the young men, being regaled with wine, drank very freely, and began to talk loud and boastfully of his master's achievements as the servants sat under the trees in front of the house; and there was with them a certain tailor, a lame man, who had furnished mourning garments for the funeral. The tailor, learning that Antonio was come, said nothing, and seemed not to hear or understand the drunken youth's talk; but at an early moment he took his departure and straightway hobbled as fast as his lame leg would let him to the Syndic of Baratesta, a very busy and ambitious fellow, who longed greatly to win the Duke's favour. And the tailor set the price of five pieces of gold and the ordering of a new gown on the news he brought; and the Syndic having agreed, the tailor cried, 'Antonio of Monte Velluto is at the house of the Peschetti, and his band is not with him. If you hasten, you may catch him.' At this the Syndic was very greatly delighted; for the Duke's Commissaries were not to arrive to take possession of the house in his name till the morrow, by which time Antonio would be gone; and the Syndic rubbed his hands, saying, 'If I can take him my glory will be great, and the gratitude of His Highness also.' And he gathered together all his constables, and had upon twenty discharged soldiers who dwelt in the town, and the fifteen men of the Duke's who were stationed at Baratesta to gather His Highness's dues; and thus, with a force of about fifty men, he set out in great haste for the house of the Peschetti, and was almost come there, before a little boy ran to Giuseppe crying that the Syndic and all the constables and many besides were coming to the house. And Giuseppe, who had but three men-servants of an age to fight, the other five being old (for Cesare had loved to keep those who served him well, even when their power grew less than their will), and moreover perceived that Antonio's four were young and untried, wrung

his hands and hastened to the Count with the news, saying, 'Yet weak as we are, we can die for you, my lord.'

'Heaven forbid!' said Antonio, looking out of the window. 'Are they all townsmen that come with this Syndic?'

'Alas, no, my lord. There are certain of the Duke's men, and I see among the rest men who have spent their days under arms, either in His Highness's service or in Free Companies.'

'Then,' said Antonio, smiling, 'unless I am to share Cesare's funeral, I had best be gone.—For I have seen too much fighting to be ashamed to run away from it.'

'But, my lord, they are at the gates.'

'And is there no other gate?'

'None, my lord, save the little gate in the wall there; and see, the Syndic has posted ten men there.'

'And he will search the house?'

'I fear that he will, my lord. For he must have tidings of your coming.'

'Then where is my horse?' said Count Antonio; and Giuseppe showed him where the horse stood in the shadow of the portico. 'Do not let the Syndic know,' added Antonio, 'that the young men are of my company, and send them away in safety.'

'But what do you, my lord?' cried Giuseppe.

'What I have done before, Giuseppe. I ride for life,' answered the Count.

Then the Count, delaying no more, ran lightly down the stairs, leaped on his horse, and, drawing his sword, rode forth from the portico; and he was among the Syndic's company before they thought to see him; and he struck right and left with his sword; and they fell back before him in fear, yet striking at him as they shrank away; and he had come clean off, but for one grizzly-haired fellow who had served much in Free Companies and learnt cunning; for he stooped low, avoiding the swoop of Antonio's sword, and stabbed the horse in its belly, and stood wiping his knife and saying, 'My legs are old. I have done my part. Do yours; the horse will not go far.' In truth the horse was wounded to death, and its bowels protruded from the wound; and Antonio felt it falter and stumble. Yet the gallant beast carried him for half a mile, and then he leaped off, fearing it would fall under him as he sat and he be crushed by it; and he drew his sword across its throat that it might not linger in pain, and then ran on foot, hearing the cries of the Syndic's company as it pressed on behind him. And thus, running, he came to the church of St John, and to the vault of the Peschetti by it; two men were at work preparing for Cesare's funeral, and the door of the vault was open. Antonio hurled one man to the right and another to the left, and rushed into the vault; for his breath failed, and there was no chance for his life were he overtaken in the open; and before the men regained their feet, he pulled the door of the vault close and sank on his knee inside, panting, and holding his sword in readiness to slay any who entered. Then the Syndic and his company came and called on him to surrender. And Antonio cried, 'Come and take me.' Then the Syndic bade the workmen pull open the door;

but Antonio held it with one hand against them both. Yet at last they drew it a little open; and Antonio lunged with his sword through the aperture and wounded the Syndic in the leg, so that he stumbled backwards with an oath. And after that none was willing to enter first, until the grizzly-haired fellow came up; and he, seeing the aperture, rushed at it sword in hand, fearing no man, not even Count Antonio. But he could not touch Antonio, and he also fell back with a sore gash in his cheek; and Antonio laughed, saying, 'Shall I surrender, Syndic?'

Now the Syndic was very urgent in his desire to take Antonio, but his men shook their heads, and he himself could not stand because of the sword-thrust in his leg; and, instead of fighting, his company began to tell of the wonderful deeds Antonio had done, and they grew no bolder by this; and the grizzly-haired fellow mocked them, saying that he would go again at the aperture if two more would attempt it with him; but none offered. And the Syndic raged and rebuked them, but he could not hurt them, being unable to stand on his feet; so that one said boldly, 'Why should we die? The Duke's Commissaries will be here to-morrow with a company of the Guard. Let the Count stay in the vault till then. He is in safe keeping; and when he sees the Guard he will surrender. It is likely enough that a great lord like the Count would rather die than give up his sword to the Syndic.' Whereat the Syndic was very ill pleased, but all the rest mighty well pleased; and, having heard this counsel, they could by no means be persuaded to attack again, but they let Antonio draw the door close again, being in truth glad to see the last of his sword. Therefore the Syndic, having no choice, set twenty to guard the entrance of the vault and prepared to depart. But he cried to Antonio, bidding him again to surrender, for the Guard would come to-morrow, and then at least he could not hope to resist.

'Ay, but to-morrow is to-morrow, Master Syndic,' laughed Antonio. 'Go, get your leg dressed, and leave to-morrow till it dawn.'

So the Syndic went home and the rest with him, leaving the twenty on guard. And to this day, if a man has more love for fighting than skill in it, folk call him a Syndic of Baratesta.

Count Antonio, being thus left in the vault, and perceiving that he would not be further molested that day, looked round; and though no daylight reached the vault, he could see, for the workmen had set a lamp there and it still burnt. Around him were the coffins of all the Peschetti who had died in five hundred years; and the air was heavy and stifling. Antonio took the lamp and walked round the vault, which was of circular form; and he perceived one coffin standing upright against the wall of the vault, as though there had been no room for it on the shelves. Then he sat down again, and, being weary, leaned his head against the wall and soon slept; for a man whose conscience is easy and whose head has sense in it may sleep as well in a vault as in a bed-chamber. Yet the air of the vault oppressed him, and he slept but lightly and

uneasily. And, if a proof be needed how legends gather round the Count's name, I have heard many wonderful stories of what happened to him in the vault—how he held converse with dead Peschetti, how they told him things which it is not given to men to know, and how a certain beautiful lady, who had been dead two hundred years, having been slain by her lover in a jealous rage, came forth from the coffin, with her hair all dishevelled and a great wound yet bleeding in her bosom, and sang a low sweet wild love-song to him as he lay, and would not leave him though he bade her soul rest in the name of Christ and the saints. But that any of these things happened I do not believe.

It was late when the Count awoke, and the lamp had burnt out, so that the vault was utterly dark. And as the Count roused himself, a sound strange in the place fell on his ear; for a man talked; and his talk was not such as one uses who speaks his own musings aloud to himself when he is alone (a trick men come by who live solitary), but he seemed to question others and to answer them, saying, 'Ay' and 'No,' and 'Alas, sweet friend!' and so forth, all in a low even voice; and now and again he would sigh, and once he laughed bitterly. Then the Count raised his voice, saying, 'Who is there?' And the other voice answered, 'Which of you speaks? The tones are not known to me. Yet I know all the Peschetti who are here.' And Antonio answered, 'I am not of the Peschetti save by my mother; my name is Antonio of Monte Velluto.' On this a cry came from the darkness, as of a man greatly troubled and alarmed; and after that there was silence for a space. And Antonio said, 'There is naught to fear; I seek to save myself, not to hurt another. But how do you, a living man, come to be in this vault, and with whom do you speak?' Then came the sound of steel striking on a flint, and presently a spark, and a torch was lighted; and Antonio beheld before him, in the glow of the torch, the figure of a man who crouched on the floor of the vault over against him; his hair was long and tangled, his beard grew to his waist, and he was naked, save for a cloth about his loins; and his eyes gleamed dark and wild as he gazed on Antonio in seeming fright and bewilderment. Then the Count, knowing that a man collects his thoughts while another speaks, told the man who he was and how he came there, and (because the man's eyes still wondered) how that he was an outlaw these three years and more because he would not bow to the Duke's will; and when he had told all, he ceased. Then the man came crawling closer to him, and, holding the torch to his face, scanned his face, saying, 'Surely he is alive!' And again he was silent, but after a while he spoke.

'For twenty-and-three years,' he said, 'I have dwelt here among the dead; and to the dead I talk, and they are my friends and companions. For I hear their voices, and they come out of their coffins and greet me; yet now they are silent and still because you are here.'

'But how can you live here?' cried Antonio. 'For you must starve for lack of food, and

come near to suffocation in the air of this vault.'

The man set his hand to his brow and frowned, and said sadly, 'Indeed I have forgotten much, yet I remember a certain night when the Devil came into me, and in black fury and jealousy I laid wait by the door of the room where my wife was; and we had been wedded but a few months. There was a man who was my friend, and he came to my wife secretly, seeking to warn her that I was suspected of treason to the Prince: yes, in all things he was my friend; for when I stabbed him as he came to the door, and, rushing in, stabbed her also, she did not die till she had told me all; and then she smiled sweetly at me, saying, "Our friend will forgive, dear husband, for you did not know; and I forgive the blow your love dealt me: kiss me and let me die here in your arms." And I kissed her, and she died. Then I laid her on her bed, and I went forth from my home; and I wandered many days. Then I sought to kill myself, but I could not, for a voice seemed to say, "What penitence is there in Death? Lo, it is sweet, Paolo!" So I did not kill myself; but I took an oath to live apart from men till God should in His mercy send me death. And coming in my wanderings to the river that runs by Baratesta, I found a little hollow in the bank of the river, and I lay down there; and none pursued me, for the Duke of Firmola cared not for a crime done in Mantivoglia. And for a year I dwelt in my little cave: then it was noised about that I dwelt there, and fools began to call me, who was the vilest sinner born, a holy hermit, and they came to me to ask prayers. So I begged from one a pick, and I worked on the face of the rock, and made a passage through it. And I swore to look no more on the light of the sun, but abode in the recesses that I had hollowed out. And I go no more to the mouth of the cave, save once a day at nightfall, when I drink of the water of the river and take the broken meats they leave for me.'

'But here—how came you here?' cried Antonio.

'I broke through one day by chance, as I worked on the rock; and, seeing the vault, I made a passage with much labour; and having done this, I hid it with a coffin; and now I dwell here with the dead, expecting the time when in God's mercy I also shall be allowed to die. But to-day I fled back through the passage, for men came and opened the vault and let in the sunshine, which I might not see. Pray for me, sir; I have need of prayers.'

'Now God comfort you,' said Count Antonio, softly. 'Of a truth, sir, a man who knows his sin and grieves for it in his heart hath in God's eyes no longer any sin. So is it sweetly taught in the most Holy Scriptures. Therefore take comfort; for your friend will forgive even as the gentle lady who loved you forgave; and Christ has no less forgiveness than they.'

'I know not,' said the hermit, groaning heavily. 'I question the dead who lie here concerning these things, but they may not tell me.'

'Indeed, poor man, they can tell nothing,'

said Antonio gently; for he perceived that the man was subject to a madness and deluded by fancied visions and voices.

'Yet I love to talk to them of the time when I also shall be dead.'

'God comfort you,' said Count Antonio again.

Now while Antonio and the hermit talked, one of those who guarded the vault chanced to lay his ear against the door, listening whether Antonio moved, and he heard, to his great dread and consternation, the voice of another who talked with Antonio: most of what was said he did not hear, but he heard Antonio say, 'God comfort you,' and the hermit answer something and groan heavily. And the legs of the listener shook under him, and he cried to his comrades that the dead talked with Antonio, he himself being from fright more dead than alive. Then all came and listened; and still the voice of another talked with Antonio; so that the guards were struck with terror and looked at one another's faces, saying, 'The dead speak! The Count speaks with the dead! Christ and the Blessed Mother of Christ and the Saints protect us!' And they looked neither to right nor left, but sat quaking on the ground about the door of the vault; and presently one ran and told the Syndic, and he caused himself to be carried thither in his chair; and he also heard, and was very greatly afraid, saying, 'This Antonio of Monte Velluto is a fearful man.' And the report spread throughout Baratesta that Count Antonio talked with the dead in the vault of the Peschetti; whence came, I doubt not, the foolish tales of which I have made mention. A seed is enough: men's tongues water it and it grows to a great plant. Nor did any man think that it was the hermit who talked; for although they knew of his cave, they did not know or imagine of the passage he had made, and his voice was utterly strange, seeing that he had spoken no word to any living man for twenty years, till he spoke with the Count that night. Therefore the whole of Baratesta was in great fear; and they came to a certain learned priest, who was priest of the church of St John, and told him. And he arose and came in great haste, and offered prayers outside the vault, and bade the unquiet spirits rest; but he did not offer to enter, nor did any one of them; but they all said, 'We had determined even before to await the Duke's Guard, and that is still the wiser thing.'

For a great while the hermit could not understand what Antonio wanted of him; for his thoughts were on his own state and with the dead; but at length having understood that Antonio would be guided through the passage and brought to the mouth of the cave, in the hope of finding means to escape before the Duke's Commissaries came with the Guard, he murmured wonderingly, 'Do you then desire to live?' and rose, and led Antonio where the coffin stood upright against the wall as Antonio had seen it; but it was now moved a little to one side, and there was a narrow opening, through which the Count had much ado to pass; and in his struggles he upset the coffin, and it fell with a great crash; whereat all who were outside the vault fled suddenly to a distance of a hundred yards or more in panic, expecting

now to see the door of the vault open and the dead walk forth: nor could they be persuaded to come nearer again. But Antonio, with a great effort, made his way through the opening, and followed the hermit along a narrow rough-hewn way, Antonio's shoulders grazing the rock on either side as he went; and having pursued this way for fifteen or twenty paces, they turned to the right sharply, and went on another ten paces, and, having passed through another narrow opening, were in the cave; and the river glistened before their eyes, for it was now dawn. And the hermit, perceiving that it was dawn, and fearing to see the sun, turned to flee back to the vault; but Antonio, being full of pity for him, detained him, and besought him to abandon his manner of life, assuring him that by now his sin was certainly purged: and when the hermit would not listen, Antonio followed him back to the opening that led into the vault, and, forgetting his own peril, reasoned with him for the space of an hour or more, but could not prevail. So at last he bade him farewell very sorrowfully, telling him that God had made him that day the instrument of saving a man's life, which should be to him a sign of favour and forgiveness; but the hermit shook his head and passed into the vault, and Antonio heard him again talking to the dead Peschetti, and answering questions that his own disordered brain invented.

SOME ASPECTS OF SLEEP.

Few of man's blessings have on the whole received worthier acknowledgment than Sleep. It wraps a man round like a garment, as Sancho Panza says, be that man monarch or mendicant. Deservedly beloved from Pole to Pole, Sleep is yet in certain of his aspects a very Robin Goodfellow, a tricky sprite, full of pranks and caprices. Where his presence is a matter of indifference, or where he is not wanted—where a suspicion of his presence is objectionable or insulting—where he is a burden and a disgrace, there Sleep drops and clings like a bur. Where he is longed for, prayed for, wooed—where, like a thrifty housewife, he might advantageously be employed knitting up 'the ravelled sleeve,' there, like the statue of Brutus, he is conspicuous by his absence. He is no mere domestic drudge, hired to make himself useful. Visits he a sick-room, he does so—not to bring refreshment and restore tranquillity to the invalid tossing, helplessly, open-eyed, hour after hour, on his feverish couch. By no means; here, the malicious elf slyly seals up the eyes of the nurse, and weighs down the eyelids of the would-be watcher.

Hovers he in churches or chapels—attracted to the former, perhaps, by the carved oaken pews, formed, as tradition relates, out of the massive bedsteads of a bygone generation, here he will alight, fantastically, on the most prominent personages. The portly Alderman, cosily seated in the cushioned 'Corporation Pew,' can scarcely incline his round and shining pate on his plump palm, ere he is caught napping. The hard-worked Doctor whom 'cases' have

kept waking these three nights, is seized *standing*, by the neglected god; and held thus, a spectacle of helpless imbecility, with eyelids dropped like his nether jaw, long after the rest of the congregation have resumed their seats, until some neighbour prods him with a hymn book in the back, and rescues him from Sleep's insidious toils. Does the imp perceive a Deacon, the 'properest' man in all the assembly, preparing to give edified and edifying attention to an impassioned and lengthened address, on a summer evening?—straightway he marks him for his own, and, presto! the Deacon is fast asleep, and resting a warm and confiding cranium against the newly varnished dado at his back. He will not, when he wakes, like the American youth, cry, 'Lemme go!' and strike out at an imaginary pinnaker. He apprehends, from the insignificant looks about him, the trap into which he has fallen, and with as little display of emotion as convenient, and with a slight but perfectly audible rending sound, he will leave the warm precincts, and—a lock of his hair on the dado.

Like the simulator that he is, Sleep plays many parts, tragic as well as comic. Here, he will break off, by his inopportune importunity, a marriage; there, by an unlucky lapse, he will rob a legatee of his expected bequest. In the first instance, the would-be bridegroom was a highly respectable and respected middle-aged lawyer. He was about to bear the yoke in company with a lady hardly less respectable, learned, and middle-aged than himself. In common with Shelley's sister-in-law, the bride-expectant delighted in nothing so much as in reading aloud. The lawyer, unlike Carlyle, did not 'hate' being read aloud to; if he did not exactly hanker after it, he bore it, provisionally, with philosophy. One day, when the reading had been particularly controversial and long-winded, he had listened and made the required tokens of assent, or dissent, so punctually, that the lady, warming to her work, continued her periods—to which there seemed no period—with ever-increasing emphasis and enjoyment, until she was suddenly startled almost out of her chair by her admirer crying with a loud voice, 'Check!' What should this mean? Nothing more or less than that the word-wearied one—an ardent chess-player—enticed by Sleep, was playing over again the game he had won the previous night from his favourite adversary, the rector. His guilt was too audible to be denied. No allowance was made for Sleep's treachery. That day, *she* read no more.

In the second instance to which reference has been made, the legatee-expectant had less excuse for yielding to Sleep's blandishments. He was engaged on what the lawyer only dreamed of—playing chess, and with his presumptive patron. He was young; he was far and away the better player, and he had dined. All these things were against him. His opponent's play was remarkable for its deliberation. Hour after hour glided by. It is sometimes as difficult to lose a game discreetly, as at others to win one honestly. Before yielding to Sleep's seductions, the young fellow had laid an ingenious plan for his own defeat and his future benefactor's victory. Roused abruptly to action

by a stern inquiry if he were dreaming, he confessed his delinquency, lost his head, and won the game—a concatenation that cost him his patron's favour for ever.

Beside such Puck-like performances, Sleep has been credited time and again with sending warnings, cautions, revelations of the whereabouts of missing documents and valuable deeds, and even with giving a clew that has led to the detection of a murderer. The legend of the Red Barn retained its place until quite recently as a well-authenticated instance of discovery through information nocturnally received. Now, it is alleged that the dreams of Maria Martin's mother rose exactly in proportion as the subsidies from the murderer sank.

However that may be, certain it is that the mark is oftener hit by mortals, when under the dominion of Sleep, than the captious average-monger is willing to admit. A well-known accountant recently, when wearied almost out of his wits by an error which had crept into some banking books he was overhauling, and which a three days' search had failed to bring to light, was mysteriously enlightened in sleep. He dreamt that the books were all spread out before him, and that a finger pointed out to him the leaf, column, and exact spot in the column where the mistake arose. Immediately on waking, he hastened to test the information so received, and found it to be correct in every particular. That, during his researches, his brain had received and stowed away the information it had received until a more convenient season arrived to reveal it, is just one of those cerebral movements of which science has yet to unravel the windings.

Few things are related with more gusto, and, we may add, received with more deserved disgust, than dreams. The hero is so obviously his own compiler, editor, and publisher all in one, that his hearers may be pardoned if their attitude is too often like that of Joseph's brethren, one of jealous impatience. The question asked by the maid in *High Life Below Stairs* as to who wrote—or 'Who writ Shickspur?' as she puts it—has sometimes been answered—'Bacon.' Yet he who could so calmly and confidently say, 'Mine eyes begin to discharge their watch—and I shall presently be as happy for a few hours as I had died the first hour I was born,' was no dreamer, was no 'such stuff as dreams are made of,' and could no more have written Clarence's awful dream than he could have dreamt it.

Sleep being of so tantalising and capricious a nature, it might be supposed that among the many inventions sought out of men, means would be found to control, and, if need be, coerce so intractable an attendant. It has been even so. All the drowsy syrups of the East have been pressed into man's service, that, with their aid, he may command Sleep. And when we have an enemy, some fell disease to battle with, who shall be blamed for calling in the help of these powerful auxiliaries? Yet does the old proverb, that 'One volunteer is worth two pressed men,' still hold good. When Sleep visits us of his own accord, though he may arrive late and depart early, he bestows benefits too often withheld from those to whom he

comes upon compulsion. If forced into service in time of peace—that is, when not required to fight absolute disease—he comes, it is true, overpowered by narcotics, he lies bound and pinioned like a slave, but only for a time. From the first moment of his capture he meditates escape, flight, revenge. Then may the mercenary auxiliaries be doubled and trebled in vain; all the opiates in the world will bring not Sleep, but his brother, Death.

So paradoxical a blessing is Sleep, that he not only makes his votaries oblivious of every other blessing, but also unconscious of his own visits, until they are past. His approach is felt, his departure mourned, his presence unknown. He binds capriciously certain of our faculties, leaving the others free to make either a heaven out of a hell of carking cares, or a hell of heavenly happiness. So that the paradox that there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so, is, as regards Sleep, a truism. Friendly where treated as a friend, his revenge for ill entertainment, for thwarting neglect, if slow, is sure. Youth flouts him for the sake of pleasure, to toss, later on, on a sleepless couch. The student baffles him for the sake of acquiring knowledge, and in long periods of insomnia has leisure to count his gains. The tie between man and Sleep is so strongly welded, that he who is divorced from Sleep will either die or become a madman.

Since, then, his presence means health, his absence, misery—since he possesses the power of renewing our spirits beyond books, music, wine, or play—since, with parental tenderness, he soothes us from infancy to extremest age, and never leaves us but with life—for such a guest, should not the guest-chamber be made ready? And while waiting silently for his approach, in the hour of quiet meditation that precedes his coming, while we review the day's deeds, repent its errors, feel grateful, it may be, for its joys, or submissive, perhaps, to its sorrows, as our hearts yearn in remembrance, or exult in anticipation, behold! our friend has arrived—he is softly closing our eyes, relaxing our limbs, bending our will, lighting up our fancy, juggling with our judgment, and leading us away, willing captives, to his realm of Dreamland.

THE ANGEL OF THE FOUR CORNERS.*

III.—BETWEEN THE FIRES.

AN hour went by. Meanwhile, Marie was gay; but Medallion noticed that her hand was now hot, now cold, as they swung through the changes, and that her eyes had a hard kind of brilliance. He guessed that she and Monsieur Camille had some little comedy or tragedy between them, but it was not given him to read the heart of the romance. He would not try to probe the thing; he merely watched and waited. He had known Marie since she was only big enough to lean her chin on his knee; and many a time since she had grown up, he and old Garon the *avocat* had talked of her, and wondered what her life would be; for it

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seemed to them both that there was no man in the parish who could make her happy—that year in Quebec had changed her so, had given her larger ideas of life and men.

He had talked much with her from time to time, and she had always seemed glad of that. She thought him wise, and he had wondered at some deep searching things she had said. He would have gone far to serve her, for the gossip, now almost legend, that he had cared for Marie's mother before she married Marie's father, had foundation. The curé had stepped in, for Medallion was a Protestant, and that ended it; but Medallion had never married, and, strange to say, the curé, and himself, and Marie's father were the best of friends. Medallion was also busy watching Monsieur Camille, for he felt that here was something wherein a friend might serve Marie—though how, he did not know. He liked the young man's face, for it had that touch of loneliness and native solitary thought, which the present gaiety of eye, voice, and manner made almost pathetic. He even saw something more—a recklessness natural to the youth's character, which sat on him like a touch of doom. And as he thought, Marie's allegory—her 'wonderful, sad, beautiful, dreadful'—those were her words—tale of love kept showing in vivid pictures in his eye.

But if he could have read the young man's mind, could have seen the struggle going on there, the despair, the wild hope, the daring, the revolt—the breaking up of all the settled courses of a life, he would have been as startled as apprehensive. For while Camille Debarrés was urging on this mirth and revel with a nervous eagerness, he kept saying to himself over and over again: 'I can't give her up, God forgive me! Marie—Marie!'

The words beat in and out of the music. Youth, humanity, flashing energies of the active world were crying out, fighting for mastery in the breast of one soon to be given to the separateness of the Church, wherein the love of man and maid must be viewed with a distant paternal eye. A hundred forces had been at work to put him and keep him in the Church; and when, as a student, Marie came into his life, these forces, with loving, yet severe apprehension, closed on him—and on the girl—and had separated them, as it seemed, for ever.

He was older now; but as he neared the final act that should set him apart from the world, and close up for always the springs of youth and desire, the old feeling had leaped up, had filled him; he had somehow got a few days of respite, and this was the result, this mad escapade, this dangerous playtime!

The night wore on. At last he was able to catch Marie's eyes. She could not resist that pleading, the inexpressible hunger in that look. She came and sat down beside him, and again Medallion called off the figures of the dance.

They spoke in very low tones, trying, with what desperate anxiety, to prevent their hearts showing in their faces.

'What do you want to say?' she asked, her breath catching.

'I want to know, Marie, if you still love me?' His voice whispered through the music.

'What does it matter?' she said. 'And is it right to ask?'

'I've come all the way from Quebec to ask it,' he said.

'You came to ask that; what did you come to say?' she flashed out, her lips quivering a little.

He understood. 'Forgive me. I thought you knew I couldn't ask you if you cared, unless I'—

He paused, for, if he spoke the words, the die would be cast for ever; he would never return to those quiet walls where incense, and not the breath of woman—a breath like this, soft, sweet, instinct with youth and delight—would touch his senses. Yet what had he come for? To rack a girl's heart and soul, and then return to his masses and his prayers, leaving an injured life behind him! When he started from Quebec, he scarcely knew what he was going to do—save that he must see this girl's face once—once again. He had had no thought beyond that. That desire was hot within him. He did not know—she might be married or dead, or the betrothed of another, but he would see her, then return to his sacred duties, and forget. In coming at all, he had committed a sin, for which he would have to atone bitterly when he returned—if he returned; but the latter thought had not presented itself to him definitely, though it had flashed in and out of the vapours of emotion like a flying flame.

But now, here was Marie, and here was he in the garb of the workaday world, and frivolity and irresponsible gaiety around them; and he, all on a sudden, with his far-away boyish recklessness again alive in him—the Master of the Revels.

'Unless?' Marie asked. 'Yes, "unless?"' There were two little lines at the corners of her mouth, lines which never come to a girl's face unless she has suffered and lost. Marie had not only a heart, but a sense of honour too—for the man. Having come to her thus, whatever chanced, he should justify himself, in so far as might be, by saying what any honest man would say. She had a right to know if he still loved her, and he had no right to know if she still loved him, until that was done. He must be justified in her sight. If he loved her—and said so—then let the Angel of the Four Corners point what way it would, she would submit.

She flushed with a kind of indignation. Must she always be the sufferer? He—a man—had a work of life to interest him; she had nothing, nothing save herself and the solitary path of meagre parish life. She would have her moment of triumph in spite of all. She would hear him say he loved her—she would make him give all up for her. She was no longer the wistful shrinking girl who had been hurried back to her home from Quebec, and handed over to the tender watchfulness of Monsieur Fabre, whose heart had ached for her, yet who felt that what was, was best.

She was very much a woman now, and if only for an hour, she would have her way.

'Unless what—Camille?' she asked.

Her voice dwelt softly on the 'Camille.' It was the first sound of tenderness that he had

heard from her since he came, and it thrilled him. It was three years since he had heard a voice with that sound in it—life was grave, and far from sentimental, in the Seminary. His youth—the old Adam—came to swelling life in him. He put it all in the words: 'I wouldn't have asked you if you loved me yet, Marie, unless I was sure you knew—that I loved you'—he drew his bow caressingly along the D string, so that a sweet aching joyfulness seemed infused into the dance—'and that I've risked everything to come and tell you so.'

A low sound, half delight, half pain, came from her. But she turned her head away. There was silence for a moment.

'Won't you speak? What are you thinking? Don't turn your head away,' he continued.

Slowly her face came toward him, her eyes shining, her cheeks pale, her lips slow and moving gently, but the words dropping like metal. 'You are true to nothing,' she said; 'neither to the Church—nor to me.'

'Marie, haven't you any pity?' He did not know what or how he was playing now. His fingers wandered; the bow came and went, but he was not thinking of the music.

'Why are you so selfish, then?' she said. 'Why didn't you leave me here alone? A woman is always at a man's mercy!'

Something scorched him from head to foot. He now felt, as he had never felt before, what that incident three years ago meant, what this girl's life had been since, what was the real nature of that renunciation. The eight-hand reel was near its end. He got to his feet in his excitement, played faster and faster, and then, with a call to the dancers and Medallion, brought the dance to a close. In the subsequent jostling, as the revellers made their way to another room for supper, he offered his arm to Marie, nodded as gaily as he could to the frequent 'Merci, Merci, Monsieur!' and they walked together to the end of the room, saying nothing.

At that moment Alphonse entered, followed by Antoine, who grasped his arm and held him back. 'Don't be a fool!' Antoine said. 'A row won't get you the girl.'

But Antoine had had two seasons as a lumberman and river-driver, and he had just been drinking. He held the code of the river, that where two men and one woman were in the triangle of Love, war must be the end thereof.

'I'll give him the grand bounce!' said Alphonse in wild English idiom. 'He don't belong here—some lawyer's clerk, or loafer.'

'*Bien*,' said Antoine, still holding him back, 'suppose Marie stand up for him.'

'Pshaw! he don't belong here. And she said some things to me about him—I know. I'm going to ask her to supper with me.'

The two were standing silent at the end of the room, watching this scene, but not hearing the words. Marie, however, guessed what was meant.

Presently Alphonse with disjointed glances came and said to her: 'I have supper with me, Ma'm'selle?' He turned his shoulder on Camille.

Marie did not hesitate. 'Not now, Alphonse;

I have a guest'—she reached out her hand towards Camille—'and he's been working hard for us all the evening.'

Alphonse looked at her with an attempt to be disdainful; then, snapping his fingers under Camille's nose contemptuously, said 'Pah!' and walked away with a shrug of the shoulders.

'It wasn't so easy getting used to that again after I came back from Quebec—three years ago,' she said.

Strange how the priest in the youth was being so swiftly lost in the man. Camille's fingers opened and shut, and his brow knotted. He smarted, too, from Marie's last remark. He did not know that with all these bitter little speeches, she was ready to fall upon his breast and cry till she had emptied her heart out. But she had been humiliated once, and she would rather die than be humbled again, whether he meant it so or not.

The room was empty, but it could not be so long, for sentimental groups would wander back from the supper room.

As Alphonse disappeared, Camille said: 'Marie, I'm seeing things as I never saw them before. I want to talk with you alone, just ten minutes—that's all I ask; but alone, where no one can interrupt us.'

'Would it be right?' she asked.

He could not tell whether she was ironical or not. 'It shall be right,' he said stoutly.

'You won't mind if it's cold?' she questioned.

'I won't mind anything, if you'll give me that ten minutes,' he answered. 'But if it's going to be cold, wrap yourself up well.' He took a man's coat from the wall.

'Come,' she said, and opened a narrow door that led into a little hall way. As she did so, he threw the coat over her shoulders. 'Give me your hand,' she added, and, taking it, led the way for half-a-dozen steps in the dark. Then she took a key from the wall and turned it in a lock, which clicked back rustily. 'It's my brother Philippe's room,' she said, as she stepped inside, he following.

The moonlight on the frosted pane gave a ghostly kind of light to the chamber. Marie felt along the wall for a match-box. 'Oh, there's not a match here,' she added.

'Feel in that overcoat pocket,' he suggested. 'Its owner is a smoker—smell it.'

She did so, and drew out a handful. He took one and scratched it on the wall. Neither of them knew it, but it was Alphonse's coat. Camille lit a half-burnt candle that stood on a chest of drawers, and then turned to Marie.

'We have never used the room since Philippe died,' she said.

'I did not know,' he rejoined gently.

'Philippe had been to Montreal,' she said. 'There he'd fallen in with a girl'—her voice faltered—'an actress. He came back to see us, and mother begged him not to go to Montreal again; for we knew—a priest had written to us about the girl. One day he got a paper. He opened it at dinner. He saw something, gave a cry, and fell against the table. "Elle est morte! Elle est morte!" he cried; and that's all he said, day after day, till he died. A man had shot the girl because she loved

Philippe. It seemed to Philippe that he himself had killed her, that if he had been with her, it wouldn't have happened. Since then, the room has been as it was the day he died.'

HISTORICAL PHRASES.

WE have preserved to us many historical sayings of famous or well-known personages, uttered in times of action or on some important occasion. Most of these serve as landmarks of history; some have passed into proverbs; while others have supplied us with convenient phrases, used without regard to their original motive. Of these last, we have an example from ancient history. Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, after a long and obstinately contested engagement, defeated the Romans in the battle of Heraclea. As he viewed the battle-field, where a large number of his best officers and men had fallen, he exclaimed, 'Another such victory, and we are undone!'—a sentiment which has been echoed more than once in modern wars.

There is another well-known saying of Cæsar Augustus, equally applicable to modern times. Hermann, or Arminius, a German chief high in favour with the Romans, became disgusted with the oppression exercised by Quintilius Varus, the Roman Governor. He induced Varus to advance his army beyond the Rhine, where he suffered a disastrous defeat near Lippe, three legions, with all the auxiliaries, being cut off. Augustus, when he heard of it, was overwhelmed with grief, and exclaimed, 'Varus! Varus! give me back my legions!'

One of the most famous historical *mots* is that attributed to Louis XIV. when seventeen years of age. The President of the French Parliament, speaking of the interests of the State, was interrupted by the king with, 'L'État, c'est moi!' Another version of the saying is, that Louis interrupted a judge who used the expression, 'The king and the State,' by saying, 'I am the State!' No authentic record of the saying exists, and it is discredited by modern French historians, being regarded as merely symbolical of the king's policy—that of absolute monarchy.

A remarkable utterance was that of the notorious Madame de Pompadour, the mistress of Louis XV. One day, as La Tour was engaged in painting the lady's portrait, Louis entered the room in a state of great dejection. He had just received news of the battle of Rossbach, in which Frederick the Great had inflicted a disastrous defeat on the combined forces of France and Austria. Madame de Pompadour told him he must not lose his spirits, because he would fall ill; and, besides, it was no matter—'After us, the deluge.' Prophetic utterance!

'All is lost save honour!' was the announcement, in a condensed form, of Francis I. in a letter to his mother after the defeat of Pavia. Napoleon used the same expression after the battle of Waterloo. On his arrival at the Elysée, three days after the battle, Caulaincourt exclaimed, 'All is lost!'—'Except honour,' added Napoleon.

The French Revolution gave us a saying which has become a proverb. Marmontel was one day regretting the excesses of the Revolution, when Chamfort, the French satirist, asked him, 'Do you think that Revolutions are made with rose-water?' Another phrase which owed its birth to the Revolution, and which will be inseparable from it, was that of Madame Roland. As she was being led to execution, she passed a statue of Liberty, erected by the Revolutionists. Looking at it intently, she exclaimed, 'O Liberty! how many crimes are committed in thy name!'

At the battle of Fontenoy occurred a well-known instance of politeness on the part of the English and French Guards, which, it is almost needless to say, could only have happened in those ceremonious times. The two battalions of opposing Guards were about to join in conflict, when the English commander advanced, and, saluting the French commander, exclaimed, 'Gentlemen of the French Guards, fire!' The French officer, not to be outdone in politeness, returned the salute, and replied, 'After you, gentlemen; the French Guards never fire first!' Upon which the English gentlemen, thinking further ceremony needless, fired, with such effect as to put nearly nine hundred of the French gentlemen *hors-de-combat*. Somewhat costly politeness for them.

Wellington did not stand on ceremony when he gave his celebrated order at Waterloo, 'Up, Guards, and at 'em!' This phrase has been the accepted form of the order, although the Duke afterwards said he did not remember using such words. The Guards were lying down beyond the crest of the hill, to escape the French fire; and when the enemy was almost close upon them, Wellington said he very probably gave some such order as, 'Stand up, Guards!' Be that as it may, 'Up, Guards, and at 'em!' has become a household word; and so it will likely remain.

Waterloo has given us other well-known phrases, although doubt has been cast upon their authenticity; but this is not to be wondered at, as in the heat and excitement of an action, exclamations, and even orders, might be imagined or misunderstood, as in the unfortunate charge of Balaklava. Wellington is said, late in the afternoon, while the fate of the day yet hung in the balance, to have pulled out his watch and muttered, 'Blücher or night.' Similarly, Napoleon is said to have given audible expression to his anxiety when he exclaimed, 'Oh that Grouchy or night were here!' At the close of the battle, when he saw that all was irretrievably lost, Napoleon is said to have exclaimed: 'They are mingled together; all is lost for the present; save himself who can!' In the rout, after the battle, a battalion of the French Guards threw itself into square, sullenly determined not to flee. When summoned to surrender, General Cambronne, the commander, is said to have returned the famous reply, 'The Guard dies, but never surrenders!' The battalion was cut to pieces, and Cambronne made prisoner. He afterwards denied having used the expression; naturally, having surrendered, he would not wish to claim the use of such a fine sentiment. A French

Guardsman, who was also made prisoner, said he distinctly heard Cambonne use it twice. The phrase is now supposed to have been invented by Rougemont, a prolific French writer, in a description of the battle which he wrote for the *Indépendant*, two days afterwards.

Nelson, as well as Wellington, has given us some historical phrases. Each of his three great battles has its own particular motto, inseparably connected with it. 'Victory or Westminster Abbey!' was his exclamation before the battle of the Nile. During the battle of Copenhagen, three of the British line-of-battle ships became disabled, and Sir Hyde Parker, fearful for the issue, rendered doubly doubtful by the unexpected and desperate resistance of the Danes, made the signal to leave off action. Nelson, greatly excited, exclaimed, 'Leave off action now! — me if I do. You know, Foley' — turning to his Captain — 'I have only one eye, and have a right to be blind sometimes;' and clapping his telescope to his blind eye, he added, 'I really do not see the signal.' Presently he exclaimed, 'Keep my signal for close action flying — nail mine to the mast.' — Who does not know the immortal signal to the fleet on the eve of the battle of Trafalgar? 'England expects every man to do his duty.' According to the *Dispatches and Letters*, this was not the original form of the message. 'England confides that every man shall do his duty,' was the signal intended by Nelson. His flag-officer, however, pointed out to him that 'confides' would require to be spelled out, not being in the vocabulary, and suggested 'expects,' which was. Nelson at once agreed to the change.

We are indebted to Cromwell for one of the best known sayings in English history, that connected with the dissolution of the Long Parliament. On the fateful day, at the conclusion of a long speech in which he (figuratively) blew up the Parliament, Cromwell called in twenty or thirty musketeers, and expelled the members. Turning to the table, his eye fell upon the symbol of the sovereignty of Parliament, the Mace. Lifting it up, he said scornfully, 'What shall we do with this bauble? Take it away!' He gave it to one of his officers, and what became of it is one of the mysteries of English history.

Equally well known is Cromwell's advice to his troops as they were about to cross a river to engage the enemy. Having made a speech, as was his custom on such occasions, he finished up with, 'Put your trust in God, but be sure to see that your powder is dry.' There is surely something truly Cromwellian in such a happy combination of piety and practical advice.

A fit companion to the above is the prayer of Leopold, Prince of Anhalt-Dessau, the 'Old Dessauer,' a General under Prince Eugene and Frederick the Great. Before an engagement, he would reverently take off his hat and pray, 'Oh God, assist our side: at least, avoid assisting the enemy, and leave the result to me.'

Frederick the Great was the author of many sayings. One of his briefest and most forcible was when he shouted to his wavering troops at the battle of Kolin, 'Dogs! would ye live for

ever?' An address not quite calculated, one would think, to inspire his troops with fresh courage. Carlyle, the iconoclast of good sayings, does not believe in this tradition.

Among less known sayings is one of Charles XII. of Sweden, 'The Madman of the North.' During one of his quixotic wars, in which he had been a long time absent from Sweden, an urgent and earnest message came to him from the land he was supposed to rule over, asking him to come back and govern his country. But all the satisfaction his anxious subjects got was, 'I'll send one of my boots to govern them!' It was Oxenstierna, the Chancellor of Gustavus Adolphus, who said to his son: 'You know not, my son, with how little wisdom the world is governed.'

The proverbial 'Non possumus' of the papacy was originally the reply, quoted from Acts, iv. 20, of Pope Clement to the demand of Henry VIII. in the divorce controversy.

That sapient monarch, James I. — 'the wisest fool in Christendom' — had many wise and witty sayings, although none of them has gained much historical celebrity. Perhaps one of the most characteristic of those attributed to him illustrates the grievous troubles and annoyances to which the Commons subjected him. One day his horse was very unruly, and the monarch's wrath at last found vent in the tirade, 'The deil i' my saul, sirrah, an ye be not quiet, I'll send you to the five hundred kings in the House of Commons: they'll quickly tame ye!'

Sir Robert Walpole vehemently opposed the Spanish War in 1739. When he heard the London bells ring upon the declaration of war, he remarked, 'They may ring their bells now; before long, they will be wringing their hands.' Not strictly accurate, as it turned out; but an indifferent prophecy may perhaps be pardoned for the sake of a good pun.

There are not many who do not know the story of Sir Isaac Newton and his dog Diamond. The dog, in frolicking about, upset a lighted taper upon some papers, setting fire to them, and destroying the labour of years. 'Oh Diamond, Diamond! little do you know the mischief you have done me!' was the philosopher's only comment. Sir David Brewster denies this story, and says that Newton never had any connection with dogs or cats.

One of the briefest of despatches was that of Sir Charles Napier announcing the victory of Hyderabad in 1843, after he had entered upon the war without official sanction. 'Peccavi' (I have Sinned).

'It is magnificent, but it is not war,' was the exclamation of General Bosquet, one of the French Generals of division, on witnessing the immortal charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava. The remark will be for ever associated with the brilliant but disastrous charge.

Scottish history affords us a few well-known phrases. Just before Robert the Bruce began his memorable struggle for Scottish independence, he was one day in conference with John Comyn, a claimant for the Scottish Crown. He accused Comyn of betraying his designs to Edward. 'You lie!' said Comyn. Bruce, enraged, drew his dagger and stabbed him; but, shocked at

what he had done, he rushed out of the church where they were and cried, 'I doubt I have slain the Red Comyn!'—'You doubt?' said Kirkpatrick of Closeburn, one of his followers, 'I mak siccar!' (I make sure); and running in, finished the deed. The Kirkpatricks have from that day adopted the words as their motto.

'Oh for an hour of Dundee!' was the cry of Gordon of Glenbucket at the battle of Sheriffmuir when the Jacobites were hard pressed by the royalist forces. This wish has been echoed, with the difference of another name for that of the redoubtable Viscount, in many a battle since.

During the war of Dutch independence, under the leadership of William, Prince of Orange, the Duke of Buckingham, who thought that the United Provinces were doomed to inevitable destruction, asked William whether he did not see that the Commonwealth was ruined. 'There is one certain means,' answered the Prince, 'by which I can be sure never to see the ruin of my country—I will die in the last ditch!'

During the battle of Buena Vista, fought in the war between the United States and Mexico, the United States infantry were at one time overwhelmed by numbers of the enemy. At the critical moment, Captain (afterwards General) Bragg's artillery was ordered up to its support, and one discharge of grape made the Mexicans waver. General Taylor, seeing this, shouted, 'A little more grape, Captain Bragg!' The Mexicans got it to such purpose that they fled in disorder. It was on his being renominated to the presidency during the civil war that Lincoln quoted, from a Dutch farmer he said, the unforgettable saying that it is not best to swap horses in crossing a stream. 'Stonewall' Jackson received his sobriquet from General Bernard Bee's exclamation during the battle of Bull Run, 'See, there is Jackson standing like a stone wall; rally on the Virginians.'

The Emperor Nicholas was the author of one of the most notorious phrases—perhaps the most notorious, in a political sense—which the nineteenth century has heard. In the beginning of 1853 he had several conversations with the English ambassador, Sir E. H. Seymour, in regard to the then probable dissolution of the Turkish Empire. In one of these he said, 'We have on our hands a sick man, a very sick man. It will be a great misfortune if he should slip away from us before the necessary arrangements have been made.' To divide the spoil, he meant. The result of his making these arrangements on his own account is well known. The phrase, however, was not altogether original. The ambassador of James II. at Constantinople wrote that the Ottoman Empire had 'the body of a sick old man, who tried to appear healthy, although his end was near.'

Every one knows Stanley's greeting to Livingstone when he 'found' him: 'Dr Livingstone, I presume?' This laconic salutation was, however, rendered politic by the fact that any show of emotion would have been looked upon by the Arabs and negroes present as a sign of weakness or inferiority.

It was Ollivier, Napoleon III.'s constitutional minister, who plunged into the disastrous war of 1870 'with a light heart.' And though the phrase 'blood and iron' is as old as Quintilian,

it was Bismarck who made it a historical phrase for what he regarded as the sole cure for Germany's political troubles.

In conclusion, a famous reply of Plato's may be given. When asked if any saying of his would be recorded, he replied, 'Wait until we become famous, and then there will be many.' Although true in the main, it is not always the person who utters it that makes a phrase famous, but sometimes the occasion which calls it forth.

OLD BEN'S BARGAIN.

THE sun had just set, leaving a bright, luminous yellow behind it; opposite, in the pale, frosty blue, hung the clear silver moon, nearly at the full. The light of the dying sunset and rising moon blended, and the whole landscape was steeped in a faint mellow light. There was not a shadow anywhere; the pure soft glow was over everything alike—purple of wet plough-lands, brownish yellow of stubble-fields, pale green of young wheat, faint purple and gray of distant downs. The thick branches of the hawthorn in the hedge were outlined clear and sharp against the yellow glow in the west. The wind had gone down, and not a twig was stirring. A little bird was rustling in the hedge; and in the distance, a thrush was singing clear and soft. Two or three rooks floated slowly overhead.

The long, dusty, white road seemed deserted for the time being, but after a while there was a shuffling sound in the distance, and a man appeared driving two cows. He was a short, thin, wiry man, with a wooden leg. Everything about him expressed determination, from his steel-gray eyes which looked out steadily from under his heavy, grizzled eyebrows, to his square chin that stuck out aggressively with an air of contradicting his thick, strong-bridged, rather overhanging nose. Even his wooden leg seemed to emphasise his resolution—it went down with such a firm rap. Suddenly, down from a cross-road came half-a-dozen young cattle at a quick trot, followed by a man. They settled into a quieter pace: and the two men walked along side by side, keeping, however, the width of the road between them. They neither of them took any notice of the other, and they marched along silently for some way, save for an occasional contemptuous sniff or snort. The newcomer was a man about ten years younger than the first; he was taller, and of a milder expression. He was stout and red-faced, and carried himself with a faint lingering of a soldierly bearing. One sleeve was pinned across his breast.

These two men were the cattle-drivers of Shornstone parish, and were considered by its inhabitants to be peculiarly fitted for their office, owing to their respective misfortunes. Nervous old ladies and gentlemen, however,

were not so sure of this sometimes, when they met them driving fierce bulls in narrow lanes. Each regarded the other as defrauding him of his rightful dues, and they hated one another with a deadly hate in consequence.

'How set up some folks be, for sure, if they gets a few mis'able young calves to drive!' said the little man suddenly, apparently addressing the hedge.

'Ah! And there's others as thinks they be gwine to make their fortunes if they gets a couple o' old cows only fitten to goo to kennel,' said the other to his side of the hedge.

They walked on in silence again for a space, though both seemed to bristle with wrath.

'Some folks *may* hev only one arm, but they've fingers enough on it to put into other people's pockets and pick 'em of their honest rights,' said the little man, resuming his conversation with the hedge.

'And if others only hev one leg, their 'ooden uns can carry 'em along fast enough if they thinks they can get anything by it,' replied the other to his side. It was noticeable that his remarks were always a weak echo of the other.

'I may hev only one leg, but I lost it honest, as you med say. Now, if I'd lost it fur gwine fur a shillen a day and cutten off other people's, I'd say it sarved me jolly well right! Fur a shillen a day!'

Henry Legge, as the stout man was called, could think of no retort to this; he took off his hat, and pushed up his stiff gray hair angrily; whereupon the little man changed his tactics.

'I *have* a-heerd say as there be some as brags as they've a lost their arms in a battle, when 'twas only they fell under a cart when they was tight! Hee, hee, hee!'

This was too much for Henry; he turned round, dropping all pretence. 'That be a lie, Benjamin Creeth, and you know it be!'

Benjamin Creeth gave an affected start, and looked innocently at him. 'Lor! I didn't know as any one was there. I did hear a noise like, but I tho't 'twas the cow blaren.'

Henry's large red face turned purple. 'You one-legged old rascal!' he exclaimed furiously.

'Sure, yes! I hev only one leg; but fur all that, there be a Legge too many in the world,' said Benjamin, chuckling at his own bad joke.

'Ah! And there's a Legge as'll kiek you, if you gets chicking me!' retorted Henry passionately.

At this moment, any one who did not know the two old men, might have feared, from their expressions, that they were coming to blows; but just then the road branched off, and they went away quite peacefully on their different routes.

Soon after, the cows made a rush in at an open gate. At the sound of their hoofs, a man came out of the cow-house and opened the door to let them in. As each one went into her own stall, he addressed Ben: 'They didn't goo off, then! Wull, I sort o' tho't they wouldn't.'

'No. Market was vurry full. I dunno when I've seed it so full.'

'They be proper glad to get home again,' said the man, with a backward glance at the cows.

'Ah! What be luck fur the fox, be loss fur the hounds!' replied Ben sententiously.

Ben's cottage, which was about a mile away, was a double one, his side being the nearest to the gate. The other side had an almost deserted appearance; there were no curtains in the window, only a pot or two of pinched-looking flowers. A great contrast to the window next door, with its cosy curtains, and brilliant flowers in their bright red pots.

'How late you be, Ben!' said his wife, hurrying to the door as she heard the tap of his wooden leg in the path. 'I didn't like to begin without you; but I be dyin' fur a cup o' tea; the dust gets down your throat so when you be cleanin' up.'

'I doubts if there be ever much dust in *your* house to get down your throat, missis!' replied Ben; whereupon Mrs Creeth flung her head back and laughed triumphantly; then stopped abruptly to call out: 'Don't you come in over my clean floor wi' all that dust on ye!'

Ben meekly took the broom and brushed himself, then followed her into the room, and seated himself at the table, his rough face beaming as he looked across at her.

'Seed anybody you know?' she inquired.

'Yes; I seed a good few. Market was uncommon full,' he answered. 'I seed that old rascal, Harry Legge, too, and he chicked me that there, that if he haedn't bin such a antient old man, I'd 'a up'd wi' my stick and het un on the yead!'

'Old, indeed!' said Mrs Creeth. 'He be a good ten year younger nor you be!'

'No; he bain't; not more nor nine year; and I be twice the man he be, wi' his apple-plectic complexion and his husky voice, like a sheep wi' the dust down's throat!—There he goos now!' he broke off excitedly, rising up and resting his fists on the table, to lean over and watch a figure that passed the window. 'Drat un! The sight o' un spiles my vittals!' he continued, craning his neck.

'What d'ye look at him fur, then?'

'I can't help secin' un,' said Ben, sinking back into his chair. 'What call had he to come and bide next door to me, I should like to know? I can't do nothen wi'out him folleren me. Coz I drives cattle, he takes and does it too. Coz I lives here, he comes next door. Why, I can't even hev one leg wi'out him havin one arm.—What be laughin' at?'

'I can't help laughin',' said Mrs Creeth with an irrepressible chuckle, 'you be so foolish! You knows as well as I do, there warn't no other cottage when he come here; and what were he to do wi' only one arm, if he didn't drive?'

'There be lots o' things,' began Ben argumentatively.

'Well, never mind if there be.—Did you see anybody else in town?' said Mrs Creeth, diverting the conversation into more peaceful channels.

After tea, Ben came to the door and stood there smoking his pipe. Henry Legge passed several times, fetching water from the well.

He was house-cleaning—that is to say, he had cleaned all his furniture out into the garden, and was dashing buckets of water over the stone floor of his room. Ben, watching the water running in a little rill down the red-brick gutter in front of the cottages, was struck with a bright idea. 'Look here!' he said, bursting out of the door. 'This half o' the gutter be mine; your side only comes to here'—marking a line with his stick from the middle of the cottage. 'You must make it run off your side!'

Henry made no reply; he fetched some bricks, with which he made a little barricade across the gutter. Then he slowly mopped up the water and wrung the mop over the garden.

'Get along with your foolishness, do!' said Mrs Creeth, coming out and addressing them both. 'I han't no patience wi' you, allus getting aggravating each other.—And you be the wust o' the two, I will say that fur ye,' she added to her husband; 'you've allus begun it.'

'Martha Creeth,' said her husband solemnly, following her indoors, 'I says, and I've said afore, as an 'oman as goos agen her husband, and tries to bring him down afore strangers, be about as bright as anybody 'ud be as climbed up on a high bough and then set to work to saw it off.' They'd be bound to come down together!'

Mrs Creeth gave her good-humoured little chuckle. 'Well, I 'lows mine be but a crooked bough!' said she.

Next morning, being Sunday, Ben was leaning over the pigsty watching his pig. A field or two off was a flock of sheep, and the shepherd coming up presently, joined Ben. He, too, folded his arms on the rail of the pigsty, and became lost in contemplation of the pig. 'Dry weather we be havin',' he remarked after a time.

'Sure, yes we be!' replied Ben. 'Good fur the sowin',' he continued: 'they says, "A dry Febooary and a wet March—one fur the corn, and one fur the grass!"'

'Yes, a fine pig,' observed the shepherd after a pause.

'Ah! I'll warnt he do take kind to his vittals,' said Ben.

'Sure, yes, 'tis a fine pig,' repeated the shepherd.

'All my missis's pigs thrives,' said Ben with pride.

'Shouldn't 'a tho't it, to look at ye,' came from the distance, where Henry Legge was walking round his part of the garden, ostensibly looking at his gooseberry bushes, but really listening to the conversation.

Ben looked at the shepherd with an expression of contemptuous pity, and tapped his head significantly; which gesture being seen, as it was intended to be, by Henry, he asked angrily: 'What be tappin yer head fur? To see if 'tis holler? I'll warnt 'tis as holler as a empty beer-barrel.'

'Wull, Harry, how be times wi' you?' inquired the shepherd hastily, wishing to cause a diversion. He moved up the path as he spoke.

'Oh, pretty fair,' replied Henry; 'but I've a middlin' queer customer afore long. Farmer

Hoist's bull, they says, there'll be a regular to-do getting un off.'

'Ah! well, take care o' yer toes, Harry, when you gets anearst un!'

'Ah! I'll look pretty lively, I'll warrant. I hev 'a bin tossed once, but that was a good many year ago now. I 'lows I wouldn't come down so light now!'

'They says as you should take the bull by the horns.'

'Ah! and they must be pretty near simpletons to say it too,' replied Henry contemptuously. 'If anybody wants a lark's journey free o' cost, they'd better just try it, that's all I've got to say.'

'Wull, then, that's what they says. I don't answer fur the sense on it,' said the shepherd, departing.

A high east wind was blowing in great clouds of dust from the road across the garden, and showering the apple petals away to the blue sky like flights of white butterflies—one morning about two months later there was snow round the cottages again—snow of apple-bloom. Mrs Creeth's cottage was half-smothered in it; a tom-tit was flying about in it, pecking out the roller caterpillars, stopping every now and then to give his quick note, like the sharp ringing of a little bell, which changed to a harsh note of warning as Mrs Creeth came out of her door and entered the next one. She went up-stairs, and presently her cheerful tones were heard alternating with a husky querulous voice. Presently she came down-stairs again and moved round the room, which had an unusual look of tidiness, dusting a table or chair here and there with her apron. Her husband came by and stopped at the door. 'Don't it look nice, Ben?' said she, looking up. 'I allus did think I'd like to hae a hand in cleanin' it, fur he've got nice furniture.'

'How be he to-day?' asked Ben.

'Oh! he be ter'ble low to-day, sayin' as how this yere illness 'ull eat up all his savins; and when he do get better, he'll hev no work to do, and 'll have to go to House.'

'Why's that?' asked Ben grumpily.

'Why, he means fur sure as you'll hev got all his custom by then.'

'Ho!' interjected Ben, with a very cross expression.

'It do sim funny,' continued Mrs Creeth, 'to think how you've a bin gwine on so many year about that pore old man comin' and takin' your work, as you said; and to think now as if he'd never come, you'd a hev to hev drove that bull yourself, and got knocked down and injured yourself, 'stead o' pore Harry, and killed belike! It do sim funny fur sure!—But there; I must goo and make him some broth; he sims to fancy it, like.'

Ben walked slowly away, looking frowningly at the ground; then suddenly wheeled round and walked determinedly off to Henry Legge's door. He went straight up the stairs, and rapped firmly at the door at the top.

'Come in,' called Henry. He was sitting up in bed with an astonished air, for he had heard the tap of Ben's leg on the stair.

'Wull, Harry, how be you to-day?' asked Ben awkwardly.

'Nicely, thankye,' replied Henry, too much amazed to remember how he was.

An uncomfortable pause ensued; then Henry asked: 'Wull ye take a chair?' remembering his manners, as he afterwards said—'fur, seeing him come in like that, I was all struck o' a heap.'

'Thankye,' replied Ben, sitting down, and turning his stick about in his hand. 'T'es uncommon hot fur this time o' year,' he observed.

'Sure, yes, it be!' replied Henry.

Then there was another pause, which Ben broke abruptly: 'My missis says as how you be frettin', thinkin' as I be gettin' hold o' your work. Now, look here, Henery Legge,' he went on emphatically, bringing his stick down on the ground. 'I sticks to it (I allus has, and allus shall) as you'd no business to come here, where I'd bid so many year, affrontin' me by takin' my trade. What you o't to hev done 'ud 'a bin to come to me and say: "Mr Creeth, owin' to me heven lost my arm, there baint a-many things I can turn to; so, if you've no objection, we'll goo into partynership." That's what you o't to hev done; but then you didn't.—'Tis true, you and me's haed words now and agen; but if you thinks as I'd take a penny as o't to come to you, you be mistook—that's all I've got to say! You be mistook. 'Tis true, I've took your work sin' you've bin led by; but I've put every ha'porth o' it by.' Here Ben began to dive in his pocket, and, with some difficulty brought out a little leather bag, out of which he turned a small heap of coins on to the bed. 'And here it be,' he continued triumphantly; 'and I'll be bothered if I'd a touched a penny o' it if I'd bin starvin'!' 'I wun't touch it, neyther,' said Henry stubbornly, shaking with excitement.

'Now, don't ye be foolish and obstinate—now, don't ye, now,' said Ben in almost pleading accents. 'You take it now, and 'twill be all fair and square, as the sayin' be.'

'No, 'twun't; I wun't touch it,' repeated Henry.

'There, I never know'd no one so contrairy as you be,' said Ben. 'I tellee'—getting angry—'as I wun't touch it.'

'And I tellee as I wun't!' said Henry.

Ben turned red with wrath; then, as he looked at Henry's changed face, with its hollow eyes and thin wan cheeks, his anger left him.

'Wull, then, we wun't say no more about it now,' he said patiently; 'but think over what I said about you and me bein' partyners. You sees how handy 'twould be if one o' us be ill, t'other can do his work; or if one's got more work at one time nor he knows how to do, there be t'other to help him; or if either on us wants to goo a day's pleasured wi's missis or a friend, why, there we be!'

'It hev accrossed my mind afore now,' allowed Henry.

'There, now! If you've atho't o' it, and I've atho't o' it, why, there 'tis now. You and me'll strike a bargain that we'll let bygones be bygones; and we'll get my missis to write out a paper—you o't to allus hae a third party to write out such matters.' The truth was Ben could only sign his name. 'We'll put it like this yere: "I, Benjamin Creeth, and Henery Legge, two poor but honest men, both o' this

parish, be gwine to goo into partynership;" and then we'll say if anybody has anything to say agen it, they be to declare it, or be for evermore silent; and then we'll sign our names to un.' Ben hitched his chair nearer the bed in his excitement. 'And I'll tellee what 'tis; we'd better take a bwoy between us. There be Joe Hill's bwoy, or my niece Em'ly's Tommy, I enclines to he, fur you o't to stick by your own folks; and we can get him sixpence a week cheaper.'

'Vurry well,' said Henry. He had a complacent expression on his face, as though well pleased at the turn affairs had taken.

'But look here, though; stop a bit,' said Ben. 'I wun't do none o' it, if you wun't take that there money!'

'Vurry well, then,' said Henry condescendingly.

'Then let's shake hands on it.'

Whereupon the two old enemies shook hands heartily. Mrs Creeth, coming in at this moment with a basin of broth, stopped short, transfixed with astonishment. Ben turned round and saw her; he rose from his chair, and extending his arm majestically over Henry, 'Missis!' he said, solemnly, 'what have passed afore betwixt that old man and me, let it be!'

AN OLD LOVE-SONG.

ASK me no gay refrain of love and leisure;
I have no lilting lay of light success.
Here to the night I sing in graver measure
My peerless lady and my dear distress.

Fairest is she—the very winds adore her,
Whispering eloquent in sigh-soft speech
How that they faint and fold their wings before her,
How like a star she shines beyond my reach.

Love her I must, not seeking her compassion,
In no stray hope to mend my sweet mischance:
Love her alone, in tender, rev'rent fashion,
And kiss her feet as queen of my romance.

Proud to the world, to her I humbly render
All knightly homage on my bended knee;
Proud but in this my absolute surrender
For life or death to her sweet sov'reignty.

Hers to command; my true allegiance keeping
Prompt to the doing of her light behest,
As to the charge where battle's storm is sweeping,
Her colours plaited in my helmet's crest.

I will not breathe the name the gods have lent her—
Call her my Lady of the Golden Heart—
Nor point the bower that she alone may enter,
The bright, chaste shrine wherein she reigns apart.

Here 'neath the stars that claim her as their fellow,
I sing my lady and my dear duress.
Tell her, ye winds that kiss her shining pillow,
The sad, sweet story of my faithfulness.

A. H. RAIKES.

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OUR OLDEST COLONY.

So little interest is taken by many of us in our colonies, that probably the only two facts popularly known about the island of Newfoundland is that it has fisheries and produces a famous breed of noble dogs! And yet Newfoundland is our oldest colony, and our colony nearest to the mother-country.

Newfoundland was discovered in 1497 by John and Sebastian Cabot (or Cabotto), Italians settled and trading in Bristol—foreigners prepared to do yeoman service for their adopted land. The Cabots went out in their ship *Matthew* at their own charges, and on St John's Day (24th of June) first sighted the shore, to which they gave the name of Prima Tierra Vista—'first-seen land.' Henry VII. gave the bold mariners his 'letters patent,' which authorised them to set up the Royal Standard, and secured the stingy king a share in their profits, without involving him in any share of their expenditure.

Seven years after the first Cabot expedition, French fishermen, intermingled with a few British adventurers, began to open up the Newfoundland cod fisheries. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Sir Walter Raleigh's half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, formally took possession of the island in the name of Great Britain. But on his return journey, his vessel, the *Squirrel*, foundered in a great storm with all hands—its companion ship, the *Golden Hind*, reaching home to tell how the brave sea-king

sat upon the deck;

The book was in his hand.

'Do not fear: Heaven is as near,'

He cried, 'by water as by land.'

In 1610 a British 'Company,' among whose promoters appears the name of the great Lord Bacon, was formed to settle a colony in Newfoundland. This proved unsuccessful; and the next movement in the same direction was a Government-commissioned Survey by one Captain Whitbourne, who had traded with the

place for forty years, and had the most enthusiastic faith in its possibilities. We need not quote his rhapsodies, which paint Newfoundland as a (rather chilly) Garden of Eden. Suffice it to say that recent scientific investigation actually confirms much of the old mariner's assertions! In 1871 it was declared that the valley of the Exploits, the largest river in the island, is capable of maintaining a thriving population of over seventy thousand. Its present inhabitants are numbered by a few hundreds, and the population of the whole island is smaller than that of the city of Edinburgh.

After Captain Whitbourne's report, Lord Baltimore made a fruitless attempt to settle the island. Then followed Lord Falkland. The emigrants he took out were chiefly Irish, and many more of that nation have since joined them. Yet in the year 1655 there were not more than two thousand Europeans living in the island, scattered in fifteen small settlements on the eastern coast. But every summer many thousands of fishermen plied their temporary labours on the shores.

Selfishness and greed prevented the speedy permanent settlement of the island, and have always stood in the way of its development from a basis of sound prosperity. Merchants and ship-owners from the west of England wished to use it solely for their own benefit. The Star Chamber was brought to issue all sorts of oppressive edicts to hinder substantial and agricultural colonisation. For instance, masters of vessels were bound, under heavy penalty, to bring back all persons who sailed out with them. No settlement was permitted within six miles of the shore. The veriest shanty within that limit was not to be permitted to have a chimney or any arrangement for lighting a fire. (Let the Newfoundland climate be borne in mind, and it will be seen that this restriction meant absolute prohibition.) Anybody accused of petty theft or other misdemeanour committed in Newfoundland was to be brought back to this country to be tried and

sentenced by the Mayors of such towns as Weymouth or Southampton.

The same greedy monopolists, who (about 1700) actually endeavoured to induce the British Government to forbid the landing of any woman in Newfoundland, and to adopt means to remove any already there, also took every opportunity to calumniate the resources of the island, thereby giving the lie alike to the ancient mariner Whitbourne, and to the modern men of science, yet creating a popular 'prejudice,' which exists to this very day.

The next difficulty was the petty feud between the French and English fishermen, whose unneighbourly feelings were increased by the war between France and England. The treaty of Utrecht, however (1713), assured the island to the British, and defined the rights of the French in a fashion which, while it secured a certain amount of peace, certainly did not smooth away all difficulties, nor invariably tend to island prosperity.

Meanwhile, things had gone badly indeed with the aborigines of Newfoundland. Cabot's advice to his captains concerning them and other 'natives of strange countries' was 'that they should be enticed aboard and made drunk with your beer and wine, for then you shall know the secrets of their hearts.' It is said, however, that he brought two to England, and, that, after a two years' experience of civilisation, they were seen 'in the Palace of Westminster,' and 'not to be distinguished from Englishmen until I was told who they were.'

One of Sir Humphrey Gilbert's party, and also good Captain Whitbourne himself, have only kindly words for the aborigines, describing them as 'harmless,' 'ingenious, and tractable,' 'full of quick and lively apprehension,' and willing to work for a small hire. But, alas! they did not at once understand the 'rights of property,' and indeed it might have been hard to explain why they might not take a few nails or a knife from those who had taken possession of their land and their rivers with all their mineral and finny riches. But 'circumstances seem to alter cases.' For every petty theft—or suspicion thereof—they were ruthlessly flogged and shot down by the invaders. The Home Government made futile appeals to its settlers to 'conciliate' the natives. But the Indians' experience of the white strangers was of a nature to cause the tribes presently to withdraw to remote lake settlements. Of these, in the year 1828, the traveller Cormack found but the deserted and decayed remains.

In the beginning of this century, a tardy and ill-conceived method of drawing the tribes from their retreat into friendly relations with civilisation was attempted. A reward was offered for the capture of a Red Indian; and in 1804 a female was taken by a fisherman and brought to St John's (the capital), where she was kindly treated and sent back to her tribe loaded with presents. A strong suspicion was entertained that the presents aroused the cupidity of the man entrusted to take her back to her people, and that the wretch murdered her and took possession of the property.'

In 1819 another female was taken by a

party of trappers on Red Indian Lake. Her husband and an Indian friend, who resisted her capture, were at once shot. She, too, was brought to St John's, named 'Mary March' after the month of her capture, 'treated with great kindness,' and sent back 'loaded with gifts.' But she had pined so terribly that she died in the hands of her captors on her way back to her (desolated) home. Her body was placed in a coffin and left where it was thought her people would find it. Years after, the traveller Cormack discovered it by the side of her murdered husband in the Indian burying-ground near the deserted settlement on Red Indian Lake.

Yet again, in 1823 three Indian women were seized in their wigwam by a party from Twillingate. They were a mother and two daughters. The mother and one daughter soon pined and died. The other endured her solitude among aliens for some years, and became 'useful as a housemaid.' She is described as six feet high, of a fine presence and handsome features, and of a nature gentle, courteous, and affectionate. A pencil and a piece of paper being given to her, she drew a deer perfectly with a few strokes, but began her sketch from the tip of the tail! She was the last of the aboriginal Indians ever seen alive. Even of their skulls, but one is known to have been preserved. It had a narrow escape from being thrown into a dust-bin, but is now stored in the Museum at St John's.

Not a snake, lizard, toad, frog, or any noxious reptile lives in Newfoundland, but game of all kinds abounds—ducks and geese, ptarmigan, sable martens, lynxes; foxes, red, black, and gray; otters, beavers, and reindeer. Even wolves and black bears still linger in the interior.

We said that Newfoundland is perhaps best known by its famous breed of dogs. But it appears that these, like the island's present humanity, are not indigenous. They seem to have been produced by some happy crossing of breeds. It is said that in the island they appear to degenerate, and that the Newfoundland dog thrives better out of Newfoundland. Old settlers are reported as saying that the genuine breed consisted of a dog twenty-six inches high, with black naked body, gray muzzle, gray or white stockinged legs, with dew-claws behind. The Leonberg dogs—a cross between the Newfoundland, the St Bernard, and the Pyrenean wolf-dog—are said to thrive well in the island, and to possess 'some of the highest moral qualities of the noble races whose blood blends in their veins.'

In the vegetable kingdom, Newfoundland, though a land of frost and fog, is reported by competent experts to be singularly rich. Common English flowers, with care, thrive well in sheltered gardens. Even the dahlia will survive the winter. Perennials do better than annuals. Among wild-flowers, lilies are developed in great luxuriance, also heart's-ease, Solomon's seal, columbine, bell-flowers, and pitcher-plants. Grasses are rich and abundant. Potatoes are unsurpassed anywhere; and cucumbers, marrows, melons, cabbages, cauliflowers, beans, carrots, and peas are abundant. Straw-

berries, raspberries, and gooseberries are fair. A farmer from Cape Breton settled near Deer Lake reports great satisfaction with his land. Clover and buckwheat grew luxuriantly, and the soil favoured the growth of flax.

It must always be borne in mind that there is great difference between the eastern and western shores of Newfoundland. On the western shore fog is rarely seen, and the climate is an 'ameliorated' one. The southern shore suffers most from fog. There is least fog in winter. Newfoundland is said to escape alike the fierce heats and the intense colds of Canada and some of the States. The inhabitants make no Arctic preparations for winter clothing, and open fireplaces suffice to warm the houses.

The interior of the island is clothed with magnificent forests of pine, spruce, birch, juniper, larch, &c. The aspen, the poplar, and the willow thrive. There are no cedars, beeches, elms, or oaks; and authority does not say whether any attempt has been made to introduce them.

It appears that in the language of the aborigines the island was called Baccalaos, or 'cod-fish'; and it is doubtful whether the most has even yet been made of these fisheries which have hitherto been almost its only source of wealth. For they have been managed in haphazard, old-fashioned, unscientific methods; and the fishermen are cramped and disheartened by finding themselves—owing to the 'truck' system—almost wholly in the hands of remote capitalists.

Newfoundland has a seal-fishery of comparatively recent date, not much older than the present century; but its seals are not those which furnish the daintiest wraps. Four species are found around Labrador and Newfoundland—the bay seal, the harp, the hood, and the square flipper. The skins of these are used rather for boots, harness, &c., though those of the harp seal with their lyre-like marking make fine mats for study or parlour.

There are large copper mines in the vicinity of Notre Dame Bay; but apart from these, the minerals of the country, said to include coal, lead, and iron, have scarcely yet been heeded.

The capital, St John's, stands on the northern side of the harbour of that name. It has been three times burned down. Each time, effort has been made to rebuild it on a safer plan, but its articles of commerce are, alas! of essentially inflammable material. Before the last fire, when property of the estimated value of four millions was consumed in a single night, it was fondly believed that St John's was fire-proof! The city clothes the slope of a hill which is crowned by the Barracks and the 'best houses,' commanding splendid views of the harbour and its hilly shores. The streets of St John's, save, perhaps, the chief, are little better than muddy lanes with wooden pavements of varied elevation, and at night they are but imperfectly lit.

By 'one who knows,' the scenery of Newfoundland (which residents in the island pronounce Nĕw-fund-land') is said to be 'Scottish' in character, with the variation (on the coast) that icebergs are seen drifting past, looking very pretty (like iridescent glass) in the June

sunshine! But even yet the island remains but little known even to its own inhabitants. A new arrival in St John's, zealously making inquiries with a view to the surroundings of an appointment he had received near Notre Dame Bay, wrote home: 'Nobody here seems to know much about the other parts of the island.' It is sincerely to be hoped that the severe crisis through which England's oldest colony is now passing may speedily give place to a period of increased prosperity, developed resources, and closer relations with the mother country.

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

CHAPTER VI. (continued).

THUS it was full morning when Antonio came again to the little cave by the river, and bethought him what he should do for his own safety. And suddenly, looking across the river, he beheld a gentleman whom he knew, one Lepardo, a Commissary of the Duke's, and with him thirty of the Duke's Guard; and they were riding very fast; for, having started at midnight to avoid the heat of the sun (it being high summer), so soon as they reached the outskirts of Baratesta, they had heard that Antonio was in the vault, and were now pressing on to cross the bridge and come upon him. And Antonio knew that Lepardo was a man of courage and hardihood, and would be prevented by nothing from entering the vault. But on a sudden Lepardo checked his horse, uttering a loud cry; for to his great amazement he had seen Antonio as Antonio looked forth from the cave, and he could not tell how he came to be there: and Antonio at once withdrew himself into the shadow of the cave. Now the banks of the stream on the side on which Lepardo rode were high and precipitous, and, although it was summer, yet the stream was too deep for him to wade, and flowed quickly; yet at Lepardo's bidding, six of his stoutest men prepared to leap down the bank and go in search of Antonio; and Antonio, discerning that they would do this, and blaming himself for his rashness in looking out so incautiously, was greatly at a loss what to do; for now he was hemmed in on either side; and he saw nothing but to sell his life dearly and do some deed that should ornament his death. So he retreated again along the passage and passed through the opening into the vault; and he summoned the hermit to aid him, and between them they set not one only, but a dozen of the coffins of the Peschetti against the opening, laying them lengthwise and piling one on the top of the other, hoping that Lepardo's men would not discover the opening, or would at least be delayed some time before they could thrust away the coffins and come through. Then Antonio took his place by the gate of the vault again, sword in hand, saying grimly to the hermit, 'If you seek Death, sir, he will be hereabouts before long.'

But the Count Antonio was not a man whom his friends would abandon to death unaided; and while the Syndic was watching Antonio, the four young men who were with the Count made their escape from Cesare's house; and, having separated from one another, rode by four different ways towards the hills, using much wariness. Yet three of them were caught by the Duke's company that watched in the plain, and, having been soundly flogged, were set to work as servants in the camp. But the fourth came safe to the hills, and found there Tommasino and Bena; and Tommasino, hearing of Antonio's state, started with Bena and eighteen more to rescue him or die with him. And they fell in with a scouting party of the Duke's, and slew every man of them to the number of five, losing two of their own number; but thus they escaped, there being none left to carry news to the camp; and they rode furiously, and, by the time they came near Baratesta, they were not more than a mile behind Lepardo's company. But Lepardo, when he had detached the six men to watch Antonio, rode on hastily to find the Syndic, and learn from him the meaning of what he had seen; and thus Tommasino, coming opposite to the mouth of the hermit's cave, saw no more than six horses tethered on the river bank, having the Duke's escutcheon wrought on their saddle-cloths. Then he leaped down, and running to the edge of the bank, saw a man disappearing into the mouth of the cave, dripping wet; and this man was the last of the six who had swum the river, and were now groping their way with great caution along the narrow track that the hermit had made. Now Tommasino understood no more than Lepardo that there was any opening from the cave to the vault, but he thought that the Duke's men did not swim the river for their pleasure, and he bade Bena take five and watch what should happen, while he rode on with the rest.

'If they come out again immediately,' he said, 'you will have them at a disadvantage; but if they do not come out, go in after them; for I know not what they are doing unless they are seeking my cousin or laying some trap for him.'

Then Tommasino rode after Lepardo; and Bena, having given the Duke's men but the briefest space in which to come out again from the cave, prepared to go after them. And the Duke's men were now much alarmed; for the last man told them of the armed men on the bank opposite, and that they did not wear the Duke's badge; so the six retreated up the passage very silently, but they could not find any opening, for it grew darker at every step, and they became much out of heart. Then Bena's men crossed the river and entered the mouth of the cave after them. Thus there was fair likelihood of good fighting both in the passage and by the gate of the vault.

But the Count Antonio, not knowing that any of his band were near, had ceased to hope for his life, and he sat calm and ready, sword in hand, while the hermit withdrew to a corner of the vault, and crouched there muttering his mad answers and questions, and ever and again

hailing some one of the dead Peschetti by name as though he saw him. Then suddenly a coffin fell with a loud crash from the top of the heap on to the floor; for the Duke's men had found the opening and were pushing at it with hand and shoulder. Antonio sprang to his feet and left the gate and went and stood ready by the pile of coffins. But again on a sudden came a tumult from beyond the opening; for Bena and his five also were now in the passage, and the foremost of them—who indeed was Bena himself—had come upon the hindmost of the Duke's men, and the six, finding an enemy behind them, pushed yet more fiercely and strenuously against the coffins. And no man in the passage saw any man, it being utterly dark; and they could not use their swords for lack of space, but drew their daggers and thrust fiercely when they felt a man's body near. So in the dark they pushed and wrestled and struggled and stabbed, and the sound of their tumult filled all the vault and spread beyond, being heard outside; and many outside crossed themselves for fear, saying, 'Hell is broke loose! God save us!' But at that moment came Lepardo and his company; and he, having leaped from his horse and heard from the Syndic that Antonio was in very truth in the vault, drew his sword and came at the head of his men to the door; and hearing the tumult from within, he cried in scorn, 'These are no ghosts!' and himself with his boldest rushed at the door, and they laid hold on the handles of it and wrenched it open. But Antonio, perceiving that the door was wrenched open, and not yet understanding that any of his friends were near, suddenly flung himself prone on the floor by the wall of the vault, behind two of the coffins which the efforts of the Duke's men had dislodged; and there he lay hidden; so that Lepardo, when he rushed in, saw no man, for the corner where the hermit crouched was dark; but the voice of the madman came, saying, 'Welcome! Do you bring me another of the Peschetti? He is welcome!' Then the Duke's men, having pushed aside all the coffins save one, came tumbling and scrambling over into the vault, where they found Lepardo and his followers; and hot on their heels came Bena and his five, so that the vault was full of men. And now from outside also came the clatter of hoofs and hoarse cries and the clash of steel; for Tommasino had come, and had fallen with great fury on those of Lepardo's men who were outside and on the Syndic's levies that watched from afar off. And fierce was the battle outside; yet it was fiercer inside, where men fought in a half-light, scarcely knowing with whom they fought, and tripping hither and thither over the coffins of the Peschetti that were strewn about the floor.

Then the Count Antonio arose from where he lay and he cried aloud, 'To me, to me! To me, Antonio of Monte Velluto!' and he rushed to the entrance of the vault. Bena, hailing the Count's voice, and cutting down one who barred the way, ran to Antonio in great joy to find him alive and whole. And Antonio came at Lepardo, who stood his onset bravely, although greatly bewildered to find a party of Antonio's men where he had looked for Antonio alone.

And he cried to his men to rally round him, and, keeping his face and his blade towards the Count, began to fall back towards the mouth of the vault, in order to rejoin his men outside; for there also he perceived that there was an enemy. Thus Lepardo fell back, and Antonio pressed on. But, unnoticed by any, the mad hermit now sprang forth from the corner where he had been; and, as Antonio was about to thrust at Lepardo, the hermit caught him by the arm, and with the strength of frenzy drew him back, and thrust himself forward, running even on the point of Lepardo's sword that was ready for Count Antonio; and the sword of Lepardo passed through the breast of the hermit of the vault, and protruded behind his back between the shoulders; and he fell prone on the floor of the vault, crying exultantly, 'Death! Thanks be to God, death!' And then and there he died of the thrust that Lepardo gave him. But Antonio with Bena and three more—for two of Bena's five were slain—drove Lepardo and his men back before them, and thus won their way to the gate of the vault, where, to their joy, they found that Tommasino more than held his own; for he had scattered Lepardo's men, and the Syndic's were in full flight, save eight or ten of the old soldiers, who had served in Free Companies; and these stood in a group, their swords in their right hands and daggers in the left, determined to die dearly; and the grizzly-haired fellow who had killed Antonio's horse had assumed command of them.

'Here are some fellows worth fighting, my lord,' said Bena joyfully to Tommasino. 'Let us meet them, my lord, man for man, an equal number of us.' For although Bena had killed one man and maimed another in the vault, he saw no reason for staying his hand.

'Ay, Bena,' laughed Tommasino. 'These fellows deserve to die at the hands of men like us.'

But while they prepared to attack, Antonio cried suddenly, 'Let them be! There are enough men dead over this matter of Cesare's treasure.' And he compelled Tommasino and Bena to come with him, although they were very reluctant; and they seized horses that had belonged to Lepardo's men; and, one of Tommasino's men also being dead, Bena took his horse. Then Antonio said to the men of the Free Companies, 'What is your quarrel with me? I do but take what is mine. Go in peace. This Syndic is no master of yours.' But the men shook their heads and stood their ground. Then Antonio turned and rode to the entrance of the vault where his band was now besieging Lepardo, and he cried to Lepardo, 'Confer with me, sir. You can come forth safely.' And Lepardo came out from the vault, having lost no fewer than five men there, and having others wounded; and he was himself wounded in his right arm and could not hold his sword. Then the Count said to him, 'Sir, it is no shame for a man to yield when fortune is against him. And I trust that I am one to whom a gentleman may yield without shame. See, the Syndic's men are fled, and yours are scattered, and these men, who stand bravely together, are not enough to resist me.'

And Lepardo answered sadly—for he was

very sorry that he had failed to take Antonio—'Indeed, my lord, we are worsted. For we are not ten men against one, as I think they should be who seek to overcome my lord Antonio.'

To this Antonio bowed most courteously, saying, 'Nay, it is rather fortune, sir.'

And Lepardo said, 'Yet we can die, in case you put unseemly conditions on us, my lord.'

'There is no condition save that you fight no more against me to-day,' said Antonio.

'So let it be, my lord,' said Lepardo; and to this the men of the Free Companies also agreed, and they mingled with Antonio's band, and two of them joined themselves to Antonio that day, and were with him henceforward, one being afterwards slain on Mount Agnino, and the other preserving his life through all the perils that beset the Count's company.

Then Antonio went back to the house of Cesare, and brought forth the body of Cesare, and, having come to the vault, he caused those who had been slain to be carried out, and set the coffins again in decent order, and laid Cesare, the last of the house, there. But when the corpse of the hermit was brought out, all marvelled very greatly, and had much compassion for him when they heard from the lips of Count Antonio his pitiful story; and Antonio bestowed out of the moneys that he had from Cesare a large sum that masses might be said for the soul of the hermit. 'For of a surety,' said the Count, 'it was Heaven's will that through his misfortune and the strange madness that came upon him, my life should be saved.'

These things done, Antonio gathered his band, and, having taken farewell of Lepardo, and commended him for the valour of his struggle, prepared to ride back to the hills. And his face was grave, for he was considering earnestly how he should escape the hundred men who lay watching for him in the plain. But while he considered, Tommasino came to him and said, 'All Baratesta is ours, cousin. Cannot we get a change of coat, and thus ride with less notice from the Duke's camp?' And Antonio laughed also, and they sent and caught twenty men of Baratesta, grave merchants and petty traders, and among them Bena laid hold of the Syndic, and brought him in his chair to Antonio; and the Count said to the Syndic, 'It is ill meddling with the affairs of better men, Master Syndic. Off with that gown of yours!'

And they stripped the Syndic of his gown, and Antonio put on the gown. Thus the Syndic had need very speedily of the new gown which he had contracted to purchase of the lame tailor as the price of the tailor's information. And all Antonio's men clothed themselves like merchants and traders, Antonio in the Syndic's gown taking his place at their head; and thus soberly attired, they rode out soberly from Baratesta, neither Lepardo nor any of his men being able to restrain themselves from laughter to see them go—and most strange of all was Bena, who wore an old man's gown of red cloth trimmed with fur.

It was now noon, and the band rode slowly, for the sun was very hot, and several times they paused to take shelter under clumps of

trees, so that the afternoon waned before they came in sight of the Duke's encampment. Soon then they were seen in their turn; and a young officer of the Guard with three men came pricking towards them to learn their business; and Antonio hunched the Syndic's gown about his neck and pulled his cap down over his eyes, and thus received the officer. And the officer was deluded, and did not know him, but said, 'Is there news, Syndic?'

'Yes, there is news,' said Antonio. 'The hermit of the vault of the Peschetti is dead at Baratesta.'

'I know naught of him,' said the officer.

By this time Antonio's men had all crowded round the officer and his companions, hemming them in on every side; and those that watched from the Duke's camp saw the merchants and traders flocking round the officer, and said to themselves, 'They are offering wares to him.' But Antonio said, 'How, sir? You have never heard of the hermit of the vault?'

'I have not, Syndic,' said the officer.

'He was a man, sir,' said Antonio, 'who dwelt with the dead in a vault, and was so enamoured of death, that he greeted it as a man greets a dear friend who has tarried over-long in coming.'

'In truth, a strange mood!' cried the officer.

'I think this hermit was mad.'

'I think so also,' said Antonio.

'I cannot doubt of it,' cried the officer.

'Then, sir, you are not of his mind?' asked Antonio, smiling. 'You would not sleep this night with the dead, nor hold out your hands to death as to a dear friend?'

'By St Prisian, no,' said the young officer with a laugh. 'For this world is well enough, Syndic, and I have sundry trifling sins that I would be quit of, before I face another.'

'If that be so, sir,' said Antonio, 'return to him who sent you, and say that the Syndic of Baratesta rides here with a company of friends and that his business is lawful and open to no suspicion.' And even as Antonio spoke, every man drew his dagger, and there were three daggers at the heart of the officer and three at the heart of each of the men with him. 'For by saying this,' continued the Count, fixing his eyes on the officer, 'and by no other means can you escape immediate death.'

Then the officer looked to right and left, being very much bewildered; but Tommasino touched him on the arm and said, 'You have fallen, sir, into the hands of the Count Antonio. Take an oath to do as he bids you, and save your life.' And Antonio took off the Syndic's cap and showed his face; and Bena rolled up the sleeve of his old man's gown and showed the muscles of his arm.

'The Count Antonio!' cried the officer and his men in great dismay.

'Yes; and we are four to one,' said Tommasino. 'You have no choice, sir, between the oath and immediate death. And it seems to me that you are indeed not of the mind of the hermit of the vault.'

But the officer cried, 'My honour will not suffer this oath, my lord.' And hearing this, Bena advanced his dagger.

But Antonio smiled again and said, 'Then I

will not force it on you, sir. But this much I must force on you—to swear to abide here for half-an-hour, and during that time to send no word, and make no sign to your camp.'

To this the officer, having no choice between it and death, agreed; and Antonio, leaving him, rode forward softly; and, riding softly, he passed within half-a-mile of the Duke's encampment. But at this moment the officer, seeing Antonio far away, broke his oath, and shouted loudly, 'It is Antonio of Monte Veluto;' and set spurs to his horse. Then Antonio's brow grew dark and he said, 'Ride on swiftly, all of you, to the hills, and leave me here.'

'My lord!' said Tommasino, beseeching him.

'Ride on!' said Antonio sternly. 'Ride at a gallop. You will draw them off from me.'

And they dared not disobey him, but all rode on. And now there was a stir in the Duke's camp, men running for their arms and their horses. But Antonio's band put themselves to a gallop, making straight for the hills; and the commander of the Duke's Guard did not know what to make of the matter; for he had heard the officer cry 'Antonio,' but did not understand what he meant; therefore there was a short delay before the pursuit after the band was afoot; and the band thus gained an advantage; and Antonio turned away, saying, 'It is enough. They will come safe to the hills.'

But he himself drew his sword and set spurs to his horse, and he rode towards where the young officer was. And at first the officer came boldly to meet him; then he wavered, and his cheek went pale; and he said to the men who rode with him, 'We are four to one.'

But one of them answered, 'Four to two, sir.'

'What do you mean?' cried the officer. 'I see none coming towards us but Count Antonio himself.'

'Is not God also against oath-breakers?' said the fellow; and he looked at his comrades. And they nodded their heads to him; for they were afraid to fight by the side of a man who had broken his oath. Moreover, the figure of the Count was very terrible; and the three turned aside and left the young officer alone.

Now by this time the whole of the Duke's encampment was astir; but they followed not after Antonio, but after Tommasino and the rest of the band; for they did not know Antonio in the Syndic's gown. Thus the young officer was left alone to meet Antonio; and when he saw this his heart failed him and his courage sank, and he dared not await Antonio, but he turned and set spurs to his horse, and fled away from Antonio across the plain. And Antonio pursued after him, and was now very near upon him; so that the officer saw that he would soon be overtaken, and the reins fell from his hand and he sat on his horse like a man smitten with a palsy, shaking and trembling: and his horse, being unguided, stumbled as it went, and the officer fell off from it; and he lay very still on the ground. Then Count Antonio came up where the officer was, and sat on his horse, holding his drawn sword in his hand; and in an instant the officer began

to raise himself; and, when he stood up, he saw Antonio with his sword drawn. And Antonio said, 'Shall men without honour live?'

Then the officer gazed into the eyes of the Count Antonio; and the sweat burst forth on his forehead. A sudden strange choking cry came from him; he dropped his sword from his hand, and with both hands he suddenly clasped his heart, uttering now a great cry of pain and having his face wrung with agony. Thus he stood for an instant, clutching his heart with both his hands, his mouth twisted fearfully, and then he dropped on to the ground and lay still. And the Count Antonio sheathed his sword, and bared his head, saying, 'It is not my sword, but God's.'

And he turned and put his horse to a gallop and rode away, not seeking to pass the Duke's encampment, but directing his way towards the village of Rilano; and there he found shelter in the house of a friend for some hours, and when night fell, made his way safely back to the hills, and found that the Duke's men had abandoned the pursuit of his band and that all of them were alive and safe.

But when they came to take up the young officer who had been false to his oath, he was dead—whether from fright at the aspect of Count Antonio and the imminent doom with which he was threatened, or by some immediate judgment of Heaven, I know not. For very various are the dealings of God with man. For one crime He will slay and tarry not, and so, perchance, was it meted out to that officer; but with another man His way is different, and He suffers him to live long days, mindful of his sin, in self-hatred and self-scorn, and will not send him the relief of death, how muchsoever the wretch may pray for it. Thus it was that God dealt with the hermit of the vault of the Peschetti, who did not find death till he had sought it for twenty-and-three years. I doubt not that in all there is purpose; even as was shown in the manner wherein the hermit, being himself bound and tied to a miserable life, was an instrument in saving the life of Count Antonio.

THE HUMOURS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WHEN a new member makes his first appearance in the House of Commons, he has to be escorted to the table to take the oath by two other members of Parliament. This is one of the immemorial usages of the House of Commons. It originated in a far remote past, when it was really necessary, in order to prevent personation, that two members of the House should identify the claimant of a seat after a by-election as the person named in the writ of the returning officer. The precaution has been unnecessary for many a year. But such is the reluctance of the House of Commons to part with any of its quaint and antique ceremonies, that it is still retained; and though a representative may come to the Bar of the House as

the unanimous choice of a constituency of ten thousand electors and produce his credentials, he will not be permitted to take his seat unless he can get two members to act as his sponsors.

Dr Kenealy, the famous counsel for 'The Claimant,' presented himself at the Bar unattended, after his election for Stoke-upon-Trent in February 1875. The Speaker informed him of the usage of the House; and as he could not get two members to accompany him to the table, he was obliged to leave. It was only by a special resolution of the House, moved by Mr Disraeli, its Leader at the time, that Dr Kenealy was allowed to take his seat without complying with the usual practice.

When men assemble together in social life, as in a theatre or at a meeting, the ordinary custom is to uncover while they are seated, and to don their hats as they enter or leave the place. In Parliamentary life that rule is reversed. Members can wear their hats only when they are seated on the benches. As they walk to their seats or rise to leave the Chamber, they must be uncovered.

This custom is the source of much confusion and embarrassment to new members. The House never fails to show its resentment of a breach of its etiquette, however slight. It will, without distinction of party, unanimously roar with indignation at a new member who, ignorant or unmindful of the Parliamentary custom, wears his hat as he walks down the floor of the Chamber. An amusing incident occurred in the early days of the first session of the present Parliament. An offending member, startled by the shout which greeted him as he was leaving the Chamber with his hat on his head instead of in his hand, paused in the middle of the floor and looked around with a mingled expression of fright and perplexity. 'Hat, hat!' shouted the House. This only embarrassed him the more. He felt his trousers pockets and his coat tails for the offending article of attire. He even looked at his feet to see if he were wearing it at that extremity of his person. It is impossible to conjecture what might have happened further, had not Dr Tanner walked up to the offending member, and, amid the loud laughter of the House, politely took off his hat and then handed it to him with a courtly bow.

The hat plays many important parts in Parliamentary customs. It also contributes occasionally to the gaiety of life in the House of Commons. No incident is greeted with more hearty laughter than the spectacle of a member, after a magnificent peroration, plumping down on his silk hat on the bench behind him. The bashful and awkward member generally figures in those accidents; but the misfortune has befallen even old and cool Parliamentary hands like Mr Chamberlain and Sir William Harcourt,

and has completely spoiled the effect of a few of their most eloquent speeches.

A few years ago Mr R. G. Webster, member for East St Pancras, sat down, after his maiden speech, on a new silk hat which he had provided in honour of the auspicious occasion; and as he was ruefully surveying his battered headgear, to the amusement of the unfeeling spectators, Mr Edward Harrington, an Irish representative, rose and gravely said: 'Mr Speaker, permit me to congratulate the honourable member on the happy circumstance that when he sat on his hat his head was not in it.' The strident call of 'Order, order!' from the Speaker was drowned in roars of laughter.

In probably every other legislative Chamber in the world each member has a special seat allotted to him. But though there are 670 members in the House of Commons, the Chamber, strangely enough, was built to accommodate only about half that number; and the only members who are certain of seats are Ministers and ex-Ministers, the occupants respectively of the Treasury bench and the first Opposition bench. The consequence is that on occasions of great interest there is always a scramble for places. A large crowd of members gathered at Westminster in the early morning of the evening on which Mr Gladstone introduced the Home Rule Bill of 1892; and when, after hours of waiting, the door giving immediate entrance to the Chamber was opened at seven A.M., so mad was the rush for seats that several members were crushed, knocked down, and trampled upon.

On such occasions, a member secures a seat for the evening by leaving his hat on it. But it must be his own workaday headgear. If he brings with him a second hat and leaves the precincts of the House wearing that hat, he forfeits all right to the seat. These two ancient but unwritten regulations have recently been the subjects of definite and specific rulings by the Speaker. After the split in the Irish party, and when the personal relations between the rival sections were very strained, one Irish member took possession of a seat on which another Irish member had placed his hat in the usual way. On the member aggrieved bringing the matter publicly under the notice of the House, the Speaker declared that he had an unquestionable right and title to the seat. Again, in connection with the fight for places on the occasion of the introduction of the Home Rule Bill in 1892, the House was informed that Dr Tanner brought with him a dozen soft hats to Westminster that morning, and with them secured twelve seats for colleagues who did not go down to the House till the ordinary hour of meeting in the afternoon; and again the Speaker ruled that the only hat which can secure a seat is the real *bonâ fide* headgear of the member and not any 'colourable substitute' for it. During the recent influenza epidemic the Speaker, in mercy for the hatless wanderers in lobbies, departed from the old usage so far as to recognise a card left on the bench as sufficing in place of the hat.

Members are not allowed to refer to each other by name in debate. The only member

who is properly addressed by name is the Chairman who presides over the deliberations of the House in Committee. On a member rising to speak in Committee he begins with, 'Mr Mellor,' and not with 'Mr Chairman,' as at public meetings. When the Speaker is in the Chair, the formula is, 'Mr Speaker, Sir.' In debate a member is distinguished by the office he holds, as 'The Right Honourable Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer;' or, 'The Honourable Gentleman the Member for York.' Some make use of the terms, 'My Honourable Friend;' or, 'My Right Honourable Friend;' but the rule is in every case to use the word 'Honourable.'

This custom has sometimes led to odd results. During the last Parliament, two members were ignominiously expelled from the House after their conviction for gross immoral offences; and yet in the discussion that took place on each occasion the criminal was still punctiliously described as 'The Honourable Gentleman.' Again, lawyers are styled 'Honourable and Learned;' and officers of the army and the navy, 'Honourable and Gallant.' The late Mr W. H. Smith, who was not a lawyer, was once referred to in a speech as 'The Right Honourable and Learned Gentleman.' 'No, no,' exclaimed the simple old man, disclaiming the distinction amid the merriment of the House. 'I beg the Honourable gentleman's pardon; I am not Learned.'

It is a breach of order for a member to read a newspaper in the House. He may quote an extract from one in the course of a speech; but if he attempted to peruse it as he sat in his place, his ears would soon be assailed by a stern and reproving cry of 'Order, order!' from the Chair. Some members resort to the deception practised by the young lady who had *Vanité Fair* bound like a New Testament and was observed reading it during service in St Paul's Cathedral. The 'Orders of the Day' is a Parliamentary paper containing the programme of business, which is circulated amongst the members every morning. Into this programme members often slip a newspaper or periodical, and read it while the Speaker imagines they are industriously studying the clause of a Bill or its amendments.

The House of Lords is less strict, oddly enough, in little matters of this kind than the House of Commons. The Peers allow the attendants to pass up and down their Chamber delivering messages; and they have a reporter—the representative of the Parliamentary Debates—sitting with the clerks at the table. But in the House of Commons no one but a member is allowed to pass up and down the floor. An attendant, even when he has letters and telegrams to deliver, dare not pass beyond the imaginary line known as the Bar, just inside the main entrance to the Chamber. He gives the messages to some member sitting near the Bar, and they are passed on from hand to hand till they reach their owners.

Another curious and amusing custom is the performance known as 'Counting the House.' No business can be transacted unless a quorum of forty members is present. But, all the same, business proceeds even though only one or two

members are present; and the Speaker never notices the paucity of the attendance unless a member rises in his place and says, 'Mr Speaker, I beg to call your attention to the fact that there are not forty members present.' That being said, the Speaker must proceed to count the House. He does not, however, simply count the members who are present in the Chamber at the moment. He sets going the electric bells which ring in every room of the vast building a summons to members to return to the House. The members come rushing in from all quarters, and after the lapse of three minutes, the doors are locked. Then, and not till then, the Speaker, using his cocked hat (which, by the way, he never wears over his huge court wig) as a pointer, proceeds to count the number in the House. When he arrives at the fortieth member he cries out 'Forty' in a loud voice, resumes his seat, and business again proceeds from the point at which it was interrupted. But if there were not forty present, he would simply quit the Chair without a word, and the sitting would be over.

It is a favourite resort for a member who desires to secure an audience for a colleague to move 'a count.' The object, however, is not always attained, for members rush out again when the Speaker announces 'forty,' and leave the benches as deserted as before.

A few sessions ago, a London Radical member, who was to have resumed a debate after the Speaker returned from dinner, at 8.30 o'clock, found when the time arrived no one in the House but himself, the Speaker, and the clerks at the table. Not relishing the idea of having to talk to empty benches, he gravely called the attention of the Speaker to the obvious fact that there were not forty members present. The division bells rang out their summons as usual; but only thirty-six members responded to the call, with the result that the member, instead of obtaining an audience, had the sitting suspended and lost his chance of making a speech. A member is occasionally 'counted out' in that fashion by an opponent, who, after a survey of the precincts of the House, discovers there are not forty members in attendance; but this is the only instance on record of a member having 'counted out' the House to his own confusion.

The forms of the House throw difficulties in the way of a member who desires to relinquish his legislative functions. He cannot resign his seat theoretically. He must be either a bankrupt or a lunatic; be expelled, or accept an office of honour or profit under the Crown—such as the nominal stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds—before he can quit the House of Commons. On the other hand, the forms of the House afford him few opportunities of exercising his legislative functions by initiating a little legislation on his own account. Every session at least three hundred Bills are introduced by 'private members,' as the unofficial members of the House are called. Not three per cent. of these Bills pass through all the stages necessary before they can be inserted on the Statute Book. The vast majority of them are killed by the curious system known as 'blocking.' The Government appropriates so

much of the time of the House to its own business, that Bills of private members can only come on for consideration at twelve o'clock at night, or at half-past five on Wednesday sittings. Now, as no opposed business can be taken after these hours, unless a Bill meets with universal favour it can make no progress. The opposition of a single member is sufficient to prevent any progress being made with a Bill. And if that opposition is exercised, the Bill is said to be 'blocked.'

Twelve o'clock at night arrives. Government business which occupied the attention of the House till that hour is then postponed; and the clerk goes through the remaining 'Orders of the Day,' in which as many as eighty of these Bills of private members often appear. The clerk reads out the first of the Bills—'The Chimney-sweepers Registration Bill.' The member who has introduced it says 'Now,' meaning that he desires the Bill to be proceeded with there and then. Immediately another member cries out, 'I object,' and—bang! goes the Bill into the waste-paper basket. The Bill has been 'blocked!' And so on through the entire list of Bills. The witching hour of night brings a terrible slaughtering of 'the innocents of legislation' in the House of Commons.

'Blocking' has degenerated into a system of reprisals. The Bills of Liberal members are blocked by Conservatives; and the Bills of Conservative members are blocked by Liberals. Frequently, the most pathetic appeals are made at this time of the sitting. 'Spare my little eve lamb!' the author of the Bill cries out when he has heard the dreaded words 'I object' from the benches at the opposite side of the House; 'No, no!' comes the relentless response; 'my little duckling was killed by your colleagues. I must have my revenge.'

Of course, many of these Bills represent pernicious fads and hobbies of members, or quixotic attempts to make straight the crooked things of this world—Bills it would never do to pass into law. Some members get so passionately attached to a hobby that night after night, session after session, parliament after parliament, they will strive, in face of cruel disappointments, to get it inserted on the Statute Book. An old and eccentric member of the House, who died recently, vainly endeavoured during half a century of Parliamentary life to get passed into law a Bill for preventing persons from standing outside windows while cleaning them. During his last session, the poor old fellow complained to a colleague that his object in introducing the Bill had been quite misunderstood by the House for these fifty years. 'I introduced the Bill,' said he, 'not for the sake of the window-cleaners, but for the sake of the people below, on whom they might fall. The idea of the Bill was suggested to me by the fear that a window-cleaner might fall on myself.'

A member addressing the House stands uncovered; but not always. There is an occasion when it is positively out of order for a member to speak on his feet and with his hat off. He must speak in his seat with his hat on his head. When a debate has terminated, and the question which has been discussed is

put from the Chair, an interval of two minutes—during which the electric division bells ring out their summons all over the precincts of St Stephen's—is allowed to enable members to get to the Chamber. The time is taken by a sand-glass on the table, and when it has elapsed, the doors of the Chamber are locked. It is at this particular juncture that it is essential that a member who desires to address the Chair should retain his seat and wear his hat. If he were to follow the ordinary practice, and stand up uncovered, he would be roared and shouted at from all sides of the House for his breach of etiquette. Mr Gladstone had occasion a few years ago to address the Chair just as a division was about to be taken; and as he never brought his hat into the Chamber, he was obliged to put on the headgear of one of his lieutenants who sat on the bench beside him. Now, Mr Gladstone's head is of an abnormal size. He has to get his own hats made to order. It is improbable that the hat of any other member in the House would fit him; but the hat available on the occasion of which we write only just covered his crown, and members made the rafters ring with laughter at his comical efforts to balance it on his head for the few minutes he occupied in speaking from his seat on the front Opposition bench.

But there is nothing more amusing, perhaps, in all the quaint and curious 'customs' of the House of Commons, than the strange ceremony which marks the termination of its every sitting. The moment the House is adjourned, stentorian-voiced messengers and policemen cry out in the lobbies and corridors, 'Who goes home?' These mysterious words have sounded every night for centuries through the Palace of Westminster. The performance originated at a time when it was necessary for members to go home in parties for common protection against the footpads who infested the streets of London. But though that danger has long since passed away, the cry of 'Who goes home?' is still heard night after night, receiving no reply, and expecting none.

THE ANGEL OF THE FOUR CORNERS.*

IV.—FROM THE CLOISTER'S SHADE.

OUTSIDE, the trees were snapping in the frost, and now and again a dull boom told that the ice was cracking on the river. A night of deep wrenching frost, the snow three feet deep, the cold steely sky brooding above. Presently, as the two stood there, the bells of the parish church rang out. It was midnight—the morning of the New Year. There were voices, too, of men singing as they drove past the house, sleigh bells joining with the song and the church bells. They could not hear the words, but they knew the air, and they knew what the song was:

Three men went forth to woo a maid—
Heigh-ho, those lovers three!—
And the first one was a roving blade,
And the second came from the cloister shade,
And the third from the gallows-tree.
C'est ça! Ho! ho! C'est ça!

Try as Camille would, the second verse of the song kept beating in his ears. It did not leave him all that night, and it followed him for many a day, with a kind of savage irony.

Three men knelt down with a lover's plea—
Ho, ho, for such a maid!—
And she chose not him of the gallows-tree,
And the roving blade had an eye too free,
But sweet is the tongue from the cloister's shade!
C'est ça! Ho! ho! C'est ça!

The song died away, but the bells kept on ringing, and there came to them distantly laughing voices. There was a strange look in Camille's eyes and swimming in his face. He stood still, and did not offer to touch the girl, though he stood very near, and her hand rested so near his, she leaning against the bureau, as though to steady herself. But standing so, he spoke.

'Perhaps you will never understand,' he said, 'how it all was. No one can ever quite know. I was younger; they told me it was better for you—better for me, better for the Church, that we should part. I thought you would forget. I thought that perhaps I should never see you again. I used to pray for us both. I never heard from you or about you. But I could not forget. . . . This week it all came back to me—to shut myself out from you always—for ever—by the sacred office! I sat up in my bed choking—I could have shrieked. I could not rest till I had seen you again. I thought, perhaps she is married; perhaps she no longer cares; perhaps she—is dead. So I came here. Somehow, I seemed to break loose when I put off my student clothes, and you see me as I am to-night. You think I am wicked, that I am untrue to the Church and to you. Ah, Marie, you no longer care as you once did, and I—God help me!—I cannot go back now to the other. And I cannot live without you. I am punished—punished!' He dropped his head, and a sob caught him in the throat—he was so boyish, so honest. There was a silence.

'Camille!' The voice was low and sweet, and very near. It drew his head up like a call. Their eyes swam in one burning hungry look; then there was a little cry from her, and in an instant he was kissing away two tears that slowly gathered, and as slowly fell down her hot cheek. The woman had conquered at last—in spite of the 'great men of the kingdom!' For the man there was no going back now. He had cast the die for ever. But she did not know that, for she was a woman, and having conquered, having justified herself, she was ready for sacrifice. Now when the man had wiped out all his past to begin life with her, she was ready to immolate herself. She loved him so well that she thought only of his good.

'Camille,' she said, gently disengaging herself, 'I am paid for those three years! But now—now, it must go no farther. The others parted us before, and made you appear unmanly—'twas that which hurt me so. Now it is I that part us, dear. You must go back. You mustn't ruin your life. Think of it all—what would be against you. Go back. Be a priest; and I'—

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He was very pale and quiet. 'And you—what would you do?' he said.

'There is always the nunnery left,' she answered wearily yet bravely.

'You think that I ought to go?' he questioned.

'You wish me to go, Marie?'

'For your own good. Think of the trouble that would come unless. You will go, Camille?'

'Never—never! Remember how your brother blamed himself—and she was an actress, you said. To leave you now; how I would hate myself! . . . Never!' His voice was strong and decisive. There was no wavering. 'There are a hundred men—better men—to take my place—there, Marie; but is there any to take my place—here?' He ran his arm around her waist. 'There is no one!' he added.

'No one, Camille,' she said faintly.

The man had in a vague, yet direct way, too, realised that to save a bruised life at your feet is better than to go a-hunting for souls with the King's Men. He had wandered out to the Cross-Roads, and the Angel of the Four Corners had motioned him back to his own door. The woman had been willing to save the man, but her heart beat for joy that he did not go.

'Come what will, Marie,' he said fervently, clasping her hands and gathering her eyes to his, 'we must not part again.'

'You do not fear the Church?' she asked.

'I am a man!' he cried, drawing himself up proudly.

'Perhaps they will not'— She paused in a sweet confusion.

'Perhaps they will not—marry us?' he said, piecing out the sentence. His eyes flashed. 'How dare they not?' he added. 'I was not yet a priest.'

How strange that *was* sounded in her ears! Already they had begun a new life. And how proud she was of him—the rebel for her sake. She moved a hand over his shoulder. 'You must go to the curé,' she said—'to good Monsieur Fabre. He knows all. I confessed to him.'

He thought a moment. 'Yes, I will go,' he said—'I will go.'

'You must go at once—now,' she urged. Then she added hastily: 'We have been here too long—I forgot!'

With a laugh he picked up the overcoat which had dropped from her shoulders, and carefully wrapped it around her. He was big with energy, emotion, and courage. He was a rebel who doubted not of success.

A moment afterwards, they were about to issue into the other room.

'Wait,' she said discreetly. 'You can go out by another door leading from this room, and the curé lives just above on the top of the hill.'

She opened a creaking door. He shut it for an instant, clasped her to his breast, then opened the door again, drew his cap from his pocket, put it on, and was gone into the frosty night. She shut the door slowly, and went back to the dancing-room. It was nearly filled, and dancers were clamouring for the fiddler and Marie. As she entered the room, Alphonse strutted over to her.

'Been for a walk with the fiddler in my coat?' he said in a rough way.

'Here is your coat, and thank you, Alphonse,' she said quietly and reprovingly.

He flung it over his shoulder. 'Lucky that the fiddler wasn't wearing it, or I'd never seen it again. Perhaps he was running off with it, and you stopped him,' he added.

She turned on him with a still cold face, her eyes all fire. 'Behind his back, Alphonse—it's so easy.'

'I'll say it to his face. He's only a tramp, anyway.'

'You'll find him at the curé's,' she coldly added, turning away to Medallion.

Anxiety showed in Medallion's eyes. 'What has happened?' he said.

She hesitated.

'I wish you would tell me,' he added. 'It's better that a girl should not go through some things alone.'

Their eyes met. The love that he had once borne her mother gave now a kind of fatherliness to his look. Vaguely she felt it, and, with her fresh frank nature, responded at once. 'You remember the story I told after the Dance of the Little Wolf?' she asked.

He nodded. 'Yes, yes.'

'Well, that was all true. He—Camille—was studying for a priest; it could not be, and we parted. He has come back; that's all.'

'What has he come back for?' Medallion gravely asked.

A kind of triumph showed in her eyes. 'What do you think?' she said.

'Is he a priest now?'

'No.'

'He is giving it all up for you, Marie?'

'For me,' she said, with a flash of her brown eyes.

Medallion's hand closed on hers warmly, strongly. 'Faith, then, he's a man!' he said; and, in truth, you're worth it, and a hundred such men!'

'Oh, you don't know—you don't know how good and brave he is,' she rejoined.

Medallion smiled quizzically. 'Ah, I know men, and I know no man, my dear, that's as good as a good woman!—and you're of the best.—Where has he gone?'

Again a smile crossed her face. To a woman there come but few moments of triumph, only a few great scenes in her life. She could not resist the joy of saying with a little dash of vanity: 'He has gone to the curé.'

Medallion gave a noiseless whistle. Frankly and promptly he said: 'Well, a happy New Year to you both, my girl! It's just now five minutes inside the New Year.'

Meanwhile, Alphonse had hurried from the room and was hard on the trail of Camille. He could see the tall figure striding on in the moonlight. Even in the vague glimmer he could see a swinging pride in the bearing of the stalwart youth. When he left the house he had no definite purpose in his mind. Now he had a kind of devilry which gets into the blood of men when a woman stands between them. In the river-driver's veins there beat the shameless agony of Cain. He broke into a run. Before Camille had half climbed the

hill to the curé's house, he was panting hard after. A cry broke from him before he reached Camille, the snarl of a man in whom there are working envy and hate.

Camille heard, and turned. He recognised Alphonse.

'What you go to the curé's for?' asked Alphonse roughly.

Camille shrugged his shoulders. 'What's that to you, my man?' he said.

Alphonse ripped out an oath. 'What you put on airs with me for! "*My man! My man!*" Take that back, you tramp.'

Perhaps it was a long training in the cloister, perhaps it was a superior nature, but Camille responded calmly: 'Yes, I will take it back, if you like, but you must not call me a tramp.'

You cannot exorcise a devil in a moment. The game had gone too far. War was in Alphonse's heart. 'I want to know what for you go to the curé? For the banns?' he sneered.

But there was also in Camille's face the freedom of his new life. 'Perhaps,' he answered meaningly.

'Then you fight me first!' shouted Alphonse, and blocked the way.

An instant after he struck out. It was not altogether an unequal battle, for although Alphonse was powerful and hardened by a laborious life, Camille was well knit, supple, and had, unlike most of his comrades in college, been constant in athletic exercises. Alphonse discovered this. By a sudden trick, Camille, who was being pressed and punished hard, suddenly brought his assailant to the ground, just as a figure appeared on the hill above them—the curé, on his way to visit a sick parishioner.

The curé called out apprehensively. At that instant, with a helpless moan, Camille rolled off Alphonse, and blood gushed from his neck. Alphonse sprang up and disappeared in the woods. A moment later the curé knelt beside the youth, stanching the blood from the wound. Sleigh bells sounded near. He raised his head, and called loudly. Camille was unconscious. The curé lifted him up, and felt his heart to see if there was life.

A few moments afterwards, Camille lay in the curé's little room, conscious now, and able to tell, little by little, his story—why he had come to the parish, and why he was seeking the curé. But he did not tell then, and he never told, whose knife it was that left a scar upon his neck. People guessed, for Alphonse never came back to the parish, but guessing does not put a man in prison.

The curé was a wise man. There was but one way now, and he was sorry that that way had not been entered on three years before; for the lives of these two young people had been on the road to misery ever since. In any case, after this affair with Alphonse, the Church was impossible to Camille. The best words that Camille had heard in his life came now from the curé, who, after walking up and down the room thoughtfully for a time, said: 'My son, I will send for Marie.'

Marie, Medallion, and the curé saw the first

sunrise of the New Year from beside the saved and sleeping Camille.

The Church had one priest the less, but two human souls were travelling to that good tavern which men call Home.

LEMONS AT MASSA-LUBRENSE.

WHO has not read descriptions of Sorrento, the fairest gem in Southern Italy, and its orange groves? In April and May the air is heavy with the scent of orange blossom; and the trees, which are still laden with the golden fruit of the last year's crop, are covered at the same time with the white flowers which promise a rich harvest. Underneath the trees are carpets of the fallen blossom, which, as it is trodden under foot, sends forth a scent oppressive in its fragrance. The sun does not strike on the roots of the trees, for they stand so close together as to form an impenetrable shade. Only the common spring violet can flourish in the gloom of an orange grove.

As the carriage winds its way up the road which leads from Sorrento to Massa-Lubrense, the orange gardens disappear, and give way to groves of lemons. As one sees the pale yellow fruit through its shining dark-green leaves, it appears as if the beauty of the lemon-tree surpasses that of the orange. The former is the most delicate of the two, and requires a dry and warm climate. The damp, soft air of Sorrento is perfect for the cultivation of the orange; but Massa-Lubrense, which is dry and more sheltered, is given up to the produce of lemons, which yield an enormous percentage to the fortunate possessors of land that can be used for that purpose. Orange-trees are here and there mingled with the lemons, just as lemon-trees will be seen in the midst of the orange groves of Sorrento, though in neither case are they the chief produce of the place.

Massa-Lubrense is largely indebted for its salubrious air to its lemon plantations. Three years must pass before a newly planted lemon-tree begins to bear fruit; and in order to bring it to perfection, it must be freely watered. A hollow is dug round the base of the tree to receive the water as in a basin, so that it may slowly penetrate to the roots. Poles are planted at intervals in the ground, somewhat higher than the trees, and smaller poles or canes are placed crossways above them, which are covered with matting when the winter approaches. It is not removed till the spring is well advanced, for lemon-trees must be most carefully sheltered from wind or frost. The fruit is gathered chiefly during the summer months, especially in May, July, and September, though there are lemons on the trees all the year round.

Much depends on the situation in which they are placed as regards the time of ripening. The fruit on the upper branches is the first to ripen, because it is more exposed to the sun. Men are employed to gather it; and young girls place the lemons carefully in the baskets waiting to receive them. Those that fall on the ground are not fit for exportation, but are sold in the Naples market. The stems which remain attached to the fruit are carefully cut

off with scissors. Those which have been emptied from the baskets on the ground in heaps must be counted in the presence of the proprietor, or some trustworthy person whom he has deputed to replace him. Women are employed for counting, and with the greatest dexterity they snatch up three lemons in their right hand, and two in their left, and in a sing-song tone chant out 'E uno, e due,' and so on, till they are all counted. The overseer who jots down the numbers knows that every number called represents five lemons.

Now the process of packing begins. Girls from ten to twenty years of age wrap each one carefully in tissue-paper, while older women place them in the boxes ready to receive them. Great care must be taken by the girls deputed to hand the lemons to the packers to choose those of equal size. The women by long practice can tell at a glance the size of the lemons required for the different cases. Each layer must fill the empty space without pressing the fruit too close together. The cases are of different sizes, containing from one hundred to five hundred lemons. The wood used for these boxes is sent to Massa-Lubrense from America, and also from Trieste. The wood, which must be pliable, so as to yield to the pressure of the lemons, is not to be obtained in Italy. A carpenter who is employed by the day assists at the process of packing, not only to make the cases as they are wanted, but also to nail the cover on each box as it is filled. A thin strip of the same wood is used as a band to bind round the finished cases.

The greater number of lemons, as well as the finest and choicest, are exported to America; and those of an inferior quality are sent to England. Steamers come expressly from America to Sorrento to export them. During the summer months, a steamer is always at anchor in the Bay of Sorrento waiting for its cargo. Large fishing-boats convey the ready packed cases from Massa-Lubrense to Sorrento. The girls who are employed in wrapping up the fruit carry the boxes down to the shore on their heads at a steady run. The impetus is often so great, owing to the heavy weight they carry, that they are obliged to shout to the passers-by to move out of their way, as they cannot easily swerve aside or draw up suddenly. Some of these girls go from the village, which is on a height, to the shore, three or four times in the course of a morning; but those less strong cannot manage it more than twice. Some of the boxes weigh as much as a hundred and fifty or two hundred English pounds, and such great weights strain the backs of those who carry them considerably. Nevertheless, they seldom lay down their burden to rest unless it be unusually heavy. Their wages are one franc a day; but the women who fill the boxes are paid two francs, as the work requires the greatest dexterity. The largest proprietor of lemon groves in the place employs these women and girls all the year round, and for that reason gives them even lower wages.

Most of the proprietors are unfortunately hard, grasping men, who take advantage of the necessity of those they employ. Some of the richest of these were originally peasants, and

they only care to hoard and accumulate money. A man with over three thousand a year will spend less than three hundred, and so his fortune rapidly increases. Few of them sell their products themselves to the American markets; but the lemons are bought up in large quantities by speculators who have direct dealings with America. Each day they receive telegrams giving them information as to the state of prices, which vary considerably, and a proprietor often feels that he has been taken in, when, after selling his lemons at an apparently good price, he finds that the buyer had secret information by which his profits had been trebled. The current price during the summer of 1894 was between forty and fifty francs a thousand, though the price in America is much higher. This price is lower than the average; but the great abundance of lemons last year has more than made up to the sellers for what they have lost on the price.

The smallest lemon-tree is calculated to yield twenty francs a year clear profit. Many of the proprietors make fifteen or sixteen per cent. on their produce. The population of Massa-Lubrense from the richest landowner to the poorest peasant may be said to live by the lemon plantations. Some parents who are unusually careful of their daughters, object to their working with a large number of companions who may draw them into evil ways; but the employers as a rule are particular as regards the conduct of the women and girls who work for them.

When evening approaches, they say the rosary together and sing hymns while they continue their work; and who can doubt their being unconsciously influenced by the beauty that surrounds them, as the gorgeous colours of sea and sky form a fitting framework to the fair landscape, with its olive yards and lemon groves interspersed by vineyards?

MY MYSTERIOUS CLIENT.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

I STARTED to practise as a solicitor without a shred of influence or connection. I simply hired a couple of third-floor-back rooms in a gloomy city building, exhibited my name on an imposing brass plate at the entrance door, engaged a diminutive lad for a clerk, and waited for clients. Needless to say that I found it weary and uphill work for several years; and I used to employ my abundant leisure time in writing short stories for the magazines. I mention this fact merely because I remember very well that I happened to be thus occupied one momentous afternoon when my clerk entered the room and said that a gentleman wished to see me.

'What name?' I inquired, shuffling away my writing, and producing a bundle of legal documents which I kept handy for the purpose.

'Please, sir, he says you wouldn't know him,' replied the lad, lowering his voice.

'Has he come on business, do you think?' I whispered anxiously.

'I think he is all right, sir,' replied the boy, who took quite a filial interest in my affairs,

and was always immensely excited when a client appeared upon the scene.

'Show him in,' I said, bending over the papers with an air of absorption.

'Morning, sir,' said a hearty voice the next moment. 'Mr Carruthers, I presume?'

I looked up, and beheld a burly figure in a tweed suit blocking up the doorway, and completely eclipsing my small clerk, who hovered in the background. My visitor looked like a well-to-do farmer, with a round red weather-tanned face, reddish hair and whiskers, and a pair of very light steel-blue eyes. I judged him to be about forty years of age, and as he entered, he extended towards me in cordial greeting a hand of the dimensions of a leg of mutton.

'Hope I see you well, sir?' he exclaimed, as he nearly shook my hand off.

'Thank you, yes,' I replied with professional courtliness.

'That's all right; that's capital,' he cried absently, while he cast a quick keen glance round the room. 'You are Mr Carruthers the lawyer, I suppose?'

'A solicitor,' I said gravely.

'Yes. Duly qualified and all the rest of it,' he observed, placing his hat carefully on the floor beside his chair.

'Of course,' I replied. 'And what is your name? My clerk said you would not give it.'

'You're welcome to it. It was no good sending it in to you, because you wouldn't have recognised it. I'm a stranger, I am, only landed two days ago from South Africa. James Dreaver, of Durban, is my name. I've been more than twenty years over there,' he explained, jerking his thumb vaguely over his shoulder.

'Farming?' I inquired.

'Mostly, but other things as well. I've come home for a bit of a spree, and to see some of the old folk, if there's any left. Suffolk is my county,' he added.

After some inquiry as to his credentials, he alleged that my name had been mentioned to him while coming up in the train from Plymouth.

I was not yet by any means convinced that my new client was speaking the truth, yet I felt tolerably satisfied of his respectability from his manner and appearance, and my circumstances were not so prosperous as to induce me to stand on ceremony. I was curious, also, to learn what his business was, and I therefore magnanimously waived the point of etiquette and said: 'Well, what can I do for you?'

Mr Dreaver seemed relieved at my condescension, and he at once assumed a confidential tone, and began to give me some details of his family history. It appeared that he wished to purchase the freehold of the farm which a widowed sister occupied in Suffolk; to seek out a brother, and, if necessary, to establish him in business; in fact, he was full of benevolent schemes for the benefit of his relations. His communications were interesting to me because they revealed a prospect of lucrative business. The only drawback was that at the moment he apparently had no definite instructions to give me; everything depended upon

the result of the journeys and inquiries he was about to make.

'Then I shall hear from you after your return from the country,' I said, feeling a little disappointed. 'When do you start?'

'At once,' he replied. 'I expect to be back in about a fortnight.—Meanwhile,' he added, suddenly producing a rather bulky packet, done up in brown paper, from a capacious side-pocket, 'I'll leave this in your charge, Mr Carruthers, till I come back.'

'What is it?' I inquired, as he placed the packet on the desk.

'A few odds and ends that I don't care to carry about with me,' he replied carelessly. 'Some family papers, and a few loose stones.'

'Valuables?' I exclaimed, weighing the packet in my hand. 'It is very heavy.'

'I'm my own banker,' he said with a wink. 'There's odds and ends there of various kinds. More than I care to risk losing, anyway: you mustn't be afraid of my forgetting to claim 'em,' he added with a laugh.

'Isn't it rather confiding of you to offer to leave them with a stranger, Mr Dreaver? After all, I am a stranger to you; and for aught you know, I may be dishonest,' I said jokingly.

My new client looked at me gravely for a moment, as though my remark startled him.

'Of course the packet will be all right here,' I added, rather amused at his anxious expression.

'You are Mr Carruthers the solicitor, are you not?' he said thoughtfully.

'Certainly.'

'Well, your friend who sent me here said you was to be trusted. Besides, I can tell an honest man when I see one,' he said, slapping his knee emphatically.

I was conscious of blushing at this eulogistic remark, and with some embarrassment I changed the conversation. 'You had better leave me your address,' I said.

'I have none,' he answered, rising from his seat. 'I leave town to-night for Suffolk; but I shan't stay there. I don't know where I may go afterwards. Better leave it that I'll write.'

'Very well, you know where to find me, at all events,' I replied.

'That will be all right, Mr Carruthers,' he said as he grasped my hand. 'You stick to the packet till you hear of me again. Before I return to the Cape, there will be several matters of business I shall want you to transact for me.'

With this satisfactory assurance, my new client shook me warmly by the hand and departed. After he had left, I began to wish I had questioned him more closely. It seemed extraordinary that he should have left a parcel of valuables in my charge on so slight acquaintance. In those days, I was apt to get a little flustered and nervous at a first interview with a new client, and the suddenness of Mr Dreaver's visit had rather overwhelmed me. However, I consoled myself with the reflection that no harm had been done, and if he had behaved rashly, it was his own affair, and not mine. My solitary safe being a small one, I decided to deposit the parcel at my banker's; and this I accordingly did, little anticipating the embarrassment which the precaution subsequently caused me.

For some weeks afterwards I was in a mild flutter of excitement in anticipation of a further visit from my new client. But he neither called nor made any sign; and just about that time I had a small stroke of luck in the shape of a quasi-public appointment, which came as a veritable godsend. My new duties and the sudden accession of work, both direct and indirect, that they entailed, completely took the edge off the keenness of my curiosity about Mr Dreaver, and, in fact, I ceased to think about him. Thus it came about that though month succeeded month without bringing any news of him, I was barely conscious of the circumstance, until one day, during a period of slackness, I referred back to my previous diary, and was astonished to find that more than a year had elapsed since Mr Dreaver's unexpected call.

I was rather startled at the discovery, and was inclined to blame myself for my supineness. Considering that Mr Dreaver was a stranger from a far-off land, it seemed heartless of me to have allowed so long a time to elapse without troubling to make inquiries. He might have been robbed and murdered; or he might have died and been buried in a pauper's grave for lack of identification; or he might, by some mental aberration, have forgotten that he had deposited a parcel with me. I did not exactly know what I could do, however, for I had no clew to his whereabouts, and he had not told me the name of his Suffolk relatives. But I felt that I must take some step or other to relieve my mind, and after some deliberation, I drew up the following brief notice: 'Mr James Dreaver, of Durban, is requested to communicate, by letter or otherwise, with Mr Martin Carruthers, Solicitor, 92 Bucklersbury, E.C.' I caused this to be inserted in three of the principal London dailies, but still my mysterious client made no sign. I then resolved to communicate with the police; but it occurred to me that, first of all, I had better examine the contents of the parcel. I was beginning to suspect that I had been the victim of a senseless practical joke, concocted by some facetious friend, and that the 'loose stones' contained in the parcel might be specimens of the common or garden pebble. I therefore walked across to my bank one afternoon, and, producing the receipt, demanded the parcel which I had deposited more than a twelvemonth ago.

I could see by the expression of the clerk's face when he heard my request that something was wrong. He carried the receipt into the manager's room, and after a brief absence, he invited me to follow him there. The manager, a courteous old gentleman with a bald head and spectacles, looked manifestly ill at ease, and was twisting the receipt about nervously between his fingers. 'Mr Carruthers, I am extremely sorry to inform you,' he said, motioning me to a chair, 'that the packet referred to in this receipt cannot be found.'

'You mean that it has been stolen!' I exclaimed, starting.

'Hardly possible, especially as nothing else is missing,' said the manager. 'I should explain, Mr Carruthers, that we discovered your parcel had—ahem!—disappeared about a week ago

while checking our muniment schedule. But as everything else was there, we hoped—as I still believe—that the parcel will turn up, and therefore I delayed telling you till a complete and thorough search was made.'

'And have you searched?' I inquired.

'Every hole and corner of the strong-room has been overhauled. I am completely at a loss, and, of course, it is impossible to conceal the truth from you any longer: you hold our receipt; but'—said the manager, shrugging his shoulders as he threw the document on the table—'we cannot give you the parcel because, apparently, we haven't got it.'

Here was a dilemma, rendered all the worse as the bank disclaimed legal responsibility.

I need not detail our further conversation, because, practically, it amounted to nothing. The bank's apologies did not console me in the least, nor was it any satisfaction to reflect that personally I was blameless. The awkward fact remained that Mr Dreaver's parcel had disappeared, and though I was not legally responsible to him any more than the bank was responsible to me, still it would not be an agreeable task to face my client with the news. It seemed to me that it had been much easier and simpler for the bank manager to inform me of the loss, than it would be for me to make the disclosure to the person chiefly interested.

However, as a week or more had elapsed since my advertisement appeared in the newspapers, I was sanguine enough to hope that I should hear nothing further from Mr Dreaver; and under the altered circumstances of the case, it seemed quite providential that he should have so completely and mysteriously disappeared. Wherever he was, I ardently prayed that he might remain there, and be spared the cruel disappointment which awaited him if he ever called upon me again.

For some few weeks after this, a knock at the outer door of my office caused me unnecessary trepidation; but my client maintained his impenetrable seclusion and reserve, and the only alarm I suffered resulted in the very happiest conclusion.

One afternoon, on returning from my mid-day refection, I found a young lady waiting to see me in the clerks' office. I saw at a glance that she was refined, ladylike, and pretty, and being a very susceptible bachelor, I invited her into my private room without asking her name.

'An advertisement appeared in the *Times* a few weeks ago under your name,' began my fair visitor nervously, as I begged her to be seated. 'I have the cutting here.'

My heart misgave me as I recognised, in the slip of paper which the young lady laid upon the desk, my unfortunate notice addressed to Mr James Dreaver.

'Yes,' I replied, turning hot and cold by turns; 'Mr James Dreaver is a client of mine.'

'He was my father,' the girl exclaimed eagerly.

'Was! Is he dead, then?' I exclaimed with a start.

'Yes; he died more than a year ago at the Cape,' was the reply.

'I think there must be some mistake,' I said slowly, as I looked at her. 'May I inquire your age?'

'I am nearly twenty-two,' she answered with a blush.

'You say your father died at the Cape. The Mr Dreaver who is my client was in England about the time you mention.'

'Oh! it cannot be the same, then,' exclaimed the young lady, with an air of deep disappointment. 'Poor papa never returned to England. He died at Port Elizabeth.'

'My client came from Durban,' I said.

'I noticed that; but I thought it was a mistake. However, there is evidently another Mr Dreaver. I am sorry to have occupied your time,' said the young lady, rising with great confusion. 'The fact is that when poor papa died, his affairs were in great disorder. I thought that perhaps'—

'Pray, don't apologise,' I interrupted eagerly. 'I am not the least surprised at your curiosity having been aroused by the advertisement. But my client is clearly not your father.'

I was inclined to enlarge upon the subject, for it seemed to give me an excuse to gaze upon the fair face before me. It was quite impossible that the young lady could be any relation to my mysterious client. She clearly belonged to a higher social status, and, apart from the fact that my client was hardly old enough to have been the girl's father, there was not the faintest resemblance between her sweet, refined, delicate features, violet eyes, and pretty golden hair, and my client's coarse ruficund countenance. Though relieved, for obvious reasons, that the young lady had no claim to the contents of the parcel, I was disappointed, on the other hand, that our acquaintance should be of this transitory nature. However, vain regrets were useless, and almost before I had realised her presence, Miss Dreaver had disappeared from my office like a beautiful vision.

It is at this point that my commonplace story becomes tinged with an element of romance, which, as it only has a remote connection with the main subject, must be related briefly. In a word, then, it came about that my casual introduction to Miss Dreaver, in the manner above described, led to her becoming my wife. We met again, months afterwards, in a perfectly fortuitous manner, at the house of a mutual friend down at Molesey, where I had taken rooms for the summer. I heard Ada Dreaver's sad little history before her name was mentioned; how she had been brought up as the motherless daughter of a rich man; how her father, having, after his retirement, sustained heavy losses, had been obliged to break up his establishment and resume his former business at the Cape; how he had left his darling child in charge of friends in England, being uncertain of the duration of his stay abroad; and how he had died suddenly, overstrained by a series of misfortunes, a broken and ruined man. His daughter, thrown upon the world with nothing but her accomplishments, which were happily considerable, had been compelled to take a situation as governess in the family of a friend; and it was

at this point of the recital, when my hostess was warmly eulogising the young lady's courage and fortitude, that Miss Dreaver entered the room. We recognised one another at once; and not to weary the reader with the prosaic details of a happy courtship, our little romance ended within a very short time in bridesmaids, orange blossom, and an unpretentious wedding.

After my marriage, during which an interval of more than ten years elapsed without bringing any tidings of my mysterious client, I prospered in my profession, but without attaining to any degree of affluence. When a young man has a family of six children, and is practically dependent on his professional earnings, he must be content to remain poor and struggling, and should esteem himself fortunate, in these days of severe competition, if he can contrive to keep out of debt and live like his neighbours. This was my own case, for my private means were very small, and my dear wife, though she brought me the untold wealth of unclouded domestic happiness, was a dowless bride. But though forced to live in a very modest style, and to do without many little comforts and luxuries to which we had both been accustomed in our earlier days, we were happy in one another and in our children, and looked forward to what the future might have in store for us without the slightest uneasiness.

TWO SPRINGS.

THE wood-birds tell me that the Spring is here,
And in the garden all the almond trees
Flutter pink ensigns to the wooing breeze,
Forgetful of the winter past and drear.

The violets blossom that we set last year—
I wonder do you mind the spot we chose,
We two together, by the guelder rose?
Ah me, those days, those sweet Spring days that
were!

And in our wood to-day I found a patch
Of yellow primrose blossoms quaintly fair;
There was such scent of sweetness in the air,
Their own faint perfume I could scarcely catch.

Above me, as I linger here, the sky
Smiles clearly blue through branches sunlight-kissed,
Just as it did last year before I missed
Your presence, and found Spring had passed me by.

But there is something now of Autumn's grief
In all this golden sunshine; and the Spring,
Amid the glories of her blossoming,
Forecasts the shadow of a falling leaf.

For ah! the blossoms of that last sweet Spring—
Our Spring, Beloved—whither are they flown?
The grass upon a grave I know is grown,
And there is nothing left worth cherishing.

LYDIA M. WOOD.

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ON BOOKS PUBLISHED BY SUBSCRIPTION.

IF our literature could be classified according to publishers and modes of publication, the section devoted to books published by subscription, or privately printed—not always the same thing, however—would be found not only to be of very considerable extent, but to include not a few of the most noteworthy works, or editions of works, in the language. In nearly all such books a list of the subscribers is given; and in the case of many works published in the last century and earlier, a survey of the names in these lists is now of considerable interest. Subscribers were at first gratefully called 'Benefactors.' In one of the earliest books printed by subscription, Blome's *Britannia*, published in 1673, there is a 'List of Benefactors of this Work.'

The first folio and illustrated edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost* was issued to subscribers in 1688, by the well-known bookseller, Jacob Tonson. The list of 'The Names of the Nobility and Gentry that encourag'd by subscription the printing this Edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost*' appears at the end of the volume, and fills six pages. It contains more than five hundred names, among which it is interesting to note those of many of the poets of the time, including Waller, Dryden, Southerne, and others. The names of one or two famous actors, such as Betterton, are also noteworthy; but it is a curious proof of the strength of the feeling which still existed against Milton, on account of his political opinions, that very few of the English clergy appear in the list. At that date there were many people living who had been through the troublous times of the Civil War, and to them its asperities and bitternesses were still a recent memory. To very many Englishmen in 1688, the name of Milton was better known as the Latin Secretary to Cromwell's government, as the defender of the king's

execution, and strenuous advocate of Republican institutions, than as the author of the epic destined to rank first in its class in our literature. Even a hundred years later, so clear-headed a critic as Dr Johnson was unable to view Milton except through the mist of political prejudice; but time smooths all asperities, and no lover of poetry nowadays, whatever his prepossessions for or against Republicanism may be, regards the author of *Paradise Lost* or his poetry through political spectacles.

It is not often that a list of names is so historically eloquent by its omissions as this list of patrons of the illustrated Milton of 1688; but another case may be mentioned where the roll of subscribers is significant, on account of the names which it includes. The *Careful and Strict Enquiry into the Modern prevailing Notions of Freedom of Will*, by the famous theologian of New England, Jonathan Edwards, was published in 1754 at Boston, Massachusetts, and includes a list of subscribers with their addresses. A love of metaphysics has always been a well-recognised characteristic of Scotsmen, and it is a remarkable proof of the strength of this predilection, that, notwithstanding the difficulties and comparative infrequency of communication in those days between New England and the mother-country, a very considerable proportion of the subscribers, as shown by the addresses given, were Scotsmen in Scotland.

There is one class of books in connection with which publication on the subscription system was formerly found to be highly successful; that is, the translation of the greater classics—Virgil's *Æneid* and Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*—by poets of established reputation. Dryden led the way with his version of the *Æneid*. The work occupied three years, and was published in 1697. The terms of subscription were on a sufficiently lordly scale, and are worth stating. Subscribers were of two classes. The first, to the number of one hundred and two, were to pay five guineas each—three on registering the name, and the remaining two

on publication; and as a special reward for their enterprise, each of these amateurs was to be honoured by having his coat of arms printed at the foot of one of the hundred and two engravings with which the book was to be illustrated. The second class of subscribers was to include those who paid two guineas each, and had their names duly registered in the list published with the book, but who had no title to the advertisement of their arms.

The hundred and two subscribers at five guineas were duly obtained, and two hundred and fifty paid two guineas. Dryden received some part of the subscription money, and in addition received certain stated payments from the publisher, Tonson, as the translation advanced. Altogether, the poet is said to have cleared over a thousand pounds by the undertaking; but this was not achieved without much bickering and verbal sparring with Mr Tonson. The correspondence between Dryden and his publisher during the progress of the work is decidedly amusing. The poet more than once accuses Tonson of paying him in clipped money—a feat easily accomplished in those days of a degraded coinage—and, worse still, in counterfeit coin. 'You know money is now very scrupulously received,' he writes; 'in the last which you did me the favour to change for my wife, besides the clipped money, there were at least forty shillings brass.' At another time Dryden amiably writes, in the spirit of the famous remark, 'Now Barabbas was a publisher'—'Upon trial, I find all of your trade are sharpers, and you not more than others; therefore, I have not wholly left you.' Tonson must have been decidedly aggravating, particularly so when he had the face of Æneas, in the engravings prepared for the book, altered and provided with a hooked nose, so as to resemble that of King William III., with the view of getting the poet to dedicate his work to that monarch, whom the ex-laureate abhorred; but on the whole the publisher was rather hardly dealt with by Dryden. On one occasion during the progress of the book, when the ill-feeling between the two was unusually acute, the poet sent Tonson the following lines, descriptive of his personal appearance, with the polite message, 'Tell the dog that he who wrote these can write more:

With leering looks, bull-faced, and freckled fair,
With two left legs, and Judas-coloured hair,
And frowzy pores that taint the ambient air.'

Dryden's successor, Pope, also essayed the subscription system, and with even greater success than the translator of the *Æneid*. Proposals for the publication by subscription of a translation of Homer's *Iliad*, by the author of *The Rape of the Lock*, were issued in 1713. The work was to fill six quarto volumes, and the price was fixed at six guineas—a very high charge, considering the then value of money; but the proposals were very favourably received, and the success of the undertaking was soon assured. Swift exerted himself greatly on behalf of his friend, and the result was seen in a list which for length and distinction of names surpassed any previous attempt of the kind. The translation was no light undertaking. The immensity of the task at first ap-

palled the poet; it haunted his dreams, and he used to say that at the beginning he wished a hundred times that anybody would hang him. However, he soon fell into a methodical way of regularly translating so many verses each day, and the work made rapid progress. The first four books of the translation were issued to subscribers in 1715, and the whole work was completed within the ensuing five years. Pope netted by this venture a sum exceeding five thousand pounds—a scale of remuneration never previously approached by any poet or prose-writer; and another three or four thousand pounds was secured by the translation of the *Odyssey*, which in due course followed the *Iliad*. From a commercial point of view, the success of the work was splendid; but, doubtless, Lord Oxford was right when he told the poet that 'so good a writer ought not to be a translator.' Pope himself said that he would certainly have written an epic poem if he had not been engaged so long on Homer.

Another well-known version of the Homeric poems, that by Cowper, was also published by subscription; but the profits of the undertaking did not approach those made by Pope. Cowper was paid a thousand pounds for his work, and certainly earned his remuneration; but his translation, although it is nearer to the original than that of Pope, is now little read.

Publication by subscription of a complete or special edition of an author's works was sometimes resorted to as a method of refilling the said author's depleted purse. In 1720 Gay published by subscription a handsome edition of his *Poems* in two quarto volumes, and realised thereby about one thousand pounds; but, tempted by the mania for speculation which then prevailed, he sank his money in South Sea stock. His modest thousand soon swelled to twenty thousand pounds, and friends advised him to sell out and secure his fortune, or at least to sell as much as would bring him in an annuity of a hundred a year—'which,' said one of his advisers, Elijah Fenton, 'will make you sure of a clean shirt and a shoulder of mutton every day.' But Gay was not to be persuaded; tempted by golden dreams, he held his stock until the crash came and he lost every penny. Later, he again found the subscription system profitable; for when the performance of his *Polly*, the sequel to the *Beggar's Opera*, was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain, he issued it to subscribers, and netted about four times the amount he would have received from the theatre.

Tonson, the bookseller, published an illustrated folio edition of Prior's *Poems* by subscription in 1718. The list of subscribers fills more than twenty pages, and contains many famous names—Swift, Gay, Steele, Vanbrugh, and many others. Another subscription book of this period led to a curious proceeding. Rowe, the poet and dramatist, died in 1718, and in the following year his translation of Lucan's *Pharsalia* was published in Dublin by subscription. The list numbers about four hundred names, including that of the Archbishop (King) of Dublin; but the most reverend prelate declared that he had not subscribed, and the unlucky printer and publisher were solemnly haled before the Irish House of Lords for having presumed to print

His Grace's name without his leave; and also, as is duly recorded, 'for their presuming to add the stile of *Reverend* [sic] to the presbyterian Teachers Names in the said List of subscribers, putting them upon a Level with the Clergy of the Establish'd Church, for both which Crimes they received a Reprimand.' The length of the subscription list was probably sufficient consolation for the committers of these remarkable 'crimes.'

In the case of many eighteenth-century subscription books, however, neither the length of the list of subscribers, nor the importance of the names contained therein, is any guide to the value of the book itself. It is more often simply a testimony to the unwearied efforts and importunities of the friends of the author. Some books now hardly known at all have lists of names which would do honour to the most important of literary enterprises. One sufficiently curious entry occurs in the list of subscribers to Bishop Keith's *History of the Affairs of Church and State in Scotland*, written of course from a strongly Episcopalian point of view, and published in folio at Edinburgh in 1734. The entry is that of no less eminent a person than 'Robert Macgregor *alias* Rob Roy.' Rob Roy died peacefully at Balquhider in that same year. We are not informed whether his copy of the work reached him, nor whether any difficulty arose about collecting the payment.

It is hardly necessary to say anything of publication by subscription as practised at the present time. The system is now usually confined either to books of merely local or personal interest—the history of a parish by its vicar or his curate, or a collection of 'poems' which the subscribers buy but do not read—or to books which, for one reason or another, are unsuitable for general circulation, and are therefore put forth in handsome guise and in limited editions for the private and special delectation of subscribers. The publication of reprints of our older literature, and of works on specialised branches of science, by the various literary and scientific Societies and Book Clubs, is an extension of the system of publishing by subscription, which has been of the greatest benefit to all students and specialists. It has cast much new light on many paths of scientific inquiry, and has laid open to all lovers of letters scores of volumes of verse and prose, and of material for both social and political history, formerly existing only in manuscript, or in examples so rare as to be practically inaccessible except to those in command of long purses.

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

CHAPTER VII.—COUNT ANTONIO AND THE LADY OF RILANO.

FROM the lips of Tommasino himself, who was cousin to Count Antonio, greatly loved by him, and partaker in all his enterprises during the time of his sojourn in an outlaw in the hills, this, the story of the Lady of Rilano, came to my venerable brother in Christ, Niccolo; and the same Niccolo, being a very old man, told it to me, so that I know that the story is true and every part of it, and tread here not

on the doubtful ground of legend, but on the firm rock of the word of honest men. There is indeed one thing doubtful, Tommasino himself being unable to know the verity of it; yet that one thing is of small moment, for it is no more than whether the lady came first to Duke Valentine, offering her aid, or whether the Duke, who since the affair of the Sacred Bones had been ever active in laying schemes against Antonio, cast his eyes upon the lady, and perceiving that she was very fair, and likely to serve his turn, sent for her, and persuaded her by gifts and by the promise of a great marriage to take the task in hand.

Be that as it may, it is certain that in the fourth year of Count Antonio's outlawry, the Lady Venusta came from Rilano, where she dwelt, and talked long with the Duke in his cabinet; so that men—and women with greater urgency—asked what His Highness did to take such a one into his counsels; for he had himself forbidden her to live in the city, and constrained her to abide in her house at Rilano, by reason of reports touching her fair fame. Nor did she then stay in Firmola, but, having had audience of the Duke, returned straightway to Rilano, and for the space of three weeks rested there; and the Duke told nothing to his lords of what had passed between him and the lady, while the Count Antonio and his friends knew not so much as that the Duke had held conference with the lady; for great penalties had been decreed against any man who sent word to Antonio of what passed in Firmola, and the pikemen kept strict guard on all who left or entered the city, so that it was rather like a town besieged than the chief place of a peaceful realm.

Now at this time, considering that his hiding-place was too well known to the lord Lorenzo and certain of the Duke's Guard, Count Antonio descended from the hills by night, and, having crossed the plains, carrying all his equipment with him, mounted again into the heights of Mount Agnino and pitched his camp in and about a certain cave, which is protected on two sides by high rocks, and on the third by the steep banks of a river, and can be approached by one path only. This cave was known to the Duke, but he could not force it without great loss, so that Antonio was well nigh as safe as when his hiding-place had been unknown; and yet he was nearer by half to the city, and but seven miles as a bird flies from the village of Rilano where the lady Venusta dwelt—although to one who travelled by the only path that a man could go upright on his feet, the distance was hard on eleven miles. But no other place was so near, and from Rilano Antonio drew the better part of the provisions and stores of which he had need, procuring them secretly from the people, who were very strictly enjoined by the Duke to furnish him with nothing under pain of forfeiture of all their goods.

Yet one day, when the man they called Bena and a dozen more rode in the evening through Rilano, returning towards the cave, the maid-servant of Venusta met them, and, with her, men bearing a great cask of fine wine, and the maid-servant said to Bena, 'My mistress bids

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you drink : for good men should not suffer thirst.'

But Bena answered her, asking, 'Do you know who we are?'

'Ay, I know, and my lady knows,' said the girl. 'But my lady says that if she must live at Rilano, then she will do what she pleases in Rilano.'

Bena and his men looked at one another, for they knew of His Highness's proclamation, but the day having been hot, they being weary, the wine seeming good, and a woman knowing her own business best, at last they drank heartily, and, rendering much thanks, rode on and told Tommasino what had been done. And Tommasino having told Antonio, the Count was angry with Bena, saying that his gluttony would bring trouble on the lady Venusta.

'She should not tempt a man,' said Bena sullenly.

All these things happened on the second day of the week ; and on the fourth, towards evening, as Antonio and Tommasino sat in front of the cave, they saw coming towards them one of the band named Luigi, a big fellow who had done good service, and was also a merry jovial man that took the lead in good-fellowship. And in his arms Luigi bore the lady Venusta. Her gown was dishevelled and torn, and the velvet shoes on her feet were cut almost to shreds, and she lay back in Luigi's arms, pale and exhausted. Luigi came and set her down gently before Antonio, saying, 'My lord, three miles from here, in the steepest and roughest part of the way, I found this lady sunk on the ground and half-swooning : when I raised her and asked how she came where she was, and in such a plight, she could answer nothing save, "Count Antonio ! Carry me to Count Antonio !" So I have brought her in obedience to her request.'

As Luigi ended, Venusta opened her eyes, and, rising to her knees, held out her hands in supplication, saying, 'Protect me, my lord, protect me. For the Duke has sent me word that to-morrow night he will burn my house and all that it holds, and will take me and lodge me in prison, and so use me there that I may know what befalls those who give aid to traitors. And all this comes upon me, my lord, because I gave a draught of wine to your men when they were thirsty.'

'I feared this thing,' said Antonio, 'and deeply I grieve at it. But I am loth to go in open war against the Duke ; moreover, in the plain he would be too strong for me. What then can I do ? For here is no place in which a lady, the more if she be alone and unattended, can be lodged with seemliness.'

'If the choice be between this and a prison'—said Venusta with a faint sorrowful smile.

'Yet it might be that I could convey you beyond His Highness's power,' pursued Antonio. 'But I fear you could not travel far to-night.'

'Indeed, I am weary even to death,' moaned Venusta.

'There is nothing for it but that to-night at least she rest here,' said Antonio to Tommasino.

Tommasino frowned. 'When woman comes

in,' said he behind the screen of his hand, 'safety flies out.'

'Better fly safety than courtesy and kindness, cousin,' said Count Antonio, and Tommasino ceased to dissuade him, although he was uneasy concerning the coming of Venusta.

That night, therefore, all made their camp outside, and gave the cave to Venusta for her use, having made a curtain of green boughs across its mouth. But again the next day Venusta was too sick for travel ; nay, she seemed very sick, and she prayed Luigi to go to Rilano and seek a physician ; and Luigi, Antonio having granted him permission, went, and returned saying that no physician dared come in face of His Highness's proclamation : but the truth was that Luigi was in the pay of Venusta and of the Duke, and had sought by his journey not a physician, but means of informing the Duke how Venusta had sped, and of seeking counsel from him as to what should next be done. And that day and for four days more Venusta abode in the cave, protesting that she could not travel ; and Antonio used her with great courtesy, above all when he heard that the Duke, having stayed to muster all his force, for fear of Antonio, had at length appointed the next day for the burning of her house at Rilano, and the carrying off of all her goods. These tidings he gave her, and though he spoke gently, she fell at once into great distress, declaring that she had not believed the Duke would carry out his purpose, and weeping for her jewels and prized possessions which were in the house.

Now Count Antonio, though no true man could call him fool, had yet a simplicity nobler it may be than the suspicious wisdom of those who, reading other hearts by their own, count all men rogues and all women wanton : and when he saw the lady weeping for the trinkets and her loved toys and trifles, he said, 'Nay, though I cannot meet the Duke face to face, yet I will ride now and come there before him, and bring what you value most from the house.'

'You will be taken,' said she, and she gazed at him with timid admiring eyes. 'I had rather a thousand times lose the jewels than that you should run into danger, my lord. For I owe to you liberty, and perhaps life.'

'I will leave Tommasino to guard you and ride at once,' and Antonio rose to his feet, smiling at her for her foolish fears.

Then a thing that seemed strange happened. For Antonio gave a sudden cry of pain. And behold, he had set his foot on the point of a dagger that was on the ground near to the lady Venusta ; and the dagger ran deep into his foot, for it was resting on a stone and the point sloped upwards, so that he trod full and with all his weight on the point ; and he sank back on the ground with the dagger in his foot. How came the dagger there ? How came it to rest against the stone ? None could tell then, though it seems plain to him that considers now. None then thought that the lady who fled to Antonio as though he were her lover, and lavished tears and sighs on him, had placed it there. Nor that honest Luigi, who made such moan of his carelessness in dropping

his poniard, had taken more pains over the losing of his weapon than most men over the preservation of theirs. Luigi cursed himself, and the lady cried out on fate; and Count Antonio consoled both of them, saying that the wound would soon be well, and that it was too light a matter for a lady to dim her bright eyes for the sake of it.

Yet light as the matter was, it was enough for Venusta's purpose and for the scheme of Duke Valentine. For Count Antonio could neither mount his horse nor go afoot to Venusta's house in Rilano; and, if the jewels were to be saved and the lady's tears dried (Mightily, she declared with pretty self-reproach, was she ashamed to think of the jewels beside Antonio's hurt, but yet they were dear to her), then Tommasino must go in his place to Rilano.

'And take all save Bena and two more,' said Antonio. 'For the Duke will not come here, if he goes to Rilano.'

'I,' said Bena, 'am neither nurse nor physician nor woman. Let Martolo stay; he says there is already too much blood on his conscience; and let me go, for there is not so much as I could bear on mine, and maybe we shall have a chance of an encounter with the foreguard of the Duke.'

But Venusta said to Antonio, 'Let both of these men go, and let Luigi stay. For he is a clever fellow, and will aid me in tending your wound.'

'So be it,' said Antonio. 'Let Luigi and the two youngest stay; and do the rest of you go, and return as speedily as you may. And the lady Venusta shall, of her great goodness, dress my wound, which pains me more than such a trifle should.'

Thus the whole band, saving Luigi and two youths, rode off early in the morning with Tommasino, their intent being to reach Rilano and get clear of it again before the Duke came thither from the city: and Venusta sent no message to the Duke, seeing that all had fallen out most prosperously and as had been arranged between them. For the Duke was not in truth minded to go at all to Rilano; but at earliest dawn, before Tommasino had set forth, the lord Lorenzo left the city with a hundred pikemen; more he would not take, fearing to be delayed if his troop were too large; and he made a great circuit, avoiding Rilano and the country adjacent to it. So that by mid-day Tommasino was come with thirty-and-four men (the whole strength of the band except the three with Antonio) to Rilano, and, meeting with no resistance, entered Venusta's house, and took all that was precious in it, and loaded their horses with the rich tapestries and the choicest of the furnishings; and then, having regaled themselves with good cheer, started in the afternoon to ride back to the cave, Tommasino and Bena grumbling to one another because they had chanced on no fighting, but not daring to tarry by reason of Antonio's orders.

But their lamentations were without need; for when they came to the pass of Mount Agnino, there at the entrance of the road which led up to the cave, by the side of the river, was encamped a force of eighty pikemen

under the Lieutenant of the Guard. Thus skillfully had the lord Lorenzo performed his duty, and cut off Tommasino and his company from all access to the cave; and now he himself was gone with twenty men up the mountain path, to take Antonio according to the scheme of the Duke and the lady Venusta. But Bena and Tommasino were sore aghast, and said to one another, 'There is treachery. What are we to do?' For the eighty of the Duke's men were posted strongly, and it was a great hazard to attack them. Yet this risk they would have run, for they were ready rather to die than to sit there idle while Antonio was taken; and in all likelihood they would have died, had the Lieutenant obeyed the orders which Lorenzo had given him and rested where he was, covered by the hill and the river. But the Lieutenant was a young man, of hot temper and impetuous, and to his mistaken pride it seemed as though it were cowardice for eighty men to shrink from attacking thirty-and-five, and for the Duke's Guards to play for advantage in a contest with a band of robbers. Moreover Tommasino's men taunted his men, crying to them to come down and fight like men in the open. Therefore, counting on a sure victory and the pardon it would gain, about three o'clock in the afternoon he cried, 'Let us have at these rascals!' and to Tommasino's great joy, his troop remounted their horses and made ready to charge from their position. Then Tommasino said, 'We are all ready to face the enemy for my lord and cousin's sake. But I have need now of those who will run away for his sake.'

Then he laid his plans that when the Lieutenant's troop charged, his men should not stand their ground. And five men he placed on one extremity of his line, Bena at their head; and four others with himself he posted at the other extremity; also he spread out his line very wide, so that it stretched on either side beyond the line of the Lieutenant. And he bade the twenty-and-five in the centre not abide the onset, but turn and flee at a gallop, trusting to the speed of their horses for escape. And he made them fling away all that they had brought from the lady Venusta's house, that they might ride the lighter.

'And I pray God,' said he, 'that you will escape alive; but if you do not, it is only what your oath to my lord constrains you to. But you and I, Bena, with our men, will ride, not back towards the plain, but on towards the hills, and it may be that we shall thus get ahead of the Lieutenant; and once we are ahead of him in the hilly ground, he will not catch us before we come to the cave.'

'Unless,' began Bena, 'there be another party'

'Hist!' said Tommasino, and he whispered to Bena, 'They will fear if they hear all.'

Then the Duke's men came forth; and it fell out as Tommasino had planned; for the body of the Duke's men, when they saw Tommasino's rank broken and his band fleeing, set up a great shout of scorn and triumph, and dug spurs into their horses and pursued the runaways. And the runaways rode at their top speed, and, having come nearly to Rilano with-

out being caught, they were three of them overtaken and captured by the well at the entrance to the village; but the rest, wheeling to the right, dashed across the plain, making for Antonio's old hiding-place; and, having lost two more of their number whose horses failed, and having slain four of the Guard, who pursued incautiously ahead of the rest, they reached the spurs of the hills, and there scattered, every man by himself, and found refuge, some in the woods, some in shepherds' huts; so they came off with their lives. But the men with Tommasino and Bena had ridden straight for the hill-road, and had passed the Lieutenant before he apprehended Tommasino's scheme. Then he cried aloud to his men, and eight of them, hearing him, checked their horses, but could not understand what he desired of them till he cried aloud again, and pointed with his hand towards where the ten, Tommasino leading and Bena in the rear, had gained the hill-road and were riding up it as swiftly as their horses could mount. Then the Lieutenant, cursing his own folly, gathered them, and they rode after Tommasino and Bena.

'Be of good heart,' said the Lieutenant. 'They are between us and the company of my lord Lorenzo.'

Yet though he said this, his mind was not at ease; for the horses of his men, being unaccustomed to the hills, could not mount the road as did the sure-footed mountain-horses ridden by Tommasino's company, and the space widened between them; and at last Tommasino's company disappeared from sight, at the point where the track turned sharp to the left, round a great jutting rock, that stood across the way and left room for but three men to ride abreast between river and rock. Then the Lieutenant drew rein and took counsel with his men, for he feared that Tommasino would wait for him behind the jutting rock and dash out on his flank as he rode round. Therefore for a while he considered; and a while longer he allowed for the breathing of the horses; and then with great caution rode on towards the jutting rock, which lay about the half of a mile from him. And when he came near to it, he and his men heard a voice cry, 'Quiet, quiet! They are close now!'

'They will dash at us as we go round,' said the Lieutenant.

'And we can go no more than three together,' said one of the Guards.

'Are you all ready?' said the voice behind the cliff, in accents that but just reached round the rock. 'Not a sound, for your lives!' Yet a sound there was, as of jingling bits, and then again an angry, 'Curse you, you clumsy fool, be still.' And then all was still.

'They are ready for us now,' whispered a Guard, with an uneasy smile.

'I will go,' said the Lieutenant. 'Which two of you will lead the way with me?'

But the men grumbled, saying, 'It is the way to death that you ask us to lead, sir.'

Then the Lieutenant drew his men back, and as they retreated, they made a great noise, hoping to make Tommasino think they were gone. And, having gone back some five hun-

dred paces thus, they rested in utter quiet for half an hour. And it was then late afternoon. And the Lieutenant said, 'I will go first alone, and in all likelihood I shall be slain; but do you follow immediately after me and avenge my death.' And this they, being ashamed for their first refusal, promised to do. Then the Lieutenant rode softly forward till he came within twenty yards of the rock, and he clapped spurs to his horse and shouted, and, followed close by his men crying 'For God and our Duke!' charged round the jutting rock.

And behold, on the other side of it was not a man! And of Tommasino and his company naught was to be seen—for they had used the last hour to put a great distance between them and their pursuers—save that away, far up the road, in the waning light of the sun, was to be dimly perceived the figure of a man on horseback, who waved his hat to them, and, turning, was in an instant lost to view. And this man was Bena, who, by himself and without a blow, had held the passage of the jutting rock for half an hour, and thus given time to Tommasino to ride on and come upon the rear of Lorenzo's company before the Lieutenant and his men could hem them in on the other side.

(To be continued.)

SUBMARINE WARFARE.

IN 1864, during the American civil war, a submarine boat succeeded in sinking the Federal frigate *Housatonic*. This boat, however, was hardly an unqualified success, as, running into the hole made by its torpedo, it went down with the ship; and three crews had previously been lost while carrying out its initial experiments. Since then, many methods of submersion have been tried; but it is only within the last five years that naval powers have awakened to the fact that a submersible boat, though by no means so formidable for offensive purposes as its name at first leads one to believe, is a factor which might have to be taken into consideration in the next naval war.

The most modern types of these boats are the Holland, Nordenfelt, Tuck, and Goubet. The Holland boat comes to us from over the Atlantic, and is peculiar in its weapon of offence. The latest type is fifty feet long, eight feet in diameter, and is driven by a petroleum engine carrying sufficient fuel for two days' run. The diving is effected by means of two horizontal rudders, one on each side of the stern. This only allows of submersion when the boat is in motion; and the boat cannot be horizontal while submerged. It carries ten-inch gelatine blasting shells, fired from a pneumatic gun, twenty feet long, whose radius of action is two hundred yards under water and one thousand yards above. The use of gelatine is also objectionable, as the confined space and the vibration of the boat prevent such explosives being carried without some risk of premature explosion. It is for this reason that gun-cotton is adopted in torpedo work, as it will not explode on concussion, and is little affected by change of temperature.

The principal features of the Nordenfelt boat are its method of submersion and its propulsion by steam. The latest type is one hundred and twenty-five feet long, twelve feet beam, and displaces two hundred and fifty tons when entirely submerged, one hundred and sixty tons when running on the surface. Her propelling machinery consists of two double cylinder compound engines, with a horse-power of one thousand, and propelling the boat at fifteen knots on the surface. The submersion of the boat is effected by means of two horizontal propellers working in wells at each end. Two conning towers project about two feet above the deck, of one-inch steel, surmounted by glass domes, protected with steel bars, for purposes of observation. The boat usually runs on the surface with these towers showing, unless the buoyancy, which is never less than half a ton, is overcome by the horizontal propellers, when the boat becomes partially or totally submerged according to their speed. To ascend to the surface it is only necessary to stop the horizontal propellers, which also stop automatically on reaching a set depth. In the forward tower are the firing keys, machinery and valves necessary for driving or steering the vessel, for controlling the horizontal propellers, and for discharging the Whitehead torpedoes. Four of these are carried, and they are discharged with powder from two tubes in the bows. In the conning tower are also placed the instruments indicating the depth, level, and course. When the boat is awash, the funnels have to be unshipped and the boat closed up before submersion. The length of time, twenty-five minutes, required for this operation is an objection to this boat, though when submerged it does not get unpleasantly hot. The temperature after a three hours' submerged run was only ninety degrees Fahrenheit. The crew consist of a captain and eight men.

The Tuck also comes from America. It is of iron, cigar-shaped, thirty feet long and six feet in diameter. It is submerged by means of a horizontal rudder in the stern and a horizontal propeller acting vertically amidships beneath the boat. It is driven by electricity, supplied from storage batteries packed closely in the bows. Compressed air is carried in reservoirs, but a supply is usually obtained when the boat is not far from the surface, by means of an iron pipe twenty feet long, which usually lies on deck, but which can be raised to an upright position by gearing from within. The top then rises above the surface of the water, and by opening a valve in the foot and attaching a pump, fresh air is drawn into the interior. The crew need not exceed three men.

The Goubet class are of iron, sixteen feet long, three feet wide, and about six feet deep. The motive-power is a Siemens motor driven by storage batteries. Fifty of these boats were purchased by the Russian Government. They have no rudder, but a universal joint in the screw shaft permits of the screw being moved through an arc of ninety degrees. The torpedo is carried outside the boat, secured by a catch worked from inside. On arriving under the enemy, the torpedo is released, and striking the ship's bottom, is held there by spikes.

The boat then withdraws, unreeling a connecting wire; and when at a safe distance, fires. The absence of a rudder, however, causes erratic steering, and the spikes with which the torpedo is fitted might fail to stick in steel-bottomed ships.

Submarine boats cannot be driven under water at a speed exceeding six knots. If driven beyond, they are inclined to dive, and in deep water, before the corrective forces against a dive have had time to act, might reach a depth where the pressure would drive in the sides or compress them to a sufficient extent to seriously reduce the displacement. In shallow water, the boat might be driven on to the bottom, and if it be clay, held there, an accident attended with fatal consequences in the case of one boat.

It is also difficult to direct the course of a submarine boat; and it is doubtful whether the advantage of not being seen counteracts the disadvantage of not being able to see. According to Mr Nordenfelt in a lecture (R.U.S. Institution, 1886, No. 133) on Submarine Boats, 'The mirror of the surface throws a strong light into the boat; you cannot see forward at all, and you cannot see far astern; it is as black as ink outside; you can only see a sort of segment.' This means that you cannot safely advance at a great speed under water. It is impossible to think of a submarine boat as a boat that actually manœuvres and does its work under water. The boat should run awash, and you can then see where you are. When we consider, then, that a boat totally submerged cannot be driven over six knots, and cannot be properly directed; when we consider the speeds of seventeen and eighteen knots attained by modern battleships, we arrive at the conclusion that boats totally submerged are useless against modern battleships in motion. Running awash, they could be tackled by torpedo catchers and torpedo boats.

MY MYSTERIOUS CLIENT.

PART II.—CONCLUSION.

ONE afternoon, when I happened to be leaving the office early to escort my wife to a garden party in the neighbourhood of our residence, a clerk came into my private room and said that a man, who would not give his name, desired to see me. I had my hat on ready to start; and partly because I did not wish to be delayed, but chiefly because I expected the visitor was either a beggar or a tout, I stepped into the clerk's office and confronted him. I found a tall, gaunt, gray-haired man, very shabbily attired, standing with a hand-dog air on the door-mat; and the moment I addressed him, I recognised, to my astonishment, my old acquaintance, Mr James Dreaver.

'You know me I see, sir,' he remarked, as he stepped into my room at my invitation.

'Certainly,' I replied, with increasing uneasiness. 'But you have altered a good deal; you've grown thin and—and you are no younger than you were ten years ago. Why didn't you send in your name?'

'I wasn't certain whether you would remember me,' he said doggedly.

I could not help staring at him, as I mentally contrasted his present appearance with my recollection of him at our former meeting. That he should have lost bulk with advancing age was not extraordinary; but though I distinctly recognised him by his features and by his eyes, there was an indescribable change, which was not accounted for by the mere passage of years. Whether it was the effect of his shabby clothes or his odd furtive manner, I immediately suspected that my client had passed a considerable portion of the time that had elapsed since our last meeting within the walls of a jail.

'Where have you been all this while?' I exclaimed. 'Why have I never heard from you?'

'I've been in an asylum,' replied Mr Dreaver gruffly.

'You mean a—a—?'

'A lunatic asylum. Not a pleasant thing to have to say; but there you have it, since you must know,' said Mr Dreaver sharply.

I was silenced by this statement, though not exactly convinced; but the man's manner did not invite further questions, or, indeed, it did not concern me whether he had been in an asylum or a jail. I naturally foresaw the object of his visit, and did not relish having to make the inevitable revelation to him.

After a little fencing on my part, during which he demanded the parcel left so long ago, and which he described quite accurately, I said abruptly, as I nerved myself for the unpleasant ordeal, 'The fact is, I have some bad news for you.'

'You don't mean to say you've parted with the things?' he cried fiercely.

'No; I deposited them at my bank for safe custody; and, by some extraordinary mischance, the parcel has been lost. From that day to this, no trace of it has been found,' I said with considerable inward trepidation.

'It's a lie!' he shouted, springing from his chair and advancing towards me in a threatening manner.

'If you don't behave yourself, I'll have you turned out of my office,' I said angrily.

I was agreeably surprised to find that my resolute tone and manner cowed the man instantly.

'Then I'm ruined,' he muttered presently, as he wiped his brow with the back of his hand. 'It was all I had.'

'Suppose we come over to the bank,' I said, feeling genuine pity for him. 'There is no legal liability either on the bank's part or mine; but it is possible, if you can prove that the contents of the parcel were valuable, that some compensation might be made. So far as I am concerned, though unfortunately a poor man, I will assist you to the extent of a few pounds if you are in want.'

'A few pounds!' he cried bitterly. 'Why, the stones alone must have been worth ten thousand pounds.'

'What!' I ejaculated, amazed at the magnitude of the sum.

'Never mind what they were worth,' he said hastily, as though repenting of his statement.

'I suppose I shall have to be satisfied with what I can get.'

'Will you come to the bank, then, and talk the matter over?' I said, rising, relieved at the reasonable spirit he displayed.

He rose, as I thought, rather unwillingly, and tramped after me through the outer office and down the staircase into the street. I was too much excited and preoccupied to speak to him as we wended our way through the crowded streets, and he did not address me; but I was conscious of his tall figure striding by my side, and one or two friends whom I passed on the way looked surprised at seeing me in company with such a disreputable client. Just as we were approaching the bank—it was not five minutes' walk from my office—a passer-by seized my arm, and I was heartily greeted by a little old gentleman named Goldspiker, whose acquaintance my wife and I had made at a dinner-party a few nights previously. Mr Goldspiker was a Dutchman who had recently retired from business at the Cape, where he had known my wife's father in former days. He had apparently taken a great fancy to my wife, probably on account of the fact above mentioned, and his object in stopping me was to invite us both to dine with him at the *Métropole Hotel*, and to go to the theatre with him afterwards.

Mr Goldspiker was a loquacious old gentleman, and though I needed no pressing to accept his cordial invitation, he insisted upon chatting with me for a few minutes in the crowded street. I took leave of him, however, as soon as I decently could, but on looking around for my late companion, I found he had completely disappeared. At first, I thought he had merely walked on, and was looking into some shop window; and finding this was not the case, I concluded that he had remembered the name of my bank, and that I should find him waiting me there. But neither at the bank nor on my way there did I see any trace of him.

I was considerably startled at this strange behaviour, which certainly seemed to confirm Mr Dreaver's statement that he had been in a lunatic asylum. Being at the bank, I looked in upon the manager, and told him that the owner of the missing parcel had turned up, but that we had become separated during our walk. I was glad that I spoke to the manager, for he told me that, upon satisfactory proof of the contents of the parcel, he had authority to make the owner some small compensation.

I was naturally much relieved at this, and returned to my office half expecting to find that my client had gone back there. He had not done so, however, and after waiting for a reasonable time, I started off for home.

I told my wife what had happened, for she knew the story about the parcel and its mysterious disappearance. We came to the conclusion that, being preoccupied with my thoughts, I had unconsciously given my client the slip—probably in crossing a crowded road—or that he had lost his way; and we felt little doubt that I should receive another visit from him the next day.

To my surprise, however, three days passed

and he did not come. I was beginning to think that the unfortunate man had retired once more to the seclusion from which he had emerged, when I received a letter from him. It bore no address, but it came through the post, and was laconic and to the point. Here it is:

'SIR—I was suddenly taken ill the other day, and have been bad since. I will call to-morrow at eleven o'clock.—Yours truly,
JAMES DREAYER.'

Now, apropos of this letter, a very singular coincidence occurred. I had still got it in my hand, and was examining with curiosity the rather peculiar caligraphy, when I was summoned to my bank by a messenger, who said the manager would feel obliged by my stepping over there at once, as he had something important to communicate. Not doubting that the message was connected with the claim of my client, I put his letter into my pocket, and the very first question the manager put to me was: 'Well, has your client turned up again?'

I replied in the affirmative, and then, with a hearty laugh, the manager said the parcel had been found, and proceeded to explain the mystery, which turned out to have a very simple solution. It appeared that late on the previous afternoon, a certain Colonel Gray, who had been absent for the last ten years in India, had written to say that he wished to examine a box which he had deposited with the bank previous to his departure. An appointment was made for the following morning, and the bank manager suddenly remembered, by a kind of inspiration, that the colonel had last overhauled the contents of his box, and deposited some things in it shortly after the date when I had lodged the parcel at the bank. Now the parcel had been placed upon a shelf in immediate proximity to the colonel's box, and it occurred to the bank manager that the colonel might have inadvertently shovelled my parcel into his box along with his own things. The idea seemed plausible, and, at all events, when Colonel Gray had presented himself that morning, the manager accompanied him to the strong-room. And, sure enough, the very first thing that happened when Colonel Gray opened his box was that he drew forth a brown paper parcel which he did not recognise as his own, but which the bank manager, owing to the label upon it, promptly claimed as my property.

Needless to dwell on the colonel's confusion at this discovery, nor to repeat his apologies for his carelessness. The manager was much too elated to be censorious; and the colonel had the satisfaction of learning that no serious harm had resulted from his having imprisoned some one else's property in his strong-box for nearly a dozen years.

'I suppose you won't trust the parcel with us any more?' laughed the manager in conclusion.

'No,' I said, taking possession of it. 'You have kept it long enough. It is my turn now.'

'You're welcome, Mr Carruthers; and I dare say you will be as glad to get rid of it as I am,' said the manager as he wrote out a receipt for me to sign.

I carried the parcel back with me to my office, and put it away in a safe, of which I now had enough and to spare. I was greatly elated at the happy turn of events.

My good-humour lasted all day—no doubt, my clerks remarked it!—and the entertainment to which old Mr Goldspiker had invited us, and which took place that evening, seemed to be an appropriate finale. My mind was full of the subject when our little party met at Mr Goldspiker's hospitable table, and having gleefully related what had happened, I said casually to my host, who had listened attentively: 'By the way, Mr Goldspiker, did you ever happen to come across a namesake of my wife's father at Durban?'

'I knew Durban very well; but it has a large population,' replied the old gentleman in his quaint broken English. 'I was only acquainted with one James Dreaver at the Cape, and that was this lady's excellent papa'—

'And he lived at Port Elizabeth,' interrupted my wife.

'Quite true. He never was at Durban. Still, it is a coincidence that there should have been two persons of the same name over there at the same time.—What is the man like?' he added, turning to me.

I described my mysterious client, both as he appeared when he first came to me and as he was now. Mr Goldspiker said nothing to attract my attention, but he seemed rather silent and thoughtful during the remainder of the evening, though he discharged his duties as host with his accustomed heartiness. He gave us a royal entertainment, winding up with oysters and chablis at his chambers; and when we parted, he drew me aside and asked me the address of my office. 'I will be with you at ten o'clock to-morrow morning,' he said, to my surprise, as he took my card.

I had forgotten all about Mr Dreaver's intended visit at the moment, and I naturally supposed that Mr Goldspiker wished to consult me on some matter of business, and was highly delighted at the prospect of securing so wealthy a client. I must confess, therefore, that I was a little disappointed when the old gentleman, on presenting himself at my office the next day at the time appointed, announced that he had called to ask me some further questions about my mysterious client.

'I have told you all I know about him,' I said.

'I've been thinking,' said Mr Goldspiker, gazing earnestly into my face through his gold-rimmed spectacles, 'that his sudden disappearance the other day was rather odd.'

'Very!' I replied. 'But then, by his own admission, the man is a lunatic.'

'If'm! He may not be so foolish as he wishes to make out.—See here, my young friend,' said Mr Goldspiker, laying his hand on my arm, 'I was very well known at the Cape. People when they have once seen me, do not forget me, eh?'

I could not help smiling while I glanced at the old gentleman as he spoke. He had the oddest face I have ever beheld; the clean-shaven features were bland and childlike; but the complexion was the colour of a guinea, and

the skin was puckered into a perfect network of wrinkles. His expression was amiable, but I am bound to say that an uglier old gentleman it would be difficult to imagine, and, as he remarked, no one who had once seen him could fail to recognise him again.

'This man was walking with you when we met in the street the other day?' he resumed.

'Yes. I see what you mean. You suggest that he recognised you, and disappeared for that reason,' I said, struck by the idea.

'Yes; and looking back, I remember that when I came up, a figure near you turned aside and went up an adjacent court.'

'H'm! you may be right, certainly,' I replied, reflecting that our meeting had, in fact, taken place opposite to the entrance of one of those narrow byways which abound in the city. 'But why should he wish to avoid you?'

'Exactly—why should he?' exclaimed Mr Goldspiker, leaning forward with his hands on his knees and gazing at me with his bland expression. 'That is what I want to know.'

'He will be here directly. You had better stay and meet him,' I said, taking up my client's note from the desk.

'I came for that purpose,' said Mr Goldspiker. 'That is his letter, *Hein*?'

'Yes.—You don't know the writing, I suppose?' I inquired as I handed it to him.

Mr Goldspiker held the note within an inch of his nose and scrutinised it deliberately for some minutes. When he looked at me again, there was a queer smile on his thin lips.

'Have you the parcel handy?' he said quietly.

'It is here—in the safe behind me,' I replied, producing the keys.

'Let me look at it,' he said.

I turned to the safe, and fetched the parcel. The old gentleman's tone and manner mystified me considerably, and I was annoyed to see him coolly produce a small penknife and cut the string of the parcel without a moment's hesitation.

'What are you about?' I cried.

But Mr Goldspiker, who seemed to be labouring under suppressed excitement, paid no heed to me. He proceeded to undo the outer wrappings of the parcel, and, having accomplished this, he revealed a small bundle of documents which looked like share certificates and a good-sized paper bag. The latter he opened and shook the contents upon my table. They consisted of several score of uncut diamonds.

'How much did he say they were worth?' he remarked, almost burying his nose among the gems and handling them with the air of a connoisseur.

'Ten thousand pounds,' I said open-mouthed.

'H'm! I should say at least that; but it is impossible to be certain in their present condition,' he replied, turning to the documents. 'H'm,' he muttered, peering into the bundle, 'not much of value here—a few hundreds perhaps—a few hundreds.'

'I don't understand what you are driving at,' I exclaimed.

'You will presently,' said Mr Goldspiker cheerfully.—'Hark! who is this?'

It was Dreaver's voice we heard in the outer

office. I rushed to the door as he was shuffling away when he found there was some one with me.

I seized him by the arm, however, and by main force, half led and half dragged him into my room and closed the door behind me. Mr Goldspiker was sitting with his back to us, but I could see by my client's manner that he recognised him at once. The sight of the gems upon the table, however, seemed to inspire the man with reckless desperation, for he advanced towards them and said harshly: 'You've been meddling with my property, Mr Carruthers.'

'Not your property, John Spooner,' said Mr Goldspiker, turning in his chair and confronting him.

Apparently the man had hoped to brazen out the situation, for he made a faint attempt at bluster; but he was quickly overawed by the calm, determined aspect of Mr Goldspiker, and stood rooted to the spot, the picture of abject confusion.

'That man was my trusted clerk for twenty years. He repaid my kindness by robbing me. He is a forger and a thief,' said Mr Goldspiker incisively.

'I've been punished,' murmured the man, hanging his head.

'Yes. I tracked you, you scoundrel, and had the satisfaction of getting you convicted and imprisoned. Twenty years' penal servitude, wasn't it?' said the old gentleman mercilessly. 'You are out on ticket of leave, I suppose?'

'It killed me almost,' groaned the poor wretch between his white lips.

'You killed somebody else. I did not know of this,' said Mr Goldspiker, pointing with trembling hand to the packet on the table, and appearing suddenly overcome by emotion. 'If I had—Go!' he added, springing suddenly to his feet in a sort of paroxysm of rage—'out of my sight, or I shall forget what you have suffered. Go, I say, or I will send for the police again.'

The man, scared and startled by the old gentleman's vehemence, took one stride to the door, and the next moment had disappeared; while Mr Goldspiker sank down in his chair and buried his face in his hands against the table. I sat silent and bewildered, amazed by the scene, staring helplessly at my companion, while I listened to the retreating footsteps of my late visitor, who hurried from the building.

'Well, it can't be helped,' said Mr Goldspiker, looking up abruptly, and resuming his habitual sprightly tone and manner. 'But I wronged him—we all wronged him.'

'Who?' I inquired.

'That man went to a friend of mine, a merchant like myself, and in my name got possession of those things by false pretences. My friend, unfortunately, was ill at the time; he became delirious, and in his ravings he alluded frequently to this transaction, and mentioned my name; but we paid no heed. He died suddenly, and his affairs were in disorder. He had been speculating, had had bad luck, but—but it was not so bad as we all thought,' he added, absently fingering the gems upon the table. 'These would have saved him.'

'The things belong to his creditors, I suppose?' I said.

'No. I was his principal creditor, and I settled with the others. For myself, I make no claim. It is the least atonement I can offer for the wrong done to him by that wretch in my name. My friend died broken-hearted because he believed that I, his old comrade, had pressed him for my debt in his adversity. He gave up all he had, and—and he was ill, and it killed him,' said the kind-hearted old gentleman, fairly breaking down.

'Come, Mr Goldspiker, you blame yourself for nothing,' I exclaimed, touched by his emotion; 'you are entirely innocent.'

'I hope your wife will believe it, Mr Caruthers,' said the old gentleman wringing my hand.

'My wife!' I exclaimed.

'Yes. Oh! did I not mention my poor friend's name?' said Mr Goldspiker, apparently astonished at my evident bewilderment. 'It is her father I am speaking of, poor James Dreaver.'

'Then do you mean to say that this—this valuable property belongs to my wife?' I cried, as the room whirled round me.

'Yes, yes. It is valuable—the stones are very good,' said Mr Goldspiker, leaning forward and beginning to sort them quickly. 'The scoundrel was within the mark when he said ten thousand pounds. Leave them to me to dispose of, and I will guarantee'—

I really cannot remember the remainder of our conversation. I was so startled and overwhelmed by this sudden and unexpected accession of fortune, that I fairly lost my head. It seemed too extraordinary to be true; but there was absolutely no mistake about it, for within a few weeks Mr Goldspiker handed my wife a cheque for upwards of twelve thousand pounds. Considering my circumstances, and that my elder children were just needing education, it will be easily imagined what a glorious windfall this was to us; in a word, it proved the turning-point of our lives.

Often, afterwards, we discussed the matter with old Mr Goldspiker; and we arrived at a tolerably clear understanding of John Spooner's method of procedure. It appeared that just about the time of James Dreaver's death, Spooner, who enjoyed the fullest confidence of his employer, obtained leave of absence on the ground of ill-health. He was supposed to have gone for a short trip; but it subsequently came to Mr Goldspiker's knowledge that the man had secretly left the country. This led to his accounts being carefully looked into, and it then transpired that during many years he had robbed his employer systematically and heartlessly. Mr Goldspiker was so indignant, that he resolved to leave no stone unturned to bring him to justice. The man was traced to England; arrested within a day or two of his arrival; was tried, convicted, and sentenced to a long term of penal servitude at the Cape.

Spooner never breathed a word about his robbery from Mr Dreaver, and the crime was never even suspected. No doubt his reticence was perfectly natural, and he evidently waited

patiently for his release in order to enjoy his plunder.

What induced the man to deposit the packet with me, and to assume the name of my wife's father, is to this day a subject of endless speculation to all of us. I think the latter circumstance is to be accounted for by the fact that some of the share certificates were made out in Mr Dreaver's name. Spooner may have suspected that I might open the parcel, and had therefore deemed it prudent to allay suspicion by personating the real owner. Besides, he had excellent reasons for concealing his own identity.

But it is less easy to imagine a plausible explanation for the happy accident of the man having come to my office.

It is possible—though I have never been able to verify the statement—that he may have had my name mentioned to him in the manner described. It is pretty clear, at all events, that he either knew or suspected that he was in danger of being arrested, and was anxious to place the packet in safe custody. Mr Goldspiker's notion was that the man was one day seized with a sudden panic—saw in the street, perhaps, the colonial detective who had been sent over to arrest him—and in his desperate anxiety to provide for the safety of his precious parcel, in view of disagreeable contingencies, he had turned into my office simply because my brass plate attracted his attention at the moment. I am not at all sure that this theory, wildly improbable as it may appear, is not the correct solution of the mystery; but the actual facts will never transpire, for I learned, as the result of subsequent inquiries, that Spooner had died suddenly shortly afterwards of syncope in the infirmary of an East End workhouse.

SNAKE-TAMING.

By DR ARTHUR STRADLING, C.M.Z.S., &c.

SNAKES have their likes and dislikes, their prejudices and predilections, their little tempers and idiosyncrasies, like the rest of us, a fact which he who aspires to subjugate their native distrust of man and to win their confidence soon discovers in his dealings with them. The gentlest of serpents, for example, considers itself aggrieved and insulted, and to have valid ground for reprisal, should its neck or tail be meddled with, for no reason that is obvious; while its dignity is still more ruffled by the lightest touch on the mouth, though it may submit to any amount of ordinary handling. These and numerous small points of a similar character are revealed to the amateur by the light of personal experience only, experience which is not seldom fraught with results painful to himself, since there is as yet no Handbook of the Boa Constrictor or Practical Treatise on Python Culture; while the snake is one of the few things left in heaven, earth, or the waters under the earth, that has not a special journal devoted to it. But the first

endeavour of the serpent-fancier is, or ought to be, to render his *protégés* tame and fearless of his presence or manipulation, not only as a matter of convenience and protection to himself, but still more for the higher consideration of their well-being, since they are much more likely to feed when free from nervous apprehension of their surroundings.

It seldom happens that a snake can be induced to take a meal until some months have elapsed since its capture; those born or hatched in cages will devour suitable food within an hour of their advent on a mortal career, provided that the temperature and other conditions are such as meet their physical requirements and that they are mature, though—like most animals born in captivity—they are apt to be even wilder and more resentful of interference than their progenitors. One of the first phenomena of ophidian psychology likely to be recognised by those who have the exceptional opportunity—and perhaps still more exceptional desire—of close companionship with any number and diversity of these creatures is the great difference which different species present in their susceptibility to taming. To instance such only as are likely to be familiar to the casual patron of menageries and zoological gardens, the rock-snake or python of India, the Madagascar boa, the black constrictor of the Cape, the copperhead, the yellow Jamaican boa—now almost extinct, owing to the introduction of the pestilent mongoose for the purpose of destroying cane-rats on the sugar plantations—and the rat-snakes of both South America and Ceylon, rarely get rid of their original timidity, and are more or less snappish to the end of their days, however long may be their association with amicably disposed humanity.

On the other hand, the Royal and other African pythons, as well as their reticulated Oriental cousin, the great anaconda, the diamond and carpet snakes of Australia, all the corals, many of the vipers, the pale-headed and thick-necked tree-boas, and most of the smaller colubrine snakes, readily acquire a confidence in man, and may be trusted implicitly after a very brief acquaintance. More curious still, the disposition appears to vary coincidentally with variety of colour in certain well-defined directions among members of the same species. The deep red boa constrictor is never so amenable to discipline as those of paler hues, while the beautiful steely specimens found in the West Indies are usually gentler than either. A similar comparison strikes one in dealing with puff adders, where the velvety amber ones are much less spiteful than the gray, and especially with rattlesnakes, the 'pearls' on which vary from a dusty neutral tint to bright yellow. With regard to the last, it should be said that nearly all crotaline serpents—those of the rattlesnake family, though not necessarily provided with the vibratory apparatus from which the head of the house derives its name—are lethargic and indisposed to attack except under extreme provocation, yet they rarely become absolutely trustworthy. Their danger to man in the wild state lies

chiefly in the fact that the same lazy apathy deters them from fleeing from his presence after the manner of most of the Order. Finally, as much difference in temper and character exists amongst individuals of the same species, age, and colour, as would be found in any miscellaneous assemblage of specimens of the genus *homo*—indeed, a parallel might be drawn, without any undue straining of details, between the serpent tribe in this particular respect and a school of children of mixed nationalities, where the natives of some countries might be expected, *ceteris paribus*, to be more impulsive or phlegmatic, as the case might be, than the rest, where complexion would in a large number of instances justify an inference as to certain psychic peculiarities, and where, nevertheless, the 'personal equation' would be predominant after all.

One of the least tamable of all snakes is the cobra *da capello*, and, singularly enough, it is this very trait which makes it so valuable to the Hindu and Arab charmers, and which has, in fact, formed the entire foundation on which the 'charming' imposture is based. It need hardly be pointed out in these *fin de siècle* days of popular science that the cobra possesses the most rudimentary organs of hearing, and cannot be influenced by the strains of the dusky musician's pipe, while the intelligence of the whole of the Ophidia is so low that no kind of training or education is possible. The very utmost that can be accomplished is to instil into them a sort of dull comprehension that they need not bring into action their weapons of defence every time their hereditary enemy comes within the range of their extremely limited vision—this, and perhaps with some of them a doubtful recognition of persons. But the cobra is ready to sit up and show fight to the bitter end at the first hint of disturbance. It is the peculiarity of its belligerent attitude, upright with a third of its length of body raised from the ground, attended by the spreading out of its anterior ribs to form with the dilatable skin of the neck the fin-like expansion known as the hood, which gives it the appearance of acting in obedience to the gestures and sorry strains of the performer, who artfully adapts both to the natural and spontaneous movements of the reptile.

This, then, is actually the converse of snake-taming. One could hardly design a creature which would better answer the purpose of the pretended snake-charmer than does the cobra, whether we regard the Indian or the Egyptian species. Venomous as it is—and there is probably none more virulent, unless it be the southern rattlesnake—with *semper paratus* for its motto, it is the most easily manipulated and 'played' of all serpents. Whatever may have been the original value of the hood in the cobra's economy, whether to inspire its foes with terror or to serve any other end, there can be no doubt that it has long passed the zenith of its utility, and, like so many structures which we find in the animal world developed to exaggeration in the blind fury of evolution, has become a hinderance rather than a help to its possessor in the great struggle. The reach

of the cobra's delivery, the limitation of the distance within which its blow must fall, can be exactly calculated almost instinctively by those who become accustomed to them, since its striking consists of the swaying down of so much of its body as is upreared and no more. The reader may obtain an efficient illustration of this by laying his upper arm upon a table, with the forearm and hand (representing the head) raised from the flexed elbow. Very different is this from the spring-like mechanism of the process by which the majority of serpents dart on their prey or adversary—'fire a shot,' as the Trinidad creoles say—the head remaining quiescent until the neck and body behind are drawn up into S-shaped folds, to be suddenly straightened with the speed of lightning as the jaws are flashed forward. And when the cobra's head has fallen for its bite, the weight of its huge expanded umbrella prevents it from rising again as quickly as it would otherwise do, and admits of its being readily seized and secured.

Its near relative, the hamadryad, the great snake-eating snake, which is the largest of all poisonous species, and which also displays a hood, soon becomes apathetic, and refuses to pander to the humbug of charming; for this reason it is held of small account by the jugglers of India and Burma, in whose baskets it is occasionally seen and to whom it is known as the big or king cobra, since it requires a lot of shaking up before it will stand on the defensive, although its monetary value as a zoological specimen is twenty times as much as that of the smaller species. Though lazy, it is said to be distinctly aggressive in its wild state, and is perhaps the most intelligent of the serpent Order.

I may mention, as curiosities incidental to snake-taming, that they are much more vicious when cold—unless of course they are chilled to absolute torpor—than at the temperature which is suitable to their vitality; that they appreciate the interposition of a solid though transparent medium within an hour or two of their first confinement behind glass, and cease to strike at anything outside; that they will often strike repeatedly—and hit pretty hard blows—without taking the trouble to open their mouths, and consequently without biting; and that they never quarrel or bite each other, even the fiercest. When the time draws near for shedding the skin, a process which takes place at intervals of from three weeks to two months, they are apt to be treacherous and uncertain, probably owing to the partial obstruction of vision. A very old python in my own collection, formerly so quiet that a baby could and did play with it, and a most valuable specimen for 'handing round' at lectures, has developed cataract in both eyes of late years, and a decided infirmity of temper therewith. Babies, by the way, like kittens and young puppies, will maul and play with snakes unharmed where grown-up people would be bitten. The most ferocious of serpents is generally safe enough while in the hands of any one who knows how to hold without coercing him and keeps a cool head; it is in the picking up and especially in letting him go again that the bite comes in.

How, then, is snake-taming effected? Well, there is no great secret or mystery about it. In the first place, the snakes must become accustomed to the presence of humanity by being placed in such a situation that people pass and repass within their sight as constantly as possible; and here it must not be forgotten that no serpent can see anything distinctly at a distance equal to twice its own length. The inmates of the Reptile House at the London Zoological Gardens become noticeably shyer after a day or two of dense fog or deep snow, during which the visitors are few and far between. And, secondly, they must be handled at all times and seasons, except immediately after a meal, handled freely and fearlessly, but with due regard to their before-mentioned morbid sensibility of neck and tail. After all, the vast majority are not nearly so anxious to use their teeth as is commonly supposed. Keepers in menageries usually lift the new specimens from the boxes in which they arrive in order to transfer them to the cages, and are rarely bitten; and in forests and jungles all over the world I have always seized upon everything I came across with my bare hands, securing on one occasion a sixteen-foot anaconda in this way; and though I have had some nasty nips, such accidents have not happened to me in one case out of a thousand where there was the possibility of their occurrence. Gloves and tongs are worse than useless, and beget a nervousness on both sides. When a snake-keeper once begins to think about being bitten, it is all over with him, and he had better keep away from his charges until his nerve comes back to him. I have had more misadventures within a few weeks after a bad bout of jungle fever than in all the rest of my life put together, and I have lived in daily companionship with these reptiles almost as long as I can remember.

The only implement I ever employ is a very soft brush, and that I use but seldom, and with one species only, the lance-headed tree-boia of Tropical America, probably the most persistently savage serpent in the world, as ready to fly at the most familiar face or hand after years of association as it was at its original captor. It grows to about seven or eight feet, and is of slender habit, though a powerful constrictor, but its teeth are longer in proportion than those of any other non-venomous snake, while its enormous flat head and absurdly thin neck give it as malign and ill-favoured an aspect as pertains to any of the race. Four large specimens and five babies—born on the voyage, little fiends all—have just reached me from the West Indies. With the small ones, an old shaving-brush receives the bite as well as anything; for larger ones, a picture-brush or feather broom clipped somewhat short is more suitable, for one's object is not to hurt the snake in any way, but to disappoint him, and teach him the vanity of earthly passions when he dashes furiously into the yielding plumes and finds nothing there. A course of lessons of this sort sometimes serves to impress upon them the futility of assault and battery, and reduces the probability of their future efforts in that line to one snap when they are touched or suddenly disturbed.

Most animals can be turned by a brush; in zoological collections the attendants who clean the cages find that crocodiles, big birds, cats, and other unpleasantly demonstrative creatures, can be kept at bay with such a weapon, where sticks, whips, or crowbars would be useless, just as larger beasts are cowed most effectually by that real yet mysteriously intangible and unfightable foe, a jet of water from the garden-engine.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE newly discovered constituent of the atmosphere to which the name Argon has been given has caused as much excitement among chemists as did the detection of the fifth satellite of Jupiter some time ago in the astronomical world. We had all long regarded the composition of the air as having been definitely determined. But any one who will take the trouble to refer to Cavendish's celebrated 'Experiments on Air' will find that a suspicion is there raised that nitrogen, or phlogisticated air, as he termed that inert gas, was not the sole residue after the oxygen, water, and carbon dioxide of the atmosphere had been removed. If there were anything else left, he concluded that it must be in the most minute quantity. That there was something else was once more suspected by Lord Rayleigh, upon proving that the nitrogen obtained from air was about a half per cent. heavier than that procured from chemical compounds. The difference in weight is now attributed to the presence in minute quantity of this new gas. Argon has been separated, and gives a distinct spectrum. Whether it be an elementary body or a compound one is at present a moot-point, but its detection and separation must be regarded as a remarkable event.

At a recent meeting of the Royal Society, Dr John Haldane dealt with the nature and physiological action of black-damp as met with in a colliery in Staffordshire and in another one in Shropshire. He described it as one of the gases frequently found in the workings of coal-mines, which could be distinguished from fire-damp in not being explosive when mixed with air, and from after-damp in not being the product of an explosion, but collecting in the workings under ordinary conditions. It consisted of nitrogen containing an admixture of a seventh to an eighth of carbon dioxide, and it acted as a poison when inhaled, its dangerous physiological action being due to absence of oxygen, or insufficiency of oxygen when diluted with air, and not to excess of carbon dioxide. Air containing just sufficient black-damp to extinguish a candle or oil lamp produced no immediate sensible action on a human being.

'The Pastures of the Sea' formed the title of a very interesting and instructive lecture at the Imperial Institute lately, which was delivered by Mr George Murray of the British Museum. Seaweeds which grow near the land do not occur at a greater depth than fifty fathoms, and they may be classified according to their

colour into red, olive-brown, and green—the red weeds growing below low-water mark, the green ones at high-water mark, and the olive-brown occupying an intermediate position. It would seem that the colours have a direct relation to the amount of light available, for the sea-water stops those rays which are active in the formation of chlorophyll, the green colouring matter of plant-life. But this coast flora of the ocean can do but little towards maintaining the necessary balance between animal and plant life, which is effected by the floating microscopic plants which are found in all waters. Sometimes these are in such immense masses that they give the water a distinctive colour, as in the case of the Red Sea, which takes its name from their presence. The floating weed in the Sargasso Sea remains a puzzle to naturalists, for no plant of the same species can be found on adjacent coasts or islands. The lecturer concluded his remarks by urging the necessity of a more extended study of the ocean and its economy.

A favourite method of 'printing' adopted by photographers is the Platinotype process, in which the image is formed in platinum black, one of the most stable substances known to chemistry. A means of toning, or rather staining the image, so that the cold, black tone can be changed to any desired tint of brown, has lately been introduced, and the specimens of prints so treated which we have examined certainly show very beautiful results. The change is brought about by submitting the print to a bath of catechu, or cutch, as it is also called. This vegetable extract has long been used as a dye for textile fabrics, and is permanent. As the process is patented, the proper kind of catechu for photographic purposes will doubtless soon be placed upon the market.

One of the most difficult problems with which our parochial authorities have to deal is the selection of a method of road-making which shall be satisfactory in use and fairly permanent. The ideal paving has not yet been discovered—that is, one which shall be at the same time durable, noiseless, inexpensive, and capable of affording a foothold for horses in all states of the weather. Possibly such an ideal is unattainable; but a method which seems to fulfil some of the conditions required is found in Ardagh's Patent Prismatic Hard Wood Paving Block. This block is made up of a number of pieces of oak, which have been previously creosoted, bound together with an iron band. The cubes of which the block is composed are cut from waste wood, therefore the cost is not prohibitive; and if required, channels may be cut in its surface and filled in with sand and cement, so as to reduce slipperiness of surface to a minimum. The system has been for some time in successful use in the streets of Worcester.

A correspondent in commenting upon a recent note in these columns with reference to the fraudulent renovation of spent tea leaves, informs us that there is yet another use for this waste product, irrespective of that found for it by the careful housemaid. 'Owners of poultry may not be aware,' he writes, 'that

fowls are very fond of spent tea leaves. They are a very useful adjunct to the poultry-yard *menu*, especially at this season, when variety of diet is welcome to make up for the loss of natural delicacies. The fowls seem to enjoy the leaves whether given alone or mixed in the other food. Probably the tea acts as a tonic! Here is another use for the leaves when exhausted by humanity.'

If the calculations of the *Gazette de St Petersburg* may be relied upon, the completion of the Trans-Siberian Railway will be beneficial not only to the Russian Empire but to those who would seek a quick route from Britain to China and Japan. At present the journey from England to Japan occupies twenty-eight days, and it takes about three days longer to reach China. By the new route it is calculated that nearly one-half of this time can be saved.

The lamentable wrecks which have occurred round our coasts during the past few months will have one good result in stimulating the endeavours which have been made to place our lighthouses, harbours, lightships, and lifeboat stations in telegraphic and telephonic communication with one another. Much has already been done, especially in and around the port of Liverpool. The completion of this necessary work will, it is said, cost a quarter of a million of money. But this should be no obstacle to a rich country like Britain, especially when it is remembered that the value of a single ship of war very often greatly exceeds this sum, to say nothing of the far more valuable lives at stake.

It is sometimes impossible to find out the causes which have led to collision at sea. Not long ago two ships in the Channel, which had been in sight of each other for a long time, collided in broad daylight, both sustaining such serious damage that their water-tight compartments alone kept them afloat. It becomes desirable, therefore, that some record of the orders given from the bridge of a ship previous to such a disaster should be available. Such a record is provided by a ship's Indicator which has been invented by Messrs Thompson & Marsden. It consists of a drum carrying a paper which revolves by clockwork once in twenty-four hours. The paper is ruled with vertical lines denoting intervals of time, and with horizontal lines dividing it into spaces, each of which corresponds to one of the words of command telegraphed from the captain to the engine-room. A pencil traces a continuous line upon this drum, but moves in sympathy with every motion of the telegraph upon the bridge. So that it is possible by after-examination of this record to find out what orders were given to the engineer, the time at which it was given, and the interval which elapsed between every such order. The inventors assert that the Indicator can be easily adapted to any ship's telegraph in use, and that it has been thoroughly tested with complete success.

Among the minor time-saving devices which have recently been generally adopted is the fountain pen, which enables a busy writer to do his work without constant renewal of ink. One of the simplest and ingenious inventions

of the kind has been brought forward by Mr John Clark of Her Majesty's Customs, London. This consists of a tiny slip of india-rubber pierced at each end, which can be slipped over an ordinary nib. In this way it forms a stretched membrane below the point of the nib, between which and the metal is thus provided a reservoir to hold sufficient ink to write a long letter. The advantage of this method is that one can use his favourite nib and turn it into a fountain pen at will.

Lovers of animals have constantly protested against the inhuman practice of mutilating the ears of dogs, a fashion which has sprung up under the mistaken notion that the appearance of the victims is thereby improved. Unhappily, these protests have not hitherto had much effect. But there are now stronger influences being brought to bear upon the evil-doers. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales having been recently asked to express his opinion upon the practice, writes through his secretary to say that 'he has kept dogs for many years, and frequently sends some of them to exhibitions, but that he has never allowed any dog belonging to him to be mutilated. His Royal Highness has always been opposed to this practice, which he considers causes unnecessary pain, and it would give him much pleasure to hear that owners of dogs had agreed to abandon such an objectionable fashion.' We are also glad to see that the barbarous practice forms the subject of an energetic protest which has been lodged with the Kennel Club, on behalf of the Ladies' Kennel Association. It is suggested that no dog born after an agreed-upon date, that has its ears mutilated, shall be eligible for exhibition at any show held under Kennel Club rules. We trust that this humane suggestion will be acted upon, for it is a shameful thing that our four-footed friends should be tortured for a mere caprice of fashion. Man has from the very earliest times hacked about his own body in obedience to custom, but he has no right to impose a similar tax upon his dependents.

The tall cliffs which look over the Channel round about the port of Dover, the whiteness of which suggested the name Albion, have for years been crumbling away, sometimes imperceptibly, and occasionally in avalanches representing many hundred tons of chalk. The natural erosion has unfortunately been increased by the establishment of the Admiralty pier at Dover, which acts like a huge groyne, in causing the shingle to be carried away from the base of the cliffs, and not replaced, so that the chalk is constantly undermined, and the face of the cliff is from time to time brought down by its own weight. A correspondent of the *Times* lately pointed out how serious the consequences are likely to be to Government property in the neighbourhood of Dover and St Margaret's Bay, and he suggests that a concrete wall built at the foot of the cliffs would do much to stop the mischief.

The Tokio correspondent of the leading English journal says that the excellent health of the Japanese troops in Corea, although the want of sanitation in that country is a byword, may possibly be attributed in great part to

their diet, which is mainly rice. He quotes the opinion of Dr E. Baelz, an eminent German physician, who has made a study of the nutrient value of rice. For men in active exercise no other food, he declares, is equally sustaining and wholesome, but it is not adapted to those leading a sedentary life, for it quickly leads to dyspepsia. This view is borne out by the evidence of the labouring classes in Japan, who have well-developed muscles and enjoy good health. The same may be said of the *Jinrikisha* drawers, who will run immense distances between the shafts of those curious two-wheeled carriages peculiar to Japan, without much fatigue. The upper classes are on the other hand frail of frame, weakly, and incapable of real exertion. If the German physician's conclusions are correct, rice should be the ideal food for military purposes, for it is most easy of transport. We doubt, though, if the European soldier would regard it with much favour.

The most important expedition for scientific purposes which was ever sent out by this country is that of the *Challenger*, a ship which was devoted to this work for three years from 1873, when she sailed to every ocean except the Arctic. This expedition was remarkably fruitful in results, so much so, that the leading scientific men at home and abroad have been occupied for many years in tabulating and putting the observations into shape for publication, and arranging the collections with a like object. The work has only just been completed by the issue of the final two volumes of the fifty bulky tomes devoted to this great national undertaking. The price of the complete work is one hundred pounds, but the Government have presented copies to most of the leading libraries in foreign countries, as an acknowledgment of valuable help received in its compilation.

A new primary battery from which great results are anticipated has been patented by Messrs Walker & Williams of Birmingham. The cell is composed of a cylinder of zinc, immersed in a porous pot containing caustic potash. This vessel is placed concentrically within a perforated earthenware jar, packed with carbon, the current being collected by a cylinder of nickel, also perforated, embedded in the granular carbon. The novel feature of this cell is represented by the perforations in the outer vessel, and in the collecting cylinder, by which the atmosphere is admitted to play an important part in preventing polarisation. It is claimed that ninety-seven per cent. of the zinc used is given back in electric energy, as against forty per cent. in other primary batteries. Professor Jamieson of Glasgow has reported upon this invention, and says that 'it will prove very serviceable for driving electric motors, for electric lighting, and for electro deposition of metals when engines and dynamos are not available.' The inventors allege that those who live in country houses can by means of these cells produce electricity on their own account for a less sum than eightpence per Board of Trade unit.

Among the recent advances due to electricity must be reckoned a new method of producing

soda alkali and chlorine, which threatens to seriously interfere with an established and important industry. Many attempts have already been made in this direction, but certain difficulties had arisen which prevented success. Mr Castner, whose name is well known in connection with certain improvements in the production of metallic sodium, has at last solved the problem, and has commenced the manufacture of electrically produced soda and chlorine upon a large scale. The details of this electrolytic method cannot well be described without diagrams, but it may be said that the success of the new process is mainly due to the mechanical means adopted for the efficient employment of the electric current.

Professor Dewar has been revealing fresh wonders with regard to liquid air, proving that bodies which at ordinary temperatures are very faintly if at all phosphorescent, glow with a strange brightness after being cooled to the temperature of boiling liquid air, and excited by the rays of an electric arc. Feathers, flowers, cotton-wool, egg-shells, and various chemical substances, when dipped in the air give brilliant effects. The Professor also showed how photographic action was retarded at these very low temperatures, and he concluded that in some way the phenomena of photographic action and phosphorescence are closely connected.

AS IT HATH BEEN, SO IT SHALL BE.

DAISIES, starring the grasses

Till they gleam with silver sheen ;

Wind, that over them passes,

Ruffling the white and green ;

Nought is changed, save the eyes that see :

As it hath been, so it shall be.

Bird, that sings in the wild wood

Songs of a thousand years ;

Child, with the laugh of childhood

Chasing its April tears ;

Earth's music changeless as beating sea :

As it hath been, so it shall be.

Heart, that throbbest so madly

With joy of each new-born thing—

Heart, that sobbest so sadly

For thought of thine own lost spring ;

Earth's Springs shall soon be unfelt by thee :

As it hath been, so it shall be.

MARY GORRES.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

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IN THE FUTURE.

IF we could transport ourselves in imagination back to the early years of this century, to a period when the lives of people still living were beginning, what a different world we should find! Think of it. The steam-engine then had but entered on its civilising career; no good roads existed even for fast coaches; no Atlantic greyhounds sped through storms and fogs at twenty miles an hour; there were no telegraphs outstripping time, and making the sun a sluggard; no railway trains to rush along by night or day at sixty miles an hour; and no gas to light our streets or homes. And seeing so much has been gained in so short a time, we can scarcely wonder that many thinking men should turn towards the ever-approaching and unknown Future, and attempt to lift the veil which shrouds it from our gaze.

Forty-three years ago an interesting paper appeared in this *Journal*, entitled 'Things in Expectation,' attempting to forestall what might occur during the following twenty years; and, considering their nature, the predictions made were fairly successful. There is now a much wider field for speculation, and the writer proposes to follow his predecessor's example, and try to anticipate some of the discoveries and inventions which are now casting their shadows before them.

To some it appears that we have, in various directions, already nearly reached that boundary beyond which the human intellect cannot pass; while others see in the success which has followed past endeavour, the promise and potency of still greater triumphs. Besides, how many discoveries Nature reveals to us unexpectedly and unsought for! while each one in succession assists in explaining mysteries yet unsolved. For science, like a benignant mother, has no favourites, and offers her rewards to all earnest seekers, the learned and unlearned alike. She has hid away many of her most valuable secrets in the most unlikely and un-

expected places, and they lie all around us awaiting recognition. Especially is it so with chemistry, which has been aptly termed the 'science of the world and the future.' By its transformations we have been enabled to convert some of the most worthless materials into important objects of every-day use. It is continually opening up to us new sources of wealth and convenience of which former ages had no idea. We look forward to a time when the chemist will make a harvest when wanted, instead of waiting a year for Nature's slower operations. Then from the common matter of the universe we shall be able to build up direct the waste that results from all action, motion, and even from life itself. At present, this waste is restored to us by eating beef or mutton. The mutton was the protoplasm or 'physical basis of life' of another animal, a sheep, which received its protoplasm from the vegetable world. But we shall have changed all that, and the task of obtaining the ingredients, the nitrogen and carbon, direct from Nature, and of combining them in their due proportions, will be simple every-day work for the chemist of the future. Then the destruction of our fleet in war-time would not mean the awful miseries of famine that would at present be almost certain to follow the blockade of our ports.

In the long catalogue of problems on which science is now earnestly engaged, one is the discovery of methods for neutralising or for finding the antidote to the bacillus or seed-form of zymotic or infectious diseases, such as cholera, consumption, smallpox, malarial diseases or fevers. But yesterday the exquisite experiments and researches of Pasteur, Tyndall, Koch, Löfler, and others, have partly foreshadowed that long-sought-for prophylactic which is to make the entry of the too oft fatal germs to the human body difficult, or to neutralise them by a simple or easy remedy. We look to science to show us the road to health and long life, by conquering disease. Medicine and

Surgery have been enabled to take a new and grander departure.

So long ago as 1613, the first note of alarm was sounded regarding the exhaustion of our coal supplies. Standish informed our ancestors that with 'no woode for fuel, there would be no kingdom;' and as for coal, it was not to be depended on, and was failing in quality as well as in quantity. Fuller, the witty divine, also joined in the warning; and ever since we seem to have had periodical attacks apprehensive of such a calamity overtaking us. It is more than probable that our future consumption of fuel, instead of increasing, will diminish through superior methods of using it, without considering the probability of our finding substitutes. For the time may come when we shall be able to concentrate and employ the immense currents of thermo-electricity which result from the action of the sun's rays and the rotation of the earth. We seem to be on the verge of being able to produce electricity directly from the burning of coal; and this once accomplished, there will immediately follow the universal adoption of the electric motor as a prime mover. In this direction we have many resources. For instance, our rivers, the winds, and tides, can all be made to contribute to the production of heat and power. Also in many countries there are springs of hot water which have flowed for centuries unchanged in temperature. On the island of Ischia, in the Bay of Naples, on deepening the sources of these springs only a few feet, the water is found to boil; while a little deeper, steam of very high pressure has been obtained. All these sources of power can be converted into stored electrical energy, capable of being conveyed to any place where wanted, and employed to give heat, light, and great power in small space. No; we need not be alarmed at the prospect of the exhaustion of our coal-fields. Science will solve this question, and at the same time purify the atmosphere of our great towns.

The promised applications of electricity are almost innumerable. Nicola de Tesla promises to give us sunshine by night or day; maintaining that terrestrial heat and light are due to electrical vibrations in the millions of miles of ether which separate our earth from the sun, and not derived from a ball of fire, as is generally believed. These vibrations have been produced on a small scale by means of an experimental alternating current dynamo giving twenty thousand vibrations a second, followed by a luminous haze. This points to the possibility of manufacturing sunshine when wanted. Sir W. Preece has made telegraphic communication between the island of Hat Holme and the Welsh coast without wires, by means of the magnetic currents in earth and water. It is not long since only one message could be sent each way over the same wire simultaneously; now, seventy can be sent, thirty-five in each direction, on one wire. Experiments have proved that electric currents give vigour to the growth of most vegetables and plants, and also paralyse the mischievous activity of parasites, animal and vegetable. Here is hope for the agriculturist, and wider opportunities for

the electrical engineer. It is said that the total amount of heat poured by the sun on every acre of the earth's surface annually is equal to seven hundred and fifty thousand horse-power. From this, a heavy crop utilises three thousand two hundred horse-power only; the remainder, so far as vegetation is concerned, is dissipated into space. Here is energy sufficient to supply all the steam-engines in existence. Who can show us how to apply it to useful purpose?

Another novelty of great value is the application of electricity to sanitary improvement; the treatment and purification of sewage by this method is only too costly for use. The sterilisation of disease germs by electricity in the water supply of cities has been experimented on with excellent results; and the difficulty and expense of dealing with such vast volumes of water is a problem which must be attacked very soon.

We are told that in this country we have no climate—'merely samples;' that an English summer consists of three fine days and a thunder-storm; and 'that the only fruit that ripens is a baked apple.' There is some truth in the sarcasm. The thunder-storm is usually followed by a fall of temperature and 'broken weather,' which, lasting from a few days to a month, combined with the absence of sunshine, often thwarts effectually Nature's kind intentions in ripening fruit. So the electrician aims at controlling the weather. Shall we ever be able to make the clouds discharge their moisture during the night, and thus leave clear skies and sunshine for the day? We have nearly always the opposite at present, and so lose the heat by radiation at night which the sun gives us by day. Some attempts at rain-making are said to have been fairly successful. Can we not employ some of the superabundant energy mentioned above in preventing or mitigating the so-called London fog, which, alas! no longer confines itself to London? Professor Lodge has proved that the discharge of electricity into the air of a smoking-room at once clears it of smoke and dust. A flash of lightning—which is simply a huge electric spark—is projected through the moisture-laden clouds, and is followed by a deluge of rain. Thunder, we know, clears the air. A fog is electro-positive, and the electrician will not be allowed to rest until fogs are things of the past.

When a cheap supply of electricity can be obtained, the immense possibilities which will come within the range of practice will soon reveal themselves. The Honourable Robert Boyle, who lived early in the seventeenth century, entitled one of his essays, 'Of Man's Great Ignorance of the Uses of Natural Things, or that there is no one Thing in Nature whereof the Uses to Human life are yet thoroughly understood.' The whole history of science, electricity especially, has been one long commentary on this curious text. After the publication of Franklin's experiments, it was generally believed that there was nothing remaining to be discovered concerning electricity. 'It may be said,' wrote Priestley, not many years later, in reply to this hasty statement, 'there is a *ne plus ultra* in everything, and therefore in

electricity. There is no reason to think that we have arrived at it, for with every new discovery it becomes more apparent that the *ultima Thule* of electrical possibilities lies far beyond our horizon.'

It is a striking illustration of the primitive barbarism still inherent in the human race, and of the elementary condition in which we yet live, that civilised nations are willing to sacrifice so much treasure and ingenuity in preparation for war. Even we in this country, whose public burdens in this connection are as nothing compared with those of some of our neighbours, spend one-third of our national income in paying for past wars, one-third in preparation for future wars, leaving the remaining one-third for carrying on the work of the nation. It is, however, a hopeful sign that two of the most civilised nations on this planet have given a noble example in settling international disputes by arbitration. The time will surely come when the youthful manhood of great nations will refuse to be led to mutual slaughter, and to submit to all the evils and demoralisation which inevitably follow in the track of war. And it is to be sincerely hoped that arbitration through the power of an intellectual, cultured, and enlightened public opinion, international and universal in its application, will speedily take the place of war.

A universal language has for nearly three centuries been the dream of scientific men, and some think that the wonderful strength and vitality of our actual English tongue points to its general adoption in the course of time. It is the language which has made the greatest progress in respect of the numbers speaking it within this century. In the year 1800 it was said to be used by twenty-two millions of people, and is now spoken by much more than one hundred millions; while the numbers speaking Russian rose in the same time from thirty to seventy or eighty millions, all the other European languages being left far behind. English is the language of the greatest colonising race in history, the race which still holds the commercial supremacy of the world. It is the language of the great American nation; and from the United Kingdom and the United States, from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Cape, and India, it is pushing its influence farther into every corner of the habitable globe. It is not, then, a perfectly foolish expectation that our language may eventually become the accepted tongue of the civilised world.

By better methods of research, with instruments far superior to anything we as yet possess, and by continued patient investigation, how much may we yet learn! May we not hope to solve problems relating to remote worlds, and possibly to the organic and sentient beings who inhabit them? Knowing what has been accomplished recently by spectrum analysis and the union of the photographic camera with the telescope—making the stars themselves deliver their own messages regarding their movements and composition—it is unreasonable to put any limit to what the future may have in store for us. Besides, we may reasonably assume that the planets are inhabited,

it may be by beings as superior to us intellectually as we are to our ancestors of thousands of years ago; and from them the first communication may come.

Science is only at the beginning of its career. The prospects of the future invite to present humility. We are still, like Newton after all his discoveries, standing on the shore of a great ocean, from which we have picked up a few of its treasures thrown upon the beach, each one of which only serves to show its illimitable and, as yet, undiscovered wealth.

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

By ANTHONY HOPE, Author of *The Prisoner of Zenda*.

CHAPTER VII. (continued).

THUS had the day worn to evening, and long had the day seemed to Antonio, who sat before the mouth of the cave, with Venusta by his side. All day they had sat thus alone, for Luigi and the two youths had gone to set snares in the wood behind the cave—or such was the pretext Luigi made; and Antonio had let them go, charging them to keep in earshot. As the long day passed, Antonio, seeking to entertain the lady and find amusement for her through the hours, began to recount to her all that he had done, how he had seized the Sacred Bones, the manner of his difference with the Abbot of St Prisian, and much else. But of the killing of Duke Paul he would not speak; nor did he speak of his love for Lucia till Venusta pressed him, making parade of great sympathy for him. But when he had set his tongue to the task, he grew eloquent, his eyes gleamed and his cheek flushed, and he spoke in the low reverent voice that a true lover uses when he speaks of his mistress, as though his wouled accents were too common and mean for her name. And Venusta sat listening, casting now and again a look at him out of her deep eyes, and finding his eyes never on hers, but filled with the fancied vision of Lucia. And at last, growing impatient with him, she broke out petulantly, 'Is this girl, then, different from all others, that you speak of her as though she were a goddess?'

'I would not have spoken of her but that you pressed me,' laughed Antonio. 'Yet in my eyes she is a goddess—as every maid should be to her lover.'

Venusta caught a twig from the ground and broke it sharp across. 'Boys' talk!' said she, and flung the broken twig away.

Antonio laughed gently, and leaned back, resting on the rock. 'Maybe,' said he. 'Yet is there none who talks boys' talk for you?'

'I love men,' said she, 'not boys. And if I were a man, I think I would love a woman, not a goddess.'

'It is Heaven's chance, I doubt not,' said Antonio, laughing again. 'Had you and I

chanced to love, we should not have quarrelled with the boys' talk nor at the name of goddess.'

She flushed suddenly, and bit her lip, but she answered in raillery, 'Indeed, had it been so, a marvel of a lover I should have had! For you have not seen your mistress for many many months, and yet you are faithful to her. Are you not, my lord?'

'Small credit not to wander where you love to rest,' said Antonio.

'And yet youth goes in waiting, and delights missed come not again,' said she, leaning towards him with a light in her eyes, and scanning his fair hair and bronzed cheek, his broad shoulders and the sinewy hands that nursed his knee.

'It may well be that they will not come to me,' he said. 'For the Duke has a halter ready for my throat, if by force or guile he can take me.'

She started at these words, searching his face; but he was calm and innocent of any hidden meaning. She forced a laugh as she said, twisting a curl of her hair round her finger, 'The more reason to waste no time, my lord Antonio.'

Antonio shook his head and said lightly, 'But I think he cannot take me by force, and I know of no man in all the Duchy that would betray me to a shameful death.'

'And of no woman?' she asked, glancing at him from under drooping lashes.

'No, for I have wronged none; and women are not cruel.'

'Yet there may be some, my lord, who call you cruel, and therefore would be cruel in vengeance. A lover faithful as you can have but one friend among women.'

'I know of none such,' he laughed. 'And surely the vengeance would be too great for the offence, if there were such.'

'Nay, I know not that,' said Venusta frowning.

'I would trust myself to any woman, even though the Duke offered her great rewards, ay, as readily as I put faith in Lucia herself, or in you.'

'You couple me with her?'

'In that matter most readily,' said Antonio.

'But in nothing else?' she asked, flushing again in anger, for still his eyes were distant, and he turned them never on her.

'You must pardon me,' he said. 'My eyes are blinded.'

For a moment she sat silent; then she said in a low voice, 'But blind eyes have learned to see before now, my lord.'

Then Antonio turned his eyes on her; and now she could not meet them, but turned her burning face away. For her soul was in tumult, and she knew not now whether she loved or hated him, nor whether she would save or still betray him. And the trust he had in her gnawed her guilty heart. So that a sudden passion seized her, and she caught Antonio by the arm, crying, 'But if a woman held your life in her hand and asked your love as its price, Antonio?'

'Such a thing could not be,' said he, wondering.

'Nay, but it might. And if it were?'

And Antonio, marvelling more and more at her vehemence, answered, 'Love is dear, and honour is dear; but we of Monte Velluto hold life of no great price.'

'Yet it is a fearful and shameful thing to hang from the city wall.'

'There are worse things,' said he. 'But indeed, I count not to do it;' and he laughed again.

Venusta sprang to her feet and paced the space between the cave and the river bank with restless steps. Once she flung her hands above her head and clasped them; then, holding them clasped in front of her, she stood by Antonio and bent over him, till her hair, falling forward as she stooped, brushed his forehead and mingled with his fair locks; and she breathed softly his name, 'Antonio, Antonio!' And he looked up with a great start, stretching up his hand as though to check her; but he said nothing. And she, suddenly sobbing, fell on her knees by him; yet, as suddenly, she ceased to sob, and a smile came on her lips, and she leaned towards him, saying again, 'Antonio.'

'I pray you, I pray you,' said he, seeking to stay her courteously.

Then, careless of her secret, she flashed out in wrath, 'Ah, you scorn me, my lord! You care nothing for me. I am dirt to you. Yet I hold your life in my hand!' And then in an instant she grew again softened, beseeching, 'Am I so hideous, dear lord, that death is better than my love? For if you will love me, I will save you.'

'I know not how my life is in your hands,' said he, glad to catch at that and leave the rest of what Venusta said.

'Is there any path that leads higher up into the mountains?' she asked.

'Yes, there is one,' said he; 'but if need came now, I could not climb it with this wounded foot of mine.'

'Luigi and the young men could carry you?'

'Yes; but what need? Tommasino and the band will return soon.'

But she caught him by the hand, crying, 'Rise, rise; call the men and let them carry you. Come, there is no time for lingering. And if I save you, my lord Antonio?'— And a yearning question sounded in her voice.

'If you save me a thousand times, I can do nothing else than pray you spare me what is more painful than death to me,' said he, looking away from her and being himself in great confusion.

'Come, come,' she cried. 'Call them! Perhaps some day— Call them, Antonio.'

But as she spoke, before Antonio could call, there came a loud cry from the wood behind the cave—the cry of a man in some great strait. Antonio's hand flew to his sword, and he rose to his feet, and stood leaning on his sword. Then he cried aloud to Luigi. And in a moment Luigi and one of the youths came running; and Luigi, casting one glance at Venusta, said breathlessly, 'My lord, Jacopo's foot slipped, and the poor fellow has fallen down a precipice thirty feet deep on to the rocks below, and we fear that he is sore hurt.'

Venusta sprang a step forward, for she suspected (what the truth was) that Luigi himself had aided the slipping of Jacopo's foot by a sudden lurch against him; but she said nothing, and Antonio bade Luigi go quick and look after Jacopo, and take the other youth with him.

'But we shall leave you unguarded, my lord,' said Luigi with a cunning show of solicitude.

'I am in no present danger, and the youth may be dying. Go speedily,' said Antonio.

Luigi turned, and with the other youth (Tommasino told Niccolo his name, but Niccolo had forgotten it) rushed off; and even as he went, Venusta cried, 'It is a lie! You yourself brought it about!' But Luigi did not hear her, and Antonio, left again alone, asked her, 'What mean you?'

'Nay, I mean naught,' said she, affrighted, and, when faced by his inquiring eyes, not daring to confess her treachery.

'I hope the lad is not killed,' said Antonio.

'I care not for a thousand lads. Think of yourself, my lord!' And, planning to rouse Antonio without betraying herself, she said, 'I distrust this man Luigi. Is he faithful? The Duke can offer great rewards.'

'He has served me well. I have no reason to mistrust him,' said Antonio.

'Ah, you trust every one!' she cried in passion and in scorn of his simplicity. 'You trust Luigi! You trust me!'

'Why not?' said he. 'But indeed now I have no choice. For they cannot carry both Jacopo and me up the path.'

'Jacopo! You would stay for Jacopo?' she flashed out fiercely.

'If nothing else, yet my oath would bind me not to leave him while he lives. For we of the band are all bound to one another as brethren by an oath, and it would look ill, if I, for whom they all have given much, were the first to break the oath. So here I am, and here I must stay,' and Antonio ended smiling, and, his foot hurting him while he stood, sat down again and rested against the rock.

It was now late and evening fell; and Venusta knew that the Duke's men should soon be upon them. And she sat down near Antonio and buried her face in her hands, and she wept. For Antonio had so won upon her by his honour and his gentleness, and most of all by his loyal clinging to the poor boy Jacopo, that she could not think of her treachery without loathing and horror. Yet she dared not tell him—that now seemed worse to her than death. And while they sat thus, Luigi came and told Antonio that the youth was sore hurt, and that they could not lift him.

'Then stay by him,' said Antonio. 'I need nothing.'

And Luigi bowed, and, turning, went back to the other youth, and bade him stay by Jacopo, while he went by Antonio's orders to seek for some one to aid in carrying him. 'I may chance,' said he, 'to find some shepherds.' So he went, not to seek shepherds, but to seek the Duke's men, and tell them that they might safely come upon Antonio, for he had now none to guard him.

Then Antonio said to Venusta, 'Why do you sit and weep?'

For he thought that she wept because he had scorned the love in which her words declared her to hold him, and he was sorry. But she made no answer.

And he went on, 'I pray you do not weep. For do not think I am blind to your beauty or to the sweet kindness which you have bestowed upon me. And in all things that I may, I will truly and faithfully serve you to my death.'

Then she raised her head and she said, 'That will not be long, Antonio.'

'I know not, but for so long as it may be,' said he.

'It will not be long,' she said again, and burst into quick passionate sobs, that shook her and left her at last breathless and exhausted.

Antonio looked at her for a while and said, 'There is something that you do not tell me. Yet, if it be anything that causes you pain or shame, you may tell me as readily as you would any man. For I am not a hard man, and I have many things on my own conscience that forbid me to judge harshly of another.'

She raised her head and she lifted her hand into the air. The stillness of evening had fallen, and a light wind blew up from the plain. There was no sound save from the flowing of the river and the gentle rustle of the trees.

'Hark!' said she. 'Hark! hark!' and with every repetition of the word her voice rose till it ended in a cry of terror.

Antonio set his hand to his ear and listened intently. 'It is the sound of men's feet on the rocky path,' said he, smiling. 'Tommasino returns, and I doubt not that he brings your jewels with him. Will you not give him a smiling welcome? Ay, and to me also your smiles would be welcome. For your weeping pierces my heart, and the dimness of your eyes is like a cloud across the sun.'

Venusta's sobs had ceased, and she looked at Antonio with a face calm, white, and set. 'It is not the lord Tommasino,' she said. 'The men you hear are the Duke's men;' and then and there she told him the whole. Yet she spoke as though neither he nor any other were there, and as though she rehearsed for her own ear some lesson that she had learned; so lifeless and monotonous was her voice as it related the shameful thing. And at last she ended saying, 'Thus in an hour you will be dead, or captured and held for a worse death. It is I who have done it.' And she bent her head again to meet her hands; yet she did not cover her face, but rested her chin on her hands, and her eyes were fixed immovably on Count Antonio.

For the space of a minute or two he sat silent. Then he said, 'I fear, then, that Tommasino and the rest have had a fight against great odds. But they are stout fellows—Tommasino, and old Bena, and the rest. I hope it is well with them.' Then, after a pause, he went on, 'Yes, the sound of the steps comes nearer. They will be here before long now. But I had not thought it of Luigi.'

The rogue! I trust they will not find the two lads.'

Venusta sat silent, waiting for him to reproach her. He read her thought on her face, and he smiled at her, and said to her, 'Go and meet them; or go, if you will, away up the path. For you should not be here when the end comes.'

Then she flung herself at his feet, asking forgiveness, but finding no words for her prayer. 'Ay, ay,' said he gently. 'But of God you must ask it in prayers and good deeds.' And he dragged himself to the cave and set himself with his back against the rock and his face towards the path along which the Duke's men must come. And he called again to Venusta, saying, 'I pray you, do not stay here.' But she heeded him not, but sat again on the ground, her chin resting on her hands and her eyes on his.

'Hark, they are near now!' said he. And he looked round at sky and trees and at the rippling swift river, and at the long dark shadows of the hills; and he listened to the faint sounds of the birds and living creatures in the wood. And a great lust of life came over him, and for a moment his lip quivered and his head fell; he was very loth to die. Yet soon he smiled again and raised his head, and so leaned easily against the rock.

Now the lord Lorenzo and his twenty men, conceiving that the Lieutenant of the Guard could without difficulty hold Tommasino, had come along leisurely, desiring to be in good order and not weary when they met Antonio; for they feared him. And thus it was evening when they came near the cave and halted a moment to make their plans; and here Luigi met them and told them how Antonio was alone and unguarded. But Lorenzo desired, if it were possible, to take Antonio alive and carry him alive to the Duke, knowing that thus he would win His Highness's greatest thanks. And while they talked of how this might best be effected, they in their turn heard the sound of men coming up the road, these sounds being made by Tommasino, Bena, and their party, who had ridden as fast as the weariness of their horses let them. But because they had ridden fast, their horses were foundered, and they had dismounted, and were now coming on foot; and Lorenzo heard them coming just as he also had decided to go forward on foot, and had caused the horses to be led into the wood and tethered there. And he asked, 'Who are these?'

Then one of his men, a skilled woodsman and hunter, listening, answered, 'They are short of a dozen, my lord. They must be come with tidings from the Lieutenant of the Guard. For they would be more if the Lieutenant came himself, or if by chance Tommasino's band had eluded him.'

'Come,' said Lorenzo. 'The capture of the Count must be ours, not theirs. Let us go forward without delay.'

Thus Lorenzo and his men pushed on; and but the half of a mile behind came Tommasino and his; and again three or four miles behind them came the Lieutenant and his; and all these companies were pressing on towards the

cave where Antonio and Venusta were. But Tommasino's men still marched the quicker, and they gained on Lorenzo, while the Lieutenant did not gain on them; yet by reason of the unceasing windings of the way, as it twisted round rocks and skimmed precipices, they did not come in sight of Lorenzo, nor did he see them; indeed he thought now of nothing but of coming first on Antonio, and of securing the glory of taking him before the Lieutenant came up. And Tommasino, drawing near the cave, gave his men orders to walk very silently; for he hoped to surprise Lorenzo unawares. Thus, as the sun sank out of sight, Lorenzo came to the cave and to the open space between it and the river, and beheld Antonio standing with his back against the rock and his drawn sword in his hand, and Venusta crouching on the ground some paces away. When Venusta saw Lorenzo, she gave a sharp, stifled cry, but did not move: Antonio smiled, and drew himself to his full height.

'Your tricks have served you well, my lord,' he said. 'Here I am alone and crippled.'

'Then yield yourself,' said Lorenzo. 'We are twenty to one.'

'I will not yield,' said Antonio. 'I can die here as well as at Firmola, and a thrust is better than a noose.'

Then Lorenzo, being a gentleman of high spirit and courage, waved his men back; and they stood still ten paces off, watching intently, as Lorenzo advanced towards Antonio, for, though Antonio was lame, yet they looked to see fine fighting. And Lorenzo advanced towards Antonio, and said again, 'Yield yourself, my lord.'

'I will not yield,' said Antonio again.

At this instant the woodsman who was with Lorenzo raised his hand to his ear and listened for a moment; but Tommasino came softly, and the woodsman was deceived. 'It is but leaves,' he said, and turned again to watch Lorenzo. And that lord now sprang fiercely on Antonio and the swords crossed. And as they crossed, Venusta crawled on her knees nearer, and, as the swords played, nearer still she came, none noticing her, till at length she was within three yards of Lorenzo. He now was pressing Antonio hard, for the Count was in great pain from his foot, and as often as he was compelled to rest his weight on it, it came near to falling him, nor could he follow up any advantage he might gain against Lorenzo. Thus passed three or four minutes in the encounter. And the woodsman cried, 'Hark! Here comes the Lieutenant. Quick, my lord, or you lose half the glory!' Then Lorenzo sprang afresh on Antonio. Yet as he sprang, another sprang also; and as that other sprang there rose a shout from Lorenzo's men; yet they did not rush to aid in the capture of Antonio, but turned themselves round. For Bena, with Tommasino at his heels, had shot among them like a great stone from a catapult; and this man Bena was a great fighter; and now he was all aflame with love and fear for Count Antonio. And he crashed through their ranks, and split the head of the woodsman with the heavy sword he carried; and thus he came to Lorenzo. But there in amaze-

ment he stood still. For Antonio and Lorenzo had dropped their points and fought no more; but both stood with their eyes on the slim figure of a girl that lay on the ground between them; and blood was pouring from a wound in her breast, and she moaned softly. And while the rest fought fiercely, these three stood looking on the girl; and Lorenzo looked also on his sword, which was dyed three inches up the blade. For as he thrust most fiercely at Antonio, Venusta had sprung at him with the spring of a young tiger, a dagger flashing in her hand, and in the instinct that sudden danger brings, he had turned his blade against her; and the point of it was deep in her breast before he drew it back with horror and a cry of 'Heavens! I have killed her!' And she fell full on the ground at the feet of Count Antonio, who had stood motionless in astonishment, with his sword in rest.

Now the stillness and secrecy of Tommasino's approach had served him well, for he had come upon Lorenzo's men when they had no thought of an enemy, but stood crowded together, shoulder to shoulder; and several of them were slain and more hurt before they could use their swords to any purpose; but Tommasino's men had fallen on them with great fury, and had broken through them even as Bena had, and getting above them, were now, step by step, driving them down the path, and formed a rampart between them and the three who stood by the dying lady. And when Bena perceived this advantage, wasting little thought on Venusta (he was a hard man, this Bena), he cried to Antonio, 'Leave him to me, my lord. We have him sure!' and in an instant he would have sprung at Lorenzo, who, finding himself between two enemies, knew that his state was perilous, but was yet minded to defend himself. But Antonio suddenly cried in a loud voice, 'Stay!' and arrested by his voice, all stood still—Lorenzo where he was, Tommasino and his men at the top of the path, and the Guards just below them. And Antonio, leaning on his sword, stepped a pace forward and said to Lorenzo, 'My lord, the dice have fallen against you. But I would not fight over this lady's body. The truth of all she did I know, yet she has at the last died that I might live. See, my men are between you and your men.'

'It is the hazard of war,' said Lorenzo.

'Ay,' said Bena. 'He had killed you, my lord Antonio, had we not come.'

But Antonio pointed to the body of Venusta. And she, at the instant, moaned again, and turned on her back, and gasped, and died: yet just before she died, her eyes sought Antonio's eyes, and he dropped suddenly on his knees beside her, and took her hand and kissed her brow. And they saw that she smiled in dying.

Then Lorenzo brushed a hand across his eyes and said to Antonio, 'Suffer me to go back with my men, and for a week there shall be a truce between us.'

'Let it be so,' said Antonio.

And Bena smiled, for he knew that the Lieutenant of the Guard must now be near at hand. But this he did not tell Antonio, fearing that Antonio would tell Lorenzo. Then

Lorenzo, with uncovered head, passed through the rank of Tommasino's men; and he took up his dead, and with them went down the path, leaving Venusta where she lay. And when he had gone two miles, he met the Lieutenant and his party, pressing on. Yet when the two companies had joined, they were no more than seventeen whole and sound men, so many of Lorenzo's had Tommasino's party slain or hurt. Therefore Lorenzo in his heart was not much grieved at the truce, for it had been hard with seventeen to force the path to the cave against ten, all unhurt and sound. And, having sorely chidden the Lieutenant of the Guard, he rode back, and rested that night in Venusta's house at Rilano, and the next day rode on to Firmola and told Duke Valentine how the expedition had sped.

Then said Duke Valentine, 'Force I have tried, and guile I have tried, and yet this man is delivered from my hand. Fortune fights for him;' and in chagrin and displeasure he went into his cabinet, and spoke to no man, and showed himself nowhere in the city, for the space of three days. But the townsmen, though they dared make no display, rejoiced that Antonio was safe, and the more because the Duke had laid so cunning and treacherous a snare for him.

Now Antonio, Tommasino, and the rest, when they were left alone, stood round the corpse of Venusta, and Antonio told them briefly all the story of her treachery as she herself had told it to him.

And when he finished the tale, Bena cried, 'She has deserved her death.'

But Tommasino stooped down and composed her limbs and her raiment gently with his hand, and when he rose up his eyes were dim, and he said, 'Yes; but at the last she gave her life for Antonio. And though she deserved death, it grieves me that she is gone to her account thus, without confession, pardon, or the rites of Holy Church.'

Then Antonio said, 'Behold her death is her confession, and the same should be her pardon. And for the rites?—'

He bent over her, and he dipped the tip of his finger in the lady's blood that had flowed from her wounded breast; and lightly with his finger-tip he signed the Cross in her own blood on her brow. 'That,' said he, 'shall be her Unction; and I think, Tommasino, it will serve.'

Thus the lady Venusta died, and they carried her body down to Rilano and buried it there. And in after-days a tomb was raised over her, which may still be seen. But Count Antonio, being rejoined by such of his company as had escaped by flight from the pursuit of the Duke's troop, abode still in the hills, and, albeit that his force was less, yet by the dread of his name and of the deeds that he had done, he still defied the power of the Duke, and was not brought to submission.

And whether the poor youth whom Luigi pushed over the precipice lived or died, Niccolo knew not. But Luigi, having entered the service of the Duke, played false to him also, and, being convicted on sure evidence of taking to himself certain moneys that the Duke had

charged him to distribute to the poor, was hanged in the great square a year to the very day after Venusta died; whereat let him grieve who will—I grieve not.

STRAWBERRY CULTURE.

In writing or thinking of the strawberry, and in eating it, one insensibly recalls what Izaak Walton set down to its credit in his *Complete Angler*, that Dr Boteler said of strawberries, 'Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did.' This is as true in the end of the nineteenth century as when first made. The strawberry has been greatly improved in the long interval, but so have other fruits, and new fruits have been introduced. The strawberry holds the same relative position to other fruits that it did when the dictum was first written, and will perhaps continue to do so till the end of time. No other fruit can be eaten in quantity with the same enjoyment and certainty of the absence of ill results. If no change in the relative position of fruits in popular favour has taken place, there has been a great improvement in the fruits themselves by the introduction of many new varieties. This has been largely the work of the present century, and may be said to date from the introduction of the long famous and not yet forgotten Keen's Seedling. This strawberry on its introduction caused great excitement among members of the gardening community, and an anxious desire on their part to get plants to test its qualities. Other new varieties of strawberries followed, slowly, at first, till in our own time the sorts introduced have been so numerous and have so frequently failed, after fair trial, to maintain their reputation as improvements on older varieties, that in many cases they are received with much distrust.

It is generally felt nowadays that favourable conditions in the matters of situation and soil, climate and cultivation, produce the main differences between different sorts of strawberries, or even between the results attained by persons growing the same variety. In making new plantations of strawberries these points demand the careful attention of the grower. The situation ought to be considered first, if any choice is allowed on this point, as a sunny position for a strawberry break means a deal in the matter of the colour and flavour of the fruit. No position will secure sunshine to the same extent as a steep bank facing the south. On this the sun's rays will fall with most power; and if the same may be said of the rain, it will also pass away more quickly, doing more good than on the level ground. In the matter of soil, a good strong clay is best; but soil must be subordinate to situation. As regards climate, if the grower cannot remove to a place with more favourable climatic conditions, he must trust to good cultivation making up deficiencies, which it will to a very great extent.

To begin with the first stage in strawberry growing. The sunniest spot has been chosen for the plantation of a break with plants of this popular fruit. No preparation for a new plantation will improve upon the old fashion

of making the plantation follow a crop of potatoes. If potatoes have been grown upon the break for a term of years, so much the better. As a matter that may be taken for granted, the ground under potatoes will have been dug and dunged, weeds kept down, and the worst sorts extirpated; for if weeds are left in the ground at the plantation of a strawberry break, the chance of getting rid of them while under strawberries is very small indeed. If the potato crop has been lifted early in autumn, there is no good reason why the putting in of the strawberry plants should not be set about after the potato haulms have been raked together and burnt and all weeds cleared off the ground. No digging is required. After the line is set, the plants should be put into the ground and the roots carefully spread before covering them with soil, which should be firmly pressed with the foot. The interval between the plants should be twenty-four inches, and the same distance ought to separate the rows. If the work is well done, they ought to winter fairly well.

When spring returns, and growth commences among the plants, they should be gone over carefully, firmly pressed into the ground if necessary, and the blanks filled up. When May brings the plants into blossom, the grower will determine whether he shall remove the blossom, to prevent the plants bearing fruit the first year, or whether he shall take all the fruit he can get from the young plants. If he determines on the latter course, he ought, as soon as the strawberry blossom is fully expanded, to take advantage of the first fine sunny forenoon, and go over the break, and water, with a watering-pan having a fine rose, the whole expanded blossom. This gentle artificial shower will fertilise the blossom by washing the pollen of the flowers on to the parts designed by nature to receive it, and make the crop a certainty. If this watering be omitted, the work of fertilisation of the blossom will be effected by bees and insects to a considerable extent, but the crop will not ripen so regularly as when nature is assisted by man, though man's help is not required on occasions when a gentle shower falls from the clouds upon the expanded strawberry blossom.

The fruit should set or the infant strawberry be formed soon after the watering, whether artificial or natural, and its development will be much assisted by another watering of the ground round each strawberry plant, the water having a small quantity of nitrate of soda dissolved in it. The advantage secured by this watering may be greatly increased by a repetition of the same sort in the course of a fortnight. When the fruit begins to ripen, it is an excellent plan to put small stones round each of the strawberry plants, on which the fruit may rest and be kept clean. In this position the fruit will ripen sooner, will take a better colour, and have a superior flavour. In the case of a break planted with 'Noble'—a new early strawberry of great size—the advantages resulting from this treatment have been very great, the improvement in colour and flavour being so decided that twopence and threepence a pound above the ordinary

price have been easily got. This shows that the old proverb, 'The nearer the stone, the sweeter the grass,' might be altered so as to read, 'strawberries' as well as grass.

The ripening of the entire crop of fruit being accelerated by a ring of stones round each plant, labour is saved, as the grower does not require to go so often over the break to pull the crop. The need for some such plan as the stone ring round Noble plants was shown by the fact that the branches of fruit grown by this sort not resting on stones fell to the ground under their own weight, and there every berry on most of the branches was ruined by damp. This danger is escaped by the use of the ring of stones, which, heating readily under the sun's rays, greatly improves the colour, flavour, and firmness of the fruit of Noble, or any other large strawberry.

Regarding the pulling of the ripe fruit, it ought to be observed that when the weather is warm it is a mistake to gather the berries in the early morning, as at this time the persons employed in pulling them cannot avoid brushing off all the dew from the strawberry leaves when turning them over in search of the fruit. This is very hurtful to the plants in the warm days of summer, when the dews are so much needed to keep the plants fresh and green, and thereby to enable them to swell the fruit. Observers have noticed that when the dew has been rubbed off in the early morning the foliage droops, and remains in that condition until the dews of night refresh the thirsty leaves. While the leaves droop, the process of ripening the fruit is at a stand-still until the dews of another evening revive the flagging foliage. The fruit should be pulled late in the evening, and will keep well if stored in a cool place.

In autumn, when the ripening of the crowns of the strawberry plants takes place—upon this depends the crop of the following year—the plants are much helped by a small quantity of bone-meal round each plant. When the process of giving this top-dressing to the break is completed, the next thing is to take the draw-hoe and draw the earth from between the rows so as to cover the bone-meal. At the same time any weeds that have begun to show themselves can be summarily dealt with. With regard to 'runners'—as young plants proceeding from the old plants are termed—the one course of procedure to be followed is to go over the break frequently and cut them off as they make their appearance, until the season for producing runners is past. If young plants are wanted for a new break, it is best to make a small plantation of strawberries of the kind wanted. If a thousand plants are required for a new break, the small plantation to produce these will require to have one hundred plants or so, as each plant should yield a dozen runners, if the plantation is made on a piece of good open ground. Every care should be taken to further the growth, and when the runners appear, a small stone should be laid behind each point, to encourage the formation of roots. By carrying on the work of helping the runners, distributing these equally over the break, and giving occasionally an appli-

cation of weak manure-water, the runners will be enabled to form vigorous crowns. When the number required is reached, further extension should be stopped in the fashion recommended for fruiting plants. When the time for planting the runners has come, the young plants should be lifted with earth adhering to the roots, and put in the ground according to the directions already given. Runners grown in a small special bed will be found to be much superior to those allowed to grow on fruiting plants, and will produce larger and better fruit.

The fruit grown the first summer after planting is of small account in the matter of quantity; but the next summer is almost certain to produce a crop of great size and excellent quality. In the autumn of the second fruiting season, after the weeds which will make their appearance have been hoed, an application of manure—a mixture from the stable and byre will be best—should be made so as to cover the vacant ground between the rows. The winter's snows and rains will wash the soluble portion of this into the soil so as to feed the strawberry plants. What is left above ground will have considerable value, as helping to keep the fruit clean and assisting the plants to withstand the summer's drought.

The quantity of fruit produced the third summer is often very great, but this is attended by a falling off in the size of the individual strawberries. The top-dressing following this crop should again be bone-meal, and if a quantity of soot can be applied before winter sets in, the improvement in the quality of the ripe fruit will well reward the labour expended in its application. As a rule, the fourth continuous crop is the last that is worth taking from a break; but if the soil is heavy and well manured with bone-meal and animal manure, breaks can be kept going till the tenth year from plantation. Such a lengthened period of cropping with strawberries, however, cannot be recommended; six years is enough for a break to be kept going with this fruit, after which the ground should again be put under potatoes. No other crop affords so good opportunities of eradicating weeds; and in the course of four or five years ground so managed should again be fit for a strawberry plantation if required.

New sorts of strawberries are offered for sale year after year. It is perhaps best for the general strawberry-growing community to leave these sorts alone until growers of high reputation have given them a fair trial and published reports of results. It will then be safe to follow the recommendations given, and either plant or not. Of the older kinds, Garibaldi and President are general favourites; but almost every locality has one variety or perhaps two differing from those growing in neighbouring districts which are found to do well. Lately, the good old-fashioned British Queen, which seemed to have been given up by everybody, has been reintroduced by market growers with satisfactory results. Another older sort, but of excellent quality, is Stirling Castle, which seems to succeed best on heavy soil. A list of the varieties most largely grown near London will be found in Mr R. D. Blackmore's article on the Strawberry in Chambers's *Ency-*

clopædia. In making new plantations, however, planters will find that it is best to get their plants from a considerable distance.

Strawberry plantations on a south sloping bank should always be helped in the spring months, up to the time of blossoming, by repeated applications of liquid manure of moderate strength. Strong manure-water would stimulate the plants too much, and might bring them into bloom before spring frosts were past; hence, it is best to dilute it considerably, so that it will only increase the fertility of the ground on the surface at first, and extend its influence downward after each application, but when the fruit has fairly set, it must be discontinued—the soil will be enriched enough to be able to stand the summer droughts. From all breaks thus aided by applications of liquid manure, the fruit will be of a superior quality to that produced on ground top-dressed with solid manure in the winter season only; and, alike in colour, size, and flavour easily surpass strawberries grown without some such application.

THE MYSTERY OF PILGRIM GRAY.

A CHRONICLE OF BOSTON.

By THOMAS ST E. HAKE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—A DEAD MAN'S KNOCK.

THE late verger of St Botolph's furnished me with the facts herein recorded. Having dropped into the bar parlour of *Ye Shodfriars' Arms* one winter's evening, and chancing to find him there, and in a mood for chronicling, I had fixed him to redeem a promise made at former meetings. With a pondering look on his wrinkled face, he had lighted his long clay pipe, and had held me well nigh spell-bound for the greater part of an hour. He possessed all the natural gifts of a story-teller; and if I had not let the years roll away, and with them the knack to reproduce the simple and picturesque qualities of his unconscious style, the result would have been, I verily believe, something singularly realistic—something almost unique in literature. But the verger has been dead time out of mind. I cannot turn to him now for inspiration. Under the shadow of the great tower of St Botolph's Church—the tower around which the interest attached to this narrative is mainly centred—there is a gravestone indicating the spot where he lies. It was the sight of this landmark, not long ago, that stirred my memory concerning the 'illusive guests' who played such leading parts in the verger's tale.

During fitful instances of moonlight (the verger began) a solitary wayfarer became evident upon one of the high-roads that intersect Wildmore Fen. He was a well-set man, carrying a bundle in one hand, and in the other a stout stick, with which he was constantly compelled to grope his way. At frequent intervals he stopped and peered about, as though by no means satisfied that he was making tracks in the right direction. He stumbled at last upon a white sign-post which indicated a choice of

high-roads; and yet the man could make nothing of the names written thereon. The traveller sat down in despair, his back against the inscrutable finger-post, and waited, though no one came to deliver him from his dilemma. It might be about nine o'clock; and it had been dark for hours. Presently his eye rested upon what seemed a gleam of light, when he chose the road which branched off towards it. When he had trudged along for a mile or more, he began to gain confidence. The light became perceptibly brighter. But some chance of setting all doubt at rest was given him at last. The sound of a horse's hoofs upon the road along the way he had come caught his ear, and grew each moment more distinct. As soon as the wayfarer could make out the shadowy outlines of a man on horseback, he raised a shout.

'Who goes there?' cried the horseman, drawing in rein.

'A friend! What light is that?' the wayfarer inquired.

'The minster light,' was the reply.

'The lantern in St Botolph's Tower?'

'That's it, my man! The lantern on Boston Stump.' With these words the shadowy horseman touched the flanks of his horse with a shadowy whip and galloped forward into the night.

The wayfarer stood like one transfixed, listening to the clatter until it had died away, and staring at the monastic lighthouse. For many years the huge lantern at the top of St Botolph's Tower had served as a beacon to mariners from the North Sea when entering the perilous channels of the Great Wash; and it had proved a no less welcome luminary to benighted travellers journeying towards the town of Boston from the low-lying fen lands for miles around.

The wayfarer moved onward until he reached a number of houses facing a row of trees, upon the bank of a river. There he stopped. Upon the corner house an oil lamp was attached to the brickwork by an iron bracket. The house was a two-storeyed cottage. Beside the cottage stood a blacksmith's workshop. The doors were closed, but a streak of light struck across the roadway. The wayfarer stopped at the front of the cottage, and was on the point of raising the knocker, made out of an old horseshoe, when voices in the workshop beyond arrested his hand. He stepped towards the window through which the light streamed, and peered cautiously into the smithy. Two figures stood there with the dull red glow of the forge fire full upon them. One was the figure of a man, the other a woman. The man, a good-looking young fellow, in a riding-coat and top-boots, had a genial and sturdy appearance. A black mare stood behind him, fastened by the bridle to a ring in the wall. She was craning her neck to get a side-glance at her master as he worked the bellows. The woman looked about eight-and-twenty, with delicate features, though tall and athletic in form. Her shapely arms were bared to the elbows, and she wore a pair of thick leathern gauntlets. A blacksmith's leathern apron almost hid her serge dress. She held a hammer in her hand; and now, as the young fellow snatched

a red-hot horse-shoe out of the fire with a pair of tongs, the woman began to beat a myriad of sparks out of it. Her companion seized another hammer, and the blows were struck alternately. They talked and laughed as they worked. The stranger watched them with a keen stern face. The light fell upon him through the window; and one of the panes being out, he could overhear nearly all that was spoken. He had the appearance of being about thirty or thirty-two at most. He wore a pilot coat buttoned tightly about his broad shoulders. His eyes flashed with jealous anger, and he frequently tugged fiercely at his dark beard.

When the hammering was done, and the girl had plunged the horse-shoe into the water-tank, the young fellow said: 'By the bye, Zilpah, have you had any news lately of Pilgrim Gray?' He knelt down under the mare as he spoke, and lifted one of her hind-legs.

Zilpah brought a hammer and nails, and knelt at his side. 'Pilgrim Gray? No, Mr Harborn. Why do you ask?'

The stranger leaned eagerly forward with his ear close to the unglazed pane, and seemed almost to stop breathing.

'Why do I ask? Well,' said Harborn with rather a forced laugh, 'an odd fancy has crossed my mind. It will surprise you. Fortune-telling is not exactly in my line; but do you know, Zilpah, I almost think that I could predict yours to-night!'

Zilpah hammered vigorously at the nails. 'Could you?' said she without looking round.

'Yes. The man to whom you engaged yourself three years ago,' said Harborn in an impressive tone—'the man who ran off to the diggings, and deserted the forge, with the quixotic notion of making his golden pile, is coming home.'

The hammer dropped from the girl's hand. 'Coming home?'

'Yes; and this very night too!'

'How can that be? He's dead. At least,' said Zilpah, resuming her hammer, and working with renewed vigour at driving the nails into the mare's hoof—'at least he has given us every reason to think so.'

'Still he is coming home to-night! You may hear at any moment indeed,' Harborn insisted, 'his familiar knock at your front door. At any moment!'

A loud knock at the front door of the cottage—a knock that set the mare jibbing restively, at this very instant resounded through the forge.

Zilpah started up from her kneeling posture. 'It's he!' cried she. 'It's Pilgrim's knock.'

Harborn took the hammer from her hand and hastened to complete the nailing of the shoe. Then he turned to Zilpah, who stood erect and motionless, as though she had lost all volition, and said: 'Are you going to keep him out in the cold?'

She pulled off the apron and flung the gloves upon the floor. 'No; I— Of course not!' said she, turning to leave him.

Harborn held out his hand. 'Good-night!'

'Must you go?'

She gave him a pleading look; and then,

placing her hand for a moment in his, with her eyes cast down, she went quickly into the house.

The way by which she went led up some stone steps into a bright little room, half-parlour, half-kitchen. She closed the forge door behind her, and stood in the middle of this room with her eyes fixed upon the front door. The door was unlocked, and she seemed from her attitude to expect to hear the knock repeated, or even to see the latch raised, and the man whom she believed to be dead—dead many months gone by—step across the threshold. But the latch remained unlifted, and no repetition of the knock reached her ear. Her face flushed, and a frightened look came into her eyes. Then she stole towards the door with her teeth firmly set, her nostrils expanded, and her whole attitude bravely defiant. She was like one who, having been told of a ghost in the haunted room, had nerved herself to confront it.

Zilpah flung the door wide open and looked out. There was no one there. The night had become intensely dark. The girl stood upon the door-step and stared up and down the dimly lighted road. 'Pilgrim!' she cried, in an awe-stricken whisper—'Pilgrim Gray!' No answer came. But she could hear the echoing hoofs of the black mare dying away upon the high-road, and she knew that Robert Harborn was gone. She shut and locked the door with a sense of dread creeping over her. She still believed that the knock had been Pilgrim Gray's. It had been as familiar to her as the sound of her own footfall for many a year.

But why had Harborn left her so abruptly? She was alone in the house. Although by no means a coward, Zilpah felt the loneliness unendurable. Would Pilgrim Gray come back? She ran to the door of the smithy and into the workshop, to ascertain if he had possibly passed in there when Harborn had gone forth. No: the forge was empty, as she could see by the lantern that hung there against the wall. She lifted it from its nail and searched in every corner. Then she took down a cloak from behind the door, extinguished the lantern, and went out. When she had padlocked the forge door and seen that the window was securely fastened, she ran down the road by the river-side. The reflected rays from the minster light glittered upon the stream, and this dim glimmer guided her steps. Presently the sound of a waterfall stole upon her. The tide was running out through the sluice from above stream. There was a great drawbridge just below these gates; and Zilpah, hurrying towards it, crossed the river with the water roaring some feet beneath. When she gained the opposite bank, she turned into a byway where the lamps flickered feebly at long intervals. This byway led direct to St Botolph's Church through the oldest and narrowest streets of Boston.

As Zilpah went along, her extinguished lantern tucked away under her cloak, her eyes were frequently lifted towards the lantern that shone so fiercely high up above St Botolph's Tower; and when she at length reached the churchyard and passed in at a side-gate, there seemed no doubt that the minster light must be in some manner connected with her hastily planned expedition. She went into the church

by a small door which she found unlocked, under a low archway; and when she had closed this door softly behind her, Zilpah found herself in complete darkness. But she discovered matches in the lantern, and soon had the lantern alight. Then she stole softly across the church and entered a dwarfish doorway in the wall. This doorway led up a flight of stone steps into the great tower.

It was a spiral ascent, and so narrow that two people meeting there would have found it difficult to pass. Zilpah went with surprising rapidity up these winding steps, only pausing occasionally at some barred window, where the keen night-wind blew in upon her and helped her to recover breath. The Tower of St Botolph's at Boston is over three hundred feet in height, and in order to reach the summit, one has to mount nearly five hundred steps. It was midnight, and the great bell beat out the hour with its impressive pause between each stroke. Then there stole upon Zilpah's ear the soft tones of a violin, as she reached an archway that led out upon a parapet, where the rays from the lantern brightened the massive stonework of the buttresses, while the background was crowded with black shadows on all sides. This parapet with its four turrets—one at each angle—crowned St Botolph's Tower. The lantern stood above the belfry, a brilliant jewel in the midst. Zilpah mounted the steps that led into one of the turrets. The spiral ascent had now become narrower and almost dark. But she presently came upon a door with a round window in the centre panel, like a porthole in a ship's cabin. The music of the violin sounded from the other side of this door. She crept up noiselessly to the topmost step and looked in at the round window.

The room—for it was an outlook in the turret fitted up as a room—was circular in shape. There was a long narrow window in it, like the window in a prison, and through this window the light from the minster lantern looked in. On an old oaken chest, with his back to the light, sat a big, strong-built man of about sixty. His whole attitude expressed deep abstraction. His head was bent over a violin, which he hugged caressingly under his chin. His legs were crossed, and his back was arched until it resembled the bridge of the instrument upon which he played. He had completely abandoned himself to the melody. His appearance was that of a blacksmith from his singed and grimy cap to his cinder-soiled, hobnail boots. A number of blacksmiths' tools and innumerable bits of old iron and brass—among other things, a bell without its clapper—strewed the floor. Zilpah waited patiently until the music ceased. She then tapped on the window, and tugging at a piece of knotted rope, the door swung open, and she stepped in. 'I'm sorry to be late, father,' said she. 'But one or two things have happened to prevent me from coming sooner. Robert Harborn brought his mare to be shod, and'

'Young Harborn, the banker?'

'Yes. And—and it has gone twelve.'

'Gone twelve, has it? Well,' said the man, looking down tenderly at his violin, 'I daresay

it has! I don't take no heed o' time when I'm up here among the works. And yet,' he added, touching a violin string with his grimy thumb, 'if anything went contrary among these here bells, Zilpah, I'd be the first to find it out.'

Zilpah's father was known as Michael Garfoot, blacksmith, for miles round Boston. He was noted for his music on the anvil even more than upon the violin. He had a meditative, smoke-dried face, set in a shading of dingy red hair that met in a ragged fringe under his chin.

'Father,' said Zilpah, looking about her and speaking in a flurried tone, 'were you of opinion that Pilgrim Gray was dead?'

'Pilgrim Gray?' and he raised his eyes dreamily to Zilpah's face, as though forcing himself out of an abstraction into which he had fallen. 'Dead? Why, o' course he is!—Dead? Why, didn't that sea-faring chap, what I told you about, confirm the news of Pilgrim's death only t'other day?'

'What sea-faring chap, father?' cried Zilpah, in a tone of angry reproach. 'You never told me a word about it!'

Michael Garfoot put down his violin, then he looked up at Zilpah with an air of perplexity and vexation oddly combined. 'No more I did! I wonder now; how could such a thing have escaped me?'

'Why, I declare,' said Zilpah, gazing at her father as he sat there with his head bent, 'you're getting more absent-minded every day.'

The look on his face became greatly bewildered. 'It was a long yarn, too,' he muttered, 'and there was a sealed letter. The letter was for you.'

'For me?' said Zilpah—'and from Pilgrim?'

'Ay; from Pilgrim Gray right enough,' said the blacksmith, fumbling in his pockets in a helpless sort of way—'from your old lover! Where can I ha' put it?' He stared vacantly into Zilpah's face.

There was a pause.

'Hadn't we best go home?' said Zilpah, with a restless movement towards the stairs. 'You've left the letter, maybe, in another coat or in the cupboard in your bedroom. Don't you think so?'

'Ay,' said the blacksmith, 'maybe.' He placed his violin under his arm and began to descend the turret stairs. Zilpah followed with the lantern, throwing the light about Michael Garfoot's head and broad shoulders. Presently the man stopped and looked up blinkingly into the girl's face. 'Don't you be afeard, my dear,' said he confidently. 'It ain't lost.' Then he resumed his descent; and as he wound his way downwards, like a corkscrew, into the darkness, he seemed to be boring into his memory for a clew to the whereabouts of the missing letter.

When they reached home, taking the same direction that Zilpah had taken when going to St Botolph's Tower, Michael Garfoot sat down broodingly beside the kitchen fire.

Zilpah dreaded to interrupt his thoughts. She went quietly to work to prepare the supper, while her father sat there puzzling his brains, as she believed, over this sealed communication that had been placed in his hands.

When supper was over and the supper things

cleared away, Zilpah saw her father again seat himself by the fireside. He appeared to be in a more absent-minded mood than she had ever known him. And presently he began to put new catgut upon his violin, occasionally employing a pitch-pipe, which he held between his teeth to tune his instrument. Then he adjusted the violin under his chin, and began to play with an absorbed and far-off look.

'Father,' Zilpah interposed, tantalised beyond endurance, 'have you forgotten what you promised me? What news did you gain, when that letter was given you, about Pilgrim Gray?'

Michael Garfoot slowly put his fiddle aside and dropped the pitch-pipe into his waistcoat pocket. 'Stop a bit,' said he. 'Yes, yes. It was at the *Shodfriars*'—that's where it was—a night or two ago. Dear me! I can't think how it was I didn't tell you all about it. I can't think how it was.' He shook his head reproachfully at this oversight on his own part, and then resumed. 'Well, a night or two ago, as I'm a-saying, I was having a glass with the verger at the *Shodfriars*', when a sea-faring chap taps me on the shoulder. "Blacksmith," says he, quite familiar-like, "I've been given to understand as how your name's Michael Garfoot." "Captain," says I, "you've been given to understand correctly!—What's in the wind?" That was how it began.' Michael Garfoot paused and gave the fire a stir meditatively. 'The chap was a bit shy at first—seemed indisposed-like,' said the blacksmith, 'to state his business with me. But when we'd had a glass together, him and me—the verger joining us as answering for my identity—he explained his business readily enough. Captain Grimshaw—John Grimshaw, mariner, as he called himself—had met with shipwreck and privation. Disasters by sea and by land, as he put it, had hindered him keeping of a solemn promise given to a shipmate o' the name of Pilgrim Gray, a year gone by.'

'What promise?' said Zilpah eagerly.

'A promise,' the blacksmith went on, 'to take ship to Boston, and seek out Michael Garfoot, blacksmith, and deliver into his very own hands a sealed letter addressed to Zilpah Garfoot, the aforesaid blacksmith's daughter.'

'There was a letter, then—a letter for me! Yes; go on.'

'A letter,' said Garfoot, the perplexed look again clouding his face—'a letter which I've put by so carefully, my dear, that I can't for the life of me remember into what secret nook or corner o' the premises I can ha' stowed it away.' His small, dreamy eyes wandered from one side of the room to the other, and he again began to plunge his hands into his pockets and then to scratch his head distractedly.

'Did this mariner, Grimshaw,' said Zilpah, 'positively confirm the report, father—the report that Pilgrim Gray was dead?'

'Ay. He told me most solemnly,' said the blacksmith, 'that Pilgrim Gray was lying at the point of death when that letter was written to you. But that ain't all.' Michael Garfoot's look had become intensely distressful, and his voice trembled.

'Not all?'

'No. That letter contained a tidy sum o'

money. How much did John Grimshaw, mariner, make out the sum to be? Let me think now! Was it seven thousand or was it ten thousand pounds? It was a tidy sum.'

'Ten thousand pounds?'

'Left to you, Zilpah—that was how the mariner put it—as Pilgrim Gray's last dying will and testament.'

'Ten thousand pounds?'

'Seven or ten,' said Garfoot, 'made by trading in pearls and such-like among the Pacific islands. And then,' he added—'and then he went and caught the fever, and died.'

There was a long pause. Zilpah sat there beside the hearth, staring fixedly into the fire. Suddenly she looked up. 'Where is this mariner—John Grimshaw—who delivered this letter for me into your safe keeping?'

'Sailed for Amsterdam,' said the blacksmith, 'that very same night.'

Zilpah rose and lit the lantern. 'Father,' said she, 'that letter must be found. The money is not mine.'

'No?'

'The letter must be found to-night,' said she in a determined voice. 'Do you understand me? Pilgrim Gray is coming home!'

THE NEW DEPARTURE IN THE HONEST ART OF ANGLING.

THE honest art of Angling, as the sweet-tempered Walton worded it, has made a wonderful departure of late years. Although Dame Juliana Berners touched upon the subject in her *Treatyse of Fysshynge with an Angle*, in 1491, and, many centuries before that, Queen Cleopatra went fishing with Mark Antony, and played him the oft-repeated trick of fastening a salted fish to his hook—if Plutarch was correctly informed—we know the honest art was not a fashionable pursuit for ladies till the Prince of Wales brought home his fair Princess from over the sea. There is no hint in Walton's beautiful pastoral that any woman who was not a milkmaid, or 'mine hostess,' was to be found near the banks of streams in his day. There were no Piscatresses standing knee-deep in cow-slips, wielding the rod, facing the sun, and avoiding the 'snow-broth' that was the residue of old storms, and other snares. But now fly-fishing has been taken up enthusiastically by ladies, and, perhaps to some extent in consequence, quite a revolution has taken place in the manufacture of the necessary paraphernalia.

We frequently meet with mention of the new light fishing-rods now in vogue. These allusions, both overt and covert, are generally found in accounts of grand harvests in rivers, or in narratives of pleasant sojourns on the banks of salmon-haunted streams. The matter of lightness is one of the requirements that the recent widening of the circle of anglers has helped to make specially desirable. Time was when weight in a fishing-rod was not much of an offence; but that was when only the stronger sex practised the gentle art. As soon as it was ascertained that the adoption of a light material for rods by no means involved a loss

of strength, attention was turned to the subject, and considerable improvements perfected. Whether fishing in rivers that are known as blue, like the Tweed and Earn; or red, like the Usk and Dee; or gray, like the Lochy and Wye; or yellow, like the Spey and Don, the absence of a burden of weight is a matter of moment. We feel sure a few particulars concerning the recent improvements made in the manufacture of rods, towards the attainment of this end, will be read with interest by all who have whipped our wandering streams.

In the main street of a Border town, just before you come to the great stone gateway, all that is left of the high and wide stone wall that once enrigned it, stands a lofty block of new buildings, in which is carried on the manufacture in question. In this factory, which has somewhat of a Continental aspect, are gathered together the products of many lands more remote than far Cathay. Plantations in India send bamboos, male and female, in thousands and thousands; islands in glittering seas send their strange bright birds, or rather their feathers, to furnish the flies that form such an important item in angling transactions; and distant mines and other places send many additional items as far-sought. There are three storeys to the factory, in each of which is carried on the different branches of the intricate processes required in the production of the various requisites for fishing.

A novice might think that a bamboo cane would make a fishing-rod with very little manipulation, but it is not so. Every length of every rod made at these headquarters of the art is composed of six strips of bamboo. Each of these six strips has been cut into a wedge-shaped piece, in which process every flaw or weak place has been discovered, and the strip containing it discarded; and when selected, and tested, and seasoned, the six long wedge-shaped strips are cemented together into a mass that is immeasurably stronger than the stoutest bamboo could be. Only about thirty per cent. of the bamboos that arrive are found sufficiently sound for use, and only a very small length of each cane that is sound is used; consequently, a large number are required to make a rod. Arrived at the first joint, a new department comes to the front; this is the manufacture of the brass joint, upon which so much depends in the way of power of resistance and general lightness combined with strength. A lockfast joint has been invented in this factory in which the utmost security is attained, as it is so contrived as to lock as well as join; at the same time it is so treated as to divest it of unnecessary weight by the scrupulous removal, in vandyked cuts, of every atom of superfluous metal not requisite for its purpose. The upper lengths of the rod are made in a similar manner to the lower one just described, and the upper joints, in diminishing sizes, with the same precision and care. The most costly rods have steel centres in addition to the inner cane centre with which the rest are furnished. They are all so pliable that, after being curved almost into a circle, on being released they rebound into their arrowy straightness in a second. All the same, in all the processes, the tying, hand-

ling, jointing, varnishing, and finishing, special care is taken to keep the rods straight, whether bound and tied down or hung up in racks to dry. As we glance around, a steam-engine of eight-horse power, with revolving wheels and wide leathern bands, is turning innumerable machines in the various departments, and filling the air with its din and uproar; skilled workmen step to and fro at benches furnished with vices and tools; rows of rods in various stages are suspended in all directions; varnish, glue, nails, screws, knives, long narrow boxes for the transit of rods, shavings of bamboos and bags of metal filings, meet the eye on all sides.

Passing a counting-house where several lady-clerks are at work, we come to the department reserved for the manufacture of the necessary reels, lines, hooks, floats, and other items of equipment, where scores of minute technical particulars may be noted. It is on the topmost floor, however, that the more interesting manufacture of flies is carried on. In Izaak Walton's time there were but twelve kinds in use. He enumerates two varieties of the dun-fly, one made with the feathers of partridges and the other with those of the black drake; the stone fly; the ruddy fly, made from the feathers of a red capon; the yellow or greenish fly; the black fly; the sad yellow fly; the Moorish fly; the tawny fly, made of the mottled feathers of the wild drake; the shell fly, made of the wings of the buzzard; and the dark drake fly, made of the black drake's feathers. 'Ephemera,' who was the leading authority in these matters about forty years ago, and edited Walton's book with many notes, mentions the wings of starlings, larks, landrails, wrens, golden plovers, peewits, and the black ostrich, as those in use, in combination with the furs of seals, bears, monkeys, spaniels, cats, moles, water-rats, hares' polls and ears, gold and silver twist, and silk and wax. The materials now employed to make the nearest approach that can be devised to the various natural flies most approved by salmon and trout are more varied still. There are nearly four hundred varieties of flies now catalogued, some of which are known by such comical names as Hardy's Favourite, Dusty Miller, Black Doctor, Thunder and Lightning, Candlestick-maker, Greenwell's Glory, Highlander, Garibaldi, Green King, and Welshman's Fairy. A row of young women sit facing a long table, before large windows that overlook the adjacent country and distant hills, all engaged in the delicate work of manufacturing feathers and fur, tinsel and twist, into the semblance of flies. Not only do they deal with the plumage of macaws, kingfishers, red ibis, jungle cocks, blue chatterers, peacocks, swans, owls, and herons; but that of the more homely birds, woodcocks, greendrakes, teal, snipes, blackbirds, thrushes, waterhens, grouse, and partridge is also necessary for the perfection of their art. There are few salmon flies that are not indebted to the golden pheasant for their attractiveness. The white tips of turkeys are also brought into requisition. Festoons of spiders that are scarcely more than films or gossamers for fragility are fastened in various places to dry; and gorgeous flies, as well as those of more sombre tints, are

in course of formation as we look on. It seems to us there are but a few touches, a few turns and twists, a little deliberate choice of materials and handling of tweezers, scissors, and silk, a little delicate dexterity, and a fly, with a hook half concealed in it, stands confessed. A carved oak cabinet, however, contains a further triumph in the shape of artificial minnows as silvery as those in our shallow pebble-paved waters, in each of which is hidden the fatal hook likewise. Looking at these subtleties, it is difficult to retain the old conviction that there are as good fish in the sea as ever were caught. It seems to us that so many odds against the inhabitants of the waters must result in a considerable diminution of their number, if not in their quality. That there is a singular decrease in the amount of fish in some of our rivers is certain, when we call to mind the clauses inserted in the indentures of apprentices in Newcastle-on-Tyne, that they should not be fed on salmon more frequently than a stated number of times in a week, and contrast this record of superabundance with the recent news to the effect that, owing to extra scarcity last season, the few fish caught by some anglers have cost them nearly a hundred pounds a piece. It is to be hoped, in the interest of the new departure, that these matters will readjust themselves in the course of time.

MY QUEER FRIEND:

HOW I FOUND AND HOW I LOST HIM.

THE good ship s.s. *Arracan* was ploughing the Bay of Bengal on a voyage between Akyab and Penang. It was an ideal afternoon at sea; even the most timid land-lubber would have gloried in it. There was just enough of wind to make a healthy breezy ripple about the bows, and occasionally to give us a gentle roll sufficient to make us aware that we were on board ship, and not citizens of some floating town moored on a lake. I had just left my cabin, and was strolling towards the fore-castle in that particularly agreeable frame of mind which follows a decent dinner, a good smoke, and an afternoon nap on the quiet. My attention was suddenly arrested by some object floating heavily through the air towards the ship. In another instant it had alighted, and was swaying to and fro from one of the fore-chains. With the utmost caution I approached, and began to scrutinise this new and unlooked-for passenger. After a cautious but careful survey I identified him as the *Pteropus rubricollis*, or Flying Fox—which is really one of the larger bats. Poor fellow!—what an experience he must have had. We were now well out at sea, and he must have winged his way for many a weary mile, vainly seeking for—well, not rest for the sole of his foot—but some kind of bearing or another upon which to hang himself up. And there he was at last swinging by his hook-like claws to the chains, and fast asleep.

I am naturally fond of all sorts of animals, and in his present condition my queer friend to be at once reached my heart. My plan of campaign was speedily formed. Proceeding to the storeroom, I soon improvised a suitable

cage in the shape of a deep wicker basket used to hold potatoes or fruit; and with this and a deck-chair, I drew near to my victim. Mounting the chair, I perceived that he was in the most profound repose, having apparently been at the very point of complete exhaustion when he reached his present perch. I carefully placed the basket beneath him, and gradually elevated it, till he at last hung in the very centre of it, his forearms and claws alone being above the rim.

'Now for you, my boy,' said I, nimbly unhooking both claws from the chain, and thus permitting my friend to drop at once to the bottom. At the same moment, with my other hand I crushed in the top of the basket all round, forming a ready-made but quite effective cage. I could now breathe freely, and take in the situation. Whatever I thought of it, certainly he did not at all relish it. If he was motionless before, he had assuredly plenty of life about him now. He grinned his teeth at me horribly, and spat and barked like a furious dog. It is a pity that some creatures don't know their best friends. Unmoved, however, by his ingratitude, I carried him triumphantly to my cabin, and set him on a little table in the corner, where we could see and converse with each other. But war *à outrance* was evidently his motto, for, approach him as I would, I received the most unfriendly of receptions, with the usual accompaniments of teeth-showing and yelping.

'Well, well,' said I; 'time will try;' and I resolved to leave him for a while to his own colloquies. Next day his behaviour continued much the same. Having heard of the power of a roasted potato or a piece of bread upon a hungry city Arab, I tried now to kill him with kindness. I offered him a ripe banana, but he would have nothing to do with it or me. On the morning of the third day I saw he was beginning to lie low. Hunger, which has conquered many an impregnable city, was beginning at last to tell upon him. In the end he snapped the banana out of my fingers and retreated to the farther side of his cage, behaving much as a cat does with a captured mouse in the presence of the housemaid. All the same, he seemed to relish it mightily, and at the close I fancied I saw in his eyes the remotest glance of affection for the donor. Day by day I continued to bestow on him his coveted bananas, and by-and-by not only found him waiting for his daily bread; he now received it with increasing grace, and ate it with comfort under my very nose. And thus the time flew swiftly and merrily past.

I thought the time had now arrived to bestow upon him a large measure of freedom and self-government, so I opened the top of his cage and gave him the run of my whole cabin, strictly charging my boy to see that the door was never left standing open in the meantime. Our mutual good offices soon ripened into a close friendship. My queer friend would now leap up into my lap, rub his nose against my hand, and look up wistfully into my face as much as to say: 'Dear master, where is my banana?' I used afterwards to tease him a great deal by passing the fruit from one

hand to another behind my back after the manner of 'Hide the slipper;' but he always fetched it in the end. I would also change it adroitly from pocket to pocket while he played the rôle of the very smartest of pickpockets.

But the scene that lingers longest in my mind in connection with him, and the thought of which yet causes a twitching about my mouth, a roughness in my throat, and a certain dimness about my eyes, is yet to tell. It was my invariable custom when out at sea, unless in case of peril or emergency, to have a short siesta in my cabin just after dinner-time. Stretched full length on my sofa, I would turn on my back, close my eyes, breathe heavily, and pretend to be fast asleep. He would then creep up upon my chest, press his little sharp snout close to the front of my neck, spread out his great furry leathern wings quite over my right and left breasts, close his bright mischievous eyes, and purr away pleasingly with a sound which was a capital imitation of my own breathing. What a sense of sympathy, affection, security, and quiet dreaminess and comfort were blended together in these afternoon naps! What a contrast to the barking, snapping, grinning savage of a few weeks ago: it was like some metamorphosis of Ovid. I need hardly say that my queer friend had now the full liberty of the whole ship, from stem to stern, and that he speedily became the friend of all on board, and of myself in particular.

With the combined agility of the squirrel and the cunning of the fox, he used to swing and flap about the decks, making such odd and funny grimaces, and playing such sly, under-hand tricks. Sometimes I would pretend not to notice him, or would seem offended with him, and pass by on the other side without speaking. I had not, however, proceeded many steps till a whiz through the air, and a smart slap between the shoulders, told me that my companion would not be put off thus, and would take no denial; till, after grubbing in every one of my pockets, he at length secured the much-coveted banana, and then retired to eat it by himself, and dizzily, dizzily to swing and drowse from one of the fore-chains.

But the greatest of all the delights of his little circumscribed life was to get a combing from me. I had beside me an old curry-comb, which had found its way on board nobody knows how. On a fine afternoon I used to take him on my knee and put the teeth through his brown furry coat, gently drawing it from head to tail. How he did enjoy that operation! No fond mother or old grandmother ever enjoyed the hair-comb, passing through her raven or snowy locks by the hands of a little child, more than did my queer friend his combing. He would stretch himself out full length, almost serpent-like, and writhe and wriggle with exquisite pleasure under it; at the same time singing away like a pussy cat when her fur has been stroked in the right direction. He used to beg for this luxury in every conceivable way; in fact, he did all but speak.

But now comes the comedy of this brief narration, for my story is a comedy after all, and not a tragedy. We had just got up the

river, and cast anchor in mid-stream, waiting for our turn of the wharf. In the great shady trees by the river's side there were many of his clan, leaping and chattering about. In the dusk, I saw him eyeing them; in the morning, he was gone. Doubtless, some fair Helen or subtle Delilah up among the branches had lured him away; for I saw his face no more. Who can blame him?

A BACHELOR OF FORTY-FIVE.

At Forty-five! Ah, can it be
The rapid steeds have reached this stage,
That Time has meted out to me
The years of man's maturer age:
And I can call mine own at this
No better half, no family hive,
But live in so-called single bliss,
A bachelor of forty-five?

I fain would take the ladies' way,
And, as to age, deny the fact:
But 'tis an awkward game to play,
These registrars are so exact.
No! I'll admit it, like a man,
Nor foolishly with figures strive.
But face the truth, e'en as I can,
A bachelor of forty-five.

I never meant it should be so;
And how the matter happened thus,
Indeed, I really do not know,
Nor how the subject to discuss.
I always loved the ladies, but—
'Tis wondrous how these 'buts' contrive
To keep a man from wedlock shut,
A bachelor of forty-five.

When five-and-twenty was my date,
Had any dismal seer foretold
That this would be my hap and fate,
I should have held him false as bold;
More likely were it had he said
That now I should not be alive,
Than that I should be still unwed,
A bachelor of forty-five.

Ah yes! When beams youth's radiant sun,
When faith is strong, and hope is high,
Man weens not how his path may run,
Nor how the promised land may lie;
He weens not to what unthought goal
Resistless fate his life may drive,
And make him—poor unmated soul!—
A bachelor of forty-five.

But cheerful hope is with me still—
Hard were my case if hope had fled;
Good fishes yet the waters fill,
And there are damselfs still unwed;
And in some matrimonial sea
Perchance I yet may daring dive,
And be no more, though still I be,
A bachelor of forty-five.

WOODBURN.

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PEKING:

BEFORE AND BEHIND THE WALLS.

PEOPLE vary greatly in their ideas as to what heaven is like, and probably nobody but a Chinaman thinks the Celestial Empire has much resemblance to paradise. But there is absolute unanimity amongst Europeans that no city in the world is less like 'a little heaven below' than Peking (or *Pei-ching*, 'Northern Capital'), the capital of the Celestial Empire. Mr Curzon, one of the most recent of the visitors who have given us their impressions of this great city of near a million inhabitants, has pretty extensive experience of the filth and squalor and evil odours and uproar of many a famous Eastern city; but the most seasoned traveller, he says, 'has never seen dirt, piled in mounds of dust in the summer, spread in oozing quagmires of mud after the rains, like that of Peking: his nostrils have never been assailed by such myriad and assorted effluvia; and the drums of his ears have never cracked beneath such a remorseless and dissonant concussion of sound.'

The visitor to Peking may have to lie tossing wearily for three or four days outside the mud-bar that blocks the mouth of the Peiho; once disembarked on the vast alluvial flats that border the river, he may accelerate his journey to the capital by a short railway run to Tien-tsin, long the official headquarters of Li-hung-chang. From Tien-tsin he may think it best to undergo a three days' voyage on a river-boat, rowed, sailed, poled, or dragged by turns up the serpentine course of the river. He may prefer to ride the eighty miles on the small but strong Chinese ponies, jogging steadily along for two days in clouds of dust. Or, like a recent visitor, Pastor Heims, a chaplain in the German navy, he may make his entry in the local cart, described as a moderate-sized dog-kennel mounted on wheels, distressingly uncomfortable to sit in and far too short to lie down in. The route is excessively uninteresting

until at a turn in the road the city suddenly bursts on the view, vast and grim, its lofty walls of twenty miles' circuit rising sheer out of the sandy plain unencumbered by suburbs or outlying villages. The impression of their height is increased by the prodigious towers and triple-roofed gate-fortresses. No city walls extant can give a notion of what the walls of Babylon must have been: authorities such as Rawlinson and Sayce believe Herodotus was not exaggerating much when he reported these were 200 royal cubits—say 335 feet, only 70 feet lower than the cross on St Paul's!—in height, and 50 cubits (85 feet) in thickness. Whereas, though Peking is as many-walled and much-walled as any town now extant, its highest wall is but 50 feet high on an average, and about as thick.

If Peking reminds the traveller of Babylon on the one hand, in one other respect it resembles an American city. Its arrangement is singularly simple, regular and rectangular both in general plan and in the arrangement of the main lines of street. And like Washington it is 'a city of magnificent distances;' but inside the twenty-one miles' circuit of the walls are large areas wholly unoccupied. The walls are a still more conspicuous element in the city than at first appears; there are several sets of walls. For firstly, there are two cities, the Inner and Outer, the Manchu and the Chinese, and though these lie close together, they, too, are separated by a huge partition wall—the wall of the Manchu city serving, so far as it extends, for the north wall of the Chinese city. The Manchu or Inner City, which is somewhat the larger, is nearly square; the Chinese city, lying close to it, is a parallelogram, longer from east to west than from north to south, and projects east and west beyond the Manchu city. It should be remembered that the Chinese are not the lords of the land: the Japanese are not the first 'foreign devils' to occupy the sacred soil. The Manchu Tartars conquered the country in the seventeenth century, and are the ruling race still: the present Manchu dynasty dates

from 1643. So that the Manchus and Chinese stand to-day in China somewhat as the Normans and native English did in England two hundred and fifty years after the Norman Conquest, a certain fusion and approximation between the races having taken place; though old antipathies and jealousies have by no means disappeared, and might perhaps be fanned into a flame. Meanwhile, in Peking there is no longer the sharp distinction between Tartars and Chinese there used to be: Chinese live in the Tartar city, and Tartars abound in the Chinese town.

But the walls surrounding the two cities do not exhaust the great walls of Peking. The portion of the Inner City next the boundary wall is called the General City, and that is divided from an interior portion called the Imperial City by another complete four-square wall twenty feet high, within which are various temples, public buildings, government offices, dwellings of princely and noble persons, barracks, parks, a lake, and a famous hill, fabled to be a store of coal against a possible invasion and siege. As the coal-hill seems to have stood there in Marco Polo's day, the fable is no doubt baseless. Once more, the innermost portion of the Imperial City is again another specially walled enclosure—the Purple Forbidden City, containing the imperial palaces—those of emperor, empress, and other imperial personages, with some halls of reception and other buildings. The emperor and his harem are believed to be guarded by a force of ten thousand eunuchs. Into this holy of holies none but official persons or those having some connection with the court are admitted—ordinary Chinese and Manchus are strictly debarred, and the idea of foreigners intruding would be appalling. All other parts of the town used to be pretty open to the inspection of foreigners; but for some fourteen years past or so, the imperial temples and enclosures even within the Chinese city have been carefully guarded against aliens; bribery and corruption will not now secure access to the parks of temples where formerly Europeans used to play cricket at will. Of late, too, foreigners are strictly excluded from the grounds of the Summer Palace. Sacked and plundered by the French and British allies during the war in 1860—'singeing the eyebrows of China,' the Marquis Tseng called this strong but necessary measure—the palace stands in a large enclosure seven miles north-west of the city.

The Chinese or Outer City is very sparsely populated. Much of the ground is under cultivation, large tracts are wooded, green fields show themselves, and other open spaces are occupied with artificial lakes and tanks. Where it is built over, the streets are for the most part narrow, and the people are busy and bustling. There are club-houses not a few, various temples, and charitable institutions for the poor, the aged, and for children, including foundling hospitals. The 'Altar to Heaven,' with its adjunct the 'Altar of Prayer for Grain,' and the 'Altar of Agriculture,' are both near the southern wall, and are reached by a 'great street,' or avenue. The first two altars are enclosed by more than three miles of wall, the space within planted with forest trees. Within a second wall is a grove of fine cypresses

encompassing the buildings. The 'Altar to Heaven' stands on a splendid triple circular terrace of white marble, with steps leading from one terrace to the next, each being surrounded by a balustrade of the same marble, richly carved. On the upper terrace, which is thirty feet in diameter and about twenty feet above the ground, the emperor appears to greet the dawning sun on the day of the winter solstice, attended by his grandees and ministers. The 'Altar of Prayer for Grain,' a similar structure, but of less dimensions, was burned down in 1889; on its upper terrace there was a triple-roofed circular building, whose imposing appearance and splendid blue tiles caused it, according to Professor Legge, to be regarded as more important than the other altar, and to be commonly, though erroneously, styled by foreign visitors, 'The Temple of Heaven.' To this altar the emperor comes in the early spring to pray for a blessing on the labours of the year. Here also he repairs in seasons of drought to pray for rain. There has been much delay in rebuilding it. A short distance to the east stands the 'Altar of Agriculture,' in an enclosure about two miles in circumference. This contains four different altars—to the Spirits of the Sky, of the Earth, of the planet Jupiter, and a local deity. The principal streets of the Chinese city are more than a hundred feet wide, but the side streets are mere lanes. The streets are not usually paved, and according to the state of the weather are deep in mud or in dust. In the smaller streets the houses are miserable huts; in the main streets both private houses and shops are one-storey brick edifices, the shops being gay with paint and gilding. The shops are open in front, the goods being often piled up outside; and many trades are carried on in the streets or in tents and movable shops. Barbers and dentists, clowns, jugglers, and sword-players, ply their vocations in the street; auctioneers and quack doctors fill the air with their vociferations.

Though there is a great Central Asian trade route from Peking to Kulja and Semiretchinsk, the trade of Peking itself is inconsiderable, save in so far as regards supplying the wants of the inhabitants; large quantities of provisions are of course required. These, like other necessities, are very dear, and (though in the city there is no tax on land, houses, or personal property) many of the people are very poor and miserable. The manufactures are unimportant.

At a first glance from the summit of the walls, the Observatory, or other elevation, the trees seem to bulk largely, and with the parks and enclosures suggest a general effect of verdure and luxuriance—especially as there are trees in the gardens behind many of the rows of common houses. But nearer inspection shows that the verdant spaces are but patches in a vast area of filthy streets, incredibly dusty flats in summer or deep swamps in winter, variegated by mounds of unspeakable unpleasantness: and squalor and decay are the permanent impression. Even the walls seem as if they had been repeatedly bombarded. At their best, needless to say, they are utterly useless as a defence against modern artillery: they consist of

two tall shells of brick (on stone foundations), the space between being filled with rubbish, and the top of the whole laid with flags. Sewers are uncovered: spacious wide streets are flanked by ramshackle mean shanties: and little black irrepressible pigs grub amongst the universal rubbish and force their way almost between the passengers' legs. You have to pick your steps to avoid the worst of the filth, and even then are half-smothered in dust or daubed with inevitable mud.

Thus perish in a sense of confusion, dirt, dilapidation, and squalor all one's preconceived notions of what is not merely a very large city, but one of the most ancient cities of the globe: on this site stood the capital of a feudal state in the twelfth century B.C. The invading Mongols of Genghis Khan established themselves here in the thirteenth century A.D.; and Kublai Khan—Marco Polo's Kublai Khan and Cole-ridge's—made Peking his capital in 1280. Marco Polo describes under the name Cambaluc (*Khan Baligh*, 'Residence of the Khan') a city largely identical with the present, occupying much of the area of the present Tartar City. After the Mongols were expelled, the capital of China was shifted to Nan-king, but the Ming Chinese dynasty returned to Peking in 1421, and built the Outer City in 1552: so that when the Tartar Manchus came in 1643 they found the city ready for them. A new era commenced in 1860, when it was surrendered to the French and English allies; and since the capture of Wei-hai-wei it seems as if another era were about to commence in the history of this ancient and remarkable city, whence for so many centuries three or four hundred millions of mankind have been ruled and regulated.

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

CHAPTER VIII.—THE MANNER OF COUNT ANTONIO'S RETURN.

IN all that I have written concerning Count Antonio, I have striven to say that only which is surely based on truth and attested by credible witness, and have left on one side the more marvellous tales such as the credulity of ignorance and the fond license of legend are wont to weave. But as to the manner of his return there is no room for uncertainty, for the whole account of it was recorded in the archives of the city, by order of Duke Valentine the Good, son and successor of that Duke who outlawed Antonio; to which archives I, Ambrose, have had full access; and I have now free permission to make known so much of them as may serve for the proper understanding of the matter. And this same task is one to which I set my pen willingly, conceiving that the story is worthy of being known to every man in the Duchy; for while many may censure the things that Antonio did in the days of his sojourn in the hills, there can, I think, be none that will not look with approval on his bearing in this last hap of fortune. Indeed he was a gallant gentleman—and if, for that, I

forgive him his sins too readily, in like manner may our good St Prisian intercede that my sins be forgiven me.

Five years had the Count dwelt in the hills; five years had the Lady Lucia mourned in the city; five years had Duke Valentine laid plans and schemes. Then it fell out that a sickness came upon the city and the country round it; many died, and more were sore stricken, but by the mercy of God narrowly escaped. Among those that suffered were the Duke himself, and at the same time a certain gentleman, by name Count Philip of Garda, a friend of Antonio's, and yet an obedient servant to the Duke. Now when Antonio heard that Philip lay sick, he sent to him a rich gift of choice meats and fruits by the hand of Tommasino. And Tommasino came with six of the band and delivered the gift, and might have ridden back in all safety, as did the six who came with him. But Philip had a fair daughter, and Tommasino, caught by her charms, made bold to linger at Philip's house, trusting that his presence there would not be known to the Duke, and venturing his own neck for the smiles of red lips and the glances of bright eyes, as young men have done since this old world began. But one of the Duke's spies, of whom he maintained many, brought word to him of Tommasino's rashness; and as Tommasino at last rode forth privily in the evening, singing a love-song, and hugging in his bosom a glove that the lady had suffered him to carry off, he came suddenly into an ambush of the Duke's Guard, was pulled violently from his horse, and before he could so much as draw his sword, behold, his arms were seized, and the lord Lorenzo stood before him, with doffed cap and mocking smile!

'My glove is like to cost me dear,' said Tommasino.

'Indeed, my lord,' answered Lorenzo, 'I fear there will be a reckoning for it.' Then he gave the word, and they set Tommasino bound on his horse and rode without drawing rein to the city. And when the Duke heard the next morning of Tommasino's capture, he raised himself on his couch, where he lay in the shade by the fish-pond under the wall of his garden. 'This is sweet medicine for my sickness,' said he. 'On the third day from now, at noon, he shall die. Bid them raise a great gibbet in front of my Palace, so high that it shall be seen from every part of the city and from beyond the walls; and on that gibbet Tommasino shall hang, that all men may know that I, Valentine, am Duke and Lord of Firmola.' And he lay back again, pale and faint.

But when word came to Antonio that Tommasino was taken, he withdrew himself from the rest of the band who were lamenting the untoward chance, and walked by himself to and fro for a long while. And he gazed once on the picture of the Lady Lucia which was always round his neck. Then he sat down and wrote a letter to the Duke, saying, 'My gracious lord, I am here with fifty men, stout and brave fellows; and if my cousin dies, there shall be no peace in the Duchy. But my heart is heavy already for those that have died in my quarrel, and I may not endure Tommasino's death. Therefore let Tommasino go, and grant full

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pardon and oblivion to him and to all who are here with me, and swear to do this with a binding oath; and then I will come and deliver myself to you, and suffer such doom as seems good to your Highness. May Almighty God assuage your Highness's sickness and keep you in all things.—ANTONIO of Monte Velluto.' And this letter he sent to the Duke Valentine, who, having received it, pondered long, but at last said to Lorenzo, 'I do not love to let Tommasino go, nor to pardon these lawless knaves; yet for five years I have pursued Antonio and have not taken him. And I am weary, and the country is racked and troubled by our strife.'

'With Antonio dead, all would be quiet, my lord,' said Lorenzo.

Then the Duke's eyes flashed and he said, 'It shall be so. And bid them strengthen the gibbet, for Antonio is a large man; and he shall surely hang on it.'

Now Lorenzo was somewhat grieved, for he esteemed Antonio; yet he obeyed the Duke's commands, and took from the Duke a letter for Antonio, wherein His Highness swore to all that Antonio asked, and bade him come alone or with one companion only into the city on the day that had been before appointed for the hanging of Tommasino. And further, the lord Lorenzo gathered together all the pikemen and every man that served the Duke, and placed them all on guard, and proclaimed that any man besides found carrying arms in the city should be held as the Duke's enemy. For he feared that the townsmen who loved Antonio would attempt something on his behalf. But when the townsmen saw the great force that Lorenzo had gathered, they dared attempt nothing, although they were sore grieved and lamented bitterly. And the lady Lucia, looking from the window of her house, beheld those who were erecting the gibbet, and wept for her lover. As for Tommasino, when he heard that he was not to be hanged, but to be set free, and Antonio to suffer death in his stead, he was like a man mad, and his rage and grief could not be restrained; for he declared that he would not live if Antonio died, and did not cease to reproach himself bitterly. Therefore the lord Lorenzo held him confined in his own house, lest he should do himself some harm, or endeavour by some desperate device to prevent Antonio from fulfilling his purpose; but he treated him with all courtesy, for he was sorry for his plight.

Now Count Antonio feared his companions, and did not dare to tell them of what he had done, lest their obedience should fail under a strain so great, and they should by force prevent his going to the city. Therefore he told them to rest quiet in their camp, while he, with Bena, went about certain necessary business; and he bade them farewell, enjoining them most strictly to do nothing against the Duke.

'For,' said he, 'although I may not tell you fully what the business is on which I go, yet I have good hope that His Highness is favourably inclined to you, and that in a short space you will receive from him pardon for all your offences. And that pardon I charge you to accept with gratitude, and, having accepted it,

be thenceforward loyal servants of His Highness.'

'But will the Duke pardon you also, my lord, and the lord Tommasino?' asked Martolo.

'He will pardon Tommasino also,' answered Antonio. 'And be assured that I shall suffer nothing.' And having said this, he shook every man by the hand, thanking them for the love and service they had shown him; and he and Bena were accompanied by all of them to the foot of Mount Agnino; and there, in the early morning of the appointed day, Antonio mounted his horse and rode with Bena into the plain. And as they rode, Bena said to him, 'My lord, why does the Duke grant this pardon?'

'Because I give him what he asks as the price of it, Bena,' answered Antonio; and they rode on for a while. But when Bena saw that Antonio turned his horse not towards Rilano, but directly across the plain towards Firmola, he said, 'My lord, whither are we riding?'

'We are riding to the city, Bena,' answered Antonio. 'There is no cause for fear: we go by leave and on the invitation of His Highness.'

'But will he let us go again?' asked Bena.

'You will be free to go when you will,' answered Antonio, 'and me the Duke will himself send forth from the city when I am ready to go.' For Lorenzo had promised in the Duke's name that Antonio's body, after it had hung three days on the gibbet, should be honourably carried from the city to the church of St Prisian at Rilano, and there interred with fitting ceremony.

'Yet I do not like this ride of ours,' grumbled Bena.

'Nay, I like it not myself,' said Antonio, smiling. 'But for the good of my cousin and of all our company, we must go forward.' And he stopped for a moment and added, 'Swear to me, Bena, by St Prisian, to obey all I bid you in the city to-day, and not to draw your sword unless I draw mine.'

'Do I not always obey you, my lord?' asked Bena.

'But swear to me.'

'Well, then, I swear,' said Bena, 'though in truth, my lord, your word is full as strong to me as any oath, whether by Prisian or another.' For this man whom they called Bena was a godless man, and one that held holy things in light esteem. But he was a fine fighter and a loyal servant; and God's mercy is infinite. It may be his heart was turned at last—though indeed I have found no record of it.

'My lord, will you see my lady Lucia in the city?' asked Bena.

'I trust to see at the least her face at her window,' answered Antonio.

'Will you have speech with her, my lord?'

'If His Highness will grant me that favour, Bena.'

'Ah, I know now why you smiled, my lord, as you rode, just now. It will be a bright day for you.' And Bena laughed.

'Indeed,' said Antonio, 'I trust that the day may be bright for me. Yes, bright as the light of heaven.'

'There is no light brighter than the eyes of the girl a man loves,' said Bena.

'Yes, there is one,' said Antonio. But Bena did not understand his meaning.

Thus they rode till it wanted only two hours of noon; and then they were within five miles of the city, and Bena, looking, beheld the great gibbet rising above the walls of the city and standing forth grim and black in front of the marble face of the Cathedral.

'What is that, my lord,' he cried, 'which towers above the walls of the city?'

'Is it not enough to know when we come there?' answered Antonio.

Then Bena sighed, and said to Antonio, 'I find it in my heart, my lord, to be half sorry that the Duke pardons us; for we lived a fine merry life in the hills. Yet it will be pleasant to live at ease: and we have adventures enough to tell our sweethearts, ay, and our children too, when we grow old, and they come round us and ask us for stories of our youth. I hope my boys will be good at a fight, my lord, and serve your sons as I have served you.'

'It may be God's will that I leave no sons to bear my name, Bena.'

'I do not think that,' said Bena with a laugh.

They were now passing the hill on which stood the blackened walls of Antonio's house, which Duke Valentine had burnt.

Bena cried out at the sight. 'You will need to spend much in rebuilding it,' said he.

'Perhaps His Highness has provided another dwelling for me,' said Antonio.

'To-night he will surely lodge you, my lord, in his own Palace, or, may be, with my lord Lorenzo.'

'Wherever it may be, I shall sleep soundly,' said Antonio.

Now they were come near to the city, and they saw a body of pikemen coming out to meet them, the Lieutenant of the Guard at the head. And when they met, the Lieutenant bowed to Antonio, who greeted him most courteously; and the pikemen spread themselves in front and behind and on both sides of Antonio and Bena, and thus they went on towards the bridge and the city gate. But Bena eyed the pikemen with no love, and moved restlessly in his saddle. 'These fellows,' said he to Antonio, 'hem us in, my lord. Shall I make my horse threaten their toes a little, so that they may give us more room?'

'Let them be,' said Antonio. 'It is not for long, Bena.'

At the entrance of the gate stood Lorenzo, awaiting the Count, and there they dismounted, and Antonio passed through the gate with Lorenzo, Bena being close to him on the other side. And when Bena saw the great force of pikemen, and, behind their ranks, a mighty throng of people, and when he saw the tall gibbet and understood what it was, suddenly his face went red and his hand flew to his sword.

But Antonio caught his arm, saying, 'My sword is not drawn, Bena.'

'My lord, what does it mean?' cried Bena in a loud voice, so that Lorenzo heard and stayed his steps and looked at Bena. 'Does he not know?' he asked of Antonio.

'He does not know yet,' said Antonio. And

to Bena he said, 'I have need of your sword, Bena. Give it me.'

'My sword, my lord?'

'Yes, your sword.'

Bena looked at him with wondering, frightened eyes; but he slowly unbuckled his sword from his belt and gave it to Antonio. And Antonio unbuckled his own sword also and gave them both to the Lieutenant of the Guard, saying, 'Sir, I pray you to restore Bena's to him in the evening, and mine to me when I go forth to Rilano.'

But Bena clutched at Antonio's arm, crying again, 'What does it mean, my lord?'

Then Antonio took him by the hand and said, 'Are we to be afraid now of what we have often faced together with light hearts, Bena?'

'Are we to die?' asked Bena.

'You are to live and beget those brave boys, Bena. But it is otherwise with me,' said Antonio.

Then the lord Lorenzo, who had looked in Bena's eyes, signed to four pikemen to come near, and they came and stood near Bena; for Lorenzo feared that he would not suffer Antonio to die without seeking to save him or to die with him.

'Nay, let him alone,' said Antonio. 'You will obey me of your free-will, Bena?'

'Yes, my lord,' said Bena; and he looked up at the gibbet; and then he caught Antonio's hand and kissed it a score of times; and he began to sob as a child sobs. And the Guard, among whom were some who had felt his arm, marvelled to see him thus moved.

'Let us go on,' said Antonio. 'It is hard on noon, and I must keep my tryst with His Highness.'

'His Highness awaits my lord by the fish-pond in the garden,' said Lorenzo; and he led Antonio to the Palace and brought him through the great hall and so to the fish-pond; and by it the Duke lay propped on pillows, yet very richly arrayed; and his little son sat by him. Now Lorenzo stood aloof, but Antonio came and, kneeling, kissed the Duke's hand, and then rose and stood before the Duke. But the boy cried, 'Why, it is my lord Antonio! Have you come back to live in the city, my lord Antonio? Ah, I am glad of it!'

'Nay, I have not come to live in the city, my little lord,' said Antonio.

'Whither do you go then?' asked the boy.

'His Highness sends me on a journey,' said Antonio.

'Is it far?'

'Yes, it is far,' said Antonio with a smile.

'I would he would send another and let you stay; then we could play at robbers again in the great hall,' said the little Duke. 'Father, can you find no other lord to go in Antonio's place?'

The Duke turned his face, pale and wasted with sickness, and his eyes, that seemed larger and deeper than they had been before, upon his son. 'I can send none but Antonio,' said he. And calling to Lorenzo, he bade him take the boy. But the boy went reluctantly, telling Antonio that he must return speedily. 'For you promised,' said he, 'to teach me how to

use my sword.' And the Duke signed with his hand to Lorenzo, who lifted the boy and carried him away, leaving Antonio alone with the Duke.

'I have set my seal to the pardons as I swore,' said the Duke; 'and Tommasino shall be free this evening; and all that he and the rest have done against me shall be forgotten from this hour. Have you any cause of complaint against me?'

'None, my lord,' said Count Antonio.

'Is there anything that you ask of me?'

'Nothing, my lord. Yet if it be your Highness's pleasure that I should have speech with the lady Lucia and with my cousin, I should be well pleased.'

'You will see them yonder in the square,' said the Duke. 'But otherwise you shall not see them.'

Then Lorenzo returned, and he led Antonio to a chamber and gave him meat and wine; and while Antonio ate, the Lord Archbishop, having heard that he was come, came in great haste; and the venerable man was very urgent with Antonio that he should make his peace with Heaven, so that, having confessed his sins and sought absolution, he might be relieved of the sentence of excommunication under which he lay, and be comforted with the rites of the Church before he died.

'For there are many wild and wicked deeds on your conscience,' said the Archbishop, 'and above all the things that you did touching the Abbot of St Prisian, and yet more impiously touching the Sacred Bones.'

'Indeed I have many sins to confess,' said Antonio; 'but, my lord Archbishop, concerning the Abbot and concerning the Sacred Bones I have nothing to confess. For even now, when I stand on the threshold of death, I can perceive nothing that I did save what I could not leave undone.'

Then the Archbishop besought him very earnestly, and even with tears; but Antonio would own no sin in these matters, and therefore the Archbishop could not relieve him from his sentence nor give him the holy comforts, but left him and returned to his own house in great distress of spirit.

The lord Lorenzo now came again to Antonio and said to him, 'My lord, it wants but a few moments of noon.' Therefore Antonio rose and went with him; and they came through the great hall, and, a strong escort being about them, took their stand at the foot of the Palace steps. Then the Duke was borne out on his couch, high on the shoulders of his lackeys, and was set down on the topmost step; and silence having been proclaimed, the Duke spoke to Antonio; but so weak was his voice that none heard save those who were very near. 'Antonio of Monte Velluto,' said he, 'it may be that in God's purposes I have not myself long to live. Yet it is long enough for me to uphold and vindicate that princely power which the same God has committed to my hands. That power you have outraged; many of my faithful friends you have slain; against both me and the Church you have lifted your hand. Go then to your death, that men may know the fate of traitors and of rebels.'

Antonio bowed low to His Highness; but, not being invited by the Duke to speak, he said naught, but suffered Lorenzo to lead him across the square; and as he went, he passed where four pikemen stood by Bena, ready to lay hold on him if he moved; and Bena fell on his knees and again kissed Antonio's hand. And Antonio, passing on, saw two young lords, followers of Lorenzo. And between them stood Tommasino; their arms were through Tommasino's arms and they held him, though lovingly, yet firmly; and he had no sword.

'May I speak with Tommasino?' asked Antonio.

'His Highness has forbidden it,' said Lorenzo; but Antonio paused for a moment before Tommasino; and Tommasino, greatly moved, cried piteously to him that he might die with him. And Antonio kissed him, and, with a shake of his head, passed on. Thus then he came to the gibbet, and mounted with Lorenzo on to the scaffold that was underneath the gibbet. And when he was seen there, a great groan went up from the people, and the apprenticed lads, who were all gathered together on the left side of the gibbet, murmured so fiercely and stirred so restlessly that the pikemen faced round, turning their backs towards the scaffold, and laid their pikes in rest.

UNCLAIMED FORTUNES IN CHANCERY.

In nearly every family there is a tradition that at some time or other funds were placed in Chancery owing to disagreements as to testamentary dispositions, or from other causes. And the general opinion in days gone by seems to have been, that when once funds were paid into Chancery it was next to an impossibility to get them out again, owing to the proverbial slowness in which such matters were dealt with. It is therefore gratifying nowadays to notice how expeditiously Chancery actions are disposed of. The good old days of 'Jarndyce & Jarndyce' seem to be over, although even now claimants turn up in this celebrated suit, immortalised by Charles Dickens, and which our readers may know refers to notorious Jennens's estate. There is now no fund in Court to the credit of this matter.

Most people will be surprised to learn that the first Court of Chancery was instituted as far back as the time of King Alfred, in the year 887. The Court was re-founded by William I. about the year 1067. It is curious to note that the Court was originally founded 'in the desire to render justice complete, and to moderate the rigour of other Courts that are bound by the strict letter of the law.'

In the olden time the Masters in Chancery had the custody of all moneys and effects deposited in Court in the suits referred to them, and the Usher took charge of any property brought into Court in suits which had not been referred to one of the Masters. The Masters and the Usher were responsible for all moneys and other property received by them, and were bound to distribute the property so entrusted to them by orders of the Court. In the meantime, they employed the money in their hands for

their own benefit. This practice continued until the bursting of the South Sea Bubble in 1720, when it was found that several of the Masters were defaulters. The defalcations amounted to over one hundred thousand pounds, but were made good by increased fees to suitors. Stringent precautions were taken to prevent a recurrence of such a scandal. Curiously enough, the date of the oldest unclaimed fund now in Court is the same as the date of the defalcations—1720.

In 1724 an order was issued by the Lord Chancellor directing each Master to procure and send to the Bank of England a chest with one lock, and hasps for two padlocks; the key of the lock to be kept by the Master; the key of one of the padlocks by one of the six clerks in Chancery; and the key of the other by the Governor or Cashier of the Bank. Each Master was ordered to deposit in his chest all moneys and securities in his hands belonging to the suitors; and the chests were then to be locked up and left in the custody of the Bank, and to be so kept that the Masters might have easy access thereto, under orders of the Court. This plan did not work well; and in 1725 an order was made that all money and effects should be taken from the Masters' chests and given into the custody of the Cashier of the Bank.

In 1726 the first Accountant-general of the Court of Chancery was appointed, and all funds in the custody of Masters or Ushers were transferred to his charge.

Delays in Chancery proceedings having long given dissatisfaction, the matter was brought before Parliament in 1825, and many times subsequently. These debates led to the passing of important Acts between the years 1852 and 1867, which amended the practice in the Court, and greatly facilitated the administration of estates.

The old Court of Chancery is now embodied in the Chancery Division of the Supreme Court of Judicature. There are several judges in this division.

The funds in Court in 1894 amounted to the huge total of £64,075,187, 4s. 1d.; but the proportion of this sum in want of owners is not stated. It is interesting to note that during the preceding year payments were made to successful claimants and others amounting to £16,324,152, 3s. There is also a large sum in Court under the heading 'Foreign Currencies,' made up of rupees, crowns, dollars, florins, francs, guilders, lire, and marks. Reference should also be made to a long list of boxes and other miscellaneous effects remaining in the custody of the Bank of England, on behalf of the Supreme Court of Judicature. Some of these items are of a curious nature, thus: A bag of clipped money, in *Jones v. Lloyd*, August 1726; a Debenture dated 1799; a sealed packet containing plate, &c.; a Bill of Exchange for 25,000 francs; a paper marked 'George Colman—Will;' a box containing jewellery; *L. S. A. Giffard*, a person of unsound mind—plate (two boxes); diamond brooch bequeathed to wife of *Gerald A. Lousada*; *Melville v. Melville*—plate and jewellery; *Wade Gery v. Handley*—heirlooms; two boxes; *E. A. Williams*, deceased—presentation plate; *Duke of West-*

minster v. Dowager Duchess of Sutherland—jewels; *Francis B. Foster*, a person of unsound mind—silver plate.

The liability of the Consolidated Fund on March 31, 1894, in respect of old unclaimed Chancery funds was £2,327,822, 13s. 5d. Prior to 1869, these funds were invested in Government securities, and the interest utilised towards the payment of the salaries and expenses of certain officers of the Court. In 1869 these charges were made payable out of the annual votes of Parliament, and the Government securities representing the debt to suitors were transferred to the National Debt Commissioners, and cancelled in 1870, the Consolidated Fund being thenceforward made liable for any claims arising in respect of the said debt to suitors.

An official list of the titles of Chancery causes undealt with for fifteen years or upwards is published triennially; but, as the names of the testators or the persons entitled to the funds are in the majority of cases not stated, the information is of little value to the general public. To give an instance: In 1823, *Nathaniel Briggs*, one of the next-of-kin of *Thomas Storke*, who died in 1760, was advertised for by order of the Court of Chancery. This fund was not claimed; and in the latest official list of dormant funds we find the title of the Chancery suit given thus—'*Pomeroy v. Brewer*.' No mention is made that the next-of-kin of *Thomas Storke* are wanted. An idea of the large number of similar cases may be gained from the fact that the list of unclaimed funds fills one hundred and eighty-seven pages. This list is only an index to the titles of accounts, and is not in any sense either a register of next-of-kin wanted, or of lapsed legacies, intestates' estates, unclaimed dividends, prize-money, &c.

To claimants who are interested in Chancery funds, and do not know the titles of the actions—without which information no claim can be entertained—there is one important way of obtaining the desired clews. All advertisements issued by order of the Court inquiring for missing kindred contain references to the titles of such actions, and therefore the first course for an heir should be to obtain a copy of the official advertisement.

Mr S. H. Preston, in his book on *Unclaimed Money*, cites some remarkable cases of claims to Chancery funds. We extract a few instances: A. states that funds in Chancery are due to the descendants of —, who died probably about the fourteenth or fifteenth century. He was a brother to one of the queens of Scotland. B. mentions that there is an estate in London worth £10,000 a year, also a farm, and a large fund in Chancery. The former owner made his will in 1782, but did not die till 1826. All the property made between these dates was undisposed of by the will. C. declares that there is a large estate in Chancery; the tenants pay no rent, and the owner is unknown. D. is certain some of his relatives have 'smuggled' property to which his family are entitled. No will was proved, and no letters of administration granted. Some of the property supposed to be in Chancery.

Large sums of the suitors' money have been borrowed to enable various Chancellors of the

Exchequer to carry through their financial operations; and in 1881 Mr Gladstone borrowed no less than forty million pounds of these funds for National Debt purposes. It is also well known that the Royal Courts of Justice, which were erected at the cost of over a million pounds, were built with money arising from the surplus interest of the suitors' funds.

With regard to old unclaimed funds in Chancery, it is officially stated that the liabilities of the Government are considered to be remote, and the State not likely to be called upon, to any material extent, to discharge. But, curiously enough, the Chancellor of the Exchequer a few years ago stated that 'he had been called upon quite unexpectedly to provide one hundred thousand pounds in respect of unclaimed funds in Chancery. It was supposed that a large sum owing to suitors would never be claimed, but experience had proved that an increased spirit of research, assisted by those means of increased publicity which the day demands and receives, had enabled many suitors who, it was believed, would never claim, to make their claim.'

Discussions in Parliament, the Press, and elsewhere, show the urgent need of greater publicity as to all unclaimed funds. Lists of some unclaimed moneys are still published only in the *London Gazette*, while others are not published at all. Until these lists are published in newspapers of wide circulation, the amount of unclaimed money must go on increasing.

THE MYSTERY OF PILGRIM GRAY.

CHAPTER II.—A STEP ON THE MINSTER STAIRS.

ZILPAH GARFOOT searched every nook and corner in cottage and workshop that night, but without result. She even consulted the verger of St Botolph's on the following day, and gained his confirmation as to the meeting at the *Shoefriers' Arms* between her father and 'John Grimshaw;' though with regard to the sealed letter which the mariner had handed to the blacksmith, according to his own account, in the cabin of his ship at a later hour, the verger could furnish no information. He even shrugged his shoulders with the air of one who would say, 'You know what sort of a man your father is!' when Zilpah reported to him that Michael Garfoot had led her to believe that this letter held a large sum of money. 'Don't mention the matter to living soul,' Zilpah had urged in conclusion; and the verger had given his word.

Some days went by. Towards dusk one afternoon, Zilpah sat in the little parlour beyond the kitchen, pondering these things—wondering whether the sealed letter would ever come to light—when there was a tap at the door, and Robert Harborn stood before her: 'May I come in?'

She wheeled an arm-chair towards the hearth and made him welcome. They had not met since the night upon which they had worked together at the shoeing of the black mare.

'Pray, sit down, Mr Harborn,' said Zilpah,

looking keenly into his face. 'Why, how ill you look! Is there anything the matter?—But I beg your pardon. What a rude question to ask.'

Harborn sat down, hardly seeming to heed her words. He took a cigarette case from his pocket. 'May I smoke?'

'Of course you may. Doesn't father smoke here every Sunday evening?—But again I must ask your pardon. You must have forgotten the Sunday evenings here, long ago.'

Harborn lighted a cigarette: 'Indeed, I've not.'

'Haven't you? It's ten years and more since you set foot inside our parlour.'

'Ah! The last time I was here,' said Harborn, glancing about him, 'was the memorable afternoon upon which Pilgrim Gray and I came to blows! Don't you recollect, Zilpah? It was about you that we had quarrelled, and your father locked me up in this room. I can't have been more than fourteen or fifteen at the time. Nor have I forgotten,' he added, 'how Pilgrim came to that window in the twilight, and executed war dances and threatened me with dire vengeance.'

Zilpah glanced laughingly towards the window. 'Yes,' said she; 'I recollect.' Then she rose and lighted the candles and drew the curtains. 'It is years ago.'

'How came he to be called Pilgrim?' Harborn presently asked.

'It was his mother's maiden name,' said Zilpah; 'and Pilgrim has proved a pilgrim by nature as well as name; hasn't he?'

Harborn blew a cloud from his cigarette. 'You think he's dead; don't you?'

'I don't know what to think. Didn't you predict, the other night,' said Zilpah, 'that he was coming home?'

'I felt sure that he was. A man stopped me on the high-road, near Wildmore Fens,' said Harborn—'on the night you helped me to shoe the mare. It was too dark to see the fellow's face; but I never heard a voice more like Pilgrim Gray's.—And then,' he added, 'that strange knock at the door. Wasn't it like Pilgrim's rat-tat?'

Zilpah nodded. 'It was strangely like,' said she. At this moment it crossed her mind to relate to Harborn, word for word, all that her father had mentioned concerning Pilgrim Gray, not even holding back from him the incident of the sealed letter. But the verger's expressive shrug of incredulity recurred as she was on the point of opening her lips. Who could determine whether Pilgrim was living or dead? When she had exclaimed to her father, 'Pilgrim Gray is coming home!' and had capped her impulsive words with an account of the strange knock at their door, she had already begun to question in her own mind whether it was Pilgrim's knock after all. And now, while still hesitating to confide in Harborn, she chanced to glance into the young fellow's face. Something in his expression urged her to guard the secret. He was nerving himself to communicate some affair of his own. Might it not be possible that his mind was tormented with a trouble more serious than this one that tormented her?

'Zilpah,' said he, in a despondent voice, 'I almost wish that I had done as Pilgrim Gray had the pluck to do, when he had served his apprenticeship at this forge. I almost wish that I had gone to seek my fortune in the Pacific. I've wasted the best days of my life in this monotonous, one-horse town.'

Zilpah looked at Harborn with unfeigned surprise. She had hitherto regarded him as one of the most rising men in Boston. What could have happened to cause this tone of almost tragic discontent?

'I hope,' said Zilpah with a hesitating manner, though her voice was full of sympathy—'I hope you're not in any trouble? If there is anything—anything that I'—

'Thank you; no—nothing,' said he; and yet his whole attitude seemed to contradict his words; he sat with his head resting on his hand—'nothing.'

They were silent for a while; then Zilpah ventured to say: 'I cannot see, Mr Harborn, why you should lament that you didn't follow in the footsteps of Pilgrim Gray. In the first place, he hardly belonged to your class in life. And then, though there have been vague reports that he made heaps of money, one can scarcely call him lucky; for they do say that, out in the Pacific islands, he caught the fever and died.'

'Better than that— Zilpah,' Harborn broke off suddenly, 'I've a great mind to tell you everything! May I? I can trust you, and you'll not misunderstand me. I am in trouble. And I feel—I don't suppose you know what it's like—I feel that unless I confide in some one, some one with a kindly nature like your own—that I must go mad.' He flung the end of his cigarette into the fire, and then, holding his head between his hands, sat looking dejectedly into the fire. Presently he resumed: 'My father, as you know,' said he, 'was only a small farmer. But he had a craze for finance. He sold his snug little property—all except the old cottage—when I was a lad, and started what he called the Loan and Deposit Agency, which got to be known about the neighbourhood as Harborn's Bank. Well! the farmers and tradespeople trusted him, and justly too, for he was honest enough. But he wasn't so prosperous as they supposed. In fact—as I have good reason to know—he was in difficulties almost from first to last. And when he died, Zilpah, I came into possession of nothing more or less than a tottering concern. I have thought a hundred times to wind up the affairs of the little counting-house in the market-place, and go seek my fortune elsewhere. But—but one thing deterred me—one thing. Zilpah, shall I tell you what that one thing was?'

Zilpah looked curiously into his face. 'One thing?'

'Yes—only one,' said he—'my love for you. Don't misunderstand me,' and he bent tenderly towards her. 'I must speak now! Ah, Zilpah, my dear, I have been fool enough to dream that I might win your love—some day. I did not attempt to hide from myself that you were promised to Pilgrim. I have never ceased to dread that he would return a rich man, as he declared that he would,

ready and willing to make you his wife. But he has not returned—not yet. This delay—the rumours of his death—would have almost justified a confession of my enduring love for you! But how could I ask you to listen—how could I think to make you my wife, even if you could care for me—when I stood at the very brink of ruin!—Forgive me, Zilpah. I came—I only came to bid you good-bye.'

Zilpah sat with her hands clasped and with her eyes downcast, during this painful avowal. But now, when Robert Harborn rose from his chair and held out his hand, she rose too, and with eager uplifted eyes, cried: 'Don't go—don't give up hope! I can—I may be able to help you. Let me think.'

'You, Zilpah! You do not know,' said Harborn—'you cannot understand the extent of my difficulties. Unless I can raise between five and six thousand pounds—and within the next three days—the doors of the bank must be closed.'

Zilpah looked thoughtfully into his face. 'Would six thousand pounds,' said she, 'really put matters straight?'

'Why do you ask?'

'Don't question me. I am not asking,' said she, 'out of idle curiosity; you may be sure of that.'

Harborn looked puzzled, scrutinising the girl's face as though he would have read her inmost thoughts. 'Well,' said he, 'I will answer in a strictly business manner, since you urge me to do so. Yes. Six thousand pounds, repayable at the end of five years—though I fear that I could not give security for the amount—would put my affairs on a safe footing.'

'Five years?'

'Yes.—But why do you look so strange?'

'I am thinking,' said she, 'what it would be best to do. Six thousand pounds!'

She sank into a chair, with her elbows on the table, and her head between her hands, as Harborn had sat a moment ago. She seemed to have suddenly raised the weight of trouble from his shoulders and taken it upon her own.

'What is it, Zilpah?' said he, placing his hand gently upon her shoulder—'what is it? I can't bear to see you look like this! Won't you explain?'

'Not to-night—not now,' she said, in a tone of earnest entreaty. 'Leave me—leave me to think what had best be done! I don't see my way clearly yet, only dimly. Wait for me at your bank to-morrow until four o'clock. Whether I succeed, or—or whatever happens—I will come to you before that hour.'

Harborn went out. Zilpah Garfoot never moved, never gave him a parting glance. She sat with her head between her hands lost in thought. It was growing late. Still she sat there thinking—thinking. But at last, after some hours had gone by, she was suddenly roused by the sound of her father's violin in the kitchen; and she hurriedly rose with the look of one abruptly awakened out of some absorbing day-dream. She had never looked more like her father. But she threw off the abstraction and was quickly herself.

She glanced at the clock. It was long past

supper-time, and Zilpah felt that she deserved reproach for not having gone to the turret workshop that evening, as she had been in the habit of doing for years past. But Michael Garfoot uttered no complaint to-night; he seemed to be more wrapped up in melody than usual.

When supper was finished, Zilpah learned the reason. 'It's all settled!' said the blacksmith, resuming his accustomed arm-chair beside the fire, and hugging his violin under his chin—'all settled at last.' He drew the bow preludiously across the instrument. 'Yes, yes. The good verger has arranged it,' he went on. 'I've gained leave through him, my dear, to play my hymn there to-morrow.'

Zilpah had come and put her arms about her father's neck, and she now kissed him tenderly on both cheeks. 'I can't tell you how pleased,' said she, 'how very pleased I am that your dream is all coming true.'

Next morning, Zilpah was about at daybreak. But although she busied herself in her household duties as she had seldom busied herself before, Robert Harborn's trouble never left her mind. Her one thought was to lift him out of his difficulties. Pilgrim Gray's letter—the letter which her father had so strangely mislaid—must by some means be unearthed. Therein lay the chance! If it contained ten thousand, or even seven thousand pounds, as 'John Grimshaw, mariner,' had led her father to imagine, the bringing of it to light became of vital importance. For a less sum than this—a sum of six thousand pounds—would rescue from ruin the man she loved.

Yes, Zilpah Garfoot had admitted to herself, now that he had spoken, that she loved Robert Harborn—that she had never loved any other man than he. But she had never dreamt until last night, when he confessed it all, that he gave her a second thought. She had always regarded him as occupying a position in life above her own, and to think of him as one who could ever care for her, ever make her his wife, seemed to belong more to dreamland than reality. She had engaged herself to Pilgrim, as a matter of fact, ten years ago, in a prosy, humdrum fashion, before she knew what love truly meant. They had been thrown together, beating out red-hot bars of iron beside the forge fire, in the days of his apprenticeship; and then he had sailed for foreign parts, and had ceased to hold communication even with her. They told her that he was dead. The rumour had been wafted into the port of Boston again and again, and Zilpah had begun to regard Pilgrim Gray as one who had at last gone out of her life.

And now the rumour of his death—if she dare believe all that her father had told her—had been positively confirmed; and if this letter could be found—this letter, that had been written while he lay at the point of death—all reasonable doubt would be removed. But be that as it may, Zilpah thought, she considered herself released from her promise. She could never marry Pilgrim now. She was resolved upon that. Robert Harborn had spoken. Her whole heart had been given to him; and she racked her brain, as only a woman who loves

will do, to ward off the catastrophe with which Harborn's bank was threatened.

When Michael Garfoot came in from the forge to dinner, Zilpah asked her father to play the very same melodies which he had played on the day the letter was received and hidden, with a view to awaken recollection. Zilpah also reminded him that he had made his way that night to the turret workshop and forgot himself over his fiddle till near daybreak.

It was a habit of Michael Garfoot's during this wintry season to sit by the kitchen fire for a while and play a piece or two upon his violin. Zilpah hastened to clear away the dishes, and then she went and lighted a fire in the front parlour, and sat there over her needlework—though she scarcely did a stitch—waiting in fear and trembling the result of her projected ordeal by melody.

Michael Garfoot began to play. The air was a simple dreamy one that Zilpah had heard him discourse a thousand times. For the greater part of an hour the blacksmith played on. The air became dreamier—more dreamy still; and at last the music ceased.

Zilpah rose from her chair. Each moment she expected to hear her father calling to her—expected each moment that he would shout out exultantly that he had called back to memory the forgotten spot wherein might be found the dead man's letter. But no sound came to her—no sound except the falling of the violin bow, as it seemed to her, upon the kitchen floor. She waited some moments, believing that another melody was being meditated; but when the silence remained unbroken, Zilpah lost patience, and crept on tiptoe to the kitchen door and peered in upon her father.

The blacksmith sat in his arm-chair before the fire as Zilpah had left him; but the violin was resting on his knees and his chin had sunk upon his breast. One arm hung listlessly over the chair, and the violin bow lay on the floor at his side. Michael Garfoot had played himself into a sound sleep.

Zilpah stepped noiselessly into the kitchen, and knelt down at his side. 'Father,' and she spoke in a hushed and impressive voice, while bending close to his ear, 'give me that letter from Pilgrim Gray.'

The blacksmith slowly opened his eyes and stared vacantly at the fire; then his eyelids began to droop, while he muttered, just audibly: 'It's locked. I always—always keep it locked. Ay, the box in the turret—turret workshop. Ay, am I—am I sitting on it? Ay, ay—I always'—

Zilpah waited to hear no more. 'The key, father!' cried she excitedly—'the key!'

Garfoot started and half rose, rubbing his eyes with both hands, and then staring blankly at Zilpah. 'What—what's all this?'

'Pilgrim's letter! You remember now where you placed it; don't you?'

'No.'

'Shall I tell you?'

'You, Zilpah—you tell me?' and the blacksmith again rubbed his eyes and again stared about him. 'How can you know?'

'You put it into the oaken tool-box,' said she. 'That old black thing up in the turret work-

shop. You put it there on the night upon which it was given into your keeping by John Grimshaw. Isn't it so?' 'Ah!'

Michael Garfoot started up out of his chair, fully awakened at last. 'Astounding! How could I go and forget that?'

'Never mind now. Give me the key,' said Zilpah, 'for you always keep that old box locked: don't you?'

'Ay, ay; so I do.'

'Quickly then—the key!'

But the muddle-headed blacksmith was not one to be hurried. He began in his deliberate way to search in one pocket and then in another. At last he paused, and looked with his most vacant stare into his daughter's face. 'I don't rightly know,' said he, 'where the key's got to now.'

'Ah! have you put that so safely away too?'

'Wait a bit. It's like enough,' said the blacksmith, rubbing his ear—'it's like enough in the turret workshop—somewhere. I keeps it mostly a-hanging there. Maybe,' he added, with a sudden look of animation—'maybe the box ain't locked, after all!'

Zilpah did not wait for more; she drew on her cloak and went out into the wintry air. It was near upon three o'clock. The minster bells were ringing for vespers; and it came into her thoughts as she walked along by the river-side that it was the day upon which her father's ambitious cravings were to be fully gratified.

She had entered at a side door, and now went unobserved up the minster stairs. She had brought the lantern with her as usual, under her cloak; and when she had mounted a few steps into the darkness, she lighted it, and hurried once more on her way. Her heart beat wildly. This ascent to the turret in search of a letter containing ten thousand pounds was only a dream; she would presently wake, and find that this gold was intangible—that Pilgrim still lived—that Robert Harborn had never spoken!

A few more windings up the turret stairs and she had reached the workshop, and was kneeling down beside the oaken chest. It was locked. Zilpah looked eagerly round the lumber-strewn floor and at the nails upon the wall, for the old key. She knew it well by sight. There were old keys in plenty, old links of chains, old bits of iron of every sort lying about; but nothing there, as she soon ascertained, would open the box. The girl bent down in her despair with her head between her hands, her elbows resting upon the oaken lid. What should she do now? It suddenly came into her mind to force the lid. There were tools among this collection of old iron on the turret floor, and Zilpah was not altogether ignorant of locksmith's work. She had helped her father, and Pilgrim too, in every detail connected with their trade. But she quickly perceived that this old lock was no easy one to contend with; besides, the tools she needed most were not there; and nearly an hour went by before the lock yielded, and she flung up the lid.

She had lighted the lamp, for the night

had been closing in apace, and she now held it up with a trembling hand and peered down into the box. At first the rays from her lamp cast no light upon any article resembling a letter. A strange assortment of music-books and loose leaves of music, fiddles and fiddle-strings, and a heap of other materials, confused her eyes and throbbing brain. But after a careful search, Zilpah found, lying inside an old violin case, the very thing she sought—an oblong envelope sealed with a black seal. The address was in a strange handwriting; but her name was upon the letter: 'Zilpah Garfoot, Boston.'

She closed the box and sat down with the lamp beside her, and broke the seal.

'Before this can reach you'—Zilpah read the words aloud, though scarcely above a whisper—'I shall be lying in my grave. The best proof I can give of the love I still have for you, Zilpah, is to endow you with all my worldly goods. John Grimshaw, mariner, is my trusted friend. He has promised to put into this letter, and seal it with a black seal, a bank draft for seven thousand eight hundred pounds. I have instructed him to give this letter into your father's hand, and inform him of all that has happened.—Good-bye. This is the last will and testament of PILGRIM GRAY.'

The letter, too, was in a strange handwriting; but she recognised the signature as Pilgrim's, beyond a doubt. As she turned it about wonderingly, a slip of crisp paper fell out and settled on the floor at her feet. She picked it up and held it between her eyes and the light. It was a draft on a San Francisco bank—'On Demand, pay to the order of Zilpah Garfoot the sum of seven thousand eight hundred pounds—Value received.'

Zilpah scarcely knew whether to laugh or cry. Her head throbbed; and she felt as though the turret workshop were spinning round, and she and the bank draft along with it. It was true, then—all true! Pilgrim Gray was dead. Poor fellow! And he, in his undying love, had willed his fortune to her—all true!

She thrust the letter with the bank bill into the bosom of her dress, and went down the turret stairs, and out upon the terrace, where, in the keen air that blew so gustily round the tower, she quickly recovered from the excitement into which she had been thrown. It was the moment for a rapid and fixed resolve. What course should she take now?

The night had almost closed in around her. Bats began to dart in and out about the arches, chasing their own swift shadows. Zilpah leaned her arms upon the parapet and looked down from this great height—looked down with an anxious gaze upon the shadowy old town, with its narrow streets now dotted with lights, and the shimmering Witham, that ran through Boston, winding like a serpent towards the distant sea. But her look quickly became concentrated upon one spot—the window of a house in the market-place—a window on an upper storey, where a light shone brightly through a red blind. It was a window in a room at Harborn's Bank. In that room, as Zilpah knew, Harborn often worked late into

the night. He was there now, waiting—waiting for her.

'I can save you now!' she cried, in a deep, earnest tone—'save you from ruin, and'—

And at this moment there was a step upon the minster stairs. It stole upon her ear faintly; but as it became more and more distinct, her face grew troubled. She took the lantern in her hand and crept softly to the archway at the head of the stairs and listened. It was surely her father. He was mounting into the tower, as he had been wont to do at sunset for many years past, to illumine the minster light.

And yet, while she still listened, it seemed to Zilpah so unlike the sound of her father's step that she drew back in alarm and blew out her lamp.

Suddenly a sense of horror seized her. It was not her father's step! And yet it was a step she knew. She sank upon her knees behind an angle of the stonework of one of the buttresses and watched the low archway that faced her; for at this opening the figure must in the course of a minute or more make its appearance in this upper region of dusky twilight. The step became each moment more distinct. Every shadow of a doubt had vanished. It was the footstep of Pilgrim Gray.

ON THE LEARNING OF LANGUAGES.

WE do not pretend in this short article to enter into a scientific dissertation on the acquisition of languages, but rather to convey a few simple hints to those who are interested in the subject. There can be no doubt as to the benefit that may be derived from the study of a foreign tongue. It is, in the first place, an excellent memory-trainer. In these days of light reading and frequent skimming, we find the unfortunate habit of mind-wandering more prevalent than ever. People do not have time to study, and in many cases they do not have the inclination to take a breathing-space and attempt to examine minutely into the meaning of what they read. This habit tends to a superficiality in everything. A great deal is glanced over, merely to entertain or to pass the time, but very little is remembered, and there is absolutely no gain, either in the acquisition of information or in the power of assimilation and discrimination. The mind of such individuals is like a sieve, which allows all the finer material to pass, leaving only the dross, which is fit for nothing but to be thrown away.

Now the effort required to be exerted in learning a language does a great deal to counteract this fatal habit. It strengthens the concentration, and compels attention to what is being read. In ordinary reading, one may glide along smoothly enough, skimming the printed page before him, and get the general 'hang' of the tale, article, speech, or whatever it may be; while at the same time the mind is ever and again wandering off into a reverie about some totally different thing. But there is less chance of this taking place if the learning of a language is being engaged in. In the latter case, the mind is not allowed to escape from the

control of the will. If it does, it is sure to be brought up, as with a jerk, and impelled to concentrate its whole power upon the subject in hand. This has the effect of insensibly increasing the quality of attention, which, as we all know, is one of the first requisites to the acquirement of a good memory. And once the habit has been acquired of 'paying attention' in one thing, it becomes natural to be as keenly observant about everything else we do.

The many other advantages of learning a language need scarcely be dwelt upon. One of the most prominent is the largely increased power that is gained over one's own speech. The mental exercise involved in searching the memory for appropriate synonymous words and phrases tends to increase the vocabulary, and to give a greater ease and facility of expression in the use of the mother-tongue. There is, besides, the pleasure that is inseparable from every intellectual pursuit; and also the practical profit of being able to converse with a foreigner whom we may chance to meet either in the way of business or pleasure.

But all this said, still leaves us with the question to answer, How may one best learn a foreign language? In attempting an answer to this question, we are not advancing anything that is new. But the method we would commend is one that cannot be too much insisted upon, particularly in the interests of a certain class to whom these remarks are more directly applicable. Many young men find themselves arrived at a period of life when they feel it difficult to attempt any subject of study. There are many demands on their time, and the effort to attempt any sort of consecutive, concentrated work seems hopeless. They may have endeavoured at various periods in their lives to acquire a knowledge of Latin, French, German, Spanish, or other foreign tongue, but, owing to various circumstances, these attempts have had to be given up. The effort to make a fresh start is put off from day to day, although the desire to do something in this direction may still be as strong as ever. Why is this so? Simply because in many cases the contemplation of the task brings up before the vision so much of the hard, grinding, uninteresting nature of the school-boy task. There are visions of endless paradigms, of rules upon rules, with all their exceptions—oh, those exceptions!—of dull exercises that seem never to get beyond the 'books of my sister's brother's friend,' or the particular situation of this or that particular individual's umbrella, or steel pen, or pencil-case, or such other interesting object. To wade through a grammar of perhaps one hundred and fifty pages, getting up by heart—if that be possible—all the conjugations, inflections, exceptions, and idioms, is the ordinary accepted notion of what is required to be done in the initiatory process of learning some foreign tongue, after which the pleasant prospect is held out that one may then begin to read something.

Such a system—if system it can be called—is an utterly erroneous one. Little wonder that it repels so many from taking up what is really a most interesting study. To any who contemplate doing so, the advice may be given to cast aside all preconceived ideas about the

old methods, and begin *at once* to read the language they are going to learn. Thoughts about the grammar and the rules should not be allowed to trouble the mind. Except to those who have had some previous grounding in a language, the grammar is sure to prove a stumbling-block, and to beget nought but despair. A good dictionary, and a book of simple tales in the language chosen, are all that is necessary in the first instance. With these in hand, the motto of the beginner should then be to read, read, read. The printed page, at first new and unfamiliar, will gradually unfold itself as word after word is learned, and when a sentence has been translated, the reader will go on with a strange feeling of delight to master more of the contents. There is no better method of retaining a word in the memory than in having to go to the trouble of looking it up in the dictionary. The word will be certain to stick, more especially if it is found recurring once or twice in the same page. As much reading should be done as time will allow. A page of the dictionary may also be frequently gone over. It soon acquires a wonderful interest. In this way the study is made from the first attractive and agreeable. If the book read be by one of the best writers, its inherent qualities will interest, while the increasing power to interpret correctly the writer's meaning will act as a constant stimulus to go on acquiring more words and phrases, and their correct use. The help of a friend imbued with similar desires and aims will be useful. At the very outset, attempts should be made to carry on conversation together in the language. The power to do this, at first halting and awkward, will gradually expand. The name of every object which is round about us in our daily life should be learned and referred to in conversation. The phrases employed to denote particular actions and feelings should be looked up as they recur to the mind. Now and again the conversation that may be heard at the table, in the train, anywhere, may be translated mentally. There are many times when one is alone and there is nothing in particular to occupy the thoughts. Such a moment should be seized to recall words we have come across in our reading, and thus make them the more firmly our own. A book of poems will be of much assistance. It is easier to learn a poem by heart than a bit of prose, and if the meaning of each passage has been thoroughly mastered, it will be a simple operation to recall each word by its context. In this way it is wonderful how rapidly the vocabulary increases.

Of course it must not for a moment be assumed that we counsel the entire neglect of the grammar. That would be a profound mistake. The grammar will by-and-by be taken up with almost as much interest as the tale itself, for, as the beauties and graces of the language reveal themselves, the learner will not rest content till he has made himself master of all its intricacies. But what we want to insist upon is that the grammar in the first instance should be given a secondary place. The method we have thus briefly sketched serves to arrest the attention and interest from the outset, and it robs the study of the nature of a task, which

is distasteful to most people who have lost their early enthusiasms. One very important consideration is, that all this may be done in those odd moments of time which the busiest man has at his command. There need be no question of sitting down as it were to the performance of an unpleasant duty. When that feeling is present, it is rare that much good work is accomplished. There should be a resolve, too, to do something every day. If an hour cannot be spared, then an odd five or ten minutes should not be lost. However little may be attempted, it should be steadily persevered in. To learn a foreign language in this manner is a pleasurable exercise: to attempt the task according to the old methods is a dreary drudgery which repels the mind and too often ends in failure.

THE SERPENT AND THE STAGE.

By DR ARTHUR STRADLING, C.M.Z.S., &c.

'Not a real snake, my dear, no—not *alive*, you know. Don't be frightened—it's only a painted one, with clockwork inside, and they wind it up to make it move, like the mouse Papa brought you from the Lowther Arcade the other day.—Look; he's twisting it round his arm—a live snake would bite him if he did that!'

Thus a lady to her little girl of six or seven summers, sitting in the stalls immediately before me at the Egyptian Hall, during the progress of that sense-and-reason-defying mystery of mysteries, the 'Miracle of Lh'Asa,' in Messrs Maskelyne & Cooke's latest sketch, *Modern Witchery*.

Years ago, Mr Maskelyne did introduce a mechanical serpent into one of his plays, an uncanny automaton, which, by the operation of occult springs and wheels and wires, pursued him sinuously across the stage, to finally climb about him and wreath the convolutions of its body around his limbs and neck. And the spectators in the front rows shuddered, so illusive was the toy, and were dismayed to find themselves in such close proximity to what they took to be a veritable and uncaged reptile, breathing the breath of life. Now, with the characteristic perversity of a show-going public, they refuse to accept genuine ophidian flesh and blood as such, and sum up the graceful movements of the elegant and exquisitely iridescent tree-boa employed by Mr Nevil Maskelyne in the incantation scene as the outcome of a cunningly devised machine. Had it not been that I was loth to shake a salutary faith in the maternal omniscience, the mention of the Lowther Arcade would have stung me into whispering there and then that the snake in question, the 'thick-necked' tree-boa of the West Indies and Tropical America, was an inmate of my own vivarium, and had been so for some years. It comes back to me for alternate fortnights to be fed, during which interval another of the same species takes its place, the pair being the only representatives of their kind in Europe at the present time; and very shortly, a brilliant-hued boa constrictor, now in process of training, will do turn and turn about with them. Although

not of gorgeous coloration, the tree-boa is a species which lends itself admirably to a performance of this sort, being light, lithe, active, and almost invariably tame and gentle. A savage snake would be little likely to bite the operator in whose hands it lies, but might very probably direct its unwelcome attentions to the 'subject' who is stretched, presumably hypnotised, on the plank; while larger pythoid serpents, though easy to procure, and possibly more impressive in effect, would embarrass the action of the piece by their weight and difficulty of replacement in a cage or other receptacle.

I beg to retract the word 'training,' which I have used in connection with the preparation of a boa constrictor for histrionic purposes. One cannot train or teach a snake to do anything whatever; their brain-power is so limited that the marvel is how they have ever managed to survive in the great competition, especially when one finds that they are still on the 'ascending curve' of evolution. Most of them can be tamed to some extent by constant human companionship and judicious handling (some species very much more readily than others); when they have learned to trust, to appreciate the fact that there is no necessity for self-defence, then they may be trusted, a principle which applies to most animals: and there the scope and possibility of their education come to an end. After that, the most that a skilful exhibitor can do with them is to adapt himself and his actions to their movements, which by familiarity he can pretty nearly anticipate, so that these may appear purposive and intelligent. He may affect to listen to the serpent's counsels, or receive its kiss on his lips if its head inclines in an upward direction, or to lure it from one hand to the other, or to guide it to some given spot, should it by chance glide horizontally or downwards; just as the Indian snake-charmer takes deceptive advantage of the natural defiant attitude of the well-nigh untamable cobra *da capello*.

Apart from mere circus exhibitions of pseudo-snake-charming, the introduction of a living serpent among the *dramatis persone* on the modern stage may still be regarded as decidedly novel; nevertheless, one or two have been so presented to theatre-goers of late years. The most famous of these was perhaps that (a European coluber, not uncommon in the southern and western parts of the Continent) which did duty as the lethal asp in the hands of Madame Sarah Bernhardt as 'Cleopatre,' when Sardou and Moreau's spectacular drama was produced at the Porte St-Martin on the 23d of October 1890, the scene in the chamber of the Great Pyramid being one of the most effective of the *tragedienne's* numerous 'deaths.' When she visited London at the termination of the run of the piece, this snake for the time being eluded the watch and ward of its custodian, and was discovered in the roadway in front of her house in St John's Wood, decorated with a gold ring and chain. In view of this evidence of aristocratic proprietorship, the crowd which soon collected refrained from killing it, and presently its temporarily bereaved owner rushed out, distracted and dishevelled, and regained

possession of her *protégé* with exuberant demonstrations of joy and affection—not so speedily, however, as to prevent the episode getting into the papers the same evening. I believe it escaped in one or two other places in a similar manner.

Mrs Langtry opened the Princess's Theatre with an English version of the play in November of the same year, filling, of course, the title rôle; but the serpent which wrought her undoing was represented by an effigy of jointed wood. An artificial asp was used also at Drury Lane by Mrs John Lancaster—then Miss Wallis—who, in 1873, played Cleopatra to Anderson's Antony at the age of seventeen; and other actresses have pressed a common slow-worm into their service in the same part. Indeed, it would seem that ladies here, both on and off the stage, are less snakily inclined than their sisters on the other side of the Channel; for the bonnets bearing gold snakes which became the rage when the divine Sarah appeared as the Egyptian Queen, never commended themselves to the feminine fancy of Britain. The Regent Street milliners took advantage of the sensation created by Mrs Langtry's later impersonation to display a head-gear of tulle on which a large jet serpent lay coiled; but the design proved unsaleable, and flowers were subsequently substituted.

When the *Great Mogul* was in preparation at the Comedy Theatre ten years ago, I was consulted by the management as to the choice of a living serpent which might be safely employed to give an air of realism to the character of a snake-charmer, undertaken by Miss Florence St John, who was supported by Miss Phyllis Broughton, Mr Arthur Roberts, Mr Frank Wyatt, poor Fred Leslie, and others, and who had already a tame white mouse in rehearsal as the subject of one of her songs. I recommended a royal python (often called the ball-snake), a small species, easily manipulated, and usually quiet, and a specimen was accordingly procured from a dealer in Liverpool. By a desperate effort, Miss St John overcame her repugnance to the creature sufficiently to handle it so as to display its Satanic livery of black and yellow to advantage, and to dance and sing while it hung around her neck; but its advent created a panic in the company generally. It was difficult to keep the cast together on the stage, while several members of the chorus did actually throw up their engagements. It is a horror, this, however, which never fails to disappear rapidly under the influence of association, and it was characteristic that before the snake had been established many days, everybody wanted to touch it; on the stage they couldn't keep their hands off it as they marched or waltzed round; in the green-room it was smothered with kisses. So far, so good; but on the day following the night on which the piece was presented to the public for the first time, an unforeseen incident occurred. The snake died. An urgent telegraphic appeal for help reached me soon enough to admit of my sending one of my own pythons up just in time to render unnecessary a remarkable sausage-like bag, stuffed with sand and covered with gummed-on scraps of coloured paper that didn't stick very well, which had been prepared *faute de mieux* for

that evening's performance; and I snaked the play through from that night forth, changing the specimen weekly for feeding.

But somehow the opera failed to find favour in the eyes of the world, and did not have a very long run. I really don't think it was my poor serpents that condemned it, though they were held chiefly to blame in the matter; I believe it was predestined to be a failure. Anyhow, the critics had their knife into it from the very first, half of them protesting against the hideous peril attending the introduction of the 'cobra,' and the rest denouncing the snake incident as a puerile imbecility. Then, when the original outcry had subsided a bit, and people were beginning to take the piece on its own merits, a rat-snake which was then on duty happened to bite one of the actors, a celebrated burlesque artiste; the fact leaked into the light of journalism, and, from the tone of the paragraph which went the round of the papers, one might have imagined that the *coulisses* of the theatre were infested with ravening monsters which fed regularly on low comedians. The only untoward occurrence actually worth mentioning was in connection with a large grass-snake which I was obliged to put on for a night or two, as everything else of suitable size in my vivarium was on the verge of shedding. The creature, becoming enraged one evening, gave expression to its anger in that horrible effluvium which is unparalleled elsewhere amongst the Ophidia, turning every one in the scene so sick that the curtain had to be brought down prematurely.

In the Passion Play at Ober Ammergau in 1890—and I suppose in previous representations—artificial snakes were used; but a live one might have been brought out without difficulty in the scene of the Garden of Eden at any rate, placed on a forked branch or bough, in which situation any member of the *Boide* will remain almost indefinitely without seeking to come down while it is conscious of movement going on around. I have kept tree-snakes on the platform beside me in such a position for demonstration throughout the whole of a lecture, without the least fear of their causing any interruption or embarrassment by a premature descent—in fact, the bother is rather to disengage them when one wants to, as a rule. A rare and curious pythonoid serpent from Malacca, of a brilliant red colour (*Python curtus*), remained for hours on a branch in an open room at the London Zoological Gardens while its portrait was sketched and painted by a special artist, though it was exceedingly vicious and promptly aggressive towards any one who ventured to approach. I have seen an Eastern juggler allow snake after snake to climb from his hands to a forked stick balanced upright on his forehead, until the bough was laden with them. The Indian scene in the spectacular extravaganza *Around the World in Eighty Days*, which M. Marius produced at the Empire Theatre in its early days, comprehended a charmer who played with live snakes—pythons; but he was bitten on the head and half scalped by one of them almost at the outset, after which the reptiles were discreetly muzzled with black silk bags. He assumed the name (Karoly)

of a noted performer with animals who was crushed to death by a huge constrictor on the stage in Madrid.

These so-called 'charmners' almost invariably exhibit big non-venomous snakes, instead of the cobras employed by their Oriental prototypes, Indian pythons being commonly utilised for the purpose. These are kept in stock by all dealers in such wares, and are sold at an average rate of one pound per foot up to about ten feet; beyond that length they become more valuable, a python of fourteen or fifteen feet being worth twenty or twenty-five pounds; while one of twenty feet would probably fetch fifty pounds—the latter, however, would be too heavy to be manageable even if quiet, and would make its price as a menagerie specimen. Dr Lynn, the conjurer, brought over some Hindu charmners with true cobras, who performed at the Aquarium and elsewhere. Some trouble arose amongst them, and he sent the men back to Madras; but the cobras were his own property, and he looked about for any men of colour, without regard to nationality, to take the place of the departed half-castes. Two negroes volunteered, and were eventually engaged; but they would have nothing to do with the deadly ophidians until the fangs had been excised. Like all experienced manipulators, the Indians had trusted simply to their own dexterity and experience in dealing with the cobras—after all, perhaps the easiest snakes in the world to play, by reason of the weight of their expansive hood, the peculiar posture assumed by them when standing on the defensive, and, not least, their never-failing and undisguised pugnacity. Arab charmners not only handle but occasionally devour live serpents *pro bono publico*, as a variant of their commoner feat of eating scorpions and red-hot cinders. So jugglers, whose specialty is to pass naked swords or knives down their throats, sometimes 'swallow' snakes, which they hold by the tail lest the descent into Avernus should be accomplished beyond recall, the creature being in reality caused to coil itself within the cavity of the mouth, as is quite possible with a slender snake half a yard or two feet long, while the muscles of the performer's bared throat and neck twitch and contract in a way calculated to delude the onlooker into believing that he sees the delectable morsel inside wriggling a protest against its deglutition.

A large *cobra da capello* was sent home several years ago to Sir Joseph Fayrer, who wanted a supply of venom for analysis. It bit the spoon repeatedly without yielding any, and on examination was found to have none to yield, not only its fangs but the poison-glands having been extirpated. A protective operation still more cruel is sometimes practised by novices in the art of charming, and consists in securing the mouth with a stitch of silk passed through the lips in front; to perform this, the poor beast's head is held tightly pressed to the ground by a short stick on which the foot rests, while the other foot restrains the writhing body, leaving both hands at liberty for the needle. Eleven apparently healthy cobras were on one occasion received at the London Zoological Gardens. They refused to feed, and grew

thin. When one died, it was discovered that its mouth was sewn up with stitches so fine as to be invisible to any but the closest scrutiny. The rest of them did well on being restored to their normal condition. In connection with this subject, I may mention that a rattlesnake was sent to me from up country when I was in Demerara, with the history that it had killed a coolie on one of the plantations. It had been badly injured about the spine, probably in capture, so that on reaching me it was not only dead but decomposed, and I was not able to make any very complete dissection; but I found that its lips were tied together with stitches—obviously the effort of an unpractised hand, since the work was very coarse. This had apparently been preceded by an unsuccessful attempt to extract the long, erectile, needle-like fangs, for one of these was twisted half round with its bony base, and had penetrated the lower lip when the jaws were forcibly closed. It is hardly possible that the duct was not occluded, but enough venom must have remained within the tube of the tiny delicate syringe to inflict a fatal scratch.

Snakes and snake-worship probably formed noteworthy ingredients of many ancient dramas. Unless the pictorial representations which have come down to us are otherwise than in accordance with truth, the Egyptian priests and priestesses must have been *au fait* at the manipulation of venomous species, both colubrine and viperine.

An ophidian which seems to have posed, no doubt unwillingly enough, as a public character, and to have met with some queer vicissitudes in the course of its chequered career, has just died in my Reptilium, a large specimen of the 'wasp'-snake, about eleven feet long, of weird aspect, and diabolically savage disposition. It was caught in Mexico, and there acquired by a travelling dealer, who brought it to Europe. On landing in Bordeaux, he found a purchaser for it almost immediately in the person of a circus proprietor, just on the eve of departure with his troupe for the West Indies and South America. Whether Barbadoes was his first 'pitch' or not, I am unable to say, but it was there that the wasp-snake escaped and was lost, its desertion probably connived at by the Princess of Abyssinia, who showed the snakes in the ring, and who had been severely bitten by this particular specimen on several occasions. Long afterwards, the truant was discovered and secured alive, in the interior of the island, creating no small stir among local naturalists, as well as the populace in general, as the Barbadian fauna had not hitherto been credited with so portentous a member. (Barbadoes was, until comparatively recently, considered to be as snakeless as Iceland or New Zealand; several species have, however, been found there, all most likely imported accidentally from other islands, concealed in bundles of wood.) For more precise identification, this wasp-snake was sent to a herpetological specialist in Trinidad, but had not long been under his care when the circus company arrived in Port-of-Spain in the course of their tour. Hearing the circumstances of the case, the manager hastened to claim the reptile as

his long-lost property, and offered to identify it by the testimony of his snake-charmer. But when appealed to, the young lady, who was not in love with the beast or enamoured of the prospect of regaining it, refused corroborative recognition. The snake remained, therefore, in the possession of its latest owner, and, declining to feed, was eventually transferred to me, thus crossing the Atlantic for the third time. The poor thing was suffering from internal congestion, and could retain no nourishment, either solid or liquid, which I administered to it. It succumbed a few weeks ago, having fasted in all probability nearly three years.

'Snake' is the name of a character in the *School for Scandal*, and a 'serpent' is a wind instrument not infrequently heard in the orchestra; but the dramatic association which always presents itself to my mind most vividly is that of the unfortunate actor who, playing Lear, paraphrased the monarch's grand invective against his daughter Cordelia's seeming ingratitude when he invokes retributive vengeance upon her through her own offspring,

that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's thanks it is
To have a toothless child!

'Man-serpent' is a title often assumed by acrobats and contortionists, but is an inadequate one, inasmuch as they usually prove themselves capable of bending backwards and forwards to an extent which no serpent would be structurally competent to effect. A snake's motion and flexibility are nearly all lateral, the arrangement of the bony processes projecting from its vertebrae prohibiting more than a very limited movement in an antero-posterior direction. The amount of spinal flexion involved in touching one's toes with the knees straight would be an impossibility to the Ophidia—to say nothing of the attitudes in which they are depicted by artists and sculptors, or in which their stuffed skins are twined around poles.

SAIL, LITTLE BOAT.

SAIL, little boat—sail out of the bay

To the radiant West;

Swift as a bird, to my Dear Heart say

That Love is best.

Bear him a message, a message sweet

(My heart thy freight!),

And haste where the surge and the shallows meet

At the golden gate.

Speed fast away with enchanted crew

And snow-white wings;

For Peace and Joy are aboard of you,

And a soul that sings.

What though the wind and the wave divide,

And the way is long—

The currents of ocean are deep and wide,

But Love is strong.

MYRA.

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POULTRY FARMING.

ONE of the most interesting among recent Parliamentary papers is Mr Henry Rew's Report on the poultry rearing and fattening industries of the Heathfield district of Sussex, which, in his capacity as an Assistant Commissioner, he has rendered to the Royal Commission on Agriculture. A curious feature about these industries (for, though intimately bound up with one another, they are quite distinct) is their strict confinement to one spot in England. They are carried on in a district which embraces some fifteen parishes, and nowhere else; and the primary business, that of poultry breeding, has had its home in the neighbourhood from time immemorial. How far back it dates is uncertain; but before the advent of railways the industry must have been of great local importance, for a special service of four-horse wagons ran three times a week between Heathfield and London for the express purpose of carrying the poultry and eggs to market. Within the last twelve or fifteen years the steady decline in agricultural prosperity induced by foreign competition has caused farmers in this locality to turn their attention more seriously to poultry as a subsidiary branch of their business, and now it may be said that fowl raising and fattening are the most lucrative industries pursued.

A few figures will give a good idea of the value of the trade. At the last census (1891), the population of the district was 24,013; or there were 4866 families or 'separate occupiers.' basing calculations on the returns of 1881, we may safely conclude that in 1893 the population had increased to 24,500; and in 1893 the station-master of Heathfield Station estimated that the total value of the dead poultry booked at his station for carriage to London and the south-coast towns was £140,000; and as five-sixths of the poultry is despatched from that station, we find that the total value of the year's output is upwards of £168,000. Eighteen

hundred and forty tons of dead poultry were booked in the year; and taking the average weight of fowls to be four pounds—it must be remembered that they are artificially fattened, and the average would probably exceed that weight—we find that 1,030,400 chickens were despatched to market from the Heathfield district in 1893.

Poultry farming as an independent industry was a good deal discussed some years ago, and we might suppose that if it could stand upon its own feet anywhere it would be in this particular region. The country is peculiarly well adapted for it; light soil which dries quickly after rain, and hills alternating with deep valleys, which give protection from the cold winds of spring, so fatal to young stock. It is stated that young chickens can be obtained in the Heathfield district a month earlier than in the neighbouring counties. And yet, with these natural advantages, poultry farms pure and simple do not pay; they have been tried on various scales, and managed with all the skill born of experience; but though some have been persevered with for several years, the end of all has been the same—failure. It seems to be now a fully established fact that poultry must be merely a kind of farming excrescence, and we have not to look far before we discover why this is so. In the first place, the large breeder of fowls must keep cows for the sake of the skim-milk which is an indispensable portion of the diet of young chicks; then, again, it is cheaper to grow a few acres of oats to be ground into meal than to buy the oatmeal. One farmer who reared about 8000 chickens a year keeps twenty-eight cows, and has to purchase milk for his fowls over and above his own yield.

It might be supposed that where poultry raising is a specialty, there would be some distinctive breed of fowl peculiar to the district. In old days this was the case. A prominent breeder deploras the disappearance of the old 'Sussex fowl,' which as a table bird 'was almost perfect,' having small white legs and a

very well-fleshed body with good breast-meat. This variety has now completely died out, though many men who are entitled to give an opinion believe that it was to this 'Sussex fowl' that Heathfield first owed its reputation. Nowadays, the breed is surprisingly nondescript; a strain of the Dorking is discoverable; but cross breeds are said to give the best results, and nobody was found who had a good word to say for any pure breed.

Though poultry rearing does not answer as a distinct occupation, it is so profitable that pretty nearly every one keeps fowls: there are the farmers, like the one above referred to, who rear their thousands; and the cottagers who, having no land, keep a few coops on the grass at the roadside. It seems somewhat curious at first sight that birds brought up in the latter make-shift fashion should thrive better than those reared in all the luxury of patent coops on good grass pastures; but this is acknowledged to be the case. The secret of it is that the fowls which have the free run of the road get plenty of the hard grits which are essential to bird digestion; and, moreover, find a vast amount of nourishment in the insect life of the hedgerows. Fowl rearing requires constant attention and unremitting care; without these it cannot succeed, and thus on large farms it is customary to secure efficient labour by paying the men a commission on the number reared, over and above the weekly wage. On smaller holdings the responsibility devolves on the wife, and the farmer whose 'better-half' is a good henwife has reason to congratulate himself. As is very generally known, land which is continually and heavily overrun by poultry becomes 'staled,' and the birds succumb to a mysterious and fatal disease; this fact means a good deal of work on a large farm, as each coop must be moved every few days to a fresh spot: the chickens go over the farm field by field in rotation, now on pasture, now on arable land; a suitable coop is made with a pair of handles at each side, so that two men can readily carry it. Much importance attaches to the coop: it must be so constructed that it shall give dry footing; it should keep off rain and wind from the inmates, and yet allow plenty of ventilation; it must be proof against the wiles of foxes, and above all, must be capable of thorough and easy cleaning. Cleanliness is a great point in poultry farming; a man may spare no effort to keep his coops sweet, but if it is his misfortune to have a careless neighbour, the disease which attacks the latter's fowls will surely spread to his own despite liberal linewash. Poultry farming, however, is not peculiar in this respect. Then, there are the natural enemies of fowls to be reckoned with; oddly enough, the worst among these are rooks. Hawks are too rare for their depredations to be worth considering; but one farmer stated that he lost upwards of fifty young chicks by rooks in a single week.

A noteworthy social result of fowl rearing, and one that proves it at once remunerative and a suitable sphere of usefulness for women, is that early marriages are very usual in the Heathfield district. A thrifty hard-working man begins with a few birds, gradually increases his

stock, saves enough money, and forthwith proceeds to enlarge the scope of his operations by taking a few acres of land, and marrying. With the aid of a capable wife, an industrious man can make the business a very paying one. A farmer who had turned his attention to fowls in despair, when he could make nothing out of corn, cattle, or sheep, told Mr Rew that 'a hundred hens properly looked after will yield a larger return than a hundred breeding ewes.' The man who made this statement had large experience of both, so he ought to have known; and in regard to this statement, which we might suppose to be exaggerated, it must be added that Mr Rew found great difficulty in obtaining any information about the financial results of the industry; fearing competition, the people were disinclined to say anything about their profits, and those who did were not suspected of furnishing figures which showed the business in the most profitable light.

One great advantage enjoyed by the poultry rearer is that he has not to go and seek his market; his market comes to his own door in the shape of the man who carries on the second branch of the business, that of fattening up the fowls for sale. These men are locally termed 'higglers.' In old days, the higgler tramped the country with a great two-storeyed crate on his back, in which he stowed his purchases. Now, this is changed; the higgler marches with the times; the area of poultry rearing has greatly increased, and time is more precious, so he goes his rounds in a light-cart, collecting all the birds from his clients. There is etiquette in higgling as in other walks of life, from the professions of law and medicine down to crossing-sweeping. Each higgler has his own particular circle of customers, on whom no other higgler would presume to call. He visits each customer about once a fortnight, and takes away all the chickens ready for fattening.

Once in the higgler's hands, the joys of early chickenhood are over for the hapless young fowl. For a fortnight or so he is imprisoned in a narrow coop, restrained from all exercise, and fed on oatmeal mixed with skim-milk and beef or mutton fat; then the process of cramming begins in earnest, and the chicken's last pleasure, that of eating, is denied him. The cramming machine is brought into use, and twice a day he is drawn out of his coop and literally 'crammed.' The fattener takes the chicken between his knees, passes a flexible rubber tube down his gullet into the crop; the turn of a crank propels the food down the tube, and the fattener's experienced finger on the bird's crop tells him when the victim has received as much as he can hold; then the chicken is thrust back into his pen to digest the meal thus forced upon him, and to think about the next. One cannot help having a certain sympathy for fowls subjected to this drastic treatment, despite the fact that it is at worst only the deprivation of a pleasure, involving no more pain than the fright attendant on being suddenly seized and delicately pumped full of food often when food is not wanted. A fortnight of cramming, and then the bird is ready for the market. Women and children

perform the plucking, or 'stutting' as it is called, and also the packing; then comes the carrier, who in his turn saves the fatterer all trouble, conveying the crates of dead poultry to the station, and consigning them to the London salesmen, who settle up direct with the fatteners.

There can be no doubt that the business as conducted in this district is very remunerative, though, as already observed, reliable figures were almost impossible to obtain. One man who combined the vocations of innkeeper and small farmer, and who for twenty years had reared about two hundred chickens annually in a couple of small fields behind his premises, stated that the cost of food represented roughly half the gross returns; thus, spending thirty pounds a year on oatmeal, maize, and skim-milk, he reckoned on making sixty pounds by the sale of his fowls.

That there is ample scope for extension of both branches of the business is proved by the fact that during six months of the year—November to April—the fatteners import large quantities of live poultry from the south of Ireland to feed up and sell, and this in spite of the circumstances that Irish fowls are coarser than home-bred birds, take longer to fatten, and are not so popular in the market. There are more higglers in the district than the breeders can supply; one fatterer in a large way of business, said he could deal with one hundred thousand more fowls annually than he could obtain. The disparity is beneficial to the poultry breeder, who can thus depend upon getting the full market price for his birds; but that by the way. The point is, that the industry is capable of large extension, and in these days of depressed agriculture it is surprising that it should still be practically confined to one small spot in the whole of England. We pay our Continental neighbours over half a million a year for poultry and game alone, the great bulk of the money going in poultry. In view of the very small capital required to start, and the quick returns, fowl rearing as an adjunct to farming ought to be more generally followed than it is.

THE CHRONICLES OF COUNT ANTONIO.*

CHAPTER VIII. (*continued*).

THEN the hour of noon struck from the clock in the tower of the Cathedral; and the Master of the Duke's Household, who stood by the couch of his master, turned his eyes to the Duke's face, seeking the signal for Antonio's death; which when he received, he would sign to the executioner to set the rope round the Count's neck; for the man stood by Antonio with the rope in his hand, and Antonio was already in his shirt. But when the Master of the Household looked at the Duke, the Duke made him no signal; yet the Duke had not fainted from his sickness, for he was propped on his elbow, his face was eager, and his gaze was set intently across the square; and his

physician, who was near, spoke to him softly, saying, 'My lord, they await the signal.'

But the Duke waved him aside impatiently, and gazed still across the square. And, seeing His Highness thus gazing intently, the Master of the Household and the physician and all the rest who were about the Duke's person, looked also; and they saw the Lady Lucia coming forth from her house, clad all in white. Antonio also saw her from where he stood on the scaffold, for the people made a way for her, and the pikemen let her pass through their ranks; so that she walked alone across the middle of the great square; and the eyes of all, leaving Antonio, were fixed upon her. Her face was very pale, and her hair fell on her shoulders; but she walked firmly and swiftly, and she turned neither to right nor left, but made straight for the spot where the Duke lay. And he, seeing her coming, moaned once, and passed his hand thrice across his eyes, and raised himself yet higher on his arm, leaning towards her over the side of the couch. Again he passed his hand across his brow; and the physician regarded him very intently, yet dared not again seek to rouse his attention, and imposed silence on the Master of the Household, who had asked in low tones, 'What ails His Highness?' Then the Lady Lucia, having reached the foot of the steps, stood still there, her eyes on the Duke. Very fair was she, and sad, and she seemed rather some beautiful unsubstantial vision than a living maiden; and though she strove to form words with her lips, yet no words came; therefore it was by her muteness that she besought pity for herself and pardon for her lover. But the Duke, leaning yet further towards her, had fallen, but that the physician, kneeling, passed his arm round his body and held him up; and he said in low hoarse tones and like a man that is amazed and full of awe, and yet moved with a gladness so great that he cannot believe in it, 'Who is it? Who is it?'

And the Lady Lucia still could not answer him. And he, craning towards her, spoke to her in entreaty, 'Margherita, Margherita!'

Then indeed all marvelled; for the name that the Duke spoke was the name by which that Princess who had been his wife and was dead had been called; and they perceived that His Highness, overcome by his sickness, had lost discernment, and conceived the Lady Lucia to be not herself but the spirit of his dead love come to him from heaven, to which delusion her white robes and her death-like pallor might well incline him. And now the wonder and fear left his face, and there came in place of them a great joy and rapture, so that his sunk eyes gleamed, his lips quivered, and he beckoned with his hand, murmuring, 'I am ready, I am ready, Margherita!' And while this passed, all who were too distant to hear the Duke's words wondered that the signal came not, but supposed that the Lady Lucia had interceded for Count Antonio, and that His Highness was now answering her prayer: some hoped that he would grant it. And Antonio stood on the scaffold between the lord Lorenzo and the executioner; and his eyes were set on Lucia.

Then the Duke spoke again to the Lady

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Lucia, saying, 'I have been lonely—very lonely. How pale your face is, my sweet! Come to me. I cannot come to you, for I am very sick.' And he held out his hand towards her again.

But she was now sore bewildered, for she could not understand the words which His Highness used to her, and she looked round, seeking some one who might tell her what they meant, but none moved from his place or came near to her; and at last she found voice enough to say in soft tones, 'Antonio, my lord, the Count Antonio!'

'Ay, I know that you loved him,' said the Duke. 'But since then he has done great crimes, and he must die. Yet speak not of him now, but come here to me, Margherita.'

Then with wavering tread, she came towards him, mounting the first of the steps, and she said, 'I know not what you would, my lord, nor why you call me by the name of Margherita. I am Lucia, and I come to ask Antonio's life.'

'Lucia, Lucia?' said he, and his face grew doubtful. 'Nay, but you are my Margherita,' he said.

'No, my lord,' she answered, as with trembling uncertain feet she mounted, till she stood but one step below where his couch was placed; and then she fell on her knees on the highest step and clasped her hands, crying, 'Have mercy, my lord, have mercy! Think, my dear lord, how I love him; for if he dies, I must die also, my lord. Ah, my lord, you have known love. You loved our sweet Lady Margherita—was not her name now on your lips? So I love Antonio—so he loves me. Ah, my lord, Christ Jesus teaches pity!' And she buried her face in her hands and sobbed.

Then the Duke, his physician and now the Master of the Household also supporting him, stretched himself over the edge of his couch, and, putting out his hand with feverish strength, plucked the Lady Lucia's hands away from her face and gazed at her face. And when he had gazed a moment, he gave a great cry, 'Ah, God!' and flung his arms up above his head and fell back into the arms of his physician, who laid him down on his couch, where he lay motionless, his eyes shut and his chin resting on his breast. And all looked at the physician, but he answered, 'Nay, he is not dead yet.'

'Why tarries the signal?' asked Antonio of Lorenzo on the scaffold.

'It must be that the Lady Lucia beseeches him for your life, my lord,' answered Lorenzo. 'Indeed heartily do I wish the Duke would hearken to her prayer.'

'He will not turn for her,' said Antonio.

But presently the report of what had passed spread from those round the Duke to the pikemen, and they, loving a marvel as most men do, must needs tell it to the people, and a murmur of wonder arose, and the report reached the Guards at the scaffold, who came and told Lorenzo, in the hearing of Antonio, of the strange delusion that had come upon the Duke.

'He must be sick to death,' said Lorenzo.

'I pray not,' said Count Antonio. 'For though he is a stern man, yet he is an able and just prince, and this fancy of his is very pitiful.'

'Do you spare pity for him?' asked Lorenzo. 'Shall not I pity all who have lost their loves?' answered Antonio with a smile, and his eye rested on the form of the Lady Lucia kneeling by the Duke's couch.

For hard on half an hour the Duke lay as he had fallen, but at last, his physician having used all his skill to rouse him, he opened his eyes; and he clutched his physician's hand and pointed to Lucia, asking, 'Who is she?'

'It is the Lady Lucia, my lord,' answered the physician.

'And there was none else?' asked the Duke in a low tremulous whisper.

'I saw no other, my lord.'

'But I saw her,' said the Duke. 'I saw her even as I saw her last, when she lay on her bed and they took the child out of her dead arms.'

'It was the weakness of your malady, my lord, that made the vision before your eyes.'

'Alas, was it no more?' moaned the Duke. 'Indeed I am very weak: there is a blur before my eyes. I cannot see who this lady is that kneels before me. Who is she, and what ails her?' And having said this in fretful weary tones, he lay back on his pillow gasping.

Then the Master of the Household came forward and said to him, 'My lord, this is the Lady Lucia, and she kneels before your Highness praying for the life of Count Antonio, because she loves him.'

Now the name of Count Antonio, when spoken to him, moved the Duke more than all the ministrations of his physician; he roused himself once again, crying, 'Antonio! I had forgotten Antonio. Does he still live?'

'Your Highness has not given the signal for his death.'

'Have I not? Then here!'

He moved his hand, but with a great cry the Lady Lucia sprang forward and seized his hand before he could raise it, kneeling to him and crying, 'No, no, my lord, no, no, no!' And the Duke had no strength to fling her off, but he gasped, 'Free me from her!' And the Master of the Household, terrified lest in her passion she should do violence to His Highness, roughly tore her hands from the Duke's hand, and the Duke, released, sat up on his couch, and he said, in a strange hard voice that was heard of all, even to the scaffold, and yet seemed not the voice that they knew as his, 'Let Antonio'— But then he stopped; he choked in his throat, and, catching at his shirt, tore it loose from him. 'Let Antonio!'— he cried again. 'Let Antonio!'— And he sat there for an instant; and his eyes grew dim, the intelligence departing from them; once again he opened his lips, but nothing came from them save a gasp; and with a thud he fell back on his pillows, and, having rolled once on his side, turned again on his back, and lay still. And a great hush fell on every man in the square, and they looked in one another's faces, but found no answer.

For Valentine, Duke and Lord of Firmola, was dead of his sickness at the moment when he had sought to send Antonio to death. Thus marvellously did Heaven in its high purposes deal with him.

'His Highness is dead,' said the physician. And the Master of the Household, as his duty

was, came to the front of the Duke's couch, and, standing there before all the people, broke the wand of his office, and let the broken fragments fall upon the marble steps; and he cried aloud, 'Hear all of you! It hath pleased Almighty God to take unto Himself the soul of the noble and illustrious Prince, Valentine, Duke and Lord of Firmola. May his soul find peace!'

But there came from the people no answering cry of 'Amen,' as, according to the custom of the Duchy, should have come. For they were amazed at the manner of this death; and many crossed themselves in fear, and women sobbed. And Lorenzo standing on the scaffold by Antonio, was struck with wonder and fear, and clutched Antonio's arm, crying, 'Can it be that the Duke is dead?' And Antonio bowed his head, answering, 'May Christ receive his soul!'

Then the Master of the Household came forward again and cried, 'Hear all of you! According to the high pleasure and appointment of Almighty God, the noble and illustrious Prince, Valentine, Second of that Name, is from this hour Duke and Lord of Firmola—whom obey, serve, and honour, all of you. May his rule be prosperous!'

And this time there came a low murmur of 'Amen' from the people. But before more could pass, there was a sudden commotion in the square before the scaffold. For Bena, seeing what was done, and knowing that the Duke was dead, had glanced at the pikemen who stood near; and when he saw that they looked not at him but towards where the Master of the Household stood, he sprang forward and ran like a deer to the scaffold; and he leaped up to the scaffold before any could hinder him, and he cried in a mighty loud voice, saying, 'By what warrant do you hold my lord a prisoner?'

Then the apprentices raised a great cheer, and with one accord pressed upon the pikemen, who, mazed by all that had passed, gave way before them; and the apprentices broke their bounds and surged like a billow of the sea up to the foot of the scaffold, shouting Antonio's name; and the young lords who held Tommasino came with him and broke through and reached the scaffold; for they feared for Lorenzo, and yet would not let Tommasino go; and Lorenzo was sore at a loss, but he drew his sword and cried that he would slay any man that touched Antonio, until the right of the matter should be known.

'Indeed, if you will give me a sword, I will slay him myself,' said Antonio. 'For I stand here by my own will, and according to the promise I gave to the Duke; and if there be lawful authority to hang me, hang me; but if not, dispose of me as the laws of the Duchy bid.'

'I have no authority,' said Lorenzo, 'save what the Duke gave; and now he is dead.'

Then the Count Antonio fastened his shirt again about his neck and put on his doublet; and he signed to Bena to stand on one side of him, and he bade the young lords loose Tommasino. And he said to Lorenzo, 'Let us go together to the Palace.' And now he was

smiling. Then they came down from the scaffold and passed across the square, a great multitude following them. And when they came to the steps of the Palace, the Duke's body was covered with a rich brocaded cloth that some hand had brought from his cabinet; and the little Duke stood there with his hand in the Master of the Household's hand; and the child was weeping bitterly, for he was very frightened; and over against him stood the Lady Lucia, motionless as though she had been turned to stone; for the strange thing that had come about through her approaching of the Duke had bewildered her brain. But when the boy saw Antonio he let go the hand he held and ran to Antonio and leaped into his arms. Then Antonio lifted him and showed him to the people, who hailed him for Duke; and Antonio set him down and knelt before him and kissed his hand. And the child cried, 'Now that my father is dead, Antonio, you must not go on your journey, but you must stay with me. For if I am Duke, I must learn to use my sword without delay, and no man but you shall teach me.'

'Shall I not go on my journey, my lord?' asked Antonio.

'No, you shall not go,' said the little Duke. Then Antonio turned to the lords who stood round and said, 'Behold, my lords, His Highness pardons me.'

But the lords doubted; and they said to Antonio, 'Nay, but he does not know what he does in pardoning you.'

'He understands as well, I think,' said Antonio, 'as his father understood when he sent me to death. Indeed, my lords, it is not children only who know not what they do.' And at this speech Tommasino smiled and Bena laughed gruffly. But the lords, bidding Antonio rest where he was till they returned, retired with the little Duke into the Palace, and sent word hastily to the Archbishop that he should join them there and deliberate with them as to what it might be best to do. And when they were thus gone in, Antonio said, 'I may not move; but the Lady Lucia is free to move.'

Then Tommasino went to the lady and spoke to her softly, telling her that Antonio desired to speak with her; and she gave Tommasino her hand, and he led her to Antonio, who stood within the portico, screened from the sight of the people. And there they were left alone.

But meanwhile the whole body of the townsmen and the apprentices had gathered before the Palace, and their one cry was for Antonio. For the fear of the Duke being no longer upon them, and the pikemen not knowing whom to obey, and being therefore disordered, the people became very bold, and they had stormed the Palace, had not one come to Antonio and implored him to show himself, that the people might know that he was safe. Therefore he came forward with the Lady Lucia, who was now no more bewildered, nor petrified with fear or astonishment, but was weeping with her eyes and smiling with her lips, and clinging to Antonio's arm. And when the people saw them thus, they sent up a great shout, that was

heard far beyond the city walls ; and the apprenticed lads turned and ran in a body across the square and swarmed on to the scaffold. And then and there they plucked down the gibbet and worked so fiercely that in the space of half an hour there was none of it left.

And now the Archbishop with the lords came forth from the council chamber, and the little Duke with them. And they caused the servants to remove the body of the dead Duke, and they set his son on a high seat, and put a sceptre in his hand. And the Archbishop offered up a prayer before the people ; and, having done this, he turned to Antonio and said, 'My lord Antonio, most anxiously have His Highness and we of his Council considered of this matter ; and it has seemed to us all—my own in truth was the sole reluctant voice, and now I also am brought to the same mind—that whereas the virtuous purposes of Princes are meet to be remembered and made perpetual by faithful fulfilment after their death, yet the errors of which they, being mortal, are guilty should not overlive them nor be suffered to endure when they have passed away. And though we are not blind to your offences, yet we judge that in the beginning the fault was not yours. Therefore His Highness decrees your pardon for all offences against his civil state and power. And I myself, who hold authority higher than any earthly might, seeing in what this day has witnessed the finger of God Himself, do not fight against it, but will pray you, as soon as you may fit yourself thereunto by prayer and meditation, to come in a humble mind and seek again the blessing of the Church. For in what you did right and in what you outstepped right, God Himself must one day judge, and I will seek to judge of it no more.'

'My lord,' said Antonio, 'I have done much wrong. Yet I will own no wrong in the matter of the Abbot nor in that of the Sacred Bones.'

But the lord Archbishop smiled at Antonio, and Antonio bent and kissed the ring that was on his finger ; and the old man laid his hand for a moment on Antonio's head, saying, 'It may be that God works sometimes in ways that I may not see.'

Thus then it was that the Count Antonio was restored to his place and came again to Firmola, and, having been relieved of the sentence of excommunication that had been laid upon him, he was wedded in the Cathedral to the Lady Lucia as soon as the days of mourning for the Duke had passed. And great was the joy in the city at their wedding ; for every maid and every man saw in the triumph of Antonio's love a sign of the favour of Heaven to those who love with a pure and abiding passion. So they made great feasts, and were marvellously merry ; and Bena let not the day go by without plighting his troth to a comely damsel, saying with a twinkle in his eye that the Count Antonio would have need of his sons, whose services he had promised to him as they rode together across the plain on the morning when Antonio had supposed that he was to die. Nor would Bena give any other reason whatso-

ever for the marriage. Nevertheless it is likely that there were others. But whether Bena fulfilled his promise I know not ; for, as I have said, so little is known concerning him that his true name does not survive, and it has proved an impossible thing to discover whether any of his descendants yet live in Firmola. If it chance that they do, I trust that they fight as well, and serve as loyally, and pray better than he. But Martolo has left those that bear his name, and a great-grandson of his is at this very time huntsman to the Monastery of St Prisian, where I have seen and talked with him many times.

The task which I laid upon myself thus finds its end. For there is no need for me to tell of the after-deeds of Count Antonio of Monte Velluto, nor how, in the space of a few months, he was chosen by all the lords to be Ruler and Protector of the State during the infancy of the Duke ; in which high office he did many notable deeds both of war and peace, and raised the Duchy to a great height of power, and conferred many favours on the townsmen of Firmola, whom he loved and cherished because they had not forsaken him nor ceased to love him during all the years that he dwelt an outlaw in the hills. And he built again his house on the hill which Duke Valentine had burnt, and dwelt there with Lucia, and with Tommasino also, until Tommasino took to wife that same lady for whose sake he had lingered and thus fallen into the hands of the lord Lorenzo, and went and dwelt at Rilano, where those of his house still dwell. But when the young Duke came of an age to reign, the Count Antonio delivered his charge into his hand, yet continued to counsel him, and was very high in authority. And neighbouring princes also sought his aid and his counsel, and he was greatly honoured of all men. Thus if there were aught in his youth that merits censure, it may be held that he blotted out the shame of it by his after-life, for his latter days were filled with honourable service to his Prince and to his country.

Yet the heart of man is a vain thing ; for when I, who am known to have learned all that can be recovered from the mists of past times concerning Count Antonio, am asked—and whether it be by men or women, by boys or girls, ay, or by toddling infants—to tell them a tale of the great Count Antonio, it is not of the prudent ruler, nor of the wise counsellor, nay, nor even of the leader of the Duke's army, that they would hear, but always of Antonio when he was an outlaw, banned by his Prince and by the Church, living by the light of his own heart and by the strength of his own hand, secured only by the love and duty of the lawless men who followed him, and risking his life every day and every hour for the sake of the bright eyes of that lady who waited for him in the city. And when I, thinking to check this perversity, bid them look rather on his more worthy and sober days, they answer with a laugh, 'But why, father, do you not write the story of those more worthy and sober days ? Nor will they believe when I say that it is but because the deeds of those days are elsewhere recorded. In good truth, I believe that

in our hearts we love a lawless man! Here then, ye perverse children, are the stories; they are all that you shall have from me. Read them; may they teach you to be true comrades, faithful lovers of one maid, and, since strife must needs come until God's pleasure bring peace to reign on earth, able, when occasion calls, to give and take good blows. Ay, never laugh. I have said it. A Churchman is a man.

THE END.

THE BALTIC AND NORTH SEA SHIP-CANAL.

THIS summer will be fulfilled a long-cherished Teutonic dream—the completion of a navigable water-way for sea-going vessels between the Baltic and the North Sea, entirely through German territory. Yet it is worth noting that the great scheme which has been successfully carried out by German enterprise was Danish in origin, and traverses a country which once—and not so long ago—was Danish by right of possession. When, however, King Christian VII. of Denmark, more than a century ago, began the Eider Canal to connect the harbour of Kiel with the river Eider, he little thought that he was preparing the way for the maritime expansion of a Power that was destined to sweep the Danes out of Sleswig-Holstein. And ever since the Germans have taken their place there, the desire has been cherished of being altogether independent of Denmark in passing from coast to coast of the German Empire. Nor was it only desire for independent communication that moulded the enterprise, for the dangers of the voyage—especially in winter-time—from the North Sea to the Baltic round the north of Denmark are manifold. A glance at the map will render intelligible the chafing of German navigators against the long round by Skager Rack and the Kattegat for sea-traffic between Hamburg and Danzig, or even between Bremen and Lübeck. And yet as a commercial highway the new Canal is not very highly appraised, its chief value in Germany being that it will afford direct water communication between the two great arsenals of the Empire, and will enable the Imperial war-ships to control both coasts in time of war. When Germany became a great naval power, Von Moltke said that it would be absolutely necessary for her to secure her possible naval operations from the interference of an inconvenient neighbour. Later on, the necessity was urged of having free and direct communication between the great dockyards of Kiel and Wilhelmshaven. It is probable, therefore, that strategical rather than commercial considerations have influenced the work, which the Emperor William I. inaugurated in 1887 as 'for the honour of Germany, and for the good, the greatness, and the strength of the Empire.'

We need not trouble ourselves with motives, however, although there is this to be pointed out, that had the Canal been designed for commercial purposes only, the other German States

might well have declined to contribute, as of every hundred vessels that pass between the two seas, about ninety belong to Prussia, upon whom would, therefore, have been thrown the cost of construction. As it is, only one-third of the cost is being borne by Prussia, and the other two-thirds proportionally by the other members of the Empire.

It was in 1887 that the first Emperor William inaugurated the work, which will thus have occupied eight years when the second Emperor William formally celebrates its completion. But previous to 1891, not very much progress was made. By the end of October 1892, some £5,800,000 had been expended on it; the estimated cost was £8,000,000; and the actual cost will be probably not less than £10,000,000. Yet the Canal is only some sixty-two miles long, and for a considerable part of its course traverses low-lying level ground. This physical character of the country has enabled the engineers to dispense with locks; but it has also added to the cost of construction in other ways. Thus, at Grüenthal and at Levensau (near Kiel), great high-level bridges have had to be constructed at a cost of about a quarter of a million each, in order to carry the railways over the water-way.

The Baltic entrance to the Canal is at Holtenau, on the west side of the Bay of Kiel, and within three miles of the celebrated arsenal. In this portion of the route, advantage has been taken of the old Eider Canal, which King Christian constructed between Holtenau and Rendsburg on the Eider. It really connected the North Sea and the Baltic a hundred years ago, but it was hampered by many locks, and could not pass vessels drawing more than about nine and a half feet of water.

Some ten miles from Holtenau, the Canal reaches a great natural lake called the Flemhude See, and here a great engineering problem had to be solved. The level of the lake is some twenty feet above that of the Ship-canal, and the question to be decided was whether the basin should be drained or dammed. To drain it would have been to sterilise the surrounding country; and to dam it involved a deviation in the course of the river Eider. A huge dam has therefore been constructed to cut off the lake, and on the outer side of the dam a channel has been cut for the river, thus converted into a canal. This fresh-water canal runs for some distance parallel with the sea-canal, but some twenty feet above it; and here again critics have found objections. They say that this is the weakest part of the whole work, and that carefully and skilfully as it has been carried out, the Ship-canal will always be liable to the danger of the fresh-water canal breaking through and sweeping away the dam. If so, the consequences to the maritime water-way would be disastrous.

Leaving the Flemhude See, the Canal passes through some other lakes, which are utilised, and about half-way reaches the town of Rendsburg, and so on to Grüenthal, which is on the watershed between the Baltic and the North Sea. Here the digging had to be carried to a depth of one hundred and forty feet, and here had to be constructed one of the high-level

bridges already mentioned, to carry the Holstein Railway over the canal. From Grüenthal to Brunsbüttel, at the mouth of the Elbe, which is the North Sea terminus, the route is through a level, though marshy, country. The difficulty at this part was not in cutting the channel, but in building up the banks, for which purpose the sandy soil taken out of the deep cutting at Grüenthal had to be brought across. Although this part of the work presented no engineering difficulty, it was toilsome and costly.

The entire length of the Canal from Holtenua to Brunsbüttel is officially stated at 98·65 kilometres, which is rather under sixty-two miles. In breadth, the water-way varies, but the navigable channel is the same at bottom as that of the Suez Canal, say seventy feet. As it is intended to allow of the passage of the largest and heaviest vessels in the German navy, which draw over twenty-five feet, a depth of something like twenty-eight feet will have to be preserved, as such vessels could not attempt the passage without a few feet of water between their keels and the bed. Whether this depth can be maintained without great annual outlay is a moot-point which can only be determined by experience.

Besides the Grüenthal viaduct, there are three railway bridges (two of them swing-bridges), and six high-roads are carried over the Canal. The great high-level bridge at Levensau has two arches of five hundred and fifty feet span each, and has two towers at each side. The Canal is to be electrically lighted along its whole course. There are great incandescent lamps of twenty-five candle-power, placed at intervals of eight hundred feet along both sides, besides arc lamps for the ferries, bridges, and locks. On the lakes through which the Canal passes, the course will be marked by gas-lighted buoys. For such a gigantic system of electric lighting, enormous machinery has been erected both at Holtenua and Brunsbüttel.

While the water-way is level throughout, it requires locks at each end, for this reason—that the rise and fall of the tide at each end is not simultaneous. For, during the spring-tides the water may rise fifteen feet above and sink ten feet below the ordinary levels at Brunsbüttel. This alone may make a difference of twenty-five feet at the North Sea end; while at the Baltic end, where the rise and fall is small, the effect of the wind is marked. When it blows strong from the east, the water in the Bay of Kiel will rise as much as eight feet; and when it blows hard from the west, it will fall to the same extent—making at this end a range of eighteen, or, allowing for tides, of twenty feet.

To meet this difficulty arising from the changing sea-levels, locks have had to be built at each end, adding, of course, greatly to the cost. At Brunsbüttel, on the dreary flat stretch of land on the north side of the mouth of the Elbe, which serves to depress the spirits of the sea-worn tourist on his way to Hamburg, the entrance locks have had to be founded on immense masses of concrete deposited on the muddy bottom. Here two great harbours have been constructed, the one within the other, for

the shelter of vessels intending to make the passage of the Canal. The inner harbour is to be reserved for German naval purposes, and is 1700 feet long by 570 feet broad. The outer one is for the use of the mercantile marine, and is 2300 feet long, and 330 feet broad. Between these harbours and the Canal entrance is erected a tower 150 feet high, which will regularly exhibit the water-level in the Elbe, in the Canal, and in the first lock. The harbours are protected by two piers, on the end of each of which is a lighthouse. To enter the Canal from the Elbe the vessel first enters a lock five hundred feet long by some eighty-five feet wide, which shuts off the sea, and then through another lock of the same dimensions, which raises or lowers to the level of the water-way. Arrived at the Holtenua end, a double lock of the same size deposits the vessel in the waters of the Baltic in the Bay of Kiel. These immense locks are fitted with the most improved machinery; and at the Kiel end the quay and harbour accommodation is being provided on the most thorough and business-like scale.

The locks are not so much what we usually mean by canal locks, as regulators of the water-level and adjusters to the winds and tides. It is intended, we believe, that the Brunsbüttel lock shall be kept open for three or four hours at a time during ebb-tide, and that the Holtenua lock will only be closed during spring-tides, or when the wind is blowing strong from certain quarters. If these intentions can be carried out, there will be uninterrupted navigation for a portion of each day in ordinary weather.

The passage from Brunsbüttel to Holtenua, it is calculated, will occupy a steamer fifteen hours, and passing-places for very large vessels are provided at intervals, and in the lakes, so that two streams of traffic may flow in opposite directions simultaneously. Should the predictions above referred to about the greater resistance of the water to large vessels in so confined a channel be verified, the passage will occupy an entire day at least. But assuming fifteen hours to be the possible time of transit from Brunsbüttel to Holtenua, that contrasts with two whole days at present required to make the voyage from the mouth of the Elbe round the Danish Peninsula to Kiel.

As the saving of time in the passage between the two seas is one of the greatest advantages claimed for the new water-way, it is worth while to consider that for a moment. A little study of the map will show that as far as British ports are concerned the advantages cannot be the same. Thus, while vessels proceeding from the English Channel to the Baltic may find the Canal a convenience, it does not follow that vessels proceeding from the north-east ports of England and from Scotland will find any. Roughly speaking, the ports of the whole British coast from the Wear northwards will derive no benefit from the Canal, because the route from them into the Baltic will be practically as short via Cape Skagen, and without the risk of detention always incidental to inland water-ways.

Of course the Danes do not regard with favour a project designed to reduce the sea-traffic past

their doors, and as a counter-agent to the attractions of the Canal, Copenhagen has been made a free port, and other facilities are being provided for shipping by the old sea-route. The Danes protest that it is rarely indeed that the Sound and the Great Belt are closed simultaneously by ice, whereas the difficulties of Elbe navigation are annual. The Sound was stopped by ice in the winter of 1892-93; but Kiel was closed for a much longer period.

This is one side of the question; but on the other side, besides the saving in time by the use of the Canal—which will, it is claimed, reduce certain voyages now occupying from two to four days to from fifteen to thirty hours—there is the question of safety, and therefore of saving in insurance. The Danish coast is well lighted, but yet is responsible for a large amount of annual wreckage. Between 1858 and 1891, it is recorded that no fewer than eight thousand vessels were lost on these coasts—an average of about two hundred and fifty a year. During the last five years, according to German statistics, ninety-two German vessels were lost in Danish waters, with upwards of seven hundred lives. It is estimated that some forty-five thousand vessels annually double Cape Skagen, of a total of about sixteen million tons, and the Germans expect to attract about one-half of that traffic to their new Ship-canal. If they do so, a moderate impost for dues should yield a fair return on the capital invested, after paying working expenses.

But in Germany the undertaking is regarded less as a financial investment than as a national enterprise. By means of the Canal, the coal-owners of Rhenish-Westphalia hope to secure the Baltic markets at present supplied from England and Scotland; and other commercial advantages are expected for other industries of the Empire. The strategic importance of the Canal, however, is that which gives it its highest value in German eyes; and from one point of view, the new water-way may be regarded as a peaceful device for sweeping Denmark out of the path of Germany as a naval power.

THE MYSTERY OF PILGRIM GRAY.

CHAPTER III.—A PERILOUS SILENCE.

ROBERT HARBORN, meanwhile, sat in his room with the red blind, wondering at Zilpah's delay. It was a little private office above the counting-house, an office which had been occupied by Harborn's father before him. Harborn's desk stood in a corner between the window and the fireplace, and the young banker worked there under a shaded lamp. His very look, pale and haggard, would have scared any one of his clients, could they have glanced in upon him. He was leaning his head upon one hand while he scratched away with the other on a large sheet of foolscap paper. But the more deeply he went into calculations, the more clearly did he realise that ruin, possibly disgrace, stared him in the face.

He threw down his pen at last, and began

to pace to and fro before the fire, his restless shadow following him on the opposite wall like his own haunting thoughts. He had done his utmost to raise six thousand pounds in order to place the little bank on a safe footing once more; but all his endeavours had failed. The urgent need of this amount, in round figures, had become only too apparent; without it, no choice would be left; the bank doors must be closed before another week had run out! And then? Well, and then his black mare would have to be sold; and the little house where he had lived all his life—Briar Cottage—the home to which he had dreamt of taking Zilpah Garfoot as his wife some day, would be disposed of to the highest bidder. These were petty details; but these are the small troubles of life that drive some men to desperation. Harborn felt that he had not the moral courage to face them on the morrow—for he resolved that he would not remain in Boston another day—he would take his passage to the United States. His bankruptcy would be a nine days' wonder in the old town—his creditors would wind up the affairs of the house, bringing serious distress upon several worthy old customers, and then Harborn's Bank would be blotted out—forgotten—a thing of the past.

It was evident Zilpah was not coming. Had she not told him to expect her before four o'clock? Still he was in no haste to leave the bank. This was the last day he would pass in the old room. It was here that he had cherished dreams of fortune—for every confidence had been placed in him by his father's clients as a trust-worthy son and successor. He had never indulged in foolish expectations of becoming a millionaire; his desire was that he might win the position of a prosperous local man. He had never regarded himself, in truth, as belonging to a class above Zilpah Garfoot's. Her father and his own had always met on equal terms. He had always thought of her, and loved her, as one belonging to his own station in life.

He began to put his papers in order. There would be no chance of doing so to-morrow. He determined to stay till midnight, if need be; for it should never be said of him that a single voucher had been missing or even out of place. It was hateful work. He felt that there was a keen sting of irony in this unromantic ending to all his castle-building in the clouds.

Half-past four. Still there was no sign of Zilpah. The young fellow was eager to see her once more. He had no belief that she could aid him. Her mysterious suggestions that help might be forthcoming had impressed him slightly, though he was intensely perplexed by her unwonted attitude toward him when he had made a clean breast of all his troubles. Could it be that Zilpah had formed some desperate scheme, he thought, by which she perceived a forlorn chance of lifting him out of his difficulties?

He was still busy over his papers—the clock in the tower of St Botolph's had just struck five—when a ring at the hall door caught his ear. The clerks were gone—had left the counting-house an hour ago—and there was no porter or housekeeper on the premises. Harborn hastened to answer the summons.

'Why, Zilpah!' he cried—for it was Zilpah

Garfoot who stood at the door—'I had quite given up the hope'—

'Had you! I am sorry I'm so late,' she interposed; 'but'—

'Come in,' said Harborn, closing the bank door and leading the way up-stairs. 'I can't tell you how glad I am to see you, Zilpah, whether you've brought good tidings or bad.'

Zilpah followed in silence. He had only caught a glimpse of her face by the light of the street lamp while letting her in, but it had impressed him as being painfully troubled. The faint hope of rescue—if it could be called hope at all—which the girl's words had awakened on the previous night were swiftly dissipated. She had failed in her brave effort to aid him; she had come to tell him so!

But Harborn assumed as cheery a manner as he could muster while ushering Zilpah into his room. It was sad to think that she should enter it for the first time, and make it seem almost sacred to him, on the very last night that he was destined to seat himself at the old desk.

'You see,' said he, with a forced laugh, as he pointed to a heap of papers on a side table, 'I'm busy putting my affairs in order. To-morrow, Zilpah—to-morrow, I shall give the lawyers instructions to announce the much-to-be-regretted suspension of Harborn's Bank. And then—and then'—

'Excuse me for interrupting,' said Zilpah, sinking wearily into the seat he offered her beside the fire, 'but does your bank close at four o'clock?'

Harborn looked at her with surprise; the cold tone in which she spoke was so unlike Zilpah Garfoot.

'Ten to four are the official hours,' said he, almost unconsciously adopting her formal manner. 'May I ask your reason for inquiring?'

'Suppose, Mr Harborn'—she scarcely seemed to heed his question—'suppose one had money one wanted to pay into your bank to-night, would it be too late?'

'Yes; too late in the ordinary way,' said the young banker, seating himself at his desk and looking at Zilpah with increasing surprise. 'It is not our custom to receive or pay any moneys after four o'clock—on Saturdays an hour earlier. But why do you ask?'

'I want to open an account at your bank—to-night, if possible—to-night, if you will break the rules to oblige an old friend.'

'An old friend?' Harborn could no longer bear this freezing formality. 'What can you mean? I—I don't understand you! You don't seem the same person to-night. Dear Zilpah!'

'No, no! Let us settle this affair.—Don't come near me!' she cried, as Harborn rose. 'Treat me as you would a stranger—a bank customer. I am nothing more.'

'Nothing more?'

'No. And if,' said she—'if you refuse me—if'

'What then?'

'I must call at ten to-morrow,' said Zilpah, in a firmer voice, 'and get the business settled down-stairs, Mr Harborn, by one of your clerks.'

Harborn stared at her in blank amazement. She wore the long cloak which she had thrown over her shoulders when leaving home that afternoon, and the hood had fallen back, and her beautiful hair was in great disorder. Zilpah noticed his look, and drew up the hood so that only a few stray tresses peeped out about her forehead.

'Since you insist,' said Harborn, leaning back resignedly in his chair, 'I will treat you as I would an ordinary customer.—Miss Garfoot, what can I have the pleasure of doing for you?'

Zilpah drew a sigh of relief as she took from the bosom of her dress an oblong envelope. 'I have a draft here—I don't understand these business matters—a draft on some bankers in San Francisco, as far as I can make out, for seven thousand eight hundred pounds. Will you oblige me by taking charge of it?' She held it towards Harborn as she spoke. His hand trembled as he took it from her; and after scrutinising it with the eye of an expert, looked perplexedly into Zilpah's face. He was about to speak, when she interposed with the question: 'Does it seem to be all right?—or does it appear a mere valueless bit of paper, that you stare so?'

'It's genuine enough. Yes, quite in order,' said Harborn. 'Do you wish this amount placed at your credit?'

'My credit? I don't understand.'

'It is your wish, I mean,' said Harborn, 'to open a deposit account with our house for seven thousand eight hundred pounds; isn't it so?'

'Yes.'

'This bank draft needs your endorsement,' said Harborn, turning it about between his fingers.

'Endorsement? What might that be, sir?'

'Your signature,' Harborn explained; and he rose to make room for her at his desk, and then handed her a pen.

When this further act of formality had been carried out, and Zilpah had filled up a printed bank form headed 'Deposit Account,' Harborn opened a safe which stood in the wall behind Zilpah's chair, and having placed the draft in a small side-drawer, relocked the safe and said: 'By the way, would you have the goodness, Miss Garfoot, to state on this slip of paper one small detail more? I am sorry to trouble you. For what period is the money to remain on deposit?'

Zilpah wrote across the paper, 'Five years.'

He uttered an exclamation, and was about to speak, but once more Zilpah's look and attitude checked him. She moved towards the door.

'You're not going?' said he, aghast.

'Why not? Yes; I am going home. The matter is settled, I think; isn't it?—Good-night.'

But Harborn could not endure this comedy—or tragedy as he felt it to be. 'Stay! You shall not leave me like this! You have saved my name—the honour of Harborn's Bank. Only an hour ago,' said he, 'I saw no escape out of the ruin that threatened; and, like a coward, I was bent on flight. I should never

have prospered: I know that—never have seen you again! But it is only now—now that you, Zilpah, have come to my rescue and removed this crisis from my life, that I can clearly comprehend how you must despise me.'

'Despise you?' Her voice was low, and a softer look had come into her eyes.

'Yes! I have myself to thank for your unbending attitude,' said Harborn, in a contrite tone. 'It is well deserved. But if you only knew how deeply I love you, Zilpah, I think you would show some mercy. I even think you would make some allowance for me if you knew to what a desperate strait the affairs of the bank were driving me.'

'I make every allowance,' Zilpah replied. 'You—you don't understand. I— Pray, let me go!'

'One word, Zilpah. What does this mean?' Harborn urged. 'You have still some confidence— You must have! You never would have lodged this large sum with me to-night, knowing what you know, unless you trusted in my honour. May I not still hope to win your love?'

'Let me go!'

'One look then—one word! You cannot doubt,' pleaded Harborn, 'since you have placed the means in my power, that I shall succeed now. My reputation is at stake; and I love you. Will you promise to be my wife some day?'

'It can never be!—Don't question me,' cried Zilpah, looking wildly about for a way of escape. 'I tell you it can never be.'

Their eyes met. A gleam of angry light came into Harborn's look. 'I'll question you no more!' He walked towards the safe and again unlocked it.

'What are you doing?' Zilpah asked in alarm.

'This bank draft for seven thousand eight hundred pounds,' said Harborn in a hoarse voice, 'has been remitted to you, Miss Garfoot, by Pilgrim Gray! He is on his way home to make you his wife—is already here—and—and—'

'Read that!' she interposed; and she handed him the letter which she had found in the oaken chest, sealed with a black seal and containing the bank draft.

Harborn took it and glanced at the contents. 'He is dead!' cried he.

She bent her eyes and gave no response. He stepped impulsively towards her. 'Zilpah! what is there now to keep us apart?'

She shrunk back, avoiding his hand. 'Don't question me,' said she—'don't touch me! Let me go.'

There was no detaining her a moment more. Harborn let her go, standing at the bank door, utterly mystified while watching her dark figure as she fled across the market-place and disappeared. Then he went slowly back to the room up-stairs, and sat down at his desk, trying to puzzle out what all this could mean. Surely she loved him. And yet her strange words and actions had filled his mind with a sense of tormenting doubt. Still there seemed to him something more than mere friendship in her generous impulse; for by placing this bank draft in his hands, with a full knowledge

of his insolvent condition, she had given every proof that she was willing to risk the loss of a fortune in order to save the house.

He went out and walked over to the *Cross Keys* hostelry, where the black mare was stalled; and presently he was cantering homeward along the dark highway. And yet, in spite of the fact that an almost overpowering load of anxiety had been lifted off his mind, another and even weightier care seemed to have fallen upon him. It seemed to Harborn, in a vague sort of way, that while accepting financial aid from Zilpah Garfoot, he was giving up something that he valued a hundred times more. Suddenly he drew in rein. It was not yet too late to go to her and give back this seven thousand eight hundred pounds. But as he was on the point of turning his horse's head, a strange disinclination, that almost amounted to dread, came over him. It was as though some voice had whispered in his ear, urging him to pursue his homeward way. A deep gloom, like the shadow of a huge warning hand, seemed to have been lifted between him and the old town. What could it mean? His own foreboding thoughts perhaps, he reflected, as he rode forward at a quickened pace.

Zilpah Garfoot reached home, meantime, breathless with running. She raised the latch of the forge door and went in noiselessly. The door leading into the kitchen stood ajar, and she caught a glimpse of her father seated in his chair beside the hearth. There was no light in the room except the glow from the fire, but it showed him lost in pleasing thoughts; for he smiled benignly to himself, and poised his head at a listening angle. His violin lay upon a chair at his side.

'Why, Zilpah,' said he, looking up, 'where have you been? I had thought to have had you, my dear, in St Botolph's this a'ternoon to hear me play.'

But of a sudden there was a change in the blacksmith's face. The change was so marked that Zilpah could scarcely suppress a cry. It filled her with dread; for her father half rose, and then sank back, clutching the arms of his chair convulsively.

'Father! are you ill?'

'Ill? No. Don't you know what's wrong? Help me with my coat!' and the blacksmith struggled to his feet, and stepping to the window, looked out. 'Why, there ain't no worser crime.—What's come to me that I should sit a-cogitating here at this time o' night? The hand-lamp, my dear—quick!'

'The lamp?' said Zilpah, with a bewildered look.

Garfoot glanced round at her over his shoulder as she held up his coat. 'Why, what's come to you? It's time I looked to the minster light; ain't it? It's death to let 'em steer into Boston Deeps without it a dark night like this!'

'Father!' and Zilpah recoiled from him with horror in her face—'is it possible you've forgotten to light the lantern in St Botolph's Tower?'

'Ay!' and Michael Garfoot hung his head dejectedly—for the first time for five-and-twenty year.'

Zilpah hastened to light the hand-lamp, while her father walked to and fro impatiently, buttoning his coat about him with trembling hands.

'Where ha' you been these hours?' he suddenly asked, turning upon the girl with a touch of anger in his tone such as she had never experienced from him before.

'To look for that letter,' said she—'that letter from Pilgrim Gray.' She handed him the lamp.

'You—you up there in the tower, Zilpah, and never had the thought to come for me?—Ah, well! It's a warning. It won't happen again.—You found Pilgrim's letter?'

'Yes.'

'In the oak box; did you?'

'Yes; it was there.' She took out the letter and held it towards him.

'Ay, that's the one!' said the blacksmith, recognising the long envelope and black seal.—'But how about the money? That was an idle yarn of John Grimshaw's, I'll be bound!'

'No, father; it was no idle yarn.'

'No! wasn't it? Well, I never!—But I dusn't stop to talk now,' said he, moving towards the door. 'I'd a deal rather the money had been lost than this should ha' happened. Upon my word, I would! And on such a night—such a dark night too.'

Zilpah had opened the door. He took the letter, thrust it into his pocket, and hurried out.

Michael Garfoot had not gone far—had not yet reached the bridge below the floodgates over the Witham—when he heard a step behind him. He looked back, and lifting the lamp above his head, Zilpah stepped breathless within the circle of light. 'What's ado?'

'Let me come with you, father; may I?'

'May you? What a question!'

'It's lonely at home,' said the girl, 'and I thought you were angry with me. I can't bear to think that! You're not angry, are you?'

'No. Why should I be? The fault's my own.'

She slipped her arm into his, and they hastened on their way. As they went along, the blacksmith, who was almost as quick to interpret his daughter's moods as she was to interpret his, surmised that there was something she wished to communicate that was troubling her—something that must be weighing heavily on her mind; for a confession of loneliness at home was so unlike Zilpah. But Michael Garfoot made no effort to win his daughter's confidence. He knew from experience that any sign from him would tend to discourage rather than incite her to speak.

When they had almost reached the last curve up the minster stairs, Zilpah leading swiftly with the lantern, her father cried: 'Stop a bit! I'm a trifle short-winded to-night. I s'pose I'm a-getting old.' He sat down upon a step to recover breath, and took from his pocket the letter from Pilgrim Gray.

'Don't read that now!' cried Zilpah, screening the light with her cloak.

'Not now! Why not?'

'Wait till we're at home,' said she. 'I will read it to you then. And then'—

'What then?'

'When we are seated over the kitchen fire,'

said Zilpah, 'as we were a while ago—I—I'll tell you everything.'

The blacksmith looked up inquiringly: 'About Pilgrim, is it?'

'Yes. I'll tell you what's happened,' said she—'what's happened since I came here to look for that letter. Yes, father, you shall know all.'

Garfoot put the letter into his pocket once more, and took the lamp out of Zilpah's hand. 'About Pilgrim, is it?' he reiterated. 'Well! wait two seconds. I'll soon set the lantern a-going; and then we'll get home.'

Zilpah waited in the darkness, seating herself on a step near the open archway, while her father mounted the stairs into St Botolph's lantern. In another minute the beams from this minster lighthouse of the Fens flashed out alike upon land and sea. The blacksmith, half-blinded by the strong glare, averted his eyes as he turned to descend the tall ladder. He had scarcely descended a dozen steps, when he saw Zilpah come from under the archway some feet below him, into the blaze of light, run quickly along the terrace, and sink beside something that seemed to Michael Garfoot like the prostrate figure of a man. A moment afterwards and he saw his daughter spring to her feet and turn an eager upward look at him while shading her eyes with her hand. 'Father!' she cried, in a frightened voice.

'Ay, ay, my dear. I'm a-coming.'

'Father! it's Pilgrim Gray!'

NORFOLK ISLAND.

THE Norfolk Island pine has found its way to most countries of the world; but to those who admire its magnificent stateliness does it occur to ask, Where is Norfolk Island, and of what character are its people? That facts may be as interesting as fiction, the following brief sketch will testify.

It may be stated that, geographically, Norfolk Island lies down in the Southern seas, distant some four hundred miles from New Zealand, and about nine hundred miles from Australia. It is five miles long, three across, and possesses an area of over seventeen square miles. It is bounded by precipitous cliffs, against which endless breakers roll. The soil is rich and undulating, and bears plants of many varieties, and groups of the magnificent pines known all over the world.

Captain Cook discovered the island one hundred and twenty years ago; and a week after the occupation of the settlement of Botany Bay in 1788, a contingent of the convicts landed there was despatched thither. This contingent made a very small party, the total being nine male and six female convicts, together with nine officers. These first settlers addressed themselves at once to the soil, and with results which answered the highest expectations. At several critical junctures afterwards, the main settlement at Botany Bay was saved from starvation by the arrival of supplies of wheat, potatoes, and other produce from the little island. From time to time fresh batches of convicts were sent out from Australia, until, in 1793, the population numbered 1008. In

that year the produce amounted to two thousand bushels of wheat, fifty tons of potatoes, and considerable quantities of other crops. In 1803 an Order from the Home Office directed the settlement to be broken up. Most of the residents were emancipists, or persons who had fulfilled their term of punishment, and it was officially considered that they would make good settlers on the mainland of Australia or in Tasmania. They were offered land in either of these places equal to that which they owned on the island; but so reluctant were they to leave the scenes of happy years, that pressure had to be applied; and it was not till 1806 that the island was vacated.

For twenty years the island now ran to waste. Looking back from to-day, one sees how egregious was the blunder which drove the emancipists from what they had made a home. Many of them did well in Tasmania and Australia afterwards; but many returned to evil ways, and that which was a garden in the wild seas became once more a place of desolation and decay. In 1826 the island was made a settlement for prisoners condemned to penal servitude in New South Wales. Prisoners condemned in Great Britain were sent to New South Wales; and to satisfy an official regulation of the time, those condemned in New South Wales were thus sent to Norfolk Island. The eighteen succeeding years make a terrible chapter of crime and its expiation. The island became the terror of civilisation. Death was preferable to living there. Dr Ullathorne, Roman Catholic vicar of New South Wales, and afterwards Bishop of Birmingham, England, went to the island in 1834 in the course of duty. A mutiny had broken out, in which nine of the insurgents were killed, and twenty-nine were condemned to die. Of the twenty-nine, eleven were executed. 'The twenty-nine men,' Dr Ullathorne writes, 'were confined in three cells. I read the names of the eleven who were to die. Each thanked God. The cruelties practised here made demons of men. Men drew lots to see who would kill the other.' Judge Burton attended to one hundred and thirty capital cases at one assizes in the same year. The little island which had had eighteen years of such peace and happiness that men longed to make it their lasting home, and from which they were only removed by absolute official pressure, became in these later eighteen years a plague-spot of human degradation, where the wildest and blackest passions brooded. And in the first period, as in the second, the material officialism operated upon was of convict pattern, leaving it to be seen how important a part system plays in the punishment and management of criminals.

In 1844 the island was declared to be no longer a dependency of New South Wales, and was by letters-patent annexed to Tasmania; but nine years afterwards, on the cessation of transportation to Tasmania, the struggle of inhabitants was withdrawn, and once more the home of the great pines was given up to desolation. On this occasion, however, it was quickly revisited. About the time the small band of convicts was sent from Botany Bay to Norfolk Island to experiment for a habitation, the *Bounty*, an

armed ship under the command of Captain William Bligh, quitted Otaheite with a cargo of bread-fruit trees, and, a mutiny occurring on board, fell into the hands of the daring outlaws. The captain and eighteen men were put into an open boat and sent adrift. The *Bounty* was afterwards burned, and several of the mutineers were arrested and executed; but nine who had escaped settled on Pitcairn Island, where, twenty years after, their descendants were discovered, now grown to a population of one hundred and ninety-eight—ninety-six males and one hundred and two females. On Tasmania withdrawing her subjects from Norfolk Island, arrangements were begun for transferring the offspring of the mutineers from Pitcairn Island thither; and in three years the transfer was completed, the dependency under these new conditions being again placed under the Governor of New South Wales, with instructions that the people were to be allowed to develop after their own ideals. Governor Denison displayed special interest in the starting of them on sound lines, while fulfilling to the letter his instructions from England; and soon the little community was furnished with a Constitution, which to the average mind of forty years ago must have seemed dangerously experimental. The franchise was given to all persons of twenty-one years of age and with ability to read and write. Education was made compulsory under a fine of sixpence per day, the accumulated fines going towards the remuneration of the schoolmaster, who was guaranteed a minimum of a ten shillings poll-tax per child per annum. It was forbidden to manufacture intoxicating drinks except for medicinal purposes; and if it were attempted to introduce them by sea, they were to be seized and poured into the harbour.

Seemingly, these measures of political and social government suited well the circumstances of the island and the temperament of the people, for, with slight changes, progress has been the rule. The population is now seven hundred and fifty. Originally, married and single were given a certain number of acres; but now the unmarried receive only twelve and a half acres, while the married obtain twenty-five; and with both, conditions are laid down demanding, under pain of forfeiture, annual improvements up to certain values. In addition to the population proper, there reside on the island a couple of hundred natives from adjacent parts connected with the Melanesian Mission, but the affairs of the island are conducted without any regard to these. The chief magistrate is provided with two counsellors to advise him; and there is a jury of seven elders, over twenty-five years of age, to deliberate and pronounce upon the guilt or innocence of accused persons. Last year, Judge Docker, of New South Wales, was commissioned to go to the island to hear two cases of exceptional gravity. The judge found on that occasion that the permanent force of the island consisted of one policeman, and that no jail existed. Having to sentence a girl to a term of nine months' imprisonment, he was accordingly obliged to order her to serve the sentence in a private household, where it was agreed she would be kept constantly employed and locked up securely every night.

Such is this remarkable little island in the southern hemisphere. There are no destitute there; none is out of work or hungry. Every acre of their little domain is put to use. Cereals and fruits of all sorts flourish luxuriantly. The excitements of the outside world rarely intrude. The islanders occasionally complain of this last matter; and to meet their desires, the Imperial authorities lately arranged that a boat shall call at least four times a year. Perhaps this will make their simple lives more enjoyable. It is at all events to be hoped that it will not make them less so.

A TALE OF ACCRÁ.

ACCRÁ is the capital of the Gold Coast, a portion of Her Majesty's dominions that has no great reputation as a sanatorium. Fate once ordained that my lot should be cast for a while in this West African town, and an agreeable lot it was in many ways, notwithstanding the insalubrity of the climate. My billet necessitated my living in a castle, which was not the least novel experience among a variety of new ones. When I say a castle, it is not to be understood by this that I mean a frowning edifice with 'cloud-capped towers,' and Gothic or Norman windows, as the case may be, after the manner of the solid piles of mediæval days. On the contrary, there is to be pictured to the mind's eye a light and airy structure, neatly perched on a promontory on the seaboard, and in its design admirably adapted to the exigencies of equatorial life. Cool breezes played about its verandas, from which could be surveyed waving palms, a cloudless sky, and a blue sea.

My quarters were situated on the western battery, and commanded a view of the extensive courtyard below. Now this courtyard had one remarkable feature about it, which was that quite a spacious portion of it was devoted to horticultural purposes. There were tubs and pots galore; and several ornamental beds had been laid out. To crown all, a magnificent flamboyant periodically donned its scarlet mantle. The whole was surrounded by a hibiscus hedge. It was in and about this attractive spot, which lay adjacent to my quarters, that the little drama was enacted which is the subject of this narrative.

On the staff of black servants at the castle were two Kroo Boys, whose substantive duty it was, at six o'clock every morning, punctually, to turn into the garden that has been referred to, water the plants—when they required it—collect and remove fallen leaves, and otherwise put the place in apple-pie order. A Kroo Boy, it should be stated, is a native of the Kroo Coast, the ultimate expression of the term having no reference whatever, as might be expected, to juvenility. He may be fifteen or fifty. The two Boys with whom we are concerned, Kaki and Sattoo, were probably each about twenty.

Kaki was a tall, raw-boned youth of solemn, almost lugubrious aspect. He rarely, if ever, smiled, and was slow and deliberate in all his movements. No one would ever have accused him of being capable of a bright idea; but yet on occasions, when least expected, he proved

himself to be exceedingly wide awake. On the whole he was a bit of an enigma.

Sattoo was as nearly as possible the reverse of all this. He was a smart, well set-up, good-looking darkie. His shiny countenance invariably wore a pleased expression, and when that bright smile of his expanded into a broad grin, which it did a hundred times a day, he displayed two rows of pearls which were at once the admiration and the envy of the beholder.

As a combination, Kaki and Sattoo were distinctly a puzzle. It was impossible to say whether they were friends or foes. They carried out to the letter the routine regulations which decreed that they should be associates in toil, whether the sphere of operations was the garden, or whether wood was to be hewn or water to be drawn; and to all appearances they worked amicably enough together; but for all that they never seemed to lighten their task, whatsoever it was, by the exchange of a remark of any kind. Day after day it was the same: Kaki was eternally glum; and Sattoo, so far as one could judge, the embodiment of good-humour.

Matters had been progressing in this fashion ever since my arrival at the castle, when early one morning, as I was taking it easily in my veranda, in pyjamas, obscured from the view of the outside world by the stephanotis that clambered over the trellis-work, I was surprised to hear not only a discussion, but a heated one, taking place between our usually silent young friends. Several words were pitched in a sufficiently high key to be heard where I was, but as they were in the Kroo vernacular, the mysteries of which I had not yet explored, they conveyed nothing to me. But I fully expected, when I looked out into the garden to acquaint myself with what was happening, to see Kaki assault his helpmate with the watering-pot that he held in his hand, and a counter-attack to be made by Sattoo with the rake which he held in his. Both had assumed defiant and defensive attitudes. Happily, however, at that moment the sergeant of the Haussas on guard at the castle gates hove in sight, and as he was coming in the direction of the disputants, they pocketed their differences, and resumed work as if nothing had happened. It was evident that a climax of some description had been reached.

On the following day a further mystery presented itself: Sattoo was nowhere to be found. He had suddenly and unaccountably disappeared, and no one was able to give any information as to his whereabouts. When two or three days elapsed and he still continued to be *non est*, it struck me very forcibly that the fall-out I had witnessed between himself and Kaki might prove to be a key to the situation. Kaki, therefore, was closely questioned in the matter; but as nothing could be elicited from him to confirm this view, the only conclusion that could be arrived at was that Sattoo, in accordance with the eccentric methods sometimes practised by the Kroo Boy, had, for reasons best known to himself, and sublimely indifferent to wages undrawn, taken it into his head to migrate to fresh fields and pastures new. He was not immediately replaced, and

Kaki continued to perform single-handed the daily round of duties which had been assigned to himself and his late companion.

About three weeks after Sattoo's mysterious disappearance, I had sat myself down in my veranda one morning, soon after sunrise, to negotiate just one 'Egyptian,' and cogitate possibly of England, home, and beauty. Kaki came to work as usual, and I watched him as he set about his task. Something peculiar in his manner caused me to take more than ordinary notice of his proceedings. There was no doubt that he seemed to be uncommonly perturbed in spirit. His heart was clearly not in his work. Moving about irresolutely, he appeared to be incapable of fixing his attention for long on anything. Then, for a change, he would fall into a brown-study, only to wake up and glance about him with a half-nervous, expectant air. And so on.

If I was puzzled by Kaki's erratic behaviour, I was considerably more so by the unexpected apparition, at one of the entrances to the garden, of Zeelah, the dusky belle of Accra. I had not seen that graceful little creature for many months, and her presence was a pleasing sight. Report had it that she had been sent to Krobo, the fetich stronghold in the hills where all maidens of marriageable age are sent for the purpose of being subjected to certain heathenish rites. However that may have been, there she was now as comely as ever, attired in a simple arrangement of blue baft, and looking charmingly picturesque. Zeelah lingered a while where she stood, and then passed in, walking with timid steps to where Kaki, with his back turned to her, was leaning over his rake, apparently engrossed in one of his brown-studies. He was not aware of her presence until she was quite close to him. As soon as he looked up and was recognised, it seemed, from the disappointed expression but too plainly depicted on Zeelah's face, that he was not the person she expected to meet. Making the best of the situation, however, she smiled, wished him good-day, and inquired as to where she could find Sattoo. She had only just come in from the hills, she said, in a soft voice, and Lectlas, her guard, had allowed her to stop at the castle to see her betrothed. Where was he? Did not Sattoo still work each day with Kaki? There was not a little anxiety in Zeelah's tones as she put these questions. 'Tell me,' she continued, 'Sattoo is well?—nothing has happened to him?' She saw that something was amiss, and the suspense evidently wrung her heart.

Kaki, as if unwilling to cause the pain which he knew his announcement would give, seemed to hesitate at first, but then told her how Sattoo had suddenly vanished, and no one knew what had become of him. But he (Kaki) knew—a statement that he conveyed with a wink and a shake of the head indicative of much wisdom—and since Zeelah wished it, he would tell her. It might be a hard thing for her to bear, but it was best that she should be told it at once. Sattoo had forgotten her, and was married to Dede, his cousin, whom Zeelah knew. They lived in Akim. 'But Manniko will tell thee all about it,' he added, 'for is it not the holy father that I see coming towards us?'

Entering at the northern gate while Kaki was speaking, there then appeared upon the scene the individual in question, an arch-priest in fetichism, and a personage not frequently seen in public. He was a most remarkable looking figure. At a first glance one might have been deceived into the belief that he was not a man but a woman—fat and forty—though certainly not fair. His waist was lost in another portion of his body, and if he was not addicted to the ways of the sybarite, his face certainly libelled him. He wore no covering on his head, and his wool, which had been allowed to grow to unusual length, was twisted into plaits, which by a dexterous arrangement on the skull resembled a cluster of intertwined snakes. There was a cunning, wicked look in his small twinkling eyes. His nose was broad and flat, his mouth large, his lips thick and colourless. He waddled rather than walked. Such was Manniko, who had the reputation—not without good ground, I fear—of being a singularly accomplished rascal. I felt convinced that his presence in the garden boded no good.

During the recital of Kaki's account of Sattoo's faithlessness, Zeelah remained speechless. It was six months or more since she had seen or heard of Sattoo, the seclusion of Krobo being rigorous in the extreme; and, loth as she was to believe it, the thought would assert itself that after all he had forgotten her. It was a cruel blow, and the heart of the little fragile thing was split fairly in two.

Manniko expressed no surprise at seeing Zeelah. It was to be assumed that he was fully informed of the movements of every member of his flock, and she belonged to it. On being appealed to by Kaki, he took up the tale of Sattoo's desertion, and delivered himself of many pious reflections on the subject of her happy escape from such a villain.

But Zeelah hardly heard. She felt benumbed, and all the light and joy in her little world were extinguished. Without vouchsafing a word, she turned from the two men and moved slowly away. But her strength failed her, and with eyes bedimmed, she sunk into the first seat that presented itself. As she sat there with bowed head and broken heart, she might have been in the tomb for any impression that her surroundings could make upon her. When she awoke from this state of trance, she found Manniko standing by her side.

'Biyo' (daughter), said he, 'it is not good for thee so to tear thy soul with thoughts of Sattoo. He is a bad man, and made but pretence to love thee; and when thou wentest to the hills, he married Dede; and have I not seen them after the day's toil, at sunset, walking hand in hand, making great love to each other? Think no more of Sattoo, little Zeelah. I have plans for thee that will make thee happy.'

'What wouldst thou have me do, father?' said the sorely stricken girl. The question was asked somewhat abruptly as she rose from the bench on which she had thrown herself. She had a fine sensibility, and was stung by the heartlessness of Manniko's suggestion that she could so easily efface the memory of her own true-love. As she stood there with her head tossed back, she looked a little queen.

Manniko bent forward—his fat face shinier than ever, his eyes glinting with more than usual devilishness—and whispered rather than spoke aloud, 'Marry Kaki.'

No sooner were these words uttered than it seemed to Zeelah that a light straight from heaven revealed to her the true situation. She knew that Manniko was well acquainted with everything concerning her, as indeed he was concerning every man, woman, and child in Accra. From the time that she had been left an orphan and had been adopted by the widow Takki, an eccentric but philanthropic old lady, he had kept a watchful eye upon her, and had taken good care not to allow her to stray from his fetich fold. She felt that he had evinced considerable interest in the legacy left to her by old Bombolo, the stevedore, which consisted of a valuable pair of elephants' tusks and half-a-dozen sheep. (Old Bombolo had died just before she was sent to the hills.) It also recurred to her how people said that Kaki was the son of Manniko (a relationship, however, which the latter would not have found it convenient to admit, owing to the fact that he professed to stand on a pedestal of strict celibacy). The thoughts of these things rushed into Zeelah's mind. Was there not an explanation in them for Sattoo's absence, and the evident desire of Manniko to see her wedded to Kaki, an alliance which she knew could be made binding almost on the instant if she would only consent to it?

In different circumstances, Manniko's personality would doubtless have appealed to her as one in which was centred all that was awful and mysterious in the diabolical practices of fetichism, and no such thought of resisting its influence would have entered her head. But now every sentiment of obedience was cast to the winds. She felt that she was the victim of a plot, and rightly or wrongly—hardly, indeed, knowing what she did, except that she followed the lead of her emotions—she roundly declared her belief that the whole story of Sattoo's desertion was false. Throwing the ugly phrase straight into Manniko's teeth, she also demanded to know whether it was true or not that Kaki was his son—and then—well, she did what most women would have done under the circumstances—relieved the tension of her feelings by bursting into tears. She had beard the majesty of fetichism, and what the results would be, now that she had done it, she trembled to think.

The fiendish expression that came over the Silenus-like visage of Manniko when he found himself thus defied by a girl over whom he had never doubted the completeness of his authority, can be more easily imagined than described. He was convulsed with rage, and positively gasped for speech. When articulation did come, however, it was full of malice and all uncharitableness. He swore by all the ghosts of his ancestors that her tongue should be slit, and that she should do at least twenty moons of penance. And a lot more.

At her flow of tears Zeelah felt relieved, but she was not unreasonably frightened at Manniko's threats, and turned as if to flee his presence. But the priest divined her intention, and, as he had not yet nearly exhausted his

stock of maledictions, stepped forward as quickly as his obesity would permit and seized her by the wrist. The electric shock of loathing conveyed by his clammy hand, and the pain that the grasp itself inflicted, produced the piercing shriek from Zeelah that followed.

I had sprung to my feet with the object of rushing to the rescue, when there came a sound as of a swirling wind. A swarthy form had cleared the hibiscus hedge at a bound, and before Manniko had time to meet the turn that events had taken further than to release his hold of Zeelah, he was clasped round the middle by a pair of arms endowed with a giant's strength, lifted on high, and thrown literally in a heap on the gravel path. In the next instant Zeelah's palpitating heart was beating against the heroic breast of her own true lover.

Manniko got his deserts—contused limbs. Nor did Kaki fail to get his; for when it was proved that at the instigation of the priest he had traduced the character of Zeelah—hence the rake and watering-pot episode—and had succeeded in sending Sattoo on a wildgoose chase to satisfy himself on the point, he was debarred any further opportunity of exercising his peculiar talents within the castle walls.

There was one particular in regard to which the conspirators had sadly miscalculated, and that was the celerity of Sattoo's movements. It was a grave doubt, in the opinion of some, whether it was intended that he should return at all.

On the following Sunday the chapel at the castle included in its congregation two converts from paganism—Sattoo and his bride.

W A N T I N G .

THE new year has brought back the same old blooms,

The daisies for the leas,

The bluebells sweet, and the cowslips' plumes,

And the pale anemones;

And again with the golden fires of spring

The woods and groves are bright,

And the same old songs the blackbirds sing

In the apple orchards white.

And the dawns are bright and the eves are fair

As e'er in the days of old;

And the fragrant hawthorn scents the air,

And the gorse is of burnished gold;

And the wind has come o'er the southern seas

From shores where the nereids play;

And as of old, do the brigand bees

On the clover blossoms stray.

There 's an amber sea in the far-off west,

Where the hills and the sunset meet;

And the hymn of the throstle by its nest

Is tender and clear and sweet;

And I wait and watch, as in days of yore,

By the ivied trysting-tree;

But ah, never, never, nevermore

Can my sweetheart come to me!

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A DAY IN THE LANDES.

By CHARLES EDUARDES.

THE Landes, or wastes, of France do not form a very attractive district for tourists, even French tourists. But they are well worth a visit. The people here are among the more primitive inhabitants of the country. For long they were left to themselves, their dunes, pine forests, marshes, and large silent lakes; while the rest of the country revelled in railways, high-roads of the best class, and the other blessings and excitements of civilisation. Their favourite, indeed to some extent their enforced, method of locomotion was stilts; and they wore sheep-skins, like those other extremely backward people, the Sardinian peasants.

But nowadays things are a little better with them. It is an enormous tract of country, this native land of theirs. Roughly, its western side stretches from the mouth of the Gironde to the Spanish frontier, more than a hundred and fifty miles of length; and there are places where its width is as much as fifty miles. Such an area exacted a colossal method of amelioration. A hundred years ago, this was begun by the planting, first of all, of pines near the coast, to stop the invasion of the sand-dunes; and the improvements then begun have never ended. Roads of a kind now traverse the district at broad intervals, canals have been cut to draw off the waters which used regularly in winter to form swamps as pestilential as destructive to agricultural enterprise, and there are even railways of a sad, slow order, a journey on which gives the traveller abundant leisure for taking stock of the monotonous landscape within his ken. More than this can hardly be done for the Landes. It is not as if there were a subsoil here that would repay the hard-working cultivator. The land is sandy to the last degree, and what vegetable matter is mixed with the sand is a bar rather than an aid to fertility.

One gets a glimpse of the Landes in careering

by the 'rapide' from Bordeaux to Spain. But it is not enough. There is much beauty in this kaleidoscopic picture. The green pines in their close ranks look charming on a hot day, and their varied undergrowth of pink-purple heather, gorse, and brambles, with, perhaps, the added glow of the bracken in its autumnal colours, form a vision of beauty that would extort praise from any one. But, we repeat, this is the Landes at their best. The casual traveller would exclaim, 'What a lovely region!' and, marking the innumerable little earthen pots hitched to the base of the gashes in the trees, might be excused for supposing that it is a wealthy region too. These pots are for the collection of the resin which is the one industry of the Landes. There must be millions of them in use between Bordeaux and Bayonne. They and the resin they gather do, in fact, represent a large annual expenditure and receipts. But for all that, this is one of the poorest districts of rich, thrifty France. 'There is no money here at all,' said a large, moustached lady of Bordeaux to the writer the other day among the pines. She had been visiting her relatives at Cazeaux, and was, she said, glad to return to the opulent city she had made her home.

The thing to do is to get to the coast south of Arcachon—that gay little health and pleasure resort—and, from the summit of one of the sand mountains, contemplate as much of the district as the clearness of the day will allow. Pines and sand for miles and miles; and the Atlantic chafing against the sandhills, as if it yearned to drive them inland in the old way, without let or hindrance. A healthy, invigorating prospect, but somewhat melancholy in its loneliness! Man can get little satisfactory foothold in such a land. And there are some two thousand square miles of it which are about as thinly inhabited as the Sahara. Where it is not sand, it must be pines or nothing. A man may nowhere in Europe lose himself more easily—and perhaps with less assurance of speedy rescue—than here, within a few hours of the

fourth city in France. The soft sand is not at all easy for walking, and the tangle of brambles and heath is in places dense enough for anything. Besides, the occasional weedy waterways which link the great lakes of the Landes together are another opposition to comfortable progress in a set direction. They are straight and stagnant, and upon the whole repellent: one fancies, the moment one is in their depths, some subaqueous power will grapple one's legs with irresistible force. A futile death-shout, and there will be one lost traveller the less in the world.

It was by mere chance that we spent a night by one of these lonely lakes of the Landes. We were in Arcachon, and, being thirsty, entered one of its numerous cafés. Here we clashed with a fine-looking man, who was soon well at work explaining that it were a sin to leave the district without visiting Cazeaux. To lend further zest to his words, he gave us his card, a professional bit of pasteboard depicting a man on stilts, and telling that the name inscribed on it belonged to the man who in 1889 ascended the Eiffel Tower on these same stilts; and also, two years later, journeyed—of course for a consideration—from Paris to Moscow in fifty-eight days on the like cumbrous supports. This was most interesting. We had come, in short, face to face with the very archetype of the Landes' people. It was diverting into the bargain to learn that our honest friend—a baker by trade—had killed two birds with one stone by gaining a medal for his bread at a Moscow Exhibition. He must have had plenty of time for thought about commercial ventures during that long stride across the middle of Europe.

And so, in the cool of a hot September day, we left Arcachon for La Teste, where there are scores of oyster-beds in the shallow Arcachon Bay, and prepared for our tramp into the forest. One naturally looked for some relic of the feudal abode of that great lord of Buch who lived here five hundred years and more ago, and was so stout a friend to the English rule in Aquitaine. But none such exists. I believe there is still a Seigneur de Buch, as there was in Froissart's time; but he does not now overshadow the land with his might.

It was on the threshold of the sunset hour that we set out down La Teste's dusty streets, its white houses mottled by the blue cottoned figures of men and women on the doorsteps. The day's work was over: a pleasant evening's idleness had begun. The people stared to see us go by, as well they might. The Rue des Landes, our thoroughfare, led nowhere except to Cazeaux, eight good miles away. Doubtless, the villagers asked themselves what in the world we could want in the forest at such an hour. But they did not put the question to us; they gave us our directions plainly enough, and were content to add a mere comment on the length of the road.

On the skirts of the village, with the dark pines already absorbing the paling horizon before us, we obtained our first and last view of a Landes' man on stilts. He was a picturesque person in blue, with a gourd slung round him.

Before him was a drove of distressed bullocks, lolling their tongues and tinkling the bells about their necks. He had brought them from the forest on his ten-feet legs, controlling them with a pole as long as his legs. Our stilted friend and his cream-coloured kine passed on up the leafy street of La Teste, and we set our faces towards the forest, already redolent of turpentine, and just gilded in the west by the sinking sun. It was not a very wise proceeding, this walk of ours, at such a time. But the Briton on tour is allowed a certain license of eccentricity; and besides, though there was no moon to aid us, we knew that the road was unmistakable, and that the southern stars on such a night might be trusted to help us somewhat.

All too soon the sunset glow in the unclouded heavens intensified. We could see the lurid light through the arcades of the pine trunks in the west. Then the stars appeared one by one, and the hum of insects, with the louder simultaneous chirp of grasshoppers, broke forth on both sides. It was like being in the tropics. And the close warm air was also more than a little suggestive of latitudes lower than the forty-fifth parallel.

We passed no houses and no enclosures. At first, it was the forest and nothing but the forest. Later, on the left hand, we could dimly distinguish a vast tract of the unregenerate Landes—level and arid and unplanted; while on the right the forest continued, with Cazeaux's railway line showing faintly now and then close alongside us. There was much that was eerie about this walk, and until the Great Bear was very emphatic in the heavens, and red Mars had appeared in the east, we rather felt than saw our way.

Cazeaux consists of a hamlet and a railway terminus, less than a mile apart, but separated by one of the long dreary canals of the Landes. It was to the hamlet that we had been directed. But our application here for beds missed its mark. A bulldog greeted us somewhat demonstratively as we knocked at a door which by good luck belonged to the hamlet hotel. The bulldog's master was very courteous, but could not receive us. And so we had to retrace our steps and flounder along the railway line in thick sand and a forest gloom that was almost oppressive, until yet another twinkle of lights betokened a dwelling-house. Here we were welcomed sufficiently, promised beds and a supper, and shown into a room remarkable for its extreme nakedness. It was much to be assured of a night's shelter, however, and we were glad to come to an anchor. Nor did it discompose us very much to hear that there were mosquitoes in the forest, and that, in all likelihood, we should make their acquaintance in the dark hours. 'What shall we do with them?' we innocently asked the stalwart landlady of the inn, when we marked the absence of mosquito or other curtains to the beds. 'Do!' quoth she—'why, kill them—so!' and she put finger and thumb to her cheek as an object lesson. This good lady also carried a moustache to her lip that would have made her ridiculous in England. Down here, though, it was not of a size to attract notice. We had seen

women not only with twirled moustaches, but also with whiskers worthy of the attribute Dundreary.

The night passed more tranquilly than we had a right to expect. We were not troubled inordinately by insects. And so at six o'clock we pushed open our shutters and looked at the contiguous forest in its fair sheen of morning sunlight. There was something vastly exhilarating in the spectacle, which included a corner of the great lake, lustrous as a mirror. Thus stimulated, we were not long in dressing, accommodating our *café au lait*, and getting down to the lake side, where a tub-like boat with a red-faced young man was awaiting us. It had been taken for granted that we would fish the lake, an assumption we were not disposed to quarrel with.

As a characteristic Landes lake, and the largest of them all, this of Cazeaux was well worth seeing. It covers about seventeen thousand acres, and is girdled completely by an undulating belt of forest, seldom more than twenty or thirty feet above the water-line. Here and there were slight bluffs, admirable sites for *châteaux*. But fashionable France has not yet taken to Cazeaux, and only one red-roofed villa of the ornamental kind could be discerned among the interminable pines. A single church spire above the trees on a distant shore was the only other noticeable indication of inhabitants on the lake's circumference. Before the shore-dunes rose up as a barrier between this part of France and the sea, it is supposed a dry valley existed where the lake now is; and a Roman road is even said to have run through the middle of it. But the lake has now got a firm hold of the land. It is a hundred feet deep in places.

We fished for pike, while our man lazily rowed us over the radiant water. It was scarcely a congenial pastime at so early an hour, for the air was frosty though the sun was hot. Very soon, however, we had heat enough for our purpose. The pale gold and turquoise and silver-gray of the morning sky were succeeded by an intense unclouded blue. The lake became smooth as a dish, and tried the eyes with its brilliancy. Nor had we much sport to encourage us to continue being slowly broiled. Twice only did the bell ring to which our lines were attached: a comfortable Southern method of fishing which enables the angler to devote his attention to other things until he has attracted the notice of a fish.

Towards eleven o'clock we returned to the shore and rambled about the forest. I never saw more butterflies than here: notably, the clouded yellow. The heath was in gay bloom, and the sun on our green canopy made a fine show. Blackberries were thick and ripe on the brambles. And the yellow and bronze of the bracken went well with the other colours about us. Thus sauntering idly, we returned to the hamlet, a straggling coterie of neat little single-storeyed cottages dispersed about a broad clearing in the forest. The people may be poor, but there were no signs of poverty in their tenements. Vines and fig-trees hugged the white walls, and made them pleasant to behold. But the cultivated fields—vines and Indian corn

—told their own tale of the uphill work of the local labourer.

There is a church in the hamlet, a commonplace French country church, with white walls and a ceiling painted with stars. But the plane-trees round about it were not commonplace. They had already begun to don the majestic hues of autumnal decay. Moreover, they offered us some shade. We got more shade at the hamlet inn, where, later, we breakfasted in a meagre fashion on a table set in the vineyard. This done, we gasped through the forest towards the railway station. We could well understand that the heat of the summer is as deleterious to the Landes as the rains of winter. The one withers the district with astonishing promptitude, while the other soaks it as mercilessly. And so we made our way back to La Teste. The train spent an hour in covering the eight miles: perhaps the heat tried it. As we returned in the evening to Bordeaux, a huge beam of purpled smoke was visible, trending obliquely from the heart of the forest towards the heavens. Our fellow-travellers were much agitated by the sight. Indeed, they had some reason to be, if they were either sympathetically or pecuniarily interested in the Landes. A forest fire had broken out. How it would burn, with such resinous fuel to feed it, the imagination may readily conceive. These contingencies represent yet another of the hardships attendant upon cultivation in this fascinating yet not altogether cheerful district. This fire in a few hours consumed, it is said, about forty thousand pounds' worth of timber.

THE MYSTERY OF PILGRIM GRAY.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

WHEN Harborn reached the office next morning, after a more restful night than he had known for some days, his gloomy forebodings had been dispelled. He sat down at his desk to open his letters without any dread of the possible threats of creditors. He broke the seals and read communication after communication—by no means cheering—without a single qualm. With few exceptions, these letters would have driven him half-crazy with despair four-and-twenty hours ago. But things had changed. The bank was as firm as a rock now. His credit would be saved! For wasn't there a draft on demand for seven thousand eight hundred pounds lying snugly stowed away behind iron doors? Yes; before four o'clock that day, Harborn reflected, the bill would have been discounted—it was drawn upon a leading San Francisco bank—and his affairs would be once more in a solvent condition.

He unlocked the safe and took out the bank draft that Zilpah had left in his keeping. While he still stood with it in his hand, revolving in his mind the best and quickest method of converting it into hard cash, the door opened and one of the clerks came in. 'Mr Garfoot, sir. He wishes to see you.'

'Michael Garfoot?' said Harborn. 'Show him up-stairs.'

Among the first to put money into Harborn's

bank, when Harborn's father started the Loan and Deposit business in the market-place at Boston, had been Michael Garfoot. During the last thirty years his account with the bank had been steadily on the increase. Harborn therefore regarded him as one of the oldest if not the most important client.

'Well, Mr Garfoot,' said the young banker cheerily as he placed a chair for the blacksmith, 'what can we do for you?'

Garfoot wore a greatcoat buttoned up over his leathern apron, of which an inch or two peeped out below his knees. He sat down and began to twist his low-crowned hat nervously in his hands. 'I reckon, Mr Harborn, you've not heard the news. Your manner tells me that.'

'The news, Garfoot?' and Harborn regarded the blacksmith more attentively. 'What news?'

'Terrible, sir,' he answered in a husky voice. 'You may hammer it into as neat a shape as you choose, you can't make it anything but terrible—leastways, for me and my girl.'

'Zilpah! She's not ill?'

'No. She bears up wonderful,' said Garfoot—'wonderful, considerin'. For it's likely enough there'll be a warrant out afore the day's over agin her and me.'

'What can you mean?'

'That's what I've come to tell you. Something happened last night, sir, that looks uncommon like the worst o' crimes—murder. An individual was struck down, as it's thought, in St Botolph's Tower; and the individual's name is Pilgrim Gray.'

'Pilgrim Gray?' and the colour left Harborn's cheeks.

'My old apprentice, Mr Harborn,' said the blacksmith, 'and Zilpah's young man.'

'And you Zilpah and you—are suspected of being concerned?'

'Ay, suspected. You can't hammer it into a better word, sir, try how you may.'

'But—but the thing's preposterous,' cried Harborn, with an indignant and angry look. 'How is it possible that you or Zilpah should be concerned?'

'That's soon told,' said Garfoot; and he proceeded to relate how his daughter was known to have been in St Botolph's Tower for an hour and more yesterday afternoon; how he, owing to a fit of abstraction, had neglected to light St Botolph's lantern at the hour of sunset; and finally, how, the lantern being once set going, Pilgrim Gray had been discovered by Zilpah lying on the terrace injured seriously, and like to die. 'At the very moment we found him,' Garfoot concluded, 'who should appear at the open archway at the top o' the stairs, Mr Harborn, but Matt Hibbins the verger, and a mariner what calls himself John Grimshaw! We carried Pilgrim down-stairs among us, and conveyed him aboard the mariner's ship. He's a-lying there now 'twixt life and death.'

For a moment they sat silent, looking fixedly at each other. The blacksmith was the first to speak.

'Mr Harborn,' said he, laying his hand respectfully on the young fellow's knee, 'I've known you all your life; and there ain't no

need to set the sparks a-flyin' when dealing with the true metal I b'lieve you to be. Come, sir! We had best understand each other at once.'

'What is it?' said Harborn, apprehensively.

'My girl was here, in this very office, about the time all this terrible business was a-going on. I've got her word for it! She's told me everything. You haven't a thought to deny it; have you?'

'No! Zilpah was here about five o'clock last evening,' said Harborn, taking the bank draft from under a paper-weight and handing it to the blacksmith.

Garfoot took it and examined it thoughtfully. 'The mariner, John Grimshaw, gave this to me,' said he, 'in that black-sealed letter to Zilpah from Pilgrim Gray. That was a week or two ago. I've a mind to give it back.'

'Why?'

'Why, Mr Harborn? Why, you see, sir, I'm mighty doubtful whether this money is my girl's a'ter all. How'd it be if Pilgrim should recover? He might lay claim to this here seven thousand odd pounds. There ain't no saying. But how'd it be should he die? Which it ain't unlikely! If this seven thousand odd pounds be used, sir, used as a desperate means o' saving your bank from a smash-up—you'll excuse plain speaking—wouldn't there be a sort of a reason to suspect you alonger Zilpah and me?'

Harborn started up from his desk. 'I never thought of that!' said he; and he began to pace to and fro.

Garfoot watched him distressfully, still turning the draft over and over while waiting for Harborn to come to some decision. Suddenly the young banker paused and rested his hand upon the blacksmith's great shoulder. 'She has told you that I love her; hasn't she?'

'Yes. My girl has kept nothing back.'

'You've no word to say against it?'

'Not a word,' said Garfoot.

'You have full confidence in me?'

'Ay, my lad,' said the blacksmith, holding out his hand; 'I would trust ye with untold gold.'

Harborn grasped Garfoot's hand; then he said: 'Now give me back that draft.'

Garfoot gave it back without hesitation; and then rising from his chair, shook Harborn by the hand once more, saying, 'I'll leave the business to you, sir, and trust you to act as a man of honour would do!' and then he went out.

Harborn had risen from his desk. A look of firm resolve crossed his face. The crash might come; the doors of the bank might be closed; but this draft on a San Francisco house, which had fallen so strangely into his hands, should never pass into circulation while a knowledge of its existence might even remotely injure Zilpah Garfoot's name.

A week went by. The day was drawing to a close. Michael Garfoot, in his leathern apron and cap, stood beside his forge fire. His daughter stood opposite to him, working diligently at the bellows with both hands. These two figures standing there, with the fire-glow

more brightly reflected, as the twilight deepened outside, formed an expressive group. Zilpah's figure was even picturesque in its attitude of energy and half-conscious defiance. The blacksmith had no look of dreaminess now. His whole aspect was that of a stern and almost dogged workman, without any visible sign of poetry in his grimy face. He presently drew forth a piece of red-hot iron with the tongs, and began to strike sparks from it on the anvil, beating out the metal in masterly style. Zilpah leaned an arm upon the bellows, watching him.

'Ah!' said he at last, still busy with hammer and tongs, 'this here's the music for me a'ter all. There's none like it when you're regular overset! The fiddle is my 'obby, I'll not deny. It has helped to pass many an hour; ay, an' cheer it too! But this is the pitch-pipe to go by, my dear; leastways, when the troubles come.' 'Perhaps you're right, father,' said Zilpah wearily; 'but we had need to hammer till doomsday to lighten the weight of trouble that's come upon us.'

'Now, Zilpah, don't you give way, my dear,' said the blacksmith. 'It ain't like you. Our luck's sure to turn! How could it be otherwise with all these horse-shoes a-hanging round the walls?—Come! Light the lamp. I mustn't be late to-night with the lantern in St Botolph's Tower. I don't know what the verger would say if 'twere to happen agin!'

When her father was gone, Zilpah still stood leaning her arm on the bellows, keeping the dying embers aglow by a mechanical movement of her elbow, and throwing up fitful reflections of the fire. Her cloak hung loosely over her shoulders, as though she had lately been out upon some errand, and had come back too tired and disheartened to remove it. While she still stood lost in thought, the clatter of a horse's hoofs upon the highway stole upon her ear and roused her attention. She raised her head, and seemed on the point of flight. But before she had moved a step, Harborn appeared, leading in the black mare at the forge door. He dropped the bridle and came forward with both hands outheld towards her: 'Zilpah!'

Her arm still rested upon the bellows. She moved her elbow, and awakened a blaze that was reflected upon both their faces. She met Harborn's glance with an intensely appealing look.

'Why did you hide the truth from me?' he cried. 'Why did you give me reason to suspect you for a single day? But I might have known. Forgive me! You are the best—the most generous woman that ever breathed.'

Again he held out his hands to her; but Zilpah never took her eyes from his face, seemingly too intent upon the words he was speaking to heed the gesture.

'I have had the good fortune,' Harborn went on, 'to learn the whole truth at last about the affair in St Botolph's Tower. You met Pilgrim Gray on the minster stairs—met him at the very moment of discovering his letter and the bank draft. You were on the point of coming to me; but he barred the way. There was a scene—a painful scene between you, I have little doubt.'

Zilpah put her hand before her eyes, but she uttered no response.

'It ended by your promising to marry him,' said Harborn, 'if he, on his part, would promise to lay no claim to the seven thousand eight hundred pounds for the term of five years.'

'Who told you this?'

'I have learned it from Pilgrim Gray himself, on board Grimshaw's ship. He is in a fair way to recover.'

'I'm glad of that. I was there an hour ago; but Captain Grimshaw wouldn't let me see him.'

'For the best of reasons, Zilpah,' said Harborn; 'another meeting between you in his present state of health would probably kill the man. When you abruptly left the tower—when you left Pilgrim Gray to his meditations—he was seized with a sudden giddiness and fell, striking his head against the stonework. There he lay until you found him an hour afterwards.'

'Poor fellow! I am much to blame. He looked as though he had been struck down,' said Zilpah—'and the verger gave it as his opinion that there had been an attempt on his life. Even Captain Grimshaw cast suspicious looks at my father and me. And I led you to believe, when I came to your office, that he was dead.'

'Yes. Why did you?'

'I dreaded being questioned,' said Zilpah. 'It was the only means of escape I could think of. We are no longer suspected?'

'No. And I'll take good care,' said Harborn, 'that no word is ever breathed against you again. The man has been subject to these attacks of giddiness ever since that serious illness that led to his reported death; for it was generally believed, at the time Grimshaw set sail, that Pilgrim Gray was as good as dead. He is not the man he was—never will be. He has never quite got over the effects of that fever; and there is little doubt that, what with the excitement of meeting you, and his jealous anger upon a certain night at seeing us here together—for it was Pilgrim's knock, after all!—naturally combined to unhinge him. But he is now out of danger once more.'

Zilpah had begun to draw her cloak more closely about her while he still spoke. 'I'll go and tell father at once,' said she.—'Thank you, Mr Harborn, for coming on your way home: thank you a thousand times! I can't tell you what a load you've taken off my mind.—Good-night!'

'Stay!' and Harborn stepped quickly before her as she moved towards the forge door. 'One word before you go. You can spare one moment more.'

'What is it, sir?'

'Zilpah, don't speak so coldly. I want to ask you a question. May I?—Well, suppose,' said he, stroking the sleek neck of his black mare thoughtfully—'suppose that Pilgrim Gray, realising, in his calmer moments, not only that you do not love him, but that a union between you would lead to serious misunderstandings as the years went by—suppose that, realising all this before it was too late, he had determined to free you from your promise—would you accept your release?'

Zilpah stared at him with wondering eyes, but no word escaped her.

'Suppose,' Harborn persisted—'suppose that, partly through his own good sense, and partly through Grimshaw's persuasion, Pilgrim Gray had resolved upon a long voyage with his trusty friend—a voyage that might extend over years—and that it was his wish to see the seven thousand eight hundred pounds invested in Harborn's Bank before he set sail—would you still keep me at arm's-length?'

'Dear friend! If it is really true,' she cried, '—if I am free—how can you ask?'

'Because I love you. Zilpah, it's true. You will not refuse me now?'

Zilpah took his outstretched hands. 'I have always loved you,' said she; 'but I never knew how deeply until I heard Pilgrim's knock, and—and you were gone.'

Harborn's Bank prospered. And at the end of five years the seven thousand eight hundred pounds, which had caused Zilpah so much distress, was repaid with interest to Pilgrim Gray. In the turret workshop in St Botolph's Tower, Michael Garfoot was to be often seen during the last days of his life seated on the oaken chest discoursing melodiously on his old violin. After Zilpah became Robert Harborn's wife, she seldom found the time to mount into the tower, as she was wont to do in former days; but her eldest boy was often there, seated at the blacksmith's feet, as the verger had often seen Zilpah Garfoot—he assured me in conclusion—when she was a child.

THE MODERN NOVEL.

THE best-read productions of the modern press, in the sense of being widely read, are doubtless the newspaper, the monthly or weekly periodical with instalments of serials or short stories, and the modern novel, whether in one volume or three volumes, either bought or perused through the circulating library. The idlest as well as the busiest people, the jaded business man, the clergyman, the lawyer as well as the working man, alike expatiate and recreate themselves in the imaginary world conjured up in books. Dr Conan Doyle, no mean master of the craft, magnifies his office, and warns us not to look at fiction as a mere pastime. It was one of the most vital influences in the world; what the people mostly read, and what they read, they thought, and what they thought they did. 'It moulded the character, and the actions of men. When one thought of what a single good novel could do, of the thousands of weary hours it had lightened to the sad-hearted, of the sick men who had been cheered up by it, he felt doubtful whether there was one sphere of human effort by which one could confer greater benefit on one's fellow-men.' And R. L. Stevenson has said, in allusion to his own intellectual development, that the most influential books, and the truest in their influence, are works of fiction, because they repeat, rearrange, and clarify the lessons of life, 'they disengage us from ourselves, and they

constrain us to the acquaintance of others.' We need not give opinions from readers, although much might be said of the abuse of this power, and also of over-production, as well as of the increase of 'Sexmania' novels, a passing disease in fiction, which it is to be hoped will soon yield to healthier influences.

No daring interviewer has hitherto managed to print a list of the reading of Queen Victoria, but it has been stated that she has read some of the novels of William Black and Thomas Hardy, Edna Lyall's *Donovan*, and in 1892 accepted a whole set of the novels of Marie Corelli. The favourite reading of the late Czar of Russia consisted of the fiction of all countries. Darwin enjoyed a novel being read to him, while Carlyle solaced himself with Marryat and the like, ere he buckled to the re-writing of the burnt first volume of his *French Revolution*. Ruskin likes a good novel, and what is more, has hinted as to improvements in the writing of them. One of the discomforts of his old age has been that the novelists have not allowed him to stay long enough with the people he likes, and that for the growing good of society, the 'varied energies and expanding peace of wedded life' should have more attention. 'The true love-story begins at the altar,' says R. L. Stevenson in his essay *El Dorado*; and Andrew Lang tells us the 'story is the thing,' and that all sorts of fiction are good save that which is wearisome.

The annual issue of novels, tales, and other fiction, in the shape of new books and new editions, is far beyond the powers of the most voracious reader. It amounts to something like three books for every day in the year, and in the case of 1894, if we include new editions, with two hundred or so to spare. Reports from librarians unite in telling us of the run upon fiction in the shelves of every public and circulating library. The Tate Library, Brixton, with five thousand novels on its shelves, had only one hundred not in circulation the other day. Mudie's first order for a novel in demand is sometimes three thousand copies. The success of the cheap collected editions of the works of Black, Blackmore, Hardy, Meredith, and others, with the continued sale of Scott, and the revival from time to time in the shape of new editions of the older and more classical storytellers, all point in the same direction.

There are many modern successes which are not easy to account for. These we can but chronicle, and the reader may make his or her own deductions. For instance, the sale of thirty-four of the books issued by Mrs Henry Wood has exceeded a million of copies; and had she been able to secure a royalty on all the dramatisations of them, she might have been, if not a millionaire, at least a much wealthier author. *East Lynne* leads off at four hundred thousand; *The Channings* at one hundred and forty thousand; *Mrs Haliburton's Troubles*, one hundred and twenty thousand; and so on down the long list, in a descending scale of popularity. Of the *Heavenly Twins*, four thousand were sold in three-volume form, and fifty thousand altogether in 1894. *Dodo* and the *Yellow Aster* both did well: of the latter, three thousand went in three-volume form, and the book is in a

fourteenth edition. Of Hall Caine's *Mancman*, fifty thousand copies were sold in five months. The sale of Scott's *Antiquary* during the first week of publication was six thousand copies. Of Mr Du Maurier's *Trilby*, one hundred thousand copies were disposed of by Harpers in America in ten weeks, and eight editions followed one another immediately on publication in this country: this last in three-volume form, a rare event in the case of any novel. The American selling price, we may add, is a dollar and a half; the English edition was published at the orthodox thirty-one shillings and sixpence. The original drawings illustrating *Peter Ibbetson* and *Trilby* have been sold for fifteen hundred pounds.

We were lately told that Mr Stanley J. Weyman made six thousand pounds in one year: this is explained when we know that he was able to put four books on the market when the tide turned in his favour, and as he has himself acknowledged, two thousand pounds of this sum came from America. The sale of J. M. Barrie's books was slow at first; it took five months to sell the first five hundred of *Auld Licht Idylls*: a notice in the *Spectator* started the book; and *A Window in Thrums* has run up to fifty thousand copies; while of the *Little Minister* forty-six thousand have been sold. It is quite natural here to point to the success last year of S. R. Crockett with the *Raiders* and *Lilac Sun-bonnet*, while the fortunate author has engagements booked up till the end of the century; and Ian Maclaren's (Rev. John Watson) *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*, has had a sale of thirty thousand copies in five months.

The increase in the demand for fiction has quickened the competition immensely amongst editors and publishers for the services of the first five or six leading novelists, and forced up prices in proportion. It is quite possible for a novelist who has a vogue, and who is neither a Thackeray nor a Dickens, to command one thousand pounds, or even fifteen hundred pounds, as the price for serial issue alone. A common method is to farm out a story through a syndicate or literary agent. Literature to the man who has a big public is not altogether a beggarly business. The gross value of Lord Tennyson's estate was over fifty-seven thousand pounds; that of Mr Froude was a few thousands more; while the value of Victor Hugo's personal estate in England was ninety-two thousand pounds. Chapman arranged to pay Dickens seven thousand five hundred pounds for his unfinished *Edwin Drood*, with a share in after-profits. George Eliot received in cash down for her different novels at least forty thousand pounds, *Romola* alone yielding seven thousand pounds. Wilkie Collins received five thousand pounds for *Armadale*, and three thousand pounds for *No Name*. The Bonners of Philadelphia have paid Mrs Hodgson Burnett as much as three thousand pounds for a new story. No wonder Mr Grant Allen turned his back in 1885 on the fight against poverty at scientific work, 'and took to penny-a-lining at vulgar stories.' But all do not receive the great prizes of literature; the highest work is not the best rewarded. Mr J. A. Symonds calculated that for eleven years' labour on his *Renaissance in*

Italy he received fifty pounds a year. And there are authors who work harder than the average clerk or business man, who cannot keep their heads above water. In literature, as in other professions, there is always 'plenty of room at the top,' and the best reward there. The struggle is at the foot of the ladder.

There is a fickleness about the regular novel reader: he is a perfect Athenian, ever craving something new; ready to drop a favourite author, when tired of his characters and trick of style, in favour of a fresh hand. Thus the older writers get elbowed out and forgotten in a surprisingly short space of time. We do not mean to indicate that this is quite the case with William Black, Besant, and others we could name who have been before the public for twenty years and more; but so many younger men have struggled to the front, that the stage is crowded, and all do not get a proper hearing. Rudyard Kipling, Rider Haggard, Stevenson, Barrie, Crockett, Hall Caine, Dr A. Conan Doyle, Mary E. Wilkins, Stanley Weyman, Gilbert Parker, Anthony Hope, all demand and have received the patronage of the fiction-reading public. So one writer crowds out another, and the question will be, Who is to stay? To be ignorant of the younger men is to belong to a past generation, although one feels that keeping up with them is often done at the expense of the 'classics.' Even the form of publication has been threatened; one volume, two, or three, what shall it be? Scott's *Pirate* brought in the thirty-one-and-sixpence price in 1822, while *Silas Marner* was amongst the first of the novels at six shillings and in one volume, a form and price which is very popular at present.

The foundation of Arrowsmith's well-known Bristol Library began with the phenomenal success of 'Hugh Conway's' *Called Back*, which sold for a time at the rate of ten thousand a week, and in less than four years had run up to three hundred and forty-eight thousand. The author had parted with the copyright for eighty pounds, but the publisher (as in the case of the Harpers and *Trilby*) generously gave him a royalty afterwards on the copies sold. One of the later successes of this series has been Anthony Hope's *Prisoner of Zenda*, which soon passed into a twelfth edition, and which, along with three more works from the same pen in 1894, and many magazine sketches, brought this clever writer rapidly to the front. He has gained a place in five or six years; and his 'Chronicles of Count Antonio' in *Chambers*, and other works, promise that he will keep it too, and advance. Like Anthony Hope, F. Anstey (Guthrie) and many another well-known author, Mr Rider Haggard, when he began literary work, only thought at first of filling up his time when preparing for the bar. The success of *King Solomon's Mines* led him on the ice; and of his most successful story, *She*, written at fever-heat in six weeks, one hundred thousand copies have been sold. Being a country gentleman, Mr Haggard can write how and when he pleases, which seems to be in winter, when there is less temptation to an out-of-door life. *King Solomon's Mines* is not far behind *She*, at ninety-four thousand. Rudyard Kipling, who has made capital of Tommy Atkins both in verse and

prose, has given literary form to a vast body of Anglo-Indian folklore and garrison romance. Ever since *Micah Clarke* and the *White Company*, and the better-known Sherlock Holmes stories, Dr A. Conan Doyle has been a popular favourite; while Stanley J. Weyman dates from the *House of the Wolf*, and has extended his reputation with *A Gentleman of France*, *The Red Kobe*, and *My Lady Rotha*. So that the historical romance of adventure is anything but dead amongst us. The novel and sketch of Scottish life and character begun by Scott, indifferently successful in the hands of Lockhart and John Wilson, and continued by Galt, Mrs Oliphant, George MacDonald, and William Black, received a powerful impulse from the work of J. M. Barrie, and has lost nothing in the hands of S. R. Crockett.

Thomas Hardy, Blackmore, William Black, Walter Besant, Mrs Oliphant, Miss Braddon, 'Ouida,' W. Clark Russell, 'Edna Lyall,' W. E. Norris, Marie Corelli, George MacDonald, Jerome, Rhoda Broughton, Wilkie Collins, Grant Allen, Trollope, Lord Lytton, and others, have had nothing to complain of from the readers at the circulating library. Mr Blackmore's *Lorna Doone*, one of the finest of our modern romances, had, as the *Spectator* says, 'the superior advantage of being novel as well as a novel, and came upon the world with the freshness and sunshine of a spring morning.' To other than the Devonshire man, it is 'as good as clotted cream almost.' Murray indicates its value as a guide to Exmoor. At first neglected, Mr Blackmore believes his romance caught on when the 'marriage of the Princess Louise with the Marquis of Lorne happened by the similarity of name to bring the book to public hearing.' It has gone through thirty-eight editions, while the original three-volume edition has been reprinted. Mr Blackmore has never again reached the same high-water mark. Since *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), Mr Thomas Hardy has had an excellent constituency, although *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* has been too much for some of his early admirers. Between three and four pounds have been offered for a first edition of the *Madding Crowd*. For long, George Meredith could hardly be called popular, though the recent issue of a cheap edition immensely widened his reading circle. The veteran novelist commands and brings a large price. When Mr Payn tells us that his average income for thirty-five working years has been fifteen hundred pounds a year from all sources, we guess how he stands with the public. He began by being frequently rejected, and the earnings of the first year of his married life were not much over thirty pounds. As the plot of *Mehalah* came to Mr Baring-Gould during a sleepless night at Mersea, Essex, and after a visit to a dreary house on a marsh, so Mr Payn's clever plot of *Lost Sir Massingberd*, which first appeared in *Chambers's Journal*, came to him while seated on the top of a stagecoach.

What Mr Swinburne has called one of our greatest masterpieces of narrative, and Mr Besant a picture of Europe before the dawn of learning and religion more faithful than anything in Scott, is Charles Reade's *Cloister and the Hearth*, which at first appeared as 'A Good Fight' in *Once a Week*, was recast, published about

thirty years ago, and lately achieved the honour of a sixpenny edition. In writing his story, Reade perused whole bookshelves and ransacked libraries. It appears that the editor of *Once a Week* having hinted at the speedy termination of the story, Reade reversed the catastrophe as it stands in volume form, as he made Gerard and his sweetheart happy. Mr Quiller-Couch agrees with Mr Besant as to this being one of the greatest of our modern historical novels. It is something, surely, to get all this for sixpence. At the date of his death, the romances of incident and adventure from the pen of R. L. Stevenson had all achieved wide recognition. Of *Jekyll and Hyde*, eighty thousand had been sold; about the same number as of Olive Schreiner's *African Farm*. *Treasure Island* stood at fifty-two thousand; *Kidnapped* at thirty-nine thousand; and its sequel, *Catriona*, at twenty thousand. These numbers are not remarkable. The greatest master of words amongst recent writers, he has defined his secret as 'elbow grease.' Though he was hardly a popular writer at first, the gruesome story of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde helped to carry his name abroad; but his sure touch in criticism and refined and delicate prose early gained the ear of the intelligent public, through his incomparable essays. According to Dr Conan Doyle, no man ever had a more delicate perception of the meaning of words than Stevenson, although his stories, while faultlessly composed, lack the robust vitality of Scott. But as a stylist he has been widely influential. A happy inspiration for a child's map of a treasure island suggested the outline of the story of that masterpiece in narrative. The *Spectator* has said that the boys who lived between *Robinson Crusoe* and *Treasure Island* are boys who had only a foretaste of what was in preparation. The success of the Edinburgh edition of his works in twenty volumes lends colour to the opinion that much of his work will become classical.

John W. Parker only ventured to print seven hundred and fifty copies of the *Heir of Redclyffe*, the maiden effort of Charlotte M. Yonge. Since it came into the hands of Macmillan in 1864 it has been reprinted twenty-two times up till 1889; the *Daisy Chain*, by the same author, has gone through twenty editions in the same period. Though it is not a novel in the ordinary sense, we note that *Tom Brown's School-days* was reprinted four times in 1857, and about fifty times altogether; while *Carrots*, by Mrs Molesworth, has been printed nineteen times between 1876 and 1889. Charles Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* in its various editions since 1885, has been printed at least thirty-four times. *Mr Isaacs*, by F. Marion Crawford, has been printed eighteen times between 1882 (the date of issue) and 1889; the demand for this story in 1883 seems to have been considerable, as it was at press nine times. *Doctor Claudius*, by the same author, has been printed nine times in six years. William Black's *Princess of Thule* (1873) has been reprinted fourteen times up till 1886. Four editions were called for in the year of publication. The *Strange Adventures of a Phaeton* has also been reprinted fourteen times. All this and more in this paragraph may be learned from the model bibliographical catalogue of Macmillan & Co.

Misunderstood, by Florence Montgomery, has been reprinted twenty-three times. We would like to know how often Mrs Craik's *John Halifax* has been reprinted, and also George MacDonald's *Alec Forbes*, but no facts are forthcoming.

In a brief article we can only touch the fringe of a big subject, and cannot touch fiction for the young, nor the American writer. We fancy E. P. Roe and Lew Wallace, whose *Ben-Hur* has sold to the extent of six hundred thousand, have had the largest sale in the United States. Dr Holland, the founder of *Scribner*, is not far behind them. The immense sale of 'yellow backs' goes without saying, and of sixpenny editions, such as Wilkie Collins's *Woman in White*, one hundred thousand is a common first impression. The secret of the immense popularity of Mrs Henry Wood has been ascribed to the fact that she was the novelist of the 'commonplace respectables'; that 'she could embody for us the ordinary middle class, unintellectual, half-disagreeable folk, of whom there are thousands round us, courting, fighting, stealing, giving, exactly as she described them.' Charles Lever tells us he wrote as he felt, sometimes in good spirits, sometimes in bad, always carelessly. 'God help me, I can do no better.' The authoress of *John Halifax* doubts if any really immoral man or irreligious woman ever made a good novelist. 'Whatever you give, let it be the best that it is in you to give, whether success ever come, or be long delayed,' says Mrs Parr. And no advice could be better.

COUSIN CHARLEY.

I.

'SHE is lovely!' said the cousin from Buenos Ayres.

'Indeed!' said little Flo.

'And our meeting was quite a romance. Green hawthorn boughs and roses and things on all sides—after we got out of the station. I am glad I managed to take the wrong train from town!'

Flo held up her finger, laughing. 'Think of poor little me—and of the pony—waiting half an hour in dismal disappointment, and then crawling back alone, past the same hawthorn boughs and roses!'

'Oh yes,' said Charley, laughing back. 'But one can't connect romance with you, or with—the pony.'

'Then tell me about the beauty.'

'Well, she got out of the same train, and nobody met her either. She had a little bag to carry, and I had nothing. So, when we got out of the station and began to march solemnly down the one long road, I raised my hat and said, "Allow me," which may have been uncivilised; but when a fellow has just arrived from the wilds, he can't be expected to know that it is rude to offer to carry a lady's luggage. She turned the loveliest indignant face in the world upon me, hugging her bag with both hands. "No—thanks," she said shortly, and proceeded to the very farthest side of the road. It made me very red; and then I began to feel amused; for she was looking with all her

might for a stile to get over; and if there were any breaks in the hawthorn, those sweet wild-roses crammed them up.—Honestly, Flo, do I look very—primeval?'

She pretended to study him, but answered fairly: 'No; only fresher than most people. Not a bit like a tramp.'

'She did not like my presence, though, un-introduced! And you see we walked at pretty much the same pace; she on one side and I on the other. I think the roses near her were sweeter; she kept her eyes on them, and I glanced that way too. But suddenly she turned and caught my look. Then she stopped to fasten a bootlace that was not untied; and as she meant me to proceed, I did it, though it was hard.'

'Poor boy!' said his cousin feelingly, patting his shoulder as she spoke. 'What a long story! And are you very, very smitten?'

'Oh, awfully,' said Charley. 'Be a comfort to me, Flo.'

She smiled as frankly as himself. 'Indeed, I will,' she said. 'You shall pour out your woes to me as you used, and I will advise you; and ask her to tea.'

Out of the depths of an easy-chair came a sudden interruption: 'Well, children, and what about the wedding?'

They stared at each other blankly. The wedding!

Flo looked down at her hands. They were not pretty. Useful little pudgy things, not overburdened with jewellery. She wore only one ring, and it flashed in her eyes now, reminding her of something.

Charley, following her look, started. 'Oh!' he said.

A shadow of constraint fell over them. It spoilt their talk, and made them—these old comrades!—positively shy. It was absurd. Flo said so to herself, looking as if she would like to pull off her only ring. But she had worn it long, and only soapy water could get it from her finger.

She and Charley had always been the best of friends; but just before he went, a boy of twenty-one, to make his way abroad, they had had a sentimental fit. Charley had spent an uncle's tip on a ring for her, and Flo's parents took the matter seriously, though the two young things got over their sentiment very soon.

After the first few mails, Charley wrote no more flowery details of the house he meant to build, and the telegram he would send to fetch her when it was ready; and Flo quite gave up studying the wedding gowns in papers. But when Flo was left an orphan, and Aunt Mary had addressed to him a long and solemn letter, he wrote to Flo, bidding her remember she belonged to him, and then filling up the rest of his letter in the old brother-fashion.

Now Charley had come over to England 'for a spree,' he said. He found his little cousin the same as ever, a bright, busy, little soul; fair and round, and not particularly beautiful, but the jolliest little comrade in the world. The very first morning she had gathered up his socks and carried them off to mend, in the nicest and least romantic way. Like a shock to both of them came the fact, never soberly faced

till now, that they were engaged to each other!

Aunt Mary, very kindly and considerately, remembering that the two had not had a private talk since Charley's coming on the day before, rose up from her comfortable chair and left the room. Her niece looked after her in consternation; and Charley gave an embarrassed laugh, and then began to whistle. There was no savour in an obvious tête-à-tête with Flo. It was she who solved the difficulty by getting up and retreating after her too kind relation. 'It is ridiculous!' she cried, pausing on the threshold; and then she slammed the door.

'My dear child'—Aunt Mary was holding forth in the kitchen, whence the only maid had been despatched upon a message. Flo knelt on the fender, making toast, and her cheeks were as hot as her angry little brain.

'My dear child,' went on Aunt Mary solemnly, 'the present arrangement, sanctioned by your parents, is eminently desirable. Charley and you know all each other's faults and habits; and such a good little housekeeper as you are is just the thing for a man in his position. I may say you have been brought up expressly for that purpose, since I have always in your training kept your probable future well in mind'—

'Bother!' ejaculated Flo.

'Besides, my dear, your parents quite considered it a settled matter. You would surely never disappoint their wishes, and for a whim of your own upset a plan known and approved by everybody, and especially advantageous to yourself and Charley'—

Flo's toast was burning black and ominous. She only said, however, getting redder, 'But if Charley does not care—for me?'

'He is very fond of you, I am sure,' declared Aunt Mary, 'and more than that would be superfluous'—

'Or—I—for Charley?'

'Do not be foolish!' With these words Aunt Mary caught the fork from her niece's careless hands and held up the smoking toast. Flo saw rebuke approaching, and decamped, but not to go and talk to Charley. There was a lump in her throat that would have to come out at her eyes.

'Take Charley for a walk.' These were Aunt Mary's commands, delivered stringently, and Flo, while fetching her hat, made up her mind that it should not be a solitary country ramble. It would have been so nice to tramp over muddy fields with Charley and chatter as they did of old. But that was impossible when they were sent out as engaged people, with the horrid consciousness upon them that they were truly such.

'We will call on the Smiths,' she suggested quickly, and Charley seemed relieved.

Out of Aunt Mary's sight, they were not so constrained, and managed to forget that they were anything but chums. As they marched up the weedy path that brought them to the Smiths', the rising fun in Flo's gray eyes encountered more in Charley's, and they rubbed their boots on the mat in merry fellowship.

There was tennis going on in the garden behind. They passed through a crooked passage, and came suddenly out among geraniums and balls and people.

'There she is!' whispered Charley—'the beauty of the station.' But Flo looked disappointed.

'That is Helen Smith,' she whispered back. 'Oh Charley, is she your style?'

'I think her very pretty,' said Charley stoutly.

His cousin raised her eyebrows. 'All right; I will present you,' she observed shortly, 'and you can go and talk to her.'

Charley was only too delighted. Properly brought up and introduced, he was quite acceptable to Helen Smith, and was permitted to fetch a camp-stool to her side. Her big dark eyes were very kind, and her voice was slow and friendly.

At the end of a very pleasant quarter of an hour, he looked lazily round to see what Flo was about, and saw her wandering among rows of distant cabbages with a tall and soldierly companion. As Charley could not keep his eyes entirely fixed on Helen Smith, he glanced over yonder now and then, and counted how often they passed the cabbages. Six times. It was rather rude of Flo to desert her cousin so completely. They turned. She must be coming now. But no; they went serenely off along a hedge of peas.

'Well, did you get on with Helen Smith?' said Flo, as she and her cousin proceeded home.

Charley, however, had a grievance which no gratitude could smother. 'What made you go off with that fellow?' he said. 'I didn't like the look of him at all.'

Flo looked up quickly, with the light of battle in her eyes. 'No? He is Helen's brother—an officer,' she said, and then was silent, though she had not uttered all she meant to say. After a while she spoke again, briskly: 'To-morrow, Helen is coming to tea.'

Charley was at his window. On the chest of drawers lay a row of neatly folded socks, fresh from Flo's tidy fingers. She had hemmed the crisp little frills of the curtains he pushed aside, and she had pinned illuminated texts above the mantel-piece. But he was not thinking of Flo. Perhaps of somebody with great dark eyes, and a slow, sweet voice. Somebody whose face was like that in a Christmas annual that Flo had once posted to Buenos Ayres, along with her own photograph in a tie and sailor hat. He had gazed long at the lovely face in the engraving—far longer than he had at the likeness of his little cousin! He had said then that he would never see such a face in real life. But he had seen Helen Smith.

All at once the small room seemed to stifle him. It reminded him of ties and promises that hemmed him in, ties that he could not fairly break. It made him feel as if all beautiful faces like Helen Smith's were far away, and amongst the rest of dear things unattainable; and he could not bear it.

Hurrying down the narrow stair, and just diving into Aunt Mary's presence to secure a

match, he went into the garden and began to smoke. A straggling apple-tree hid the still little red-brick dwelling from his view, and far down the twisting road he could see the trees and the white smoke of Helen Smith's abode. It was hard on a fellow to be bound like this. He had been a boy and an idiot then; but everybody took it for granted that he had the same mind still. And he could not fairly go up to Flo, kind little Flo, and say: 'You are a jolly little chum, and I like you very much; but I do want something else in a wife.' That would be a mean thing, and he could not do it. But if only—

'Charley!'

He started. Flo, in her cotton blouse and dark blue skirt, was hurrying down the path. Her face was red, as if she had been crying, and her hair was rather tumbled. 'I want to speak to you,' she called, panting. Then she took him to the very end of the garden, which no window saw, and began. 'Aunt Mary has been driving me wild. She keeps reminding me that you and I are engaged, and telling me that—that you really need me, and that it is horrid of me to feel—different. Oh Charley, we were such good friends before! and now I know we are both cross and miserable, and I am sure you are getting to hate me, and I—I am getting to hate you. It would be so much better if we were not engaged, and if we might do whatever we liked. I want to give you back your ring, Charley; and, please, let us be happy again!' She ended with a short, excited sob, and held out the ring glittering in her palm. There was a mark round her finger where it had been, and she had spent an hour trying to get it off with soap and water; but at last she had succeeded, and had brought it out all wet and shining.

Charley looked at her, full of relief. Poor little Flo! So she had been in the same condition as himself, only she was braver about it than he, and had had the courage to put an end to it all.

'So that is all square,' he said, after many arguments put weakly on his part, and a triumphant overriding of them by Flo. Tucking her arm in his own, he proposed a walk. But Flo shook her head, and said she had things to do. Would he take a note to Helen Smith?

II.

He was free, quite free—Charley told himself so many times, as he tramped down the muddy country lane with Flo's little note in his pocket. It made a difference to everything; the very air seemed lighter, and the sun more cheery. Still, he was sorry that Flo had not kept his ring. She had had it so long; it did not seem nice of her to give it back like a trifle she did not prize or care for in the least. Might she not have said: 'I will keep my ring for your sake all the same, Charley?' He had asked her to; but she had declared that Aunt Mary would need its disappearance as a proof that matters were really at an end. Dear little Flo! She was as glad as he was to be on the same footing as of yore, and to have got rid of the complication that was upsetting their friendship for each other.

The Smiths' gate swung gaily shut as Charley sauntered through. The Smiths' cat sat on the door-mat very solemnly, but arose to greet him, and purred about his boots. And Helen Smith rose slowly from a hammock in the garden and met him on the grass. He was not taken into the drawing-room. Why should one introduce dirty feet to the crumbless carpet, and disturb the fluffy tidies on the chairs, when the sun was shining warmly on the lawn?

The note was opened and read. Something about bazaar-work, needing Mrs Smith to dictate the answer. She was out; but Charley was willing to wait, and Helen sat under the trees and looked enchanting; while he in his new-found freedom felt as if there were nothing to prevent his gazing at her as much as he liked, and as long as she would let him. The martial tread of Helen's brother disturbed them suddenly. He stalked up, leaving heavy traces on the grass, and shook hands with Charley very shortly. Then he looked round and asked if he had come alone. The civilian saw him march back into the house, and thought to himself that Major Smith was a poor specimen of a British soldier, in spite of his girth and height. It did not need Helen's soft laugh to explain that if his cousin Flo had accompanied him, Major Smith would not have been in such a hurry to retire, though he had 'letters to write.' And Charley considered that Flo was far too good for him, though he was Helen's only brother.

Helen did not talk much, now they were together and alone. But Charley trusted that Mrs Smith would not feel called upon to hurry. How beautiful she was!—not Mrs Smith, of course. How daintily her hair waved backwards, and how sweet and white were the hands that lay so idly on her lap. He could not help wondering how the ring Flo had repudiated would look on her taper finger. It would have to be taken in considerably first. And then the brisk swish of coming skirts was heard, and Mrs Smith called out 'Good-morning!' shrilly in advance.

Walking back, Charley shut his eyes and tried to call up visions of Helen Smith: Helen in long white floating robes, with flowers on her head; Helen on board ship, with the wide blue sea glinting up in her eyes; Helen standing on a veranda, greeting—somebody. The pictures he called up were pretty ones; but somehow they all stopped at the veranda, over which the jasmine stars were drooping, with the soft winds sighing past. Homelier, simpler pictures did not suit so well. It was easier to fancy some small, busy face, like Flo's, smiling across the teacups, or looking warmly up from the winter fire. He had too much reverence for the stately Helen to imagine her trotting about in a shabby house-frock, with a jingle of keys at her waist, and thoughts of tea and sugar. She was a beautiful thing to admire and treasure, not a mere ordinary being such as Flo. Lightly, rapidly, the summer days went by. Flo made the dearest little comrade in the world, and when she said that Helen Smith was not her style, she would always end by talking of her beauty, which was very kind. But Charley could not get on with Major Smith.

Men are so greedy. His relief had been intense when Flo had cut the knot in early summer. They were free again, free to go back to the early friendship that had been no encumbrance, that had not shut all romance for them into one dull and narrow groove. And that was to both delightful. But now, when the time of his going was not so far, he was not so content. He did not like to think that his little cousin's face should brighten more for anybody else—that he should be 'only Charley' to her now. It was greedy and stupid to feel so. He told himself that with a laugh, and tried to be more charitable to this Major Smith, who seemed to have so much good sense. He would be a lucky man if he married Flo—if he was not only flirting—and at that thought Charley ground his teeth. If anybody dared to flirt with Flo, dear little Flo!

He took to watching Major Smith, instead of giving all his mind to Helen. Yes, he was sure of it—there was no sincerity in the man. He was amusing himself. And what would it be to Flo? Charley made up his mind to warn her. A brother and a chum might well do that. So he followed her into the garden, where she was picking gooseberries, and offered help.

'Thanks,' said Flo, displaying her scratched fingers wofully. 'The harm is done!'

'Oh, what a shame!' said Charley; and then, suggestively, 'Can't you wear gloves?'

'My hands are not ornaments, like Helen's,' retorted Flo snappishly, and continuing to thrust them into the thorniest bushes.

He helped to fill her bowl, and then, when she sat down on the grass to cut off the tops and tails, he established himself beside her and began to feel his way.

They talked of the house across the ocean—which Flo would never see of the shiftless bachelor rooms that might be made so pretty—of the yellow rose that *would* not beat the jasmine, and that nobody ever tended. And Flo was full of such clever plans and fancies, that Charley said: 'I do wish you were there to carry them out!'

Flo laughed. 'Honestly, Charley, you are wishing that somebody like Helen Smith, somebody with beautiful eyes and voice—and primed with good advice from me—was sweeping up and down the veranda and ordering you to do things!'

'Talking of Helen Smith,' said Charley quickly—here was his chance—'I wanted to speak to you about her brother.'

'To speak to me?' and there was something very proud in the way Flo lifted up her little voice.

'Yes. I don't like the way--I mean I think he is trying to amuse himself—to—'

'Go on,' said Flo.

'Well, "flirt" I suppose you would call it,' finished Charley lamely—'with you.'

The bowl was overturned. The gooseberries rolled far and wide over the grass, and Flo stood up in a blaze of indignation. 'What right have you?' she cried tempestuously; 'and what business have you to suppose that, because you cannot care for me, because you do not think me pretty, others cannot? I will thank

you to let my affairs alone, and to try and imagine, if you can, that everybody may not feel as you do.' Then she caught up the empty bowl, and, crushing the gooseberries under her hasty feet, departed.

Flo was offended, and Charley found it a very serious matter. Rain had come on; there was no getting out. He was thrown on Aunt Mary's powers of entertainment, and got no help from Flo. The sitting-room had a damp and clammy feel. His own room was being 'cleaned' by a dilatory maid; the carpet was up, and could not be shaken in the wet. And Aunt Mary's talk was that of a barometer.

He waylaid Flo on the stairs once and began to make apologies. But she, sailing down, smothered in a big white apron, said she was busy, and quickly disappeared. Charley lingered in the draughty passage for a space, and then pushed open the kitchen door. The maid was up-stairs, and Flo in sole possession. The fire shone from the open range, and glittered on the polished things hanging about. Flo's hands, looking white and comely, were dabbling in white clouds of flour, and she looked so bright and busy that Charley forgot her wrath and took one step towards her. But on seeing him, her face changed, and the little song she was humming stopped. 'You must not come into the kitchen,' she said. 'Aunt Mary would not like it;' and her voice was dry and cold. She would not answer his beseeching except by a sharper repetition; and he had to remove himself from thence. That warm little picture fixed itself on his mind regretfully through the whole dreary afternoon.

She did not relent at night. And the next morning she had to go to a dentist, and Charley might not come with her. She would be all day about that and other things; and unless he cared to walk about the streets of a country town for hours in solitary state, he had better stay at home. So he stayed, and found the day extremely long.

He went over to the Smiths' for a little, but did not enjoy it so much as he expected. Helen looked as lovely as ever, but then she had always looked the same. For the first time Charley felt impatient, bored, and took himself off early.

He had observed a sudden look of Major Smith's as he said that Flo was coming back that evening; and he wondered if Helen's brother meant to have the impertinence to meet her. The fancy bothered him. He did not know by what train she would come. She would not say, but declared that all depended on the dentist and if he was merciful. But supposing that fellow Smith was going to hang about until she arrived, ought not Charley to go down? Even if Flo resented his brotherly attentions, still, as her oldest friend, and one who might have been more than that, he ought to take care of her, and keep the other, the insincere Major, at a distance. So Charley thought; and he marched along to his duty, feeling like a judicious guardian and a meritorious friend.

The first thing he saw on the platform was Major Smith stalking up and down and watching the smoke of a coming train. He started

as Charley banged the little gate, but greeted him quite coolly. 'I just turned in to see about a parcel,' he remarked. 'Idiots, these porters!'

'They seem intelligent,' said Charley.

'Well, they can't find it,' said Major Smith. 'Say it has not arrived yet, and may turn up any time. So I must wait.'

'Can I do anything for you?' asked Charley most politely. 'I am waiting for my cousin, and perhaps—'

'Thanks so much; but I must see to it myself,' said Major Smith; and as train after train arrived, he questioned the guards and stuck to the platform. When Flo at last arrived, they were both still on the spot; when the Major said he must give it up, and the three went solemnly together down the road.

Flo was quite happy. The dentist had not hurt her much. But she had not forgiven Charley.

Major Smith was on one side, and he on the other; but Flo always turned to the Major when she spoke or smiled; and Charley strode glumly on and longed to punch his head, and do other zealous things that were not called for. It was a dismal walk for Charley. His cousin looked so bright and cheerful, and was so very oblivious of him; and he was sure the Major was only amusing himself; and altogether it was wretched. He had nothing to do but stare at the sloppy fields, and listen to their talk—so seldom including him—or think—

III.

'A letter for you.'

'From Helen? Thanks,' said Flo carelessly, and she filled all the cups before she opened it. Helen Smith had gone on a fleeting visit somewhere, escorted by her brother. It was nice of her to write, but the letter could be nothing very special.

'Oh!' A short gasp made Charley look up. She sat quite straight, with her eyes wide, and her cheeks suddenly pale. Then she crumpled up her letter, and meeting her cousin's look, swallowed her tea quickly enough to make a casual observer think it had gone the wrong way, when she got up and hurried out.

Going up-stairs soon after, Charley heard a sound of crying. Flo's door was shut, and she did not speak when he called. There was clearly something wrong.

Poor little girl! So the blow had fallen, the thing that he had feared. Something in Helen's letter had done it. And a sudden anger rose in his mind against her. She was beautiful, charming; her eyes were dark and lustrous, and her voice was sweet. But she had not had the sense to avoid wounding her friend, or the heart to do it gently.

Poor little Flo! Charley had seen it coming; he had warned her, but she would not hear. And now Helen's own hand had shown up her brother; and Flo was comfortless. Oh, if Charley had only got that fellow in his grip!—that villain who had dared to play with her. He listened anxiously. She was crying still.

He called, and again; but she did not answer. So, with a sore heart, Charley went down and out into the garden. He stalked

about blindly, trampling over Aunt Mary's mignonette and young potatoes, thinking of nothing but his little cousin and her sudden grief. Then he saw a window open, and a face look tremulously out, and then Flo herself came slowly out and towards him. As he saw her sad little face approaching, his whole being longed to comfort her, and a great pity and anger filled him. More than that. In watching her, the fog of the last few weeks cleared suddenly, and Charley understood himself at last.

'Oh Charley!' Flo had come up now, and her eyes were full of the tears that were staining her kind little face. But while he was wondering how much comfort he dared to offer, she laid her hand on his arm and said: 'My poor boy!'

Charley stared. Was she going to console him for having given vain advice?

Flo continued: 'At first, I—I—oh, I don't know how I felt. But I was so sorry directly, and I—have been fearing to think how you would bear it.—Bravely, of course. But still I know how it will hurt; and if only I could do anything! Oh Charley, my poor Charley, believe me I am so sorry for you!'

'But why?' asked Charley blankly.

Flo seemed hardly to have the courage to tell her news; then she pulled herself together and said: 'Helen is engaged.'

After that, she thought that he was mad; for, instead of needing her support and comfort, he laughed, a great, wide laugh. And then she looked in his eyes, and her own brightened strangely.

'Is that all?' he asked.

'Oh yes,' said Flo, amazed, and she held up the letter for him to see. What was it that caught Charley's eye, far down the page? 'You naughty little girl, we might have been married together; if you had not refused poor'— That was on the other side, and Flo caught back her letter suddenly.

'Whom did you refuse?' asked Charley quickly.

Flo looked down. 'Major Smith.'

Then Charley took her hands in his own, and was encouraged when she let them stay. 'Do you know, Flo, I have found out something.'

'Oh Charley, so have I!'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE subject of meteorites is always an attractive one, if only on account of the interest which must attach itself to an emissary from the depths of space. For this reason, the lectures recently given at the Royal Institution by Mr Fletcher, F.R.S., met with much appreciation. At a moderate calculation, these luminous bodies travel at a rate of thirty or forty miles per second, a speed which is reduced to perhaps not more than four hundred feet per second when they come into contact with our atmosphere. Schiaparelli calculated that a meteorite eight inches in diameter and weighing thirty-two pounds would have its speed reduced to gunnery velocities even in the highly rarefied regions of the atmosphere,

although its initial speed may have been forty-five miles per second. Friction has not so much to do with this reduction of speed as the cushion of compressed air in front of the moving body. The luminous train which many meteorites leave in their wake may be accounted for by the recent researches of Professor Dewar with regard to the phosphorescence exhibited by bodies at an extremely low temperature after exposure to a brilliant light. The meteorite in passing through the air lights up the dust particles, and these continue luminous long after the meteor itself has become extinguished.

The utilisation of the Falls of Niagara as a source of energy, which, thanks to the dynamo, can be distributed over many square miles of country, will surely lead to the employment of many minor waterfalls in a like capacity, for a natural fall of water represents the very cheapest form of energy which we can command. Already many hundreds of waterfalls have been thus placed in harness, and, as a matter of course, their beauty has been spoiled by the juxtaposition of machinery. The Falls of Foyers, on Loch Ness, are, it is said, about to furnish the necessary power for a British Aluminium Company which is to establish itself there. The Falls are a great attraction to tourists, and we trust that they are not destined to assume the appearance of a manufacturing plant. In connection with this matter it may be mentioned that the difficulty of soldering aluminium has been solved by Mr. T. M. Clark of Boston. No flux is necessary. A bit of solder is placed on the aluminium and rendered fluid by heat; it is then painted along the surface to be joined with a wire-brush. Two surfaces so treated will adhere so strongly that the joint cannot be torn open.

That mysterious action known as spontaneous combustion, which has been the cause of so many disastrous fires both on land and sea, was very clearly explained in a lecture on Fire-risks, recently given at Bristol by Dr Ernest Cook. Speaking of oils, he pointed out that they could be divided into drying oils and non-drying oils. The former included the animal and vegetable oils, which could not be distilled, but broke up under the process; while the latter are mineral oils, which can be distilled with ease. The non-drying oils will not ignite spontaneously, while the drying oils will do so. The action is due to oxidation, or union of the oil with the oxygen of the atmosphere. A board painted with boiled linseed oil will, when dry, be heavier than the original weight of the wood and oil added together, the absorption of oxygen accounting for the difference. This combination of oxygen with the oil will evolve heat, which in the case of the board will be carried away by the air. Oil-waste, if spread out so that the air will permeate it, will also give up the heat evolved in the same manner. But if the waste be placed in a heap, the weight of the upper portion will confine the lower part, and more heat will be produced than the air can carry away, and the temperature rapidly rises until the mass bursts into flame. 'This is the history,' said the lecturer, 'of what has doubtless often occurred in the cases of many fires of doubtful origin.'

The Society of Arts (London), with a view to encourage the development of photogravure in this country, are offering two prizes, the first being a gold medal and twenty pounds for the best reproduction of a selected picture; and the second a silver medal and ten pounds for the best negative suitable for such a reproduction. We may explain, for the benefit of the uninitiated, that photogravure is a process by which a photographic picture is reproduced on copper, which can be printed from in a copperplate press. It is generally considered to be the finest of all the photographic reproductive processes, not only because it gives most beautiful results, but also because the proofs, being in printing-ink, are as permanent as any printed matter can be. The method is only adapted to illustrations of the highest class, the process of printing from the plate being necessarily slow.

The British system of weights and measures is now being inquired into by a select Committee of the House of Commons; and according to the evidence given before this Committee by an official of the Board of Trade, the various methods of weighing and measuring which obtain in different parts of the country are most confusing. Practically, the only two European countries of any importance in which the metric system is not adopted are Great Britain and Russia, and the sooner that they fall into line with the others the better for the convenience of trade generally. Many weights and measures are in use among us which are not legally recognised, such as the carat, the boll (used in Scotland), the ell, the coomb (for measuring corn), the Winchester bushel, the butcher's stone (eight pounds), the miner's dish (a measure for ore used in Derbyshire); besides others. Then there were the Scotch and Irish miles, which differed from the recognised mile of 1760 yards; and, to go to smaller things, the druggist has two different ounces, one of 480 grains, and the other of 437½ grains. It is to be hoped that the Committee will put an end to these anomalies, and apparently the best way to do this would be to adopt the metric system.

M. Meillère of Paris has published the formula of a cheap and efficient disinfectant which is intended more especially for use in the sick-room. It consists of 1000 grammes of zinc sulphate, 5 to 10 centigrammes of sulphuric acid, 2 centigrammes of essence of mirbane, and 15 centigrammes of colouring-matter such as indigo. A small quantity of this mixture will not only act as a perfect antiseptic, but it will replace objectionable odours by an agreeable smell.

It is well known that the extreme tenuity of the air at great altitudes occasions much suffering both to mountaineers and aeronauts. A pigeon thrown from the car of a balloon will fall like a stone until it reaches a lower depth where the air is dense enough to offer sufficient resistance to the action of its wings. The short supply of oxygen at high altitudes makes exertion very difficult, and a case in point was furnished during the recent construction of the Peruvian Central Railway, a line which, starting from Lima, and proceeding inland, reaches an elevation of nearly 16,000 feet above sea-level.

At about half the altitude, the men could do a fair day's work; but after this there was a sudden falling-off in the work of one-fourth to one-third up to 12,000 feet. Higher than this, one hundred men were required to do the work which, at sea-level, could be easily accomplished by fifty.

Numberless methods for coating the bottoms of ships with so-called 'anti-fouling' paints and preparations have from time to time been brought forward, and vast sums have been spent in such enterprises, but without any really successful result. The importance of keeping the hull of a ship free from barnacles is instanced by a case recorded of a large vessel having used in one voyage a thousand tons more coal than she would have done had she been free from this pest. From two other vessels twenty-five tons of barnacles were removed. A coating of copper will effectually keep barnacles and other marine growths from the hulls of ships; and a process by which a hull can be electroplated by that metal has recently been put in practice at New York with every success. It has been patented by Mr T. S. Crane, of East Orange, New Jersey. The process briefly consists in attaching to part of the hull a temporary tray or bath, in which the necessary solutions are held in contact with the iron surface. First, an acid solution to clean the surface, and afterwards a copper solution, which in conjunction with an electric current deposits a layer of that metal upon the iron of the requisite thickness. The operation takes about four days, after which the bath is removed to operate upon another portion of the hull, until the whole is covered with a layer of copper so adherent that it can only be removed with a cold chisel. Of course the process can be hastened by the employment of several baths.

A new method of treating floors has been invented in Germany under the name of Wood-pulp Mosaics. The process briefly described is as follows: Particles of wood, such as sawdust and fine shavings, are thoroughly impregnated with shellac dissolved in alcohol, and are afterwards dried. A cement is then made by mixing fresh cheese whey and slaked lime, and incorporated with this is the shellacked wood. The compound is now allowed to dry to a certain extent, when it is placed in hot moulds under pressure, and thus takes any form required. After cooling, the compound becomes as hard as stone, and yet retains all the essential properties of wood; but it is not susceptible to moisture or to changes of temperature. If colour be desired, the wood is stained in the first instance, and then patterns can be worked out as in ordinary mosaics. The method is said to be particularly well adapted for use as floor-covering in living-rooms.

The cold wave which swept over the country in February will long be remembered by householders, if only because of the stoppage of the usual water supply, a stoppage due not to frost within their premises, but to ice-bound pipes beneath the roadways. It seems certain, from careful observations recorded by the Assistant Secretary of the Royal Botanic Gardens, London, that all pipes laid at a depth of two feet from

the surface are secure from frost, that is, in the case of private grounds. But owing to the reprehensible practice of strewing the public roadways with salt, they are turned into artificial refrigerators, and the pipes must surely suffer. This practice has again and again been condemned, as inflicting needless suffering on both man and beast, but it is continued all the same. Possibly the parochial mind cannot appreciate the fact that liquid slush can be colder than solid ice and snow.

Householders have a certain protection against the disagreeable incident of burst water-pipes within their premises, if they will only secure the means of emptying the pipes when the thermometer goes below thirty-two degrees. In the first place, there should be provided a stopcock to shut off the water from the street main. In addition to this there should be a small tap on the service pipe where it enters the house, so that the water remaining in the pipe may be drawn off. By this means the supply is kept under control, and no ice can form in the pipes. A similar draw-off tap should be provided on the hot-water pipe which serves the bath, &c., and all domestic boilers for the supply of baths should also be provided with a safety-valve. By such simple means, frozen water-pipes within the house and domestic boiler explosions would become impossible.

Four years ago, the Society for the Protection of Birds was formed as a protest against the wanton destruction of these beautiful creatures for decorative purposes, and it now numbers nearly twelve thousand members. The bird-wearing fashion, although it has greatly decreased, still continues, and the Society are endeavouring to impress upon members of Parliament that a law is still wanted to put some restraint upon bird-catching. In the meantime, there is another enemy to bird-life in the indefensible and increasing demand for larks for the table of the gourmand. A correspondent of the *Times* recently pointed out that in one poulterer's shop in London were to be seen twenty hampers packed with the bodies of these sweet songsters. Surely it is not too much to ask that protection should be extended to these birds, whose notes have given a theme to so many of our poets, and give such pleasure to all lovers of nature.

An excellent paper upon Cider-making was read recently before the Society of Arts by Mr Radcliffe Cooke, M.P., who stated that cider and perry making were flourishing industries two centuries back, but had since decayed. Within the last few years, however, there had been a revival, and there was every hope that the art was not a lost one, but would again become an important home industry. The recognised cider-fruit might be divided into 'Bitter Sweets,' such as the so-called Norman apples and the Wildings; and 'Red' fruits, with a sharper flavour, such as the nearly extinct 'Red Streak.' The best cider was made from an admixture of the two sorts of juice. He pointed out that cider was a very healthful beverage, and said that those who adopted it lived to an old age. There was no difficulty in expressing the juice, but the fermentation process was not sufficiently studied, and it was

there that failure commonly occurred. The process of cider-making in this country had recently been much facilitated by the introduction of improved appliances. The reading of the paper gave rise to an animated discussion, giving evidence that it had aroused much interest among the many who were present.

From statistics recently published, it would appear that the Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act of 1889, which has been rigorously enforced in London, although adopted or declined at will by other districts, has had no beneficial effect whatever, for there has been an increase rather than a decline in the diseases covered by the Act since its adoption. By this Act a case of, say, scarlet fever must be reported to the authorities both by the householder when the outbreak occurs, and by the doctor in attendance. But let us suppose that the case is of a mild type, and that it occurs in the house of a man too poor to call in medical aid. The patient is apparently suffering from a feverish cold, is confined to the house for a day or two, and then goes among his usual associates an innocent disseminator of the disease. The Notification Act, therefore, is a dead-letter with regard to those who are most likely in their ignorance to spread infection.

Few persons are aware of the enormous trade which is carried on in the supply of violets from the south of France, and particularly from the French Riviera. During the last two years the growers have noted with alarm a disease attacking the flowers, which occasions the greatest anxiety. The flowers are grown in the open fields to the value of many hundred thousand pounds annually, and the disease referred to manifests itself in a dropping of the leaves and a residue of bare roots. The application of a copper solution is found an effectual remedy, but the cost of applying it is a serious item of expense. In the meantime, there is no doubt that the 'modest violet' blossom is more highly esteemed than any other flower in season, and endless new varieties are appearing as a rival to the woodland original. One of these is a huge Californian variety with a bloom larger than a silver dollar, which is arousing great interest on the other side of the Atlantic. Its colour is a deep purple, and it is said to have a very strong scent.

The Catalonian cork industry forms the subject of a recent United States Consular Report. A large quantity of cork is exported annually from this district of Spain to the United States, the lesser purchasers being England, Italy, France, and the Spanish colonies. The cork forests are situated in Gerona, one of the four provinces comprising the principality of Catalonia. The trees grow for from three to four hundred years, and become productive at an age of about twenty-five years. The bark is then removed, and thereafter the operation is repeated every twelve or fourteen years. The greater part of the bark is made into corks for bottles, the rougher parts being reserved for rustic decoration. The fishermen also employ the coarser pieces as floats for their nets. The articles manufactured from cork comprise handles for bicycles, cigarette mouth-pieces, shoe soles, and visiting-cards. A very warm and lasting

flooring is also made from layers of cork. The cuttings and residue generally are ground to powder, and used for packing fruit; and if it is not good enough for this purpose, it enters into brick-making for building purposes.

A new advertising appliance which is designed to decorate the public roadways with lettering is described by a Parisian paper. The apparatus consists of a large tricycle with very broad wheels, upon which are fitted flat india-rubber tires with raised letters inscribed thereon. An air-blast in front of each wheel drives away the dust preparatory to the printing operations, for printing pure and simple it is, the wheels being inked by rollers placed above them. We trust that this new infliction will keep to the country of its origin. Luckily, its action must to a very great extent depend upon the weather. Upon wet asphalt it would make no impression whatever, and the words it printed would hardly be decipherable upon any other form of roadway. All things considered, it hardly seems good enough to tempt the enterprising advertiser from his customary groove.

ON A ROMAN CAMP.

HERE on this brow the Roman eagle made
Her eyrie; hence she watched the wide champaign,
And, taming the rude dwellers on the plain,
Stablished that power which the world obeyed:

And hence the swart Italian, who had strayed
Far from his home in sunnier Italy,
Looked down with home-sick eye, and wept to see
Bleak dreary wastes, that knew not axe or spade.

That day hath passed for aye; and whoso stands
Hereon, doth see no more the woods and heaths
That lay of old beneath the sway of Rome,
But corn and harvest, and green pasture-lands
Dotted with flocks and herds, and circling wreaths
Of blue smoke over many a quiet home.

R. C. K. ENSOR.

Next Saturday, May 4th, will commence the opening chapters of a new Novel, entitled

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By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN;

Also

RICHARD MAITLAND—CONSUL,

STORY II.,

By Professor R. K. DOUGLAS and L. T. MEADE.

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AN ELECTRIC SPARK.*

By G. MANVILLE FENN,

AUTHOR OF 'BEGUMBAGH;' 'WITNESS TO THE DEED;' 'ELI'S CHILDREN;'
'MAHME NOUSIE,' &C.

CHAPTER I.—AT FULL TIDE.

'No: there can be no mistake now. I have it safe—safe as anything upon this changing earth can be. Not a doubt about it.'

The sun shone brightly upon the green turf, but Paul Wynyan was brooding upon his own affairs, so that he did not see how it lit up the brilliant cups of yellow and scarlet where the tulips stood up rigidly, and ranked, like brigades from Flora's army, massed in the opening by the Abbey; but though the earnest-looking thinker paused by one of the carefully tended beds, as if to examine them, he still did not see the gay early summer flowers, for his mind was occupied with other matters, and he saw there before him the result of long months of arduous labour in the form of success—of fortune. This to him took the shape, not of a heavy balance at his bank, but of a pair of soft gray eyes set in a face that had for two years been to him that of his guardian angel, the decider of his course, and for whose sake he worked as few men of eight-and-twenty care to work, giving up every form of pleasure and social engagement, burning the midnight oil till he had, as he told himself, won, and with the winning gained the right to say to the keen, stern man he served: 'I love her: give her me to wife.'

Paul Wynyan could not see the tulips through *Rénée Dalton's* face; but in a few seconds he awoke from his dream, walked on quickly, and did see the tawdry drinking fountain whose ornamentation glittered in the sunshine.

'Gimcrack!' he muttered, and then strode along Great George Street, erect, proud, and as

if he were walking on air. Then he checked his pace, and one strong hand clutched his dark brown beard.

Carriages? Two, at the office door, forty yards away across the street.

Paul Wynyan felt startled, for the first was the doctor's brougham. Was his chief worse? Then his pulses began to beat with a heavy accelerated throb, for he knew the second brougham, a quiet-looking but perfect equipage with magnificent horses, and coachman and footman in quiet liveries.

He knew that carriage well in the park, at a distance, in square and fashionable street, where there were dinner-parties, and where, late at night, from knowledge previously gained, he had—accidentally, of course—been strolling along, smoking a cigar, about half-past ten, till, unnoticed, he could see a stiff-built, big-headed, elderly man lead out a graceful figure in light wrapper and lace veil to the carriage waiting. And at such times the young engineer would perhaps catch the flash of a diamond or the soft gleam of pearls in the lamplight. Then there was the clatter of hoofs, the whir of wheels, and he went back to his chambers, to dream of the future and of the great work in hand.

But it was broad daylight now, as he walked up to the open doorway of Robert Dalton & Company's offices, stepped into the well-worn, dingy marble-paved hall, and stopped short facing a sandy and gray haired middle-aged man in black and shepherd's plaid.

'Hullo, young fireworks!'

'You, doctor? There's nothing wrong?'

'Who said there was?' was the rather acid answer. 'How are you? Needn't ask. My word, I'd give something for your physique, Wynyan. Strong as a horse—and young. Hah! But don't overdo it, my boy, don't overdo it!'

'But Mr Dalton! You've been to see him?'

'Yes; 'bliged to. He won't come to me. Oh, he's pretty well.—But, look here, Wynyan; you'll oblige me if you'll put the drag on him all you can. He's a good fellow, and we can't spare him. He really has overdone it. Stop him all you can.'

'I do; but you know what he is.'

'Oh yes, I know what he is. Talk about burning the candle at both ends: he does that, and melts it in the middle too.'

'But, doctor, surely there's nothing serious?'

'Eh? Humph! Well, I must be off: half-a-dozen important patients to see who have nothing serious the matter. The ladies are up-stairs.'

The doctor was off without answering the important question asked; and Paul Wynyan with his heart still beating heavily, hurried up-stairs to the principal offices on the first floor, where in the outer room four draughtsmen were busily at work with scale, compasses, and ruling pen, and a gray, plump little man of about sixty, with a quill pen behind his ear, and a small boxwood ruler across his mouth, rose from a green baize-covered table at which he had been busy writing in figures upon a plan held flat against a board with drawing-pins.

'Mr Dalton has asked for you twice, Mr Wynyan,' said the old man. 'You were to go to him as soon as you returned.'

'But he has company.'

'He wouldn't like you to study that, sir. Better go in at once.'

Wynyan drew a deep breath, steadied himself successfully, though the colour in his face was slightly heightened, hung his coat upon a peg, and crossing the room, he drew back a baize door, and then tapped sharply upon an inner one of oak, opened it, and stepped into a substantially furnished room whose walls and tables were covered with coloured plans; and the thick Turkey carpet littered like the wall and stands with papers, flat, rolled, and pinned out on boards.

Familiar objects these, but it was at the unfamiliar that Paul Wynyan gazed as he was greeted by a waft of fragrance, and faced the features which haunted his sleeping and waking moments. He was conscious of the brightness of flowers and fashionable attire, and then of the presence of some one beside the three ladies, for a sharp, rather bullying voice exclaimed loudly: 'Oh, hang it all, Mr Wynyan, don't you see that the room is engaged?'

'I beg pardon,' said the intruder; but he was interrupted by one of the visitors, whose voice thrilled Wynyan as she exclaimed reproachfully: 'Oh Brant, how can you!—We ought to beg pardon, Mr Wynyan,' she continued, holding out her delicately gloved hand, 'for intruding here. But I am so anxious about Papa. You know Miss Endoza?'

'I have had the pleasure,' said Wynyan, bowing as the lady named—a black-eyed, black-haired, waxen-complexioned girl of about seventeen—rose and returned his bow, gazing at him dreamily for a moment before the heavily fringed lids of her great eyes drooped slowly.

'And Mr Wynyan knows me too,' said the third visitor, a well-featured, rather faded lady of any age between forty and fifty, and once more a delicately gloved hand was extended to the engineer; 'but really, Mr Wynyan, you are not at all polite. You never call upon us, and we are always at home to you.'

The gentleman addressed as Brant turned impatiently away, made his teeth grate together, and said something known across Palace Yard as unparliamentary—but to himself.

'Miss Bryne forgets that I am not a society man.'

'Oh no! I do not,' said the lady. 'It is always this dreadful business.'

Just then a door behind the lady opened sharply, and the thick-set massively headed man of Paul Wynyan's dreams entered with a cheque in his hand. 'Here you are, Rénée. I shan't— Ah, Wynyan, back at last. Come in here.—There, my dear: that's the last donation I'll give them. I believe it's humbug. Take it, and be off for your drive.—Eh? Don't look shocked, Isabel, my dear.'

'But you quite frighten me, Mr Dalton,' said the foreign-looking girl, wrinkling her forehead and pouting.

'Do I, my dear? Then you shouldn't come and stir me up in my den when I'm busy.'

He smiled pleasantly as he took and putted the girl's hand, retaining it for a moment or two. Then turning to her elderly companion, 'There, Mary,' he said; 'now do rid me of these tiresome girls.—Well, Brant, what are you waiting for?'

'Oh, all right, uncle,' said the young man, glancing at Rénée and biting his lip.

'By the way, Miss Endoza,' continued the head of the firm quickly; but as he turned to the lady, he saw his nephew looking hard at his daughter. 'Did you hear what I said, Brant?' he cried.

'Yes,' said the young man sulkily.

'Then why don't you go?'

A sharp retort was on Brant Dalton's lips, but he checked it, made an impatient gesture, and went out, closing the first door gently, the baize with a bang.

Robert Dalton's head turned with an angry jerk, but it was brought back by his foreign-looking visitor.

'You really do frighten me, Mr Dalton,' she said, with a pretty little show of fear.

'No, no; I don't believe that,' he said.—'Thank you both for the flowers, my dears. Now, good-bye.'

'But, Papa dear,' said his child, laying her hands upon his breast as he bent down to kiss her tenderly, 'you haven't told me what Doctor Kilpatrick said.'

'Eh? No. Oh, nothing. That I was quite well. To take a holiday or some nonsense or another, and— Here—I say,' he cried, in his quick sharp imperious manner, as he grasped Rénée's shoulders and peered sharply in her

face, turning then to look searchingly at Miss Bryne. 'This is a plot—an imposition: flowers for me from Covent Garden—cheque wanted for the Decayed Ladies' Asylum—Kilpatrick dropping in as he passed. Mary—Rénée—you witch—you told him to come.'

'Yes, Papa dear,' said the girl with the tears gathering in her eyes: 'we were so very, very anxious about you.'

'Tut, tut, tut!' he ejaculated impatiently. 'I'm quite well, only a little overdone with work.—There,' he said, changing his tone and once more bending down to kiss the sweet earnest face looking up so lovingly; 'I shall soon be more at liberty, and we'll have a run on the Continent. Mr Wynyan here will give me a holiday. There; run away now; I have urgent business with him.'

'Yes, Papa dear,' said Rénée, smiling once more.

'Good-bye, Spanish Gypsy,' continued the old man. 'Are you very much afraid of me now?'

'No: not a bit,' said the lady addressed, as she offered her lips to his salute.

'That's right. I shall see you on Friday of course.'

'Good-day, Mr Wynyan,' said Rénée, offering her hand. 'Do take care of Papa.'

'Yes, do, Mr Wynyan,' cried Miss Bryne, smiling quite maternally upon the young man.

By this time Robert Dalton had opened the inner door and then the baize.

'Here Brant,' he cried in his sharp imperious way: 'show the ladies to their carriage.'

The next minute, the baize door fell to, the great engineer's face turned ashy as he closed and slipped the bolt of the inner door; and as Paul Wynyan looked at him anxiously, he walked hurriedly to the great office table, took up the superb bouquet his child had left for him, raised it to his face in a dazed way, dropped it suddenly, and had just time to stagger to a great morocco-covered chair, Wynyan springing forward and guiding him as he sank back heavily.

'Water,' he panted—'glass;' and Wynyan caught a table filter from where it stood and filled a glass.

'Hall,' said the old man in a hoarse whisper, and a portion of the glass's contents was sent flying over the carpet.

'Shall I call for help, sir?'

'No—that drawer—bottle,' and a trembling hand was pointed at the table.

Wynyan snatched open the drawer, caught up a small stoppered phial, read upon it the directions: 'Dose: twenty minims.' Then removing the stopper, he carefully let the required number of drops fall into the glass, held it to the fainting man's lips, and watched him as he drank it off quickly, and then sighed and closed his eyes as he lay back.

Wynyan took the glass from his hand, placed it on the table, and moved towards the door to seek for help.

'Don't go,' came from behind him. 'Better now. Hah! Thank God!' was breathed in a loud sigh. 'I shall be all right directly, Wynyan. Weak heart, Kilpatrick says. I don't look the sort of man, do I?' he added with a feeble smile. 'Hah,' he sighed. 'That's better.'

'Will you lie down, sir?' said Wynyan earnestly.

'No, no. It's passing off. A kind of spasm. Those drops work wonders. Must talk to you directly.'

'I would not worry about business to-day, sir,' said Wynyan in a tone of remonstrance.

'What!' cried the engineer with fierce energy now. 'Why, it is life to me. There; I'm myself again. Now then, Wynyan: sit down. Look here, boy. I've been half mad. Then they came—she came—God bless her! and I was obliged to keep it down. Look here, boy. I'll tell you now. It has been a terribly anxious time, but the negotiations have all been carried through. We've sold the motor.'

'To some company, sir?'

'Company? No, boy: at Whitehall—to the Government. They've paid me a heavy sum down—a big sum, Wynyan.'

'My dear Mr Dalton,' cried the young man excitedly, 'I congratulate you. Then now you must rest and grow strong.'

'Rest, boy? Congratulate me? It is ruin and destruction.'

Wynyan looked at him curiously. 'Ruin, sir?'

'Yes, Ruin. I thought—you thought—that we were perfect—that the cursed thing could not fail; and now it is like ruin to me and my bondsmen too; for, as usual in an invention, there was one little point we had forgotten, one little hole through which all our hopes escape. I only saw it last night, and doubted. This morning I have made sure. Two years of anxiety and labour cast away. In spite of all we have done, the motor as we have designed it is bound to fail, and even the greatest heads the Government called in were as blind as I.'

'Yes, sir,' said Wynyan, bowing his head: 'it was bound to fail.'

THE SUPPLY OF SEAMEN.

THE incessantly increasing proportion of foreign sailors and firemen in the many and various steamships and sailing-vessels of the British mercantile marine demands the careful consideration of all those who hold dear the red ensign of our fatherland. Britannia can only continue to be supreme on the high seas provided her stalwart sons offer themselves for a life on the ocean wave in sufficient numbers to cope with modern requirements. Moreover, inasmuch as skilled seamanship is only obtainable by thorough training from youth to manhood, under every sky, it necessarily follows that boys and young men should be found forming an essential portion of every ship's crew. Warships may be of the most approved type, and numerous enough to satisfy the most exacting of competent critics. The naval architect can readily devise more and more powerful fleets; and money will doubtless be voted without a murmur to defray the cost of keeping up a first line of defence worthy of the premier nautical nation. Nevertheless, without sailors

and firemen, deck officers and marine engineers, battleships and cruisers would be worse than useless. The very fact that such splendid ships were afloat might mislead those 'whose heritage is the sea' by engendering a feeling of baseless security. In the old sailing-ship days of our masterful forefathers there were certainly a few foreigners serving in inferior capacities on board British merchant-ships; but, as a general rule, our sailors and officers were of British birth. They were second to none, neither with respect to quantity nor to quality.

Hence, when the dogs of war were let loose, the ships of the State could always fairly rely upon the services of many sterling seamen of every rank, who would readily volunteer from our carrying craft to help their native land in the hour of her need. Those who evinced any reluctance to risk their lives at the cannon's mouth not infrequently fell into the over-eager hands of the prowling pressgangs, so much in evidence when the world was younger. Such stragglers accepted the situation thus thrust upon them, despite every effort to the contrary, with but little demur, when once environed by the discipline and duty of a British man-of-war. In the days of yore, when pigtailed and long voyages were *de rigueur*, British boys yearned to become sailors. At the same time these ingenious youngsters were warmly welcomed on board their country's cargo-carriers, making perilous passages under swelling sails to and from far-off lands. Charles Kingsley, in his soul-stirring story of *Westward Ho!* has delightfully described that absorbing love of the sea and seamen which animated British-born youths when Drake, Hawkins, and a famous host of undaunted rovers on the wild wastes of waters laid the firm foundations of England's naval and commercial glory. His vivid word-picture of young Amyas Leigh affords an insight to the intense attraction which the sea had for boys of that history-making epoch. That ardent youth addressing Oxenham, a navigator just returned home from an adventurous voyage to the Spanish Main, blurted out: 'I want to go to sea. I want to see the Indies. I want to fight the Spaniards. Though I am a gentleman's son, I'd a deal liever be a cabin boy on board your ship.' Of such stuff are seamen made!

Steam and the screw propeller have almost killed that spirit of adventure which has helped to make the British flag evident and respected on every sea. No longer even does the hardy toiler of old ocean 'fill his pockets with the good red gold, by sailing on the sea, O!' Prudent parents more often prevail upon their boys to seek safer and more lucrative employment on dry land; and, worse still, many of those who actually proceed to sea soon throw up the nautical profession in deep disgust. *Robinson Crusoe* has an ever-widening circle of readers, but that enchanting book appears to have a decreasing influence upon each successive generation. Alfred Crowquill's moral appended

to one edition of Defoe's tale may not be known generally, but it is acted upon literally, and home comfort is at a premium. As a matter of fact, boys are seldom wanted now on board sailing-ships, except as apprentices in training for officers; and lads from the school-ships around our coasts experience very great difficulty in finding a ship-owning firm that will give them employment in the fore-castle. Able-bodied seamen are almost solely in request, but no attempt is made to bring up boys in the way they should go to become seamen for the replacement of those who die or desert. A stow-away is sent on shore as soon as possible after discovery. He also runs a serious risk of receiving three months' imprisonment in a common jail for his pains. Yet we must have sailors of mature age to man our carrying craft. British ship-owners exercise the right of all employers of labour by buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest, and sailor boys are seldom seen in our merchant-ships. Consequently, seamen of British birth are surely becoming a lamentable exception under the red ensign of our fatherland.

Captain A. G. Froud, R.N.R., during the course of an inquiry into the manning of British ships, found that of thirty vessels taken haphazard, no fewer than eighteen carried none but able seamen. Hence the fore-castle, or sailors' dwelling-place, of many a sailing-ship under the British red ensign is a veritable Tower of Babel, where every language is heard save our own. There are not wanting sailing-vessels belonging to one or other of our principal home ports, on board which master, officers, and men are all foreigners. Just eight years ago a Californian daily newspaper, the *San Francisco Call*, gave a curious example of the extent to which foreigners are carried in our merchant-ships. A large British sailing-vessel, the *Bandanaira*, at that Pacific port was one day the observed of all observers. She was decorated with flags from stem to stern, from truck to rail, as though it were the occasion of some national holiday. The paper's marine reporter ascertained that, although an English ship, captain and crew were Germans, and they took this means of testifying to their joy at the passage of a Bill in the German Reichstag which affected their interests. Ships thus manned would not only be a source of weakness, but also an element of danger, in war-time. The Liverpool ship *Theophane* disappeared while taking a coal cargo from New South Wales to Peru. Her published crew-list shows that her officers were British born, but her sailors were of various nationalities. There were seven Germans, two Norwegians, two Italians, three Swedes, one Dane, one Russian, and only four English. Captain J. Mitchell, R.N.R., in a pamphlet of 1876, gave two examples of mixed crews under the British flag, and since then we have gone from bad to worse in this respect. The sailing-ship *Northfleet* had sixteen sailors. Of these there were three Russians, eight Swedes, two Germans, one American, and but two British. A steamer, the *Scotland*, had a crew consisting of eight Greeks, two Brazilians, eight Scandinavians, three Dutch, four Germans, three French, one American, one Russian, one

Austrian, one Chinaman, one East Indian, and twelve Englishmen. The last-mentioned would doubtless include the deck officers and marine engineers. 'Comment,' he said, 'is needless on the above; they speak for themselves in all languages.' Very many instances of a like nature might be quoted. Sufficient, however, has been done to indicate that the British mercantile marine, as at present constituted, would be but a broken reed to rely upon in the hour of danger.

Statistics often afford much food for reflection. 'Facts, or what a man believes to be facts,' said Mark Twain, 'are delightful.' Curiously enough, the same data by delicate manipulation often serve to enforce contradictory propositions at the sweet will of the operators. Board of Trade returns give sixteen per centum as the actual proportion of foreign seamen in British ships of the mercantile marine. Sailors, however, frequently form a relatively insignificant portion of the whole crew in many a modern merchantman. A large passenger steamship will have a master, mates, petty officers, sailors, engineers, firemen, coal-trimmers, stewards, stewardesses, and others, in her crew. Captain E. Blackmore, J.P., in a paper read before the London Shipmasters' Society, has referred to the misleading nature of these official returns. The correct result can only be obtained by taking the number of able seamen who sign the articles of agreement in British merchant-ships during one year, separate our own countrymen from the foreigners, and then make the comparison. 'Any other method is simply throwing dust in the eyes of the public, and can never show our strength or weakness in case of a great war with European powers.' A Liverpool ship-owner, Mr Williamson, of statistical repute, is of opinion that nearly one-third of the sailors in British ships are foreigners, who owe no allegiance to the famous flag under which they sail. An interesting return, apparently obtained from an official source, has lately made the round of the public press. This being accepted as true, it follows that in April 1891 there was forty-three per centum of foreign sailors in our sailing-ships making voyages to ports abroad; and during the first six months of 1894 the total percentage of foreign sailors in ships belonging to the United Kingdom was forty-three. In London, the percentage was forty-eight; and in North Shields it actually reached sixty-seven!

Our near kindred on the other side of the stormy North Atlantic are even worse off than ourselves with respect to seamen of native birth. We continue to rigidly exclude foreigners from serving Her Majesty in a war-ship. The United States could not possibly do without the ubiquitous foreigner in government ships. Otherwise, the first-class fighting-ships of her brand-new war navy would have to remain snugly moored in her home ports. Her naval officers are all citizens of the Great Republic, and equal to those of any other race either in theory or in practice. Not so her sailors. The United States war-ship *Ashuelot*, which met her fate in the China Sea about eleven years ago, going down with part of her crew, had one hundred and eleven enlisted men exclusive of

marines. This small number comprised twenty different races gathered from the four quarters of the globe. Only nineteen were native-born Americans. Another similar ship, the *Monocacy*, had a crew of one hundred and five exclusive of officers and marines. Twenty-one countries were represented, and foreigners held most of the important petty officers' ratings. From personal observation of the writer, at least one-half of the sailors on board the United States flag-ship *Chicago* are foreigners. Mr F. M. Bennett, an engineer officer of the United States Navy, in the course of an instructive article entitled 'American Men for the American Navy,' has done good service to his country by drawing attention to the danger to the State likely to arise by the employment of foreigners in war-ships. He suggests that 'theories must be laid aside, and some practical method put in operation whereby an American youth can find in the navy of his country an opportunity for a career at least equal to that open to him in trade or in the mechanical arts.' America once had a far-famed fleet of first-class clipper merchant-ships which held their own against all comers. These sailing-vessels monopolised the most paying routes. British shipmasters often murmured because the American clipper could command a freight in a China tea-port; whereas our ships, badly modelled, for the purpose of evading the tonnage laws of the period, were utterly ignored. Much has happened since then, however, and the glory of the American mercantile marine is but a memory of the past.

Ships of the Great Republic seem at one time to have been actually officered and manned by her sailor sons. The repugnance against a sea-life evinced by American youths of to-day must militate sadly against the wish of Americans to obtain a larger share of the world's ocean carrying-trade. The American flag is now seldom seen in ports abroad displayed by merchant vessels, and the crews of her finest ships are of every nationality. It would be passing strange were England and America compelled to rely for seamen upon Scandinavia. Yet, unless some serious steps be shortly taken, this most undesirable result is probable in the near future.

Captain G. Cawley, R.N.R., has well said that 'it is a question of patriotism and national expediency that we should foster British seamen.' Not only are foreigners filling the forecastles of our cargo-carriers, but they are also serving as officers and masters. The late Admiral Hornby, in an important letter which appeared in the *Times* of 9th June 1894, dealing with the supply of seamen, remarks that 'ship-owners complain that they are obliged to employ many of those foreigners as mates, and even as captains, for want of competent Englishmen.' If this be true, it follows that the downfall of England's supremacy at sea is merely a matter of time. The Shipmasters' Society have denied that there is any truth in the imputation. Nevertheless, it must be confessed that foreign sailors are becoming more and more numerous in British merchant-ships; boys are rarely found; and there is no restriction at present with respect to this insidious danger, which threatens to sap

the foundations of British maritime supremacy. No other country, save Belgium, will permit her merchant vessels to be manned solely by foreigners. That celebrated nautical novelist, Clark Russell, in one of his most recent yarns of the salt sea, makes the principal character truthfully say that 'with a fok'sle so full of fired Dutchmen—why, when they hoist the English red ensign, the flag's the bitterest lie since Annynius and Sophia.' Our heritage is the sea, and the incessant influx of foreign seamen does not tend to make it secure for those coming after us. To have British-born seamen requires that our youth shall be trained on our merchant-ships, and ship-owners will not have boys. Hence the supply of native-born seamen will grow surely less, while those seamen found in British ships will be either inefficient or foreign. It is high time that this question of the supply of seamen received the serious attention of our foremost legislators ere it be too late. Sea-going training ships have become almost absolutely necessary to ensure even a proportion of competent merchant seamen of British birth.

RICHARD MAITLAND—CONSUL.

By L. T. MEADE and Professor ROBERT K. DOUGLAS.

STORY II.—A VICTIM OF THE KOLAO-HWUY.

CHAPTER I.

AFTER the exciting adventures related in the last story, the Foreign Office thought it well, for more than one reason, to remove Richard Maitland from the Consulate at Ch'anyang to the larger treaty port of Tingchiang. Here he was in the centre of a large English community; and as time passed, the strange events which had so seriously destroyed his peace, and almost cost him his life, began to fade from his mind. He commenced once again to look upon life from a humorous and kindly standpoint. He was soon an immense favourite with the English residents, and began also to be popular with those Chinamen who came in his way.

On the day when this story opens, Maitland was in his most genial frame of mind. An entertainment on a very magnificent scale was to take place that evening at the Consulate. To this festivity nearly all the English residents of the place were invited. Amongst the expected guests was a young man of the name of Wilfrid Sterling. He had been a resident at Tingchiang for some years, and was one of the most popular of the English inhabitants. On this occasion his name was in every one's mouth, for he had just returned from England bringing his bride with him. Mrs Sterling happened to belong to a family whom Maitland knew well in the old country, and it was primarily in her honour that the ball was given.

In due course the company began to assemble. The splendid rooms of the Consulate were brightly lighted. The gardens and verandas

were rendered gay with Chinese lanterns and various other illuminations. A spirited band kept up a constant and gay strain of music. It would have been difficult anywhere to find a more brilliant or more animated scene. The hour was close on midnight; but the special guests of the evening—Sterling and his wife—had not arrived. As the moments flew by without their putting in an appearance, the feeling of expectation which all shared gradually reached that of disappointment. A bride was not to be found every day at Tingchiang; and this bride, report said, was both beautiful and young.

Maitland had seen Mrs Sterling that morning. She and her husband had promised to arrive in good time; the Consul was therefore beginning to feel a slight sense of uneasiness at their prolonged absence, when a commotion near one of the principal entrances caused him to hurry forward. One of the Chinese servants called the names of Mr and Mrs Sterling in a shrill, high, penetrating voice, and a slender girl in white, accompanied by a tall square-shouldered young man, came eagerly forward.

'Better late than never,' exclaimed Maitland, as he extended a hearty hand of welcome to each.

'We were unexpectedly delayed. We are ever so sorry,' explained Mrs Sterling.

Maitland offered her his arm, and they entered the ballroom together.

All eyes were immediately fixed on the young bride's pretty face. The brightness of her complexion, her fresh and rounded cheeks, the delicate lines of her soft mouth, all proclaimed to those habitués of an Oriental climate the fact of her late arrival from England.

'She will soon lose those roses,' whispered a sallow-faced lady to a young naval officer with whom she was dancing.

'What a beautiful girl she is!' he replied. 'I hope I may get introduced to her. Her husband is a remarkably good-looking fellow too.'

'Oh, Wilfrid Sterling has been the pet of all the English residents for a long time,' replied Mrs Anstruther. 'He is one of the best-natured, jolliest fellows I have ever come across. We were all astonished when he suddenly got leave of absence and rushed off to England; and still more amazed when the news reached us that he was coming back with an English wife. He was not quite well when he left—I only hope the change has done him good.'

Here Mrs Anstruther looked eagerly across the room at Sterling, as he stood in the recess of a window. He was not speaking, and some lines of worry were plainly discernible on his brow.

'Now that I look at him, he does not seem much better for the change,' she continued. 'What a pity!—one would have thought that England and matrimony would have set up any man.'

'Sterling's complexion is as sallow as his wife's is the reverse,' replied Captain Jeffrey. 'I should say—though perhaps it is treason to think such a thing—that your good friend indulges in opium-smoking on the quiet.'

'I am certain he does not,' replied Mrs Anstruther with indignation; 'he is as steady

a fellow as any in the settlement. But come this way; I must speak to him, and get him to introduce me to Mrs Sterling.'

Sterling had moved farther into the recess of the window. No one was speaking to him for a moment, and the look of anxiety seemed to deepen and grow more marked on his dark, handsome face. His young wife was standing not ten yards away from him. Her girlish and silvery laughter floated to him where he stood. He suddenly clenched his teeth.

'For Evelyn's sake, I will cut this Gordian knot,' he said to himself.

Just at this moment Mrs Anstruther came up to him. 'How do you do?' she said. 'Allow me to introduce my friend, Captain Jeffrey. I am delighted to welcome you back, Mr Sterling. Pray, introduce me without any delay to your wife. How sweet and fresh and charming she looks—in short, almost a child.'

'Evelyn is nineteen,' replied Sterling. 'She will be only too glad to make your acquaintance, Mrs Anstruther; and if you can help her in any way, you will secure my abundant gratitude. She knows nothing of the life here; and I am very much afraid may suffer from loneliness while I am busy at the office.'

'Oh, she won't suffer from that long,' said Mrs Anstruther. 'There isn't a lady in the settlement who won't be good to your bride.—Oh, how provoking! Mr Maitland has taken her away to a distant part of the room. Most inconsiderate of our good Consul. I see that my introduction must wait. Well, I will come back to you presently; in the meantime, I should like you and my friend Captain Jeffrey to know each other.'

Sterling bowed; and Mrs Anstruther, seeing a new acquaintance, hurried off to exchange greetings. The two young men were left standing side by side in the veranda.

'Why don't you join the dancers?' said Captain Jeffrey presently.

Before Sterling could reply, some one touched his coat from behind. He turned abruptly; a Chinese servant who had come up slipped a small piece of paper into his hand. His fingers closed over it tremulously; he could not quite conceal his emotion.

'You will excuse me for a moment, Captain Jeffrey, while I attend to this,' he said.

He went up and stood under the light of a Chinese lantern. His eyes quickly devoured the following words: 'Meet me under the willow tree by the bridge which crosses the Mien stream, at twelve to-night. If you dare to disobey, or if you breathe a word to the authorities, an order will at once be issued for the murder of yourself and of your wife; so obey and tremble.'

Having read this ominous epistle twice, the young man crushed it tightly in the palm of his right hand, and turning to Captain Jeffrey, who had been watching him with undisguised interest and some slight alarm, began to speak in a husky voice.

'This letter is of importance,' he said; 'I must attend to it immediately.'

'You cannot intend to leave us!' exclaimed Jeffrey. 'Why, you and your wife have only just arrived, and I know our good friend Mait-

land has been expecting you the whole evening.'

'I know it, worse luck,' muttered Sterling. 'The business which now calls me away also delayed my coming here in time. Now, I must hurry off. I wonder if you would be good-natured enough to take a message from me to Mrs Sterling?'

'I will, with all the pleasure in the world.'

'A thousand thanks. Pray, do not stand on ceremony with her. Tell her I asked you to speak to her. Say that I have been obliged to leave here unexpectedly, but I expect to be home early to-morrow morning. Ask Maitland to see that she has a sedan-chair home to our *hony* [house]. I shall be eternally grateful if you can do this for me.'

A grave expression came over Captain Jeffrey's good-humoured face when Sterling left him.

'That lad looks as if he had got into some sort of trouble,' he muttered. 'Yes, of course; I will take his message to his pretty wife; but I will also interfere sufficiently in the matter to consult Maitland. I confess I do not like the look of things. That letter, which evidently gave Sterling such a shock, was not written by an Englishman.'

As these thoughts passed quickly through his mind, Captain Jeffrey re-entered the heated ballroom.

Meanwhile, Sterling having reached the outer air, stood still for a moment to breathe and consider how best to act. His head was burning, and his pulses were beating fast. He knew too well the purport of the paper which had been put into his hands in Maitland's drawing-room. Its contents, short and stern as they were, were not any shorter or sterner than the fate which would be his if he dared to disobey them.

'Obey and tremble,' said the writer of the note. Sterling was as plucky a young Englishman as could be found anywhere, but at the present moment he undoubtedly felt a strong sense of fear.

The circumstances under which he now found himself were as follows: He was entrapped by one of the most terrible of the many secret societies which abound in China. The document which he still held in his hand was stamped with the seal of this society; and though the paper was unsigned, the unfortunate young man was able to make a shrewd guess as to the personality of the writer.

Wilfrid Sterling was the junior partner in a large firm of tea-merchants. He had come from England when little more than a lad, and for a long time all had gone well with him; but in an evil hour he had been tempted into an opium saloon by a Chinese acquaintance. He had gone there principally from curiosity, and did not even intend to indulge in the pipe. This scruple, however, was quickly overcome; and although at first he had found some difficulty in inhaling the drug, and had wondered what gratification its votaries could possibly find in the opium pipe, by degrees he learned to breathe it in, and then the delight of its fumes fairly intoxicated him. His first evening at the opium saloon was followed by many others. Soon, evening after evening found him

there, until at last the one dream of his life was to repair to the den, and there rejoice in visions of joy, beauty, and happiness until the small-hours of the morning. In the daytime he made desperate struggles to overcome the vice which was undermining his manhood, but evening after evening found him again the victim of this terrible temptation.

Bad as this state of things was, however, there was worse to follow. More often than not, when indulging in the opium pipe, he was associated on the same divan with a Chinaman of the name of Lin. Close neighbourhood and a certain affinity of tastes brought about an alliance; and as time went on, Lin confessed himself to be a member of the Kolao-hwuy, one of the largest and most famous of the secret societies which abounded in all parts of the empire. Even to mention the name of the Kolao-hwuy was to strike terror in many a breast. But Sterling, under the influence of the drug, listened to his companion's speech with complaisance, and gradually became himself indoctrinated with Lin's views of the iniquities of the present dynasty, and the past glories of the dynasty of Ming. One marked effect of opium-smoking is that it weakens the will and demoralises the sense of right and wrong. Under the influence of the fumes, Sterling listened to his companion with deep sympathy, and eventually authorised Lin to enter his name as a candidate for election to the society.

He had no sooner done this than the reaction came, and he hurried back to his lodgings in the English settlement in a state of terror.

The next morning, however, unexpected relief came. It was necessary to send a member of the firm to England without delay, and Sterling, as the youngest partner, was the man appointed to undertake the business. Within two days he found himself far from Ting-chiang, and hoped that he had also put away for ever the vice which had so nearly ruined him. The bracing climate of his native land, and the society of those whom he loved best, helped further to restore him. The evils of the habits he had contracted were borne in strongly upon him, and he vowed a fierce vow that never again would he take an opium pipe within his lips. During his stay in England, Sterling met the daughter of an old friend of Richard Maitland's.

Evelyn Stanhope was a beautiful girl, with sparkling eyes and a vivacious temperament. Sterling fell in love with her almost at first sight—his passion was returned; and when he set sail again for China, Evelyn accompanied him as his wife. During their short engagement, he had often felt inclined to tell the girl whom he loved the story of his brief fall from the paths of virtue; but he had not sufficient courage to undertake this task. He could not bear to see the reproach which he was quite certain would fill Evelyn's dark eyes; and as he now considered the whole thing at an end, he hoped that his bride might never learn how nearly his life had been wrecked.

In the excitement of his hurried visit to England, his brief wooing and hasty marriage, the young man had absolutely forgotten the

promise he had given to Lin. Lin, however, was the sort of person who never forgets. It was one of the objects of his life to gain recruits for the society, and he hoped great things from the young Englishman.

Sterling and his wife spent two or three weeks of perfect happiness at Tingchiang before the blow fell. On the evening, however, of Maitland's ball, as he was preparing to accompany Evelyn to the scene of festivities, he was met by an emissary of Lin's, who whispered to him that he would presently receive a substantial token of Lin's identity. The news came as a terrible shock to the unfortunate young man. He returned to the room where his pretty wife stood in her white dress, looked at her with passionate trouble in his eyes, and wondered if even now he might dare to tell her the truth.

'We are late already, Wilfrid,' exclaimed Mrs Sterling in an eager tone—'had we not better go?'

Sterling sat somewhat in shadow, and she did not notice how pale and haggard his face had grown.

'Yes, yes, we'll go at once,' he exclaimed.

He roused himself—a sedan-chair was sent for, and the young couple were carried quickly to the Consulate.

The fatal note, therefore, which was so soon slipped into Sterling's hand, came by no means as a surprise.

As he stood now, in the open air, just outside the Consulate, the thought of all this note involved made him feel for a few moments as if his reason would be upset. To flee was hopeless; to struggle was absolutely vain. The old habits—the old horrors—would once more surround him.

'Nay,' he said half aloud; 'if it were only the old habits—the old demoralising vice! It is worse, far worse things which I have now to fear. What madness seized me when I promised to become a member of such a terrible and dangerous society as the Kolao-hwuy? Well, I dare not hesitate; there is no turning back. I must meet Lin under the willow-tree which crosses the Mien. Yes, and it only wants half an hour to twelve o'clock. I can't risk Evelyn's life. Yes, I must obey. What a frightful position to be in! how little I guessed what a noose I was slipping round my neck when I became friends with an unscrupulous fellow like Lin.'

The night was warm, the sky cloudless; but Sterling shivered as he stood alone and allowed these thoughts to rush through his brain. Then making a great effort, he pulled himself together. 'Whatever happens, I must play the man,' he exclaimed. 'I must be wary, cautious, cunning—there may be a loophole of escape; but at present there is nothing for me but to obey—well, at least I will not tremble. Outwardly, I'll show these Chinese beggars that I have got the grit of an Englishman about me.'

He hurried forward, hastening his steps as he knew that the time of the appointment was close at hand. He soon left the town behind him, and the soft night-air fanning his heated forehead brought back some degree of courage

to his heart. As he walked faster and faster, houses occurred at rare intervals, until by-and-by he found himself in the neighbourhood of the rice-fields and beyond the reach of human dwellings. A walk of a mile and a half farther along the narrow path which bordered the rice-fields brought him to the spot where the appointment had been made. As he approached the willow-tree, he trembled again with anxiety and horror. The place, however, was perfectly quiet, not a soul within sight. The solitude and the peace had a strange power of relieving Sterling from his worst terrors. He looked around him, to right and left. No one was waiting for him at the willow-tree. This fact brought immense comfort to his overstrained nerves, and he said to himself, with a sigh of gladness, that doubtless he was after all but the victim of a hoax. He was about to turn back again, when suddenly, from behind a bush, Lin and another man who was an absolute stranger to Sterling, appeared. He started violently when he saw them.

'Your Excellency has done well to come,' said Lin, 'and it is high time we started.'

The revulsion of feeling from hope once again to despair, had made the poor young Englishman almost incapable of speech.

'Are you in a dream?' said Lin roughly. 'I said it was high time we started.'

Sterling made an effort to find speech.

'It is many months since we talked of these matters,' he said. 'I have married since then; and though approving of the principles of your society, I do not now feel inclined to join its ranks.'

A grim smile passed like a flash over Lin's austere face.

'The order has gone forth at the Willow Lodge for your initiation,' he said. 'And the punishment for non-compliance stated in the summons is no idle threat, I can assure you.'

As he spoke, his companion planted himself on the narrow causeway along which Sterling had come, and the manner of both men showed that at all events in this matter they were fully in earnest.

For a moment he scarcely knew how to act. Whether he obeyed or disobeyed the summons, he felt that ruin was awaiting him. If he became a member of the society, there was no knowing what terrible commission he might be called upon to accomplish. If he refused to take the initiatory vows, he and his young wife would certainly both fall victims to the secret and awful power which never failed to strike those who had once put themselves in its grasp. Scarcely a moment was given him for deliberation, and in the confused and hurried rush of thought which passed through his brain, he tried to consider which course entailed the least fearful consequences to Evelyn. After brief and rapid thought, he made up his mind that the only thing now to do was to follow the men. For the present at least, his life and his wife's were safe, and he must leave consequences to the future.

'I will go with you,' he said to Lin. 'How far is it to the place?'

'Not far,' said Lin. 'We will take you there

straight, and you will be able to get home in good time in the morning.'

'Then let us get it over quickly,' said Sterling.

In sober silence, the three men set forth in Indian file, Lin taking the lead, Sterling following, and the other man bringing up the rear. By many secret and divers paths, they crossed a rough and mountainous country, until at last they came to a narrow opening in the rocks which went by the name of the 'Sun Moon Pass.' Here, a stern-looking custodian awaited them, motionless; when the three men approached him, he turned and passed a secret sign with Lin, and immediately afterwards demanded a small fee in money from Sterling.

'Give him a trifle and come on,' said Lin in his harshest tone.

The Englishman obeyed mechanically. The three walked on quickly once again until, having crossed a stone bridge over a rapidly flowing river, they reached a small building which went by the name of the 'Hall of Fidelity and Loyalty.' Here Lin and his friend were obliged to produce their diplomas. They did so quickly, and hurried Sterling on at a greater speed than ever. After a further walk of some distance, they reached the Lodge known as the 'City of Willows.' This ominous-looking place was surrounded by a wall which resembled the approach to a camp. Here a number of men stood waiting, and Sterling was informed by Lin that they were neophytes, who, like himself, were to be initiated into the society that evening. The neophytes were all attended, as Sterling was himself, by well-accredited brethren. So soon as the party met outside the 'City of Willows,' they were led within the first gate of the camp, where they found themselves face to face with an official whom Lin described to Sterling as the *Vanguard*. The candidates were paraded one by one before this individual, who asked them their names and ages. Sterling's English face and figure formed a striking contrast to those of the other neophytes, and as he passed before the *Vanguard*, the man favoured him with a piercing and suspicious glance.

'What is the name of this neophyte?' he said, turning quickly round to Lin.

'Sterling, the Englishman, your Excellency, whose services we have been so anxious to secure for our society,' replied Lin, in a somewhat pompous tone.

'Is he likely to be loyal and faithful?' asked the *Vanguard*.

To this question Lin replied in too low a tone for Sterling to catch his words, but the ominous look on his face was the reverse of reassuring.

The *Vanguard* now once again asked Sterling's name. This proved a severe puzzle to his unaccustomed lips, nor did he feel equal to cope with the spelling of such an unwonted word; he finally ended by writing it down as follows—*Ssu-Ta-ling*.

When all the names had been duly registered, the *Vanguard* gave the word of command.

'Form the Bridge of Swords,' he shouted in a sonorous voice.

In compliance with this startling order, the brethren immediately formed themselves into two ranks, which were distinguished by the materials of their swords; the swords held by the right rank being made of steel, and those by the left, of copper. Having raised the swords so as to meet in the air in the form of a bridge, the neophytes, conducted by their introducers, were obliged to pass beneath them, and were then immediately led forward into the presence of two generals who were guarding the Hung Gate.

'Name the "New Horses,"' commanded these officers.

The Vanguard immediately replied by reading out the list of candidates; and Sterling found himself with the other neophytes introduced into the Hall, where the task of instructing the new members in the objects and rules of the society began.

B L O N D I N .

ROPE-WALKERS, like lion-tamers and poets, are born and not made. Blondin began to walk along a rope when he was only four years old, and at twice that age gave a special exhibition before the king of Italy at Turin. And last Christmas, although over seventy years of age, when performing on the high-rope in the Agricultural Hall, Islington, he appeared as nimble and active as ever. He went through much the same performance as that which startled the public at the Crystal Palace about thirty years ago. He ran along the rope; he did the journey in a sack and blindfolded; he stood upright in a chair, which he had previously balanced in the centre of the rope; he stood on his head on the rope, and concluded by carrying his attendant across. When performing at the Crystal Palace in 1860 he made one hundred pounds a day by his exhibitions, and one hundred and fifty pounds when he had two exhibitions. A rope two inches in diameter, and two hundred and forty yards long, was stretched from the level of the hand-rail of the highest gallery in the transept right across to the other side, and kept from swinging laterally by fifteen pairs of guy-lines. The rope was made steady, but not rigid, at one hundred and seventy feet from the ground. There Blondin disported himself as if the narrow rope were as broad and safe as a London street. He turned somersaults, walked blindfolded; passed along the rope with his feet in waste-paper baskets. He even carried a cooking-stove, and fastened it on the centre of the rope, and cooked an omelette there. Once, when he pretended to slip, two ladies fainted right away. A spectator has written: 'We have seen enough to set our pulses thumping painfully, to send a cold sickening terror crawling along our veins, to make us very glad to look anywhere but on the rope, when the fascination which riveted our gaze upon it had a little died away. When this

happened, and we looked around, we beheld a more curious spectacle than Blondin will ever present, reflected in the sea of up-turned faces that were watching him.' If this was so in the Crystal Palace, what must have been the terrible fascination and tension of feeling in watching him cross and recross Niagara?

Blondin is the *nom de théâtre* of Jean François Gravelet, who was born at Hesdin, near Calais, on the 28th of February 1824. His father—whose nickname, 'Blondin,' from the colour of his hair, has descended to his son—was a soldier of the first French Empire, who had seen service under Napoleon at Austerlitz, Wagram, and Moscow, but died when his son was in his ninth year. The pluck and strength that young Blondin displayed even in his fourth year was marvellous; and when only a few years older, he was trained by the Principal of *L'École de Gymnase* at Lyons in many gymnastic feats, and after six months there, was brought out as 'The Little Wonder.' He excelled especially at tight-rope dancing, jumping, and somersault-throwing. One of his jumps was over a double rank of soldiers with bayonets fixed. The agent of an American company—the Ravels—aware of his success in the French provinces, gave him a two year engagement for the United States, which afterwards extended to eight years. He went to America in 1855; and it must have been about four years later, when looking across the Niagara Falls, that he remarked to Mr Ravel: 'What a splendid place to bridge with a tight-rope!'

When at the end of his contract, although called idiot and madman, he endeavoured to carry this daring project of crossing the Falls on the tight-rope into execution. In the spring of 1859 he took rooms in the Hotel at Niagara Falls village, and began to make his arrangements. There was some difficulty at first in getting permission from the proprietors on either side of the river. A Mr Hamblin was good for the necessary thirteen hundred dollars for the rope to span the fifteen hundred feet of roaring water below the Falls. The bank on one side was about one hundred and sixty feet in height; on the other, one hundred and seventy. He crossed for the first time on the 30th of June, in the presence of what was said to be a concourse of upwards of fifty thousand people. On the 4th of July he crossed again, his body enveloped in a heavy sack of blankets; with eyes thus blindfolded, his step was as steady as if he saw. In the middle of the month he crossed, wheeling a wheelbarrow; and on the 5th of August, in crossing, he turned somersaults and performed various gymnastic feats on the rope. He crossed with a man on his back on the 19th; and on the 27th as a Siberian exile in shackles. On the 2d of September he crossed at night, and stood on his head amid a blaze of fireworks. In the summer of 1860 he crossed below the Suspension Bridge; but previously, he had great difficulty in adjusting his one-inch rope, and nearly lost his life in fixing the lateral guy-ropes. The difficulty and danger in crossing was increased by a dip of forty feet on the length of the rope. His last performance here, on the 14th of September 1860, was witnessed by the Prince of Wales and

suite and a vast assembly of spectators. The Prince eagerly and anxiously watched his progress through a telescope; and on Blondin being presented afterwards, his first words of greeting were: 'Thank God, it is all over.' At this time he crossed with a man on his back, traversed the rope in a sack and blindfolded, and even went across on stilts. In traversing the rope with a man on his back, the time occupied was forty-five minutes; he set the man down, while he rested six times on the rope. Fancy the man thus climbing again on his shoulders and inserting his legs in the hooks attached to the hips of the gymnast for his support!

The Prince of Wales sent a special cheque to Blondin after his great feat; another of his gifts was a cluster diamond ring; and the inhabitants of the village gave him a gold medal, as a tribute of admiration, with this inscription: 'Presented to Mons. J. F. Blondin by the Citizens of Niagara Falls, in appreciation of a feat never before attempted by man, but by him successfully performed on the 19th of August 1859, that of carrying a man upon his back over the Falls of Niagara on a Tight-rope.' Probably, these feats are never likely again to be repeated by even the most daring and accomplished rope-walker.

Since his triumphs at Niagara, Blondin has made more than four thousand ascents in all parts of the world without the slightest accident. He used his Niagara rope for the first performance at the Crystal Palace; in one of these performances the man who had charge of the fireworks sent him off his balance, and he narrowly missed falling one hundred and twenty feet, by catching hold of the rope. He dropped his balancing-pole, however. His only other misadventures were while wheeling a lioness down the 'sag' of the rope; it became entangled with the line regulating his descent, and he had to return walking backwards. At Birmingham reservoir the sag of the rope caused him to cross knee-deep in water at one part. The riding along the rope on a special bicycle seems a difficult feat, and the finish up, surrounded by a blaze of fireworks, was very effective.

Apparently, Blondin does not know what nervousness means, and his secret has been described as confidence in himself, obtained by long habit in rope-walking. There is no doubt some of the victims he has carried across his rope have suffered. He would talk to them on the most indifferent subjects; tell them to sit perfectly still, and avoid clutching him round the neck, or look downward when in mid-air. He has frequently detected a gasp of relief from the man on his back, when the end of the rope and platform were reached. What he considers as one of his greatest feats was in walking on a rope from the mainmast to the mizzen on board the *Peninsular and Oriental* steamer *Poonah*, while on her way to Australia, between Aden and Galle in 1874. He had to sit down five times while the heaviest waves were approaching the ship.

His baggage when on tour consists of the following: a main rope of eight hundred feet; circumference six and a half inches; weight eight hundredweight: twenty-eight straining-

ropes, fifty guide-ropes, eighty tying-bars—the average weight, not including poles, being five and a half tons. The freight of his fixings—including, we suppose, a huge travelling tent, which can encompass fourteen thousand people—amounted to one thousand pounds between Southampton and Melbourne. About three days are consumed in making his preparations, by the aid of a dozen assistants. The due adjustment of his rope is his principal care, and he superintends every detail.

In a fragment of autobiography written some years ago, Blondin tells us that the rope he generally used was formed with a flexible core of steel wire covered with the best Manilla hemp, about an inch or three-quarters in diameter, several hundred yards in length, and costing about one hundred pounds. A large windlass at either end of the rope served to make it taut, while it was supported by two high poles. His balancing-poles, of ash-wood, vary in length, and are in three sections, and weigh from thirty-seven to forty-seven pounds. He is indifferent as to the height at which he is to perform. Blondin has never confessed to any nervousness on the rope, and while walking, he generally looks eighteen or twenty feet ahead, and whistles or hums some snatch of a song. The time kept by a musical band has frequently aided him in preserving his balance. Blondin is something of both carpenter and blacksmith, and is able to make his own models and fit up his own apparatus.

At Niagara House, South Ealing, he is quite a country gentleman, surrounded by his pet black and tan terriers, and poultry, and recreates himself, and does a stroke of honest work in his workshop with its lathe and forge. He is no smoker, takes little or no wine, and is a good billiard player. This blue-eyed, fair-complexioned, ruddy old man seems to have the secret of perpetual youth. He displays a profusion of diamond studs and rings; and besides his gifts from the Prince of Wales, has had many honours from crowned heads. He is the proud possessor of one of the two gold medals struck in commemoration of the opening of the Crystal Palace in 1854. The Queen has the other. He has, besides, the Cross from Queen Isabel of Spain, which entitles him to the title of Chevalier; while the Australians bestowed a handsome cross upon him of Australian gold.

Blondin possesses besides a wonderful scrap-book, containing extracts and pictures from newspapers in almost every language, recording his feats in various parts of the world. Here is a gem entitled 'A Noad to Mr Blondin: Remarkable pusson! enterprisn' Strainger! You probably startid on to a railrode trac, or praps a curb ston; then you took to fensis; and then you Soared to rafters of noo houses. Remarkable pusson! Bi merely a taikin ov a walk you clear 1000 dolers neerly every time. Then the hier you get the Straiter you kin walk, this shows you ain't at al like common foax, wich can't walk mutch when they are Elevated.'

There have been rope-dancers and rope-walkers before Blondin, but he claims to have been the first to perform on the horizontal tight-rope. Previous performances were on hori-

zontal slack-ropes, or ropes fastened diagonally from a height to the ground. And certainly he has shown as much care, talent, and originality in the manufacture and adjustment of his ropes, as in his performances, else he had not lived till now.

The Romans were familiar with performances on the tight-rope, and Pliny has described the evolutions of elephants thereon. At the marriage festivities of Charles VI. with Isabel of Bavaria in 1385, a rope-dancer walked along a rope stretched between St Michael's Church and Notre-Dame, with burning candles in his hand. A Spaniard danced and tumbled on a tight-rope at another royal marriage in 1501—'sometime on pattens, sometime with tennis balls, sometime with fetters of iron, dancing with bells, and leaping many leaps upon the said cables both forward and backward. He played some time with a sword and a buckler; oftsoon he cast himself suddenly from the rope, and hung by the toes, sometimes by the teeth, most marvellously and with greatest sleight and cunning that any man could do.' A man slid down a rope from the top of St Paul's, without aid of hand or foot, in 1554. Pepys, under date September 15th, 1657, records the feats of a wonderful rope-dancer. And all through the eighteenth century there are references now and again to this amusement. Cadman, a rope-walker, was killed by a fall from a rope stretched from Shrewsbury Church tower across the Severn to the fields on the other side. And this is part of his epitaph:

'Twas not for want of skill,
Or courage, to perform the task, he fell:
No, no—a faulty cord, being drawn too tight,
Hurried his soul on high to take her flight,
Which bid the body here beneath good-night.

No wonder Blondin sees personally after the making and adjustment of his rope, when all the risks to be run are fully realised.

SCHLOSS MANSFELD.

ON a wooded hill, in the midst of a bare, unattractive landscape, in Prussian Saxony, not far from Luther's town of Eisleben, rise the walls of Schloss Mansfeld, one of the most notable fortresses in Germany during those stormy centuries when a great noble was a powerful factor in the history of his country. For generations the Lords of Mansfeld played their parts in the tragic drama—'stern lords and mighty,' as their chronicler calls them, ruling like independent princes over the wide tract of land which, by fair means or foul, they had gradually drawn under their sway, and passing away at last, after a blaze of meteoric splendour, in the Thirty Years' War, in a riot of pride and luxury, of debt and fraternal hatred—one of the saddest ruins of a grand old family of which even German annals can furnish us with an example.

'The old order changeth, giving place to new.' And surely, nowhere could the contrast be more striking than at Mansfeld now. Round the base of the hill, far almost as eye can see, the commercial spirit of the nineteenth century shows itself in a most unlovely aspect. The low swelling hills are pierced by mines in

every direction; the tall chimneys of furnaces and smelting-houses pour forth volumes of black unsavoury smoke; small towns and villages inhabited by rough miners; fields on whose red metallic soil grow but scanty harvests; unsheltered roads over which the wind sweeps in fury; black heaps of ashes and refuse—make up, spite of the human activity of which they tell, a sad picture, rendered sadder still by the knowledge that these mines, the source of the wealth and power of the Mansfelds, were also, indirectly, the cause of their shameful decay. In the last few months, the mines have been inundated, and are now closed, thousands of men being thrown out of employ. The subsidence of the great lake near Halle, the waters of which are believed to have forced a subterranean passage into the galleries, has provided the scientific world of Germany with an interesting problem.

A modern house has been built in connection with the best-preserved portion of the old castle; terraced gardens have been laid out on what remains of the gigantic fortifications; the tournament court is now a grass plot with flower-beds and fruit-trees; a lodge, recently erected, occupies the site of the old gate-tower. Passing under this and crossing the drawbridge, you look down into the broad deep moat, where trees are growing amid fragments of enormous masonry. Shattered as the ruins are, they have so far escaped the ravages of Time as to allow us to trace out the lines of the ancient building; while the Gothic chapel and spiral staircase, the gems of Mansfeld, remain almost entire.

There is no record of the foundation of this mighty stronghold; the first mention of it occurs in the Saxon wars of the twelfth century, when it was already a place of considerable importance. Its owners, the Counts of Mansfeld, are said to have acquired their lands in the following manner: a doughty warrior in the service of the Emperor Henry IV., when told to name the reward of some great service, modestly asked for so much ground as he could sow with a bushel of corn. The request was granted; and he, dropping grain by grain warily, to the amazement and chagrin of his comrades, traced the borders of the county which bore from that day the name of the Man's Field. In corroboration of the legend, the Counts bore six grains of corn gules on a field argent.

As they became more powerful, adding, by conquest or by marriage, fief after fief to their fair possessions, this story of their origin was considered too modern, and zealous chroniclers, groping into the mists of prehistoric times, discovered a certain Hoyer the Red, whose prowess eclipsed most of his companions of Arthur's Round Table. Hoyer was always a favourite name with the Counts of Mansfeld. They were masters of all the country round, and at the period of their greatest prosperity, no fewer than seven ruling families of the name dwelt in their respective fortresses, while the main line resided in Mansfeld itself, where it was represented by three brothers, who shared the castle, naming their respective abodes the Vorder (Front), Mittel (Middle), and Hinter (Rear) Ort.

Their descendants dwelt for generations shut up between these walls, hating each other with a hatred born of jealousy and greed, nourished by constant intercourse, and finally embittered by difference of creed, presenting us with one of the most miserable family histories which it is possible to conceive. In 1420 a number of friends and adherents interfered, and a treaty was signed by the three families, specifying their mutual rights, and making arrangements for the future, which it was vainly hoped might enable them to live peacefully together. At this time the buildings of the Vorder Ort were painted red, the Mittel yellow, and the Hinter blue. Vast sums were spent by the Counts in decorating and fortifying their residences; the Hinter Ort was wainscoted throughout with precious foreign woods, the scent of which perfumed the whole castle; the Mittel Ort boasted a large banquet-hall, which from its splendour was called the Golden Room; the Vorder Ort, being less magnificent, outlasted both its rivals. It was repaired and partly rebuilt by Count Hoyer, the privy-councillor of Charles V., whose monument may still be seen in the chapel; and in it died (1710) John George, the last Mansfeld who inhabited the home of his ancestors, and who was carried to his grave at Eisleben with regal pomp and ceremony.

The castle stood many sieges in troublous times; the tide of the Thirty Years' War ebbed and flowed round its vast ramparts; sometimes it was in the hands of the Protestants, with whom Count Albert of the Hinter Ort had cast in his lot; sometimes in those of the Imperialists, for whom Count Wolf held it with the help of his Catholic brothers and cousins. An amusing story is told of two Protestants who were imprisoned for a long time in the vaults and fed on bread and water. They heard the guns firing in honour of several Catholic victories; presently came tidings of the Catholics' defeat at Leipzig, which the captives found out somehow or other. They sung Protestant hymns of triumph lustily through their dungeon bars, till the Commandant, finding that neither threats nor persuasion would silence them, ordered the one to be left alone in his subterranean prison, while the other was carried to a cell over the gate tower. It says something for the Commandant's humanity that, in those fearful times, when every man did that which was right in his own eyes, he should have adopted no sterner measure to enforce their silence. Count Albert at this juncture had been turned out of the castle; but his wife, a courageous dame, who proved her Protestantism by deeds as well as words, kept her apartments with a stately retinue around her. The cousins lived in constant dread of Albert's return, and once, when a dense fog enveloped the hill for three consecutive days and nights, they insisted on expelling all the Countess's male retainers, and allowed only her maids to wait upon her. Albert did return after all, by a peaceful compromise. He had a large family, fifteen in all; and, by marrying three of his daughters to three brothers of the rival house, he stayed the feud for a while.

The Swedes sat down before the castle; and

mines and counter-mines, stratagems, attempts to poison the water in the deep well, all that the ingenuity of those days could devise, was tried against the formidable fortress. The Imperial garrison was at length starved into capitulation, and for seven years, Gustavus's soldiers manned the walls under various commanders, one of whom, George Wardland, was a Scotsman. The chief burghers of Eisleben were detained here as hostages till the town paid the enormous contributions levied by the Swedes.

In 1650, after the peace of Westphalia, the keys of Mansfeld were handed to Christian Frederick, the senior of the family. Not long after, the inhabitants of the adjacent country entreated that the fortifications might be razed, and a party of four hundred soldiers and forty miners worked busily at the demolition of the ramparts. Strange secrets were then brought to light—unknown vaults with fragments of antique weapons and human skeletons; an underground passage leading into the town of Eisleben, and said to exist to this day, though choked up by rubbish. Several of the bastions were blown up by gunpowder; but such was the strength of the walls, that considerable portions still attest the skill of those builders from Nuremberg who laboured on the vast pile in the days of its splendour. There is a legend in the neighbourhood that Luther, who was at school in Mansfeld, and loved the place with all his heart, had the proud castle in his mind when he composed the glorious battle-hymn of German Protestantism, 'Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.' And one can easily believe it when standing in the round battery of the Mint, and looking through its embrasures, fifteen feet deep, each one of which used to hold a cannon blazoned with the arms of Mansfeld. This was the famous bastion, the Fox, of which it is said that, when its guns fired, the whole valley of the Wipper used to tremble. The great bastion in the rear, called the Wild ('at, from the name of its largest piece of ordnance, has entirely disappeared.

Traditions of Luther are the most cherished memories of the place. In his childhood he was frequently in the small mining town at the foot of the hill, and must have looked up, with a child's boundless awe and wonder, to the towers frowning on the height. As a man, he retained his love for the place and people, though his respect for their lords must have been rudely shaken. He preached often from the little pulpit in the chapel; and when the reckless extravagance of the Counts had reached its highest pitch, he rebuked them publicly. It was doubtless at the time when his stanch partisan, Count Albert, was a fugitive, and political and religious differences added a yet deeper dye to their sins in his eyes. Trusting in the sacredness of his office, perhaps, too, in the friendship of the strong-minded Countess, who seems, even when her husband's fortunes were at their lowest ebb, to have inspired her rough relatives with a certain amount of respect, the great Reformer went to beard the lion in his den. Standing on the neutral ground of the tournament court, he inveighed against the evil courses which were sapping their proud house

to its very foundations. The Counts, newly risen from a banquet in the Golden Room, stood on the carved balcony whence the ladies used to hand prizes to the victors in the jousts. Flushed with wine, they mocked the sturdy champion of the new creed, and made their servants roll down upon him a cask which had been broached for their revels. Masters and men laughed boisterously as the rich liquor splashed the steps; and Luther, gathering his black gown about him, retreated a few yards; but, turning once more and raising his hand in solemn warning, he told them that, for all their godless mirth, the grass would grow in their courts ere a hundred years were over. And his prophecy was fulfilled, although the Catholic Count Hoyer restored the castle, and made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and filled the small court near the Golden Room with hallowed earth from Palestine, in which flourishes to this day a peculiar species of nettle, *Urtica pillulosa*, which, they say, will grow nowhere else in the country.

Though Luther shook off the dust from his feet when he parted with the riotous Counts, his love for Mansfeld was not extinguished. Evil tidings reached him from time to time in Wittenberg, and it was in the hope of making some impression on the godless nobles that he set out on his last journey to Eisleben. Heavy storms had made the river impassable, and for three days he waited on its banks, crossing at last, not without danger, in a frail boat. During the last fortnight of his life, he summoned the Mansfelds to his bedside and admonished them repeatedly. Albert and his wife remained with him, ministering to him with their own hands till all was over. Several of the Counts, with two hundred mounted retainers, escorted the corpse to Wittenberg; but the smouldering feud broke out again when the Reformer was in his grave, and raged till the proud family was destroyed and the doom fulfilled.

The Gothic chapel of Mansfeld is a beautiful building, with high groined roof and long lancet windows; the altar-piece, a curious old triptych by an unknown hand, represents the Crucifixion. A screen of wrought-iron, with the arms and quarterings of the Mansfelds, and surmounted by a large crucifix with the Virgin standing at its foot, separates the chancel from the rest of the building; inside the screen stands the small pulpit. The carved gallery round three sides of the chapel used to be connected by passages stretching across the courts with the three different residences. The spiral staircase giving access to the Vorder Ort now joins the chapel to the modern house. The Counts used to sit in the right-hand gallery, their officers occupying the left one. The service used to be celebrated with considerable pomp. When they repeated the Creed, all the gentlemen stood with their hands on their swords, drawing them half out of the scabbard, in token that they were ever ready to fight for their faith; and in the early days of the Reformation, when heresies were rife, four choristers used to kneel in front of the altar when the officiating minister began the words, 'Born of the Virgin Mary,' and remain kneeling till

he had said, 'He rose again from the dead,' a protest against the wild theories which impugned the perfect divinity of the Son. Unseemly disputes took place sometimes in the chapel. Protestants and Catholics, with their respective chaplains, fought for possession of the sacred edifice, and when, by a compromise, the use of it was allowed to both at different hours, matters were hardly improved. The Reformers thundered against the Romanists in the morning to the edification of Count Albert; Count Wolf's priest reconsecrated the church in the afternoon, and diligently refuted all that had been taught in the morning.

After the Mansfelds left their dismantled castle, a Protestant service was held by the minister of the town below; sometimes, at long intervals, one of the family would come from Prague for a few days, bringing his chaplain to say mass for him daily. All the carvings and ornaments which were considered of any value were gradually removed to Bohemia. The chapel was left entirely to the Protestants, who took no care of it whatever.

The tombs of Counts Hoyer and Albert, and a few broken ornaments of wood and stone, are all that remain in the lovely building which now serves the purposes of a common lumber-room. In the sacristy are some life-sized wooden figures, male and female, which used to be draped in mourning garments and placed round the coffin of each departed Mansfeld as he lay in state before the altar. Tradition says these quaint figures were made to replace twelve statues of the apostles in massive silver. As their debts increased and their faith waxed feebler, the Counts sent one apostle after the other to the Mint, to be coined into the thalers which are still sometimes found in the neighbourhood, and to which a special value is attached. They bear the arms and initials of the Counts in whose reign they were coined, and on the obverse side, their patron, St George, slaying the dragon. As their fortunes waned, their patron dismounted, and on the latest Mansfeld thalers he appears on foot. In the Hungarian wars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, these coins were supposed to protect the bearer from all hostile weapons. To this day they are worn as talismans, the most curious part of the superstition being, that the thaler must either be received as a gift, or found, or stolen. If purchased for money, its efficacy is at an end.

MORE ABOUT SOLUBLE PAPER.

SINCE the appearance of the short article on 'Soluble Paper' in the 12th January issue of this *Journal*, many fresh facts about this important form of cellulose have come under our notice. A number of experiments in the practical applications of 'viscose'—as the new substance has been termed by its discoverers, Messrs Cross, Bevan, and Beadle—have been carried out by Mr Arthur D. Little, who has published the results of his work in the *Journal of the Franklin Institute*. The term 'soluble paper' is perhaps rather a misnomer, for the cellulose

is not soluble when once the alkali and sulphur that were combined with it have been removed; but what we wished to express by the title was that in the new substance we had a soluble combination of cellulose—or, in popular language, paper—from which the solid could be recovered in any shape we desired. Wonderful, indeed, are the forms it can be made to assume, either alone or in combination with foreign matter, for Mr Little's experiments have extended the sphere of usefulness of viscose so as to include such heterogeneous things as sponges, artificial leather, floor-tiles, and 'lagging' for steam-pipes and boilers. A substance that can assume such a multitude of forms, all equally useful, and can appear first as glue, then as a film of paper so thin as to be almost intangible, and finally as a substance hard as ebonite, is indeed a wonderful addition to our workshop. It sounds almost too good to be true, and reminds us of the gifts of the fairies that would change at the will of the possessor from a cloak to a table spread with an aldermanic repast.

As regards the first of its applications, viscose is said to be not only better than glue, but cheaper, a five per cent. solution having greater adhesive properties than a fifty per cent. solution of hot glue; whilst a solution containing more than ten per cent. was too thick to be used. When two pieces of maple were stuck together with a ten per cent. solution of viscose so as to form a joint one square inch in section, a strain of five hundred pounds was required to separate them. Weak viscose has been used successfully in the manufacture of three and four ply straw boards, and has an advantage over glue in that it has no smell and is not affected by moisture. Books that have been bound by its aid open anywhere, and remain open, being perfectly flexible. Another application will be welcomed with positive enthusiasm by nearly everybody—namely, its use in the treatment of cotton and linen as a substitute for starch. Articles of personal apparel, such as 'shirt-bosoms,' to quote the American original, or larger articles of domestic furniture such as table-cloths and serviettes, are passed through the decolorised solution, and the excess is squeezed out by rollers. When dry, the various articles become as stiff as if they had been starched in the ordinary way, and possess that polished surface which is so much appreciated by the male members of the community. The superiority does not end here, for the sizing operation with viscose only requires to be done once for all. When a collar or a 'shirt-bosom' that has once been treated with viscose is sent to the wash, it becomes perfectly soft directly it is placed in hot water; and after the washing process is complete, the articles resume their former stiffness when dried and ironed without any further addition of viscose.

As soon as the new method comes into vogue generally, we shall get over the tortures incident on buttoning a collar that has been starched so as to resemble enamelled iron; and shall escape the opposite extreme of fastening round our necks what is little better than a limp rag.

We have mentioned the use of viscose solution for strengthening and filling textile goods in our previous article, so that we can pass on to its application in colour pigment printing. In this industry the weak solution will be employed as a vehicle for the pigments, and the cloth, after printing, will be washed and dried in the usual way. As soon as it is dry, the viscose will coagulate, cementing the pigments firmly to the material, so that the cloth will preserve its appearance for a longer period than is now the case. For centuries the Japanese have done exquisite work in colour-printing on fabric, largely with a stencil; and European manufacturers are showing a disposition to adopt their methods, although in the hurry after cheapness, the Westem will never turn out such beautiful work as the Japanese have done. The style of the new school of design, which has learned a great deal from the Japanese, is admirably suited for stencil-work, and the introduction of viscose will lend much assistance to the work, for, by varying the density of the medium, we shall be enabled to alter the effects of the superimposed colours. In our last article we spoke of the possible use of viscose in the manufacture of artificial silk. We do not know whether it is being used for this purpose at present, but a nitrated wood-pulp is actually being manufactured into artificial silk by the apparatus we mentioned, which is the invention of Dr Lehner of Zürich. Those who are interested in the subject will find much information in the United States Consular Reports for December. It is stated that a company is being formed in Bradford for the manufacture of this material, and that we shall soon be able to purchase it in England. Some doubts, however, have been expressed by experts as to its success when used alone, although they think there is a possibility of the artificial product being used as a warp with other material as a warp.

According to the Report of the Bradford Conditioning House, the strength of the artificial silk is little more than half that of the natural variety, but the two resemble one another in being practically non-elastic. The artificial silk is relatively heavier and more even in texture, taking the dye perfectly in all shades with a brilliant effect. It is probable that the introduction of soluble paper will give an impetus to this new fabric; and it is quite possible that the silk made from viscose will be quite as strong as the product of the silk-worm, although whether it will be as beautiful remains to be seen.

The applications of the films are more extensive even than we had imagined. Not only will they be useful by themselves; but by cementing the wet films on to a cloth backing, a whole series of new products can be evolved. As regards the simple film, which may vary in thickness from gossamer to thick leather, it is stated that a film as clear as glass can be

made by pouring the viscose solution on to a glass plate with rough edges, to regulate the thickness, and coagulating it by heat. When it is washed and dried, the film is perfectly clear and transparent, and eminently fitted for all photographic purposes. The inventors of viscose have discovered a new substance, also a cellulose compound, which seems likely to be more valuable for this end than viscose, and possesses the remarkable property of being unaffected by heat up to two hundred degrees Centigrade (three hundred and ninety-two degrees Fahrenheit). This substance is quite a new addition to our knowledge of cellulose, and experiments upon it from an industrial point of view have hardly been begun; but it will prove to be of the utmost importance commercially, and we hope to give further particulars about it soon. The heavier sheets made from viscose have been cut into all kinds of useful things, including plates, trays, backs for brushes, inner soles for boots, embossed signs, &c.; and the sheets can be printed upon and used as book-covers. Cloth with a facing of cellulose from ten- to thirty-thousandths of an inch in thickness seems to be of great importance. Owing to the readiness with which the superficial layer can be moulded, it can be made to imitate morocco exactly, taking all the fine grain under a suitable die; whilst thicker sheets have proved themselves to be a handsome carpet, and durable withal. Perhaps the most remarkable opening for viscose is in the manufacture of sponges. By suitable treatment, the cellulose can be recovered from the viscose solution in a porous form; and with a little improvement, there is no reason why the structure of the sponge cannot be imitated. A large sponge is a somewhat expensive luxury, and promises to become still more so as the fishing-grounds become exhausted; so that the discovery of a substitute is very opportune. Besides sponges, the porous form of cellulose is admirably adapted to the making of fancy boxes, embossed hangings, photograph frames, book-covers, and novel kinds of decorative material. By mixing foreign ingredients such as sawdust, fibres, plaster of Paris, clay, *Kieselguhr*, &c. with a small proportion of raw viscose solution, all kinds of materials, such as linoleum, decorative tiles, panels, and numberless other products, can be obtained. In fact, there seems to be no end to its applications in this direction. Viscose solution makes a splendid medium for *gesso* work, and we have seen some clever decorations executed with a mixture of plaster of Paris and viscose.

With all our boasted progress, we are a long way behind the plants and the insects. Plants discovered soluble cellulose before man existed, and the long rows of upright cells just under the upper surface of the leaf called by botanists *Palisade parenchyma*, seems to be the principal manufactory of it. Wasps and other insects learned to build their houses of paper long, long ago, and we are only just beginning to find all this out. We are endeavouring, nevertheless, to make the most of our discoveries; and if the present century has earned the title of the Iron Age, the next era may perhaps claim the title of the Paper Age. To

all appearances, we shall build our houses soon of paper bricks, make the floors of paper tiles, and cover them with paper carpets, decorate the walls with paper mouldings, shut out the draughts with paper curtains, sit on paper chairs, and on high days and holidays clothe ourselves in paper silks.

A BACHELOR'S CONSOLATIONS.

WHILE most companions of my youth
Now proudly lead about a wife,
I sometimes feel, to own the truth,
But half-content with single life;
Yet wedlock may be not all sweet,
And e'en the humble bachelor
In unthought ways a joy may meet
That's well worth living single for.

A trait it is of envious man
To think his share of blessing less,
If in another's lot he scan
Some part which he does not possess;
But, rightly viewed, my Colebs yoke
May be a state superior
To that of double-harnessed folk,
And well worth living single for.

'Tis clear that in the case of Tom
The gray mare is the better horse;
She orders him to go and come,
And he obeys her as of course.
I go and come just as I please,
Ruled by no female monitor.
Are not such liberty and ease
Right well worth living single for?

Three tiny restless elves hath Jack,
Of whom he is exceeding proud;
By Jove, my ears they soon would crack,
Their squalls are so exceeding loud!
But in my wifeless, childless nest,
Peace is a constant visitor,
A blessing surely of the best,
And well worth living single for.

Two, and potential more, afford
An easy mark to fortune's aim;
Misfortune here the fitter word
May be, the meaning is the same;
Man *solus*—hard to hit is he
By any stroke of fortune, or
Misfortune. Such immunity
Is well worth living single for.

The wight before the altar who
'I wed thee' says, with fateful breath,
Hath little to look forward to
In order of events but death;
While he whose bolt is still unshot
Hath hope and chances yet galore;
In short, a prospect—hath he not?—
That's well worth living single for.

WOODBURN.

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CHINEE TOWN, CALCUTTA.

IN Christmas week there met me at the races an acquaintance fresh from England. It was the height of the globe-trotting season, and Calcutta was sweet with the savour of them. I am only a subaltern, one of a privileged class in the matter of globe-trotters, for no earnest seeker after knowledge can spare more than a cursory dinner with such insignificant persons—it is even delusive to talk to them. But this man failed, somehow, to take himself seriously. He came to dine in the Fort, and capital company he was. I found he had never seen opium dens. They were much discussed at the time, for the beautiful *Sunbeam* was lying in the Hooghly, and the Opium Commission was laboriously examining the notes in other men's eyes. A note to the police station brought a pleasant sergeant of police; and we descended to the Inferno of Chinee Town. 'And to the place I come where nothing shines.' In truth, the alums were fearsome, dirty, dark, evil-smelling—remote, apparently, from all things open, cleanly, respectable.

The opium dens close early, so thither we went first of all. Shade of De Quincey! there was no 'cottage room seven and a half feet long by seven and a half high; no library of five thousand books; no tea-table; no open volume of German metaphysics; no glass decanter made to look as much like a wine decanter as possible, full of a quart of ruby-coloured liquid, the *pharmakon nepenthes* for all human woes—oh! just subtle and mighty opium.' Here were far other temples for other devotees—a small door with a hatch in it—a narrow, dark passage, and a tiny stifling den—a wooden couch with wooden blocks for pillows—a sort of safe with bars—a smiling Chinese attendant—two bundles of inert blue garments, and a fresh customer paying two annas for his smoke. Two annas bought enough to half-fill a thimble; and a piece which looked about the size of a packet of envelopes was worth twenty-five

rupees. The price varies largely, and there is much gambling done in opium-broking in the 'Afim-ha-chowrastra.'

We watched the process of filling and smoking a pipe. The two annas' worth was put into a small metal cup and roasted. It became a brown treacly-looking substance—lifted, turned, and twisted on a skewer, round which it writhed and wriggled demoniacally like silver paper in a flame. The long wooden pipe was taken from its nail, the writhing brown mass placed in it. The intent Chinaman sat him down on the edge of the couch and pulled at it. His eyes brightened, then half-closed, and he lay back among the other recumbent bundles, his so strange Mongolian visage beatified. Did he reach the heaven of philosophy, the rapture of release from individuality, the selfless floating in contentment? Or was it only of his puny life glorified that he dreamt, of hundreds of rupees, of a good son, of a new wife, of a run at the gambling-table?

The man in charge presented us with little sticks of incense. They are about eight inches long, and will burn all night before the black joss. We left the quiet hot place, where no one seems to speak above a whisper.

A dark muddy lane, a right-handed turn into a courtyard, through a shop, into a sort of bamboo-built outhouse. This was a Chinese gambling den, where 'fan-tan' was being played. There was a large table divided into four parts by lines from corner to corner. These parts were numbered 0, 1, 2, and 3, and the stake could be placed on any of them. A heap of cowries or counters was poured upon the table, and rapidly counted into fours by a croupier with a small rake. According as the remainder was one, two, three, or nothing, the people who had staked on the division so numbered won double their stake; for the table laid two to one, which obviously it could very well afford. The gamblers were quick reckoners. Before the croupier had nearly finished counting, they seemed to know from the size and

appearance of the pile what the remainder would be. There they stood in a crowd, stolid, immovable as so many tallow idols. They were all dressed in blue cotton; their faces were all yellow and wrinkled, their eyes all narrow and brown, their pigtailed all black and greasy. They were one and all apparently indifferent to gain or loss, though they were all poor men, and many of them, we were told, would stake a week's earnings. The profits of such tables, which, from the odds they lay, must necessarily be large, are formed into charitable funds among these peculiar people in their peculiar quarter. The poor are relieved; and as the men of Chinese Town are all too familiar with the police courts, the defence of any accused member of the community is furnished out of these funds. Several noted criminals were pointed out to us that night—one old man with a wooden, vacant, smiling face, had served his time in the Andamans. It is not a quarter of the city where it would be pleasant to wander after dark without a police escort.

We went to several gambling places. They are all alike—hot, foul, and crowded, full of the sickening smell of cocoa-nut oil. Even Western curiosity was glutted with the kaleidoscope of faces—hard, seamed faces—young yellow faces—each like a mask, a riddle to decipher, yet even so all alike, covering one emotion, one master-passion.

At last our cicerone put us down by the lock-up, appropriately wholly of stone, and of an iron colour, and we fled out of this ominous region in a *ticca gharry*.

The night was young, and I remembered an invitation to the wedding feast of a wealthy *babu's* son. The very thing; and we headed for Dum-Dum. Two miles in this direction brought us to our destination. Flags, flowery poles, triumphal arches, an avenue of lamps. It was a great *tamasha*. Torches waved, and servants bowed, and we were shown into the *atrium*, the middle court, which is so distinctive a feature in Eastern houses. We were met by our host, a genial *babu*, who spoke excellent English. In the centre of the court sat the bridegroom, throned. He was richly dressed, and covered with jewels, but he looked very tired, poor little boy. His part was to sit there all night, neither moving nor speaking, nor being spoken to. His father once spoke two words to him, but it was not etiquette for guests to greet him. He was only fourteen; and the bride, not of course *en évidence*, was much younger. This was the preliminary or betrothal ceremony, what we should call the marriage not taking place for three or four years. We were taken up-stairs, where a lavish table was laid for many people, and we duly drank the bridegroom's health. The food, the wine, and the service were English; while from the wall, bizarrely painted, looked down strangely Vishnu the Preserver.

After supper, we were all seated in the court. In one corner was a band, made up of ten or twelve sepoys in mufti from the band of the nearest native regiment. They played at intervals, the *British Grenadiers* and the *Regimental March* seeming about the sum-total of their accomplishments. In the upper storey, which was built on stucco columns, were the ladies of the house. They were screened of course, but evidently enjoying the scene, whispering and laughing.

The nautch began. Dancer succeeded dancer. We only stayed for four of them, each uglier than the last, and to our ears more cacophonous. Their silk dresses and massive silver ornaments rustled and chinked as they circled. Each girl was *en grande tenue*, and had brought her own four musicians—tom-toms and *saringis*. One dancing girl who just escaped being ugly, came forward singing in English—she was the *première danseuse et cantatrice* of Calcutta—'Oh! my darling! where is she?' with tedious repetition. Chink-chank! chink-chank! went her anklets as she swayed before us, her feet together, her arms raised gracefully, sinking to the ground in a sort of curtsying finale. A nautch is extremely monotonous, and we were soon saying good-night to our host.

He took us across the road to show us the temple that he had built. It was of stucco, and was highly ornate in the usual Hindu style. How many lakhs it had cost, or how many poor men he fed daily, I have forgotten; but he was a good man and passing rich.

The Bengali theatre was near, and to finish the night we turned in there. Sitting in state in the Viceregal box, we surveyed the house. There was a tier of boxes to the right and left of us, curtained for *pardah nashin* ladies, and every box seemed full. The stalls and pit were crowded with white toged *babus*; young, mild-eyed *babus*; old, bearded, and paunch-bearing *babus*—there they lolled, all chewing betel, all looking happy, all wearing patent-leather shoes. One felt certain they would answer every conceivable question under the sun. The play was a classic tragedy of the highest order—scenes from the *Ramayana*, showing the ruin of Sita, and the slaying of her destroyer, the king of Lanha, at the hands of Rama. The language was either Hindi or Bengali, and was too hard for us; but it was pleasant to hear, and the elocution was undeniably good. The company acted with great spirit, and some actors were natural and eloquent, though even the best of them ranted somewhat. The orchestra played dreary, blatant, native music. When the piece was over, the manager took us behind the scenes. We were introduced to the green-room, where the main article of furniture was a large sink, in which the company washed their faces. The actors are shareholders. The leading actor's pay was sixty rupees a month, besides a share of profits. The leading lady's, thirty to fifty rupees.

While we were behind, they began the farce, the humour of which was beyond us. It was then about half an hour after midnight, and the farce would last another hour. It is a strange reversal of our arrangement to play a long classical piece first, and then with the

same troupe embark after midnight on a roaring farce. The audience would certainly get their money's worth.

Then away in the cool black night, between dark houses and up quiet streets. They were playing the last bars of the opera at the Parsi Theatre, a sort of dismal, clanging, thumping medley of tuneless instruments and strained voices. In the house were a curious crowd—Hindus from Bengal, Mohammedans from the Punjab, Parsis from Bombay, Afghan horse-dealers, Arabs from the Gulf, Malays, Chinamen, with here and there the green turban of a hadji.

An iced drink at the club, an appointment to visit the rain-gambling den next day, and we went over the Maidan homewards in the grateful coolness of an Indian night.

AN ELECTRIC SPARK.*

CHAPTER II.—ONE CLOUD CLEARED.

ROBERT DALTON gazed wildly at the man whom during the past year or so he had grown to trust more and more, looking at him as his *alter ego*, only, as it now seemed, to find that he had leaned upon a bruised reed.

'You knew this,' he cried fiercely, 'and did not speak?'

'Yes, sir.'

'And let me go so far as to make that tremendous engagement? Why, it will be the ruin of a reputation I have spent my life in building up!'

'The thought must have come to us simultaneously,' said Wynyan, smiling. 'I had not a doubt until last night; but I have always been seeking for that flaw. Last night I found it. It came like a flash.'

'Yes, the thunderbolt to destroy the work of a life. How could we be such idiots?'

Wynyan was silent; but he took out a large thin flat leather case from his pocket, and opened from it a fine sheet of transparent tracing-linen folded like a map. This he spread upon the table, and the old engineer shrank from it as if it filled him with disgust.

'Don't,' he cried. 'Keep the accursed thing out of sight.'

'Why?' replied Wynyan with a faint smile of satisfaction upon his lip.

'Why?' cried Dalton fiercely. 'I'll tell you. Because you are almost a boy. To you it means trying to grapple with difficulties during the long years of life you have stretching out in sunshine. To me it means hopelessness and despair. You are healthy and strong. I am old and broken in health. For Heaven's sake, burn the miserable delusion—the snare with its tempting bait.'

'That is not the spirit in which we have always worked,' said Wynyan quietly. 'You taught me differently from that, Mr Dalton.' He

took up a pencil and drew his chair closer to the table. 'It is as you say, sir, certain to fail as it stands. Our model worked beautifully, but as you have seen, the constant pressure must after some hours mean collapse.'

'Yes, yes, I know,' said Dalton bitterly; but he was impressed by his junior's manner. There was something suggestive of the holding out a straw to one who drowned, and his fingers twitched as if to grasp that straw in his great despair.

'Now,' said Wynyan, in a low voice as if to himself, and he kept on touching portions of the coloured sections carefully drawn to scale, 'I spent last night going through this from point to point, calculating it, working the stress and strain at easy pressure.'

'Yes,' sighed Dalton sadly, 'and it means utter destruction after some hours' use. Ship or building would go, and it would be more dangerous to its friends than to its enemies.'

'So would a steam-engine be if there were no safety-valve,' replied Wynyan quietly.

'Then you propose to put a safety-valve in there, I suppose?' replied Dalton mockingly.

'That which would occupy its place and purpose,' replied Wynyan. 'Suppose I introduce a small shaft here bearing an eccentric, and break or modify the current at stated intervals—half-minutes or minutes as we pleased, or experience taught us was necessary to relieve the strain.'

He pointed with his pencil as he spoke, and the old engineer sprang from his chair, clapped his trembling hands down upon the drawing, and gazed at the portion indicated by the pencil.

'Say that again,' he cried in a husky voice, and Wynyan quietly repeated his words, while the great drops gathered on the old man's broad forehead ran together, and there was a faint pat and a gathering stain upon the weak spot of the drawing—a spot which made the colour run as if marked out upon blotting-paper. Then with a cry, the hands resting upon the plans were shifted to Wynyan's shoulders, and he was pressed back in his chair.

'Not—not another word,' panted Dalton, 'unless you cry "Eureka." But there—I must be calm—for René's sake. Paul—Paul Wynyan,' he gasped out, as he sank back in his chair, 'God bless you, boy! You have saved my life.'

'You think, then, that I am right?'

'You are right, boy. A simple thing threatened ruin; a simple thing has given me back my life. I couldn't have borne it, Wynyan. I must have gone.'

'Come, come; you are excited, sir, and you magnify the evil and relief.'

'No, boy; neither—I know.'

He spoke in a subdued voice now, with his hands laid upon his breast.

'I did not want more money; but when you suggested the production of this motor, I saw its enormous value, and for your sake, as well as my own, I went into it heart and soul. As we went on, it grew upon us till I felt that if

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we perfected our work a nation which possessed it might laugh at her rivals.'

'Yes, sir,' said Wynyan quietly, 'it must give a country gigantic power.'

'And we have won, then, after all. Wynyan, my dear boy, I promised you that if you succeeded I would be fair.'

'Yes; but you need not have promised,' said the young man quietly. 'You always are.'

'My enemies do not say so,' said Dalton. 'Even Brant considers me unjust.'

'Don't let us discuss that or anything else now, sir,' said Wynyan, doubling up his drawing, and replacing it in his pocket. 'You have had anxiety enough. Only tell me this—you feel full confidence in the invention now?'

'Perfect.'

'And I have the same, Mr Dalton, in you.'

'I know that, my boy,' said the old man, leaning forward to lay his hand upon his lieutenant's knee. 'But I will say this—you must join me as my partner.'

'Mr Dalton, this is too much,' cried the young man, flushing.

'Let me be the judge of that. There; I must rest now; I have gone through too much during the past twenty-four hours. Tell Hamber not to let me be disturbed.'

'Would it not be better to have some advice, sir?' said Wynyan anxiously.

'Send for Kilpatrick again?' replied Dalton with a smile. 'My dear boy, you have prescribed that this afternoon which will give me years of life. By the way, we are at home on Wednesdays. Come in for an hour or two.'

Wynyan hesitated.

'Yes,' continued Dalton, 'come in now and then. You must meet people more. There will not be many, but Villar Endoza said he would come; I want you to know him more. He has something on the way again, and we may as well have the contract. They pay—or the British public does. The electric lighting has given great satisfaction, he says. For the present, then. You will come in sometimes?'

Come! When it was like opening to him the door of happiness and joy.

The old man turned to the table filter to replenish his glass of water, and Wynyan's hand closed upon a white rose which had half escaped from the bouquet on the table. He hesitated for a moment, and then resisted the temptation.

The next moment Dalton was back and took up the bunch to hold them to his face. 'Hah!' he said with a smile, 'the links that hold us back to childhood. Take one for your button-hole, Wynyan. They are very fine. But you don't do that sort of thing.'

'Oh yes,' he cried eagerly, 'sometimes;' and he took a creamy bud with feverish haste, placed it in his coat, and then went out from the principal's room with the feeling upon him that flowers linked us with something more than childhood. To him then it was as if he were a step nearer Réné.

The next moment he felt a chill, for Brant Dalton came up as if to enter the private room.

'Mr Dalton asked me to say that he wished not to be disturbed.'

'What?' said Brant sharply; but he did not look at the man he addressed. Wynyan saw that his eyes were fixed upon the rose he was wearing at his breast.

THE SCOTTISH GOLD-FIELDS.

THERE are few countries in the world which have not at some time or other yielded gold, for it is one of the most widely distributed metals, though, unfortunately, it always occurs in small quantities, mingled with vast masses of valueless materials. So valuable is it, moreover, that once a deposit has been discovered, men do not rest until they have extracted all the precious metal that is within their reach; and therefore in countries which have been long civilised, the gold-fields have mostly become exhausted. The United Kingdom has in the past yielded very considerable quantities of gold, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales each giving a fair share; but of all the regions in which gold has been found in Great Britain, the Scottish gold-fields of Lanarkshire are the most interesting.

Not fifty miles from the city of Glasgow, it is yet a *terra incognita* both to natives and visitors, except the very few who have in some way become acquainted with it; indeed, probably the great majority of Scotsmen do not know that Scotland ever produced any gold. The district in which the gold was found is the only mineral region in Scotland, and so rich was it in gold and lead, that it came to be called 'God's Treasure-house in Scotland.' The gold was found in the valleys of the Lowthers, a group of rounded, featureless hills, covered with dark grass, enriched during the autumn by patches of purple heather; bare and treeless, and having altogether a very barren and uninviting appearance. Nor are they lofty; and they cannot by any stretch of the imagination be considered to be mountains, the highest point, the Green Lowther, only attaining an altitude of about two thousand four hundred feet. The hills are the remains of a mass of high land elevated above the sea many ages ago, into which the long-continued action of running water has cut deep valleys. On the high lands rise tiny rivulets, which uniting, form burns, and these ultimately find their way into the two rivers which receive most of the drainage on the two sides of the water-parting, the Clyde and the Nith. Of the streams, but three have yielded any considerable quantity of gold, and these rise very close together near the base of the Green Lowther. The Wanlock Water flows by a very devious course to the Nith; the other two soon separate, and reach the Clyde, some miles apart—the Glengonar Water taking the more northerly course, and the Shortcleuch, which soon becomes the Elvan Water, going more to the south. The total length of each of these streams, from its source to the Clyde, is under ten miles. The valleys are not narrow gorges; but are of the usual river-valley type, a more or less wide plain through which the stream runs, winding in and out, bounded by steep sloping hills, which are cut into smaller transverse valleys

wherever smaller burns send down their waters.

The streams have cut their courses deep into the rock; the heavy rains aided by the resistless expansive force of freezing water, and the more important, though less obvious disintegration brought about by the chemical action of air and water, have worn away the sides of the valleys, and the remnants of the rocks have been carried into the streams. In ordinary times, these streams are small brooks, and seem almost powerless; but in times of 'spate' they increase enormously in size, and, becoming torrents, sweep the lighter materials down towards the sea; whilst the larger and heavier fragments, which the rushing water cannot carry, are deposited, forming the beds of gravel which line the bottom of the valleys, and through which in peaceful times the streams flow.

It is in these gravels that the gold has been found. Gold is not easily destructible; it is not acted on by water, or by air, and being very heavy, it is not easily carried down by the streams, whilst its brightness enables it to be found with comparative ease, even when present in small quantities. At what period gold was first discovered in this region it is impossible to say—certainly it was before the beginning of authentic history, for gold ornaments have been found in abundance among the very earliest Scotch remains; and we know of no district from which the metal is likely to have come but this—unless, indeed, it was imported, which does not seem to be likely—and both Strabo and Tacitus mention gold as being one of the metals occurring in the island. Gold is known to have been worked in these valleys as far back as the thirteenth century, mention being made of workings in the reign of David I. (1125). Later, in the reign of James IV., gold was obtained in considerable quantities, the works being then known as those of Crawford or Crawford-muir.

In 1537, James V. married Magdalene, a daughter of the king of France, and brought her to Scotland, accompanied, of course, by many retainers from the French court. Soon after their arrival, the king, accompanied by the queen and her train, set out to hunt among the Lowthers, and took up his abode at Crawford Castle. No contrasts could be greater than those between the lovely fertile valleys of France with their trees and flowers, and these bare, bleak, treeless hills, hardly supporting any plants but grass and heather, uncultivated and uncultivable, affording a bare subsistence to hardy mountain sheep, and between the bright sunny weather of the south, and the damp, dull, depressing climate of the north. The French felt the difference keenly, and no doubt also expressed it openly, jeering at the barrenness of the land to which they had come. The king heard of this, and, according to the tradition, he wagered that his land, barren though it seemed, would produce fairer fruit than any in sunny France; and at a banquet to be held soon after, he would be ready to make good his wager. When the day of the banquet arrived, a large covered dish was brought in and set before the queen; the cover was removed, and revealed a heap of

fine new gold coins (the celebrated 'Bonnet' pieces), made with gold from the Elvan Valley. It was admitted that this was a goodly fruit, and the king thus won his bet. It seems curious that a descendant of one De Hope, who came over in the train of Queen Magdalene, should afterwards own Leadhills. These valuable mines were acquired by the Hopetoun family through the marriage of Sir James Hope of Hopetoun, a member of the Scottish bar, to Anne, only daughter and heir of Robert Foulis, of Leadhills.

Soon after the death of his young French queen, James married Mary of Guise. The new queen was a woman of great ability and enormous energy; she had no doubt heard of the bonnet-pieces, and she resolved to gather a further harvest of the same fruit. She brought over miners from France to carry on the work systematically, and probably a considerable quantity of gold was obtained, for in '1567 Cornelius de Vois sent eight pounds' weight of gold to Edinburgh, the produce of thirty days' work of the persons he had employed;' and the Regent Morton not long after 'presented to the French king a gold basin filled with gold pieces, all being the produce of Scotland.'

A period of religious and political upheaving followed, in which men had little time to give to systematic mining, and still less to recording their success; so for a few years nothing is known of what was done.

About 1578, another attempt was made to find gold—this time, by an English adventurer, Bevis Bulmer. Thomas Foulis, an Edinburgh goldsmith, had commenced to work the lead-mines at the head of the Shortcleuch and Glengonar Waters—which have been worked ever since, and are now known as the Leadhills mines—and in 1576 he engaged Bulmer to take charge of the works. Bulmer had of course heard of the gold finds, and being of a very speculative disposition, was more powerfully attracted by the chances of gold-finding than by the more prosaic if more profitable lead-mining. He obtained 'letters of recommendation from Queen Elizabeth;' and on the strength of these, the Scotch Government granted him a patent to 'adventure and search for gold and silver mines' on Crawford-muir.

He commenced work on the Menock Water, where he found but little gold; then he tried the Wanlock Water, where he was more successful; then he turned his attention to the Shortcleuch, and worked down it and the Elvan Water, and then down the Glengonar Water, on all of which he found gold, some pieces being of considerable size. The works were carried on in a thorough and systematic manner. He was miner enough to know that desultory hunting could be of little use, so he erected dams, and made artificial water-courses or sluices for the washing; and the great heaps of refuse, the 'gold scours,' which still remain in various parts of the valley, attest to the thoroughness with which the work was done. He built stores in several places, and erected a house for himself in Glengonar, over the door of which he is said to have put the lines:

In Wanlock, Elvan, and Glengonar,
I found my riches and my honour.

For three years the work went on successfully; about three hundred men being employed, and gold to the value of one hundred thousand pounds was obtained; but as the workings were carried down the streams, they became less and less productive, and at last ceasing to be profitable, were abandoned. Bulmer returning to England, 'presented Queen Elizabeth with a porringer made of Scotch gold, along with the statement in rhyme:

My mind and heart shall still invent
To seek out treasures yet unknown.'

Bulmer's work had been a success; he exhausted the gold so completely, that there was little left for those who came after him. Alluvial gold-washing can never last long, if systematically carried on; a very short time sufficing to clear out the gold which has taken ages to accumulate; but as the most complete washing fails to remove all the metal, occasional finds are possible, even after the gravels have been well worked. Since Bulmer's time, no systematic working has been attempted; but occasional finds, sometimes of considerable value, have not been uncommon. In 1863 a party of Leadhills miners made an organised search, and obtained about two thousand grains of gold, which was presented to Lady Hopetoun, who had it made into ornaments. Since that date, on several occasions small quantities of eighty grains or so have been found, and made into wedding rings on the occasion of the marriage of some of the officials of the mining company, and an ornament of Leadhills gold was given by the miners to the present Lady Hopetoun on her marriage. A ring of Leadhills gold was presented in 1893 to the Duchess of York. The lion shield of the old Scottish kings with the thistle was impressed upon the outside of the ring, and also this motto, 'Nemo me impune lacessit.' Inside the ring there was this inscription: 'This ring of Scotch gold, from the ancient mines of Leadhills, was given by Mr W. G. Borron and the miners of that district, to the Princess Victoria Mary of Teck, July 1893.' Even now, small quantities of the precious metal are occasionally found by miners, some of whom spend their spare time in searching likely places—a very good substitute, one would think, for fishing, and one not to be despised as a recreation in a place where amusements are few.

The gold occurs in the gravels in the form of dust, scales, and small nuggets, and is very irregularly scattered. It might be thought that none would now occur near enough the surface to be obtained; but it must be remembered that the heavy rains, which are by no means infrequent in the district, disturb and rearrange the gravels, and sweep down fresh debris from the hillsides.

The gold from various parts of the field differs much in appearance; and like all native gold, it is never pure, but contains a considerable quantity of silver. The Leadhills gold has an average fineness of about 850, or contains eighty-five per cent. of gold, the remainder being almost entirely silver.

Whence came the gold; and how did it get into the gravels? It must surely have come from the rocks which have yielded the gravel;

and if the streams be traced up to their source, the place from which it came should be found. For centuries, search has been made for this 'reef,' but without success. Bulmer thought he had found it, and set up stamping machinery to extract the gold; but the yield was too small to be profitable. Quite recently, a miner found a piece of quartz containing unmistakable gold, and he thought he could find the reef from which it came; but after diligent search, he, too, failed to find it. The accumulation of the mass of auriferous gravel must have taken an enormous time, the water breaking up the rocks, and carrying them in powder or in solution to the sea, whilst the gold, from its durability and density, was left, Nature carrying on in her own way a process of concentration exactly similar to that by which man treats the gravels to recover the gold.

If the reef exists, it is curious that it has not been discovered; but as the great bulk of the gold has been found not very far from the heads of the streams, it is obvious that the source of the gold cannot be lower down. The whole region is traversed by a large number of mineral veins, which now yield lead, or contain nothing of worth; and it is possible that the gold may have been in the upper portions of some of these, and that the reef, as far as it was gold-bearing, may have been completely washed away.

Whether the days of Scotland as a gold-producing country—at any rate as far as the district under consideration is concerned—are gone for ever, it is impossible to say. Bevis Bulmer did his work so well, that there is no likelihood of more gold being obtained from the gravels; but should the reef at any time be found, it is impossible to say what it may or may not yield. Quite apart from gold, 'the Treasure-house' is still rich in mineral wealth; and a large quantity of lead, containing some silver, is still obtained from the mines at the Leadhills and at Wanlockhead. The output from these mines is much smaller now than it was; but in 1892 it amounted to about 3000 tons, containing about 9000 ounces of silver.

In both places the lead ore is smelted, and at Wanlockhead the silver is extracted, whilst the lead from Leadhills is sent to Glasgow, and is there desilverised. The mines have been profitable in the past; but it is difficult to see how they can long continue so with lead at its present very low price.

In Dr John Brown's delightful article in *John Leech and other Papers* on the wild Enterkin Pass, near at hand, the story of a covenanting rescue is quoted from Defoe. There is much information also in Porteous's *God's Treasure-house in Scotland*. Allan Ramsay the poet was a son of a mine manager at Leadhills; and James Taylor, a pioneer in inland steam-navigation, was also a native. There is a good public library, founded in 1741. Dorothy Wordsworth has a record in her *Journal in Scotland* in 1803, of the visit paid to Leadhills and the neighbouring village of Wanlockhead by herself, her brother William, and Coleridge. Leadhills and Wanlockhead claim to be two of the highest villages in Scotland; and both, along with Crawford, Elvanfoot, and Abington, on

the upper reach of the Clyde, are patronised by visitors, in the season, for the bracing hill air.

There is another district from which gold has been obtained, and which deserves mention among the gold-fields of Scotland. It is situated on the south-east coast of Sutherland. Here streams flowing down from the hills have deposited beds of gravel, and in these gravels gold has been found. The first finds in this district date back to a somewhat remote period, and attempts have been made at intervals to work them. Whether the gravels contain enough of the precious metal to make a systematic washing profitable is uncertain, but attempts are being made to test this, and to keep the working open, and it is to be hoped that the yield may be large enough to add gold-washing to the permanent industries of the Highlands.

RICHARD MAITLAND—CONSUL.

A VICTIM OF THE KOLAO-HWUY.

CHAPTER II.

It took some time to prime the candidates in their new duties; but at last the weary task came to an end, and Sterling and the other neophytes were led to the 'Lodge of Universal Peace,' where the whole council was assembled.

'May my lords live myriads of years,' said the *Vanguard* as he entered the assembly.

'Who is there before me, on the ground?' demanded the President.

'It is *Tien-yu-hung*' (the Introducer).

The 'Introducer' took his place by the side of the candidates. A long examination immediately followed, which to poor Sterling's fevered brain appeared meaningless and wearisome in the extreme.

At the conclusion of this so-called examination, the following question was put to the new members: 'Do you still desire to become one of the brethren?'

Sterling raised his eyes with a momentary gleam of hope—the word 'No' had almost passed his lips; but he fortunately paused before he uttered it, for a wretched neophyte who stood near was bold enough to decline to become a member of the Kolao-hwuy.

'No; I do not wish to become a brother,' he said. The words had scarcely passed his lips before the unfortunate man was dragged outside the west gate of the camp and instantly beheaded.

After this ghastly experience, there were no more dissentient voices on the part of the neophytes. Sterling felt his heart beat hard and fast; but true to his resolve to act up to the traditions of his country, he held himself erect, and looked boldly into the face of the President.

'We will now go into the Red Flower Pavilion,' said that personage. He led the way; and the new members with the council immediately followed him. Here the neophytes were obliged to confirm by a bloody oath their desire to join the society. The whole of this ceremony was ghastly in the extreme. The place, the hour, the expressions on the faces of those men who already belonged to the

Kolao-hwuy, added to the horrors which already filled poor Sterling's mind. He thought of Evelyn waiting for him at home, and of the terrible chains which, through his own rash act, were now being riveted round his neck.

As a preliminary to this final ceremony, the faces of the new members were washed in cold water and long white robes were put upon them. After a tedious prayer to the gods, in which the brethren declared their intention of destroying the present dynasty, and remaining faithful to the Kolao-hwuy Society through all changes and chances of life, the oath, which consisted of thirty-six articles, was read to the neophytes on their bended knees. A bowl of wine was next introduced, over which each candidate pricked his middle finger with a silver needle and let some drops of blood mix with the wine. This was done as a token of membership. After which each individual drank in turn out of the bowl, and thus confirmed by blood his loyalty to the society.

This formality ended the initiation ceremony, immediately after which the President distributed to each member a diploma inscribed on linen.

When he received his, Sterling asked if he might now be allowed to return home. His request was gruffly refused. He had once again to accompany his brethren through the Lodge, and was called upon to listen to many and weary explanations of all the numerous insignia pertaining to the society. The lecture was finally followed by a feast; and it was not until the first streaks of dawn lit up the eastern sky that the new member of the Kolao-hwuy was allowed to make his way back to the settlement.

When he found himself once more in the open air, he could not help giving a sigh of relief. 'The ghastly thing is over,' he muttered under his breath; 'and I must now hope for the best. I must hide all knowledge of what has occurred from Evelyn, and must as soon as possible take steps to ensure our return to England. It is impossible for me to be a member of anything so iniquitous except in name, and I have a shrewd suspicion, from the look on Lin's face when he introduced me to the *Vanguard*, that these people mean me to be by no means an idle member. It is to be hoped, though, that they will give me a few days' grace; and now my first care is to reassure Evelyn, and satisfy her as to my strange absence from home to-night.'

The sun was shining brightly when Sterling entered his *hong*. He was startled to see that his wife had never been to bed. She hurried out of one of their reception rooms, threw her arms round his neck, and burst into tears. 'I have gone through a terrible night,' she said. 'I cannot tell you what fears and horrors have come to me. Where have you been, Wilfrid? What has happened? Oh, the joy of seeing you back again! Do tell me where you have been.'

'I was called away on unexpected business, dearest,' replied the young man; 'we won't say anything about it now—it doesn't concern you, and it is over, Evelyn;' and so he silenced her inquiries for the time being.

During the day that followed, Sterling found it extremely difficult to keep up his spirits. In the first place, he felt tired; and in the next, the more he thought about the dilemma into which his own rash acts had brought him, the more difficult it appeared to be to find any way out of it. It was all very well for him to say that he might escape the machinations of the Kolao-hwuy by leaving the country; but what possible excuse could he give to the other partners of the firm for asking for leave of absence just after he had been for a holiday. He thought and thought; the more he thought, the less he liked the position of affairs. In the evening he returned to his hong, where Evelyn was waiting for him. She was dressed in one of those simple dresses which she used to wear at home. She looked so young and fair, so guileless, so almost child-like, that the young man's whole heart went out to her with a great yearning. He felt a choking sensation in his throat as he looked at her.

'She is such a child,' he muttered to himself. 'How can I ever forgive myself for dragging her into a mess of this sort.'

Evelyn, however, was not quite so child-like as she looked. She was a woman, and a brave one—she had also considerable sense and penetration. In short, she could read the faces of those she loved as an open book. Sterling had assured her when he came back in the morning that there was nothing wrong; but Evelyn looked into his eyes and suspected otherwise. It was impossible for her to have the least suspicion as to the sort of trouble that hung over him, but to know that he was in trouble was quite enough for her. She thought of him all day long; and when he came down-stairs dressed for dinner, she determined to win his confidence before the evening passed.

During dinner, Sterling's spirits somewhat revived. It was some hours now since his initiation into the society. Not a word, not a token had been vouchsafed to him during the day, and he greatly hoped that Lin and his emissaries would leave him alone for at least a time.

'I shall surely be given breathing-space, and during that time something must be done,' he murmured.

He cheered up as this thought came to him, and after dinner suggested to Evelyn that she should sing to him.

Glad to see him cheerful once more, she ran out of the room to fetch her music. She was some little time absent, and when she came back, her face wore a startled expression.

'See what an extraordinary thing I found in your study,' she said. 'It was pinned to the tablecloth with an arrow. What in the world is it? I cannot understand this curious message.'

'Give it to me at once, Evelyn,' said her husband.

He snatched the piece of blue paper from her hand, tore it open, and read the contents. His face turned ghastly.

'What is the matter? You look as if you are going to faint,' said the wife.

'Nothing, nothing,' he replied. He walked across the room, took some brandy out of a sideboard, mixed it with water, and drank it

off. The strong stimulant brought back his failing courage.

'You must tell me what is wrong,' said Evelyn, following him. 'There,' she added, using a sudden new note of authority; 'I insist upon knowing. Sit down on that chair and tell me at once. Do you think I can't share your troubles? What is a wife for, except to share her husband's troubles?' Here she knelt by his side and put her arms round his neck.

The unfortunate young man clasped her tightly to his heart. 'Oh, my darling,' he exclaimed, 'I ought never to have married you. I have done wrong, and I am punished. I ought not to have married you, Evelyn.'

'Why so?' she answered. 'You love me, and I love you.'

'God knows I love you, dearest.'

'Then nothing else is any matter,' she replied in a cheerful tone. 'I didn't expect everything to be smooth when I became your wife, Wilfrid. Now tell me the trouble. Where were you last night? And what does that dreadful bit of paper and this horrid arrow mean?'

'They mean, Evelyn,' said Sterling, 'that I am in the hands of an enemy who never relents, and who never slackens his hold. Believe me, my dear wife, you had best not know any more.'

'I insist on knowing. Who is the enemy, Wilfrid?'

'I will whisper the name to you.'

'Yes, do. What is it?'

'The Kolao-hwuy. I am a member of the Kolao-hwuy.'

Evelyn's face looked blank. She had never heard of the Kolao-hwuy, and thought that her husband must be slightly off his head.

'I have no time to explain,' he said, springing to his feet. 'I am a member of a very terrible secret society called the Kolao-hwuy. I was initiated into that society last night. I didn't mean you to know, but I cannot keep the knowledge from your ears. If I disobey the mandates of the society, I am a dead man. The letter which you saw pinned with an arrow to the tablecloth in our study is a summons to be present at one of their important meetings. I must go, Evelyn. As long as I obey them, I am all right.'

Evelyn's face had grown as white as death. 'But what do they want you to do?' she exclaimed.

'God knows; I don't.'

'But suppose it is anything wrong, anything awful?'

'I must go to them to-night, Evelyn. They are scarcely likely to give an important mission to so new a member. My dear, you must not keep me any longer. This summons requires immediate attention. We will try and get back to England by-and-by. In England we shall be safe.' Sterling rose as he spoke. A moment later he had left the room and the house.

Evelyn stood quite still after he had left her. The suddenness of the calamity which had overtaken her husband, and turned all their happiness into misery, stunned her for a moment; then a great wave of courage and determination filled her heart.

'Something must be done, and I am the one

to do it,' she murmured. 'Yes; I won't lose a minute.' She walked across the room and rang a bell. When a servant appeared, she asked him to fetch a sedan-chair for her immediately. When it arrived, she stepped into it, and desired the bearers to take her to the Consulate.

The night was as beautiful as the previous one, and Maitland was enjoying the fresh air on the veranda when Mrs Sterling was announced. She had thrown a white shawl over her head and shoulders, and came up to his side impulsively.

One glance at her face was quite enough to show Maitland that she was in trouble. 'My dear girl, what can I do for you?' he said, taking one of her hands in both of his.

'I want to speak to you,' she said in a hoarse kind of voice. 'Can we be alone somewhere?'

'Yes; come into my study with me.'

The moment they entered this room, Evelyn came close to Maitland. 'We're in terrible trouble,' she said. 'I have not the faintest idea what it means, but I know it means something dreadful. My husband was made a member of the Kolao-hwuy last night.'

'What?' cried Maitland.

'My husband was last night made a member of a secret society here, which goes by the name of the Kolao-hwuy. It was for that purpose he suddenly left this house.—What is the matter, Mr Maitland?'

'Oh, nothing, my dear—nothing,' replied the Consul—'only, your news has startled me a good bit.'

'I am ignorant of where the danger lies,' replied Evelyn; 'but I judge from Wilfrid's manner that it is very real and very grave.'

'What possessed the man?'—began Maitland.

'We have no time to go into that now,' continued Evelyn, interrupting him with sudden passion. 'Wilfrid was made a member last night. An hour ago, I found a paper pinned with an arrow to the cloth in our study, summoning him to a meeting of the society. I took it to him. I do not know what the contents were, but they evidently caused him the deepest distress. He has now gone to attend the meeting; and I, Mr Maitland, I have come to you.' Evelyn looked full into the Consul's face as she said the last words. 'Will you help me?' she asked. 'Will you save my husband?'

'I will do everything that man can do for you, my poor child. Your news has upset me a good bit. I know all about the Kolao-hwuy. I can't hide from you, Evelyn, that your husband is in extreme danger. You must let me think for a few minutes. Sit there, my dear; when I have arranged my thoughts, I will speak to you.'

Maitland paced up and down his room in deep cogitation. Evelyn sat in her chair, leaning her face on her hands—she was trying hard to restrain her tears—a fearful weight lay at her heart. Maitland's manner, too, added to her alarm.

Suddenly he stopped and stood opposite to her. 'Where is Sterling at this moment?' he asked.

'I don't know,' she replied. 'I suppose he has gone to this terrible meeting.'

'That can't be,' said Maitland. 'The meetings are always held late at night.' He turned as he spoke, and again strode up and down the room—his brow was heavily overcast, as if he saw a fresh difficulty in his way. Evelyn's eyes followed him in mute agony.

After a time, he again broke the silence. 'Can you tell me, Evelyn, if there is any one who knows your husband's usual haunts?' Maitland laid a peculiar emphasis on the word 'haunts,' that made poor Evelyn shiver.

'I don't know,' she replied with a choking sensation in her voice. 'Until last night, I thought I knew everything about him; but it seems I was mistaken. Perhaps his "boy" can tell us.'

'Ah, that is a good thought,' answered Maitland. 'I will go and see the boy immediately.—Now, my dear, listen to me; you're safest where you are at the present moment. I wish you to stay here; and I want you further to trust me, and to rely on my promise to do all that mortal man can to save your husband from the grave danger in which he has placed himself.'

Evelyn stood up. 'How can I thank you?' she said. 'I felt from the first that you were the only one who could and who would help me. But I would rather go home now, please. Wilfrid might return at any moment, and think it strange if I were out.'

'Do as you like,' replied Maitland; 'only, we have no time to lose.' He drew her hand through his arm as he spoke, and conducted her down-stairs to her sedan.

The coolies who were crouching beside it rose to their feet at a word from the Consul, and without more ado, carried the chair towards the hong at a pace which taxed Maitland's walking powers to the utmost. On reaching the hong, Maitland immediately summoned Sterling's boy into his presence.

'Where your master have got?' inquired the Consul.

'I no savey,' answered the imperturbable Chinaman.

'You no talkee me lie, pidjin. You savey very well. Tell me where he have got. You no tellee me, I send you to the Mandalin.'

This threat had a perceptible effect on the boy. He lost his stolid indifference, and began to gesticulate as he said: 'How can savey—master go plenty places.'

'Tell me where that place, opium shop belong?'

This last question was said at a venture. A sudden idea had darted through Maitland's brain that Sterling might be seeking refuge from his misery in opium. When putting the question, Maitland looked at the boy straight in his eyes, and he saw at once that the shot had told.

'Suppose master go smoke opium, I can savey that place,' he answered in a low tone.

'You can show me immediately,' said Maitland, as he rose to go into the drawing-room to speak one last word to Evelyn. She was standing near the door, listening intently—her hands were tightly clasped together, her head slightly thrown back.

'I think I know where your husband is now,' said Maitland in his most cheering tones. 'Keep up your courage, and I will bring him back to you in less than no time.'

Without allowing himself even a moment to glance at the poor young wife's stricken face, the Consul turned and went out into the courtyard, where Sterling's boy was waiting for him; and in silence the two walked out of the foreign settlement into the native city.

On entering the main street, the boy turned sharply to the right, down a narrow lane, and, after several more turns and twists, stopped suddenly and pointed at a house which stood just before them. On the side of the door was pasted a round piece of paper, which marked the character of the place.

'Wait here for me,' said Maitland in an authoritative tone.

Without a moment's hesitation, he pushed open the door and walked into the squalid yard of the building. As he entered, he saw an attendant carrying some prepared opium and a pipe into the principal saloon. Maitland followed him swiftly: he found himself in a long low room—the sickening fumes of the drug hung heavy in the air; and stretched on different divans lay eight or ten men in various stages of intoxication.

As long as he lived, Maitland never forgot this sickening sight. Some of the opium victims were inhaling the first few whiffs from their pipes, and were chatting eagerly to one another. Others, who had passed this stage, were sleepily breathing in the smoke, and were fast entering that land of dreams in which others, again, were already revelling. The pale and haggard features of these wretched men were in striking contrast to the painted cheeks of two girls who were supplying their wants. None of the men took the least notice of Maitland; but one of the girls came quickly up to him and offered him a place on a divan, and also a pipe.

Maitland pushed her aside in disgust; and looking more keenly into the faces of the smokers, discovered, with a strange thrill of pain and satisfaction, the haggard features of the Englishman whom he had come to rescue. Sterling was lying in a half-stupor, waiting for the refilling of his pipe. Maitland went quickly up to him, took him by the arm, and gently shook him. Sterling gazed at him with a confused stare, then exclaimed, in an accent of terror: 'Who are you?'

'Come along, Sterling. I am Maitland, your friend. I have got something to say to you.'

Once in the courtyard, a cup of tea which was immediately supplied had a wonderful effect on Sterling. He recovered his senses, and with them came a feeling of shame which bowed him to the ground. 'How did you know where I was?' he asked. 'And why have you come to see me in my disgrace?'

'Because I have something to say; it is this: I am determined to save you from yourself, and also to save your brave wife from misery and shame.'

At the word 'wife,' Sterling uttered a groan and covered his face with both hands. 'You don't know what you are saying,' he answered. 'I am in the hands of those whom to disobey is death.'

'I know what you mean,' said Maitland; 'but remember, I am on the side of right against wrong, and I swear that I will save you, were you in the hands of fifty Kolobwuns.'

'You can't, Maitland—you can't,' said the wretched man. 'I am lost—I am lost!'

THE FOREST DWARFS OF THE CONGO.

THE existence of a tribe of Dwarfs, not as a mere *lusus nature*, but as an independent branch of the human race, has been an oft-disputed point, which the explorations of Mr Stanley in the great forest of the Congo have gone far to solve. Dwarfs figure largely in all heathen mythologies, whence they have descended into the pages of modern fairy tales. As early as the fifth century B.C. the geographer Hecateus of Miletus speaks of a race of tiny beings no more than a span in height, dwelling in Libya, who cut down corn-stalks with an axe, and whom Hercules is said to have gathered up in his lion's skin as a present for King Eurystheus. Dwarfs also play an important part in the folklore of the nations of northern and western Europe, whose imagination peopled the hills, the woods, and the rivers of their respective countries with numberless elves, fairies, sprites, trolls, and water-nixies—beings endowed with supernatural powers, employed for the most part in the service of man. Modern writers have occasionally adapted the same tales to meet their own requirements—for example, the rivalry between Oberon and Titania forms the background of the plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; while Swift, under cover of Gulliver's visit to Lilliput, takes the opportunity of directing a scathing satire against the political intrigues of his own country.

But altogether apart from the imaginations of ancient and modern writers, it is interesting to notice the persistent and reiterated tradition which asserted the existence of an undersized nomadic race in the heart of the African Continent—a tradition whose first appearance dates from the time of Homer, nearly a thousand years before the Christian era. In a passage found in the third book of the *Iliad*, Homer refers to the wars carried on between the Pygmies and the Cranes:

As when the cry
Of cranes is in the air, that, flying south
From winter, and its mighty breadth of rain,
Wing their way over ocean, and at dawn
Bring fearful battle to the Pygmy race,
Bloodshed and death.

By the time of Herodotus their position had become permanently fixed in the centre of Africa. That historian relates the adventures of five young men of the Nasamones, a fierce Libyan tribe on the north coast of Africa, who started to explore the unknown parts of the interior; and describes how 'they at length saw some trees growing on a plain; and having approached, they began to pluck the fruit; and while they were gathering it, some diminutive men, less than men of middle stature, came up and seized them and carried them away.'

Later on, Aristotle, with evident reference to the passage in the *Iliad*, alludes to the same tradition. 'The cranes,' he says, 'fly to the lakes above Egypt from which flows the Nile. There dwell the Pygmies; and this is no fable, but the simple truth. There, just as we are told, men and horses of diminutive size dwell in caves.'

Strabo, the Roman geographer in the time of Tiberius, had heard of the Pygmies, but disbelieved in their existence. In the seventeenth book of his Geography, which deals chiefly with Egypt and Libya, there occurs the following statement: 'The Æthiopians for the most part live a miserable and nomadic life. They go naked; and their domestic animals are of small stature, as are also their dogs. The inhabitants themselves are small, but active and warlike. Perhaps it is their small stature which has given rise to the fables about the Pygmies; for there is no man worthy of credit who has spoken of them as an eye-witness.'

From these statements of early historians and geographers, it may be clearly gathered that the existence of a nomadic race of undersized men was an article of popular belief among the ancients. It remains, therefore, to inquire how far the investigations of modern African explorers tend to confirm the truth of this tradition. On the disruption of the Roman Empire, civilisation and literature perished for a time under the smouldering ruins of Athens and Rome. During the period that ensued, the course of exploration and scientific investigation was roughly interrupted, and was not resumed until the nations of modern Europe began to emerge from the chaos. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the tide of exploration was for the most part turned to America; nor was it until the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century that attention was once more fully directed towards Africa. During the first half of the nineteenth century, a fair knowledge was gained of those parts of Africa adjoining the sea-coast; but the interior of the Continent long remained unexplored, until the modern era of exploration began under Livingstone, Speke, Burton, Grant, and others, and culminated in the successful expeditions of Mr Stanley.

With the increased knowledge of the interior, it is interesting to notice the revival of the traditions concerning the Pygmy race of Central Africa. As early as 1848, Du Chaillu, a well-known African traveller, had heard reports of a tribe called Dokos, no bigger than boys ten years old—that is, about four feet in height—with dark olive-coloured complexions, whose main articles of diet consisted of serpents, ants, and mice. At a later date he himself came across a race of dwarfs called Obongos, whose appearance and customs are fully described in a book entitled *The Country of the Dwarfs*. He found them dwelling in a forest, scattered at intervals near the settlements of the full-grown aborigines. He describes them as skillful hunters and trappers of game, using no iron weapons, but only bows and arrows, the latter of which they tip with poison. They never remained long together in the same place; but when food began to grow scarce, moved off in search of

new quarters. On several occasions he entered their huts, which were oval in shape, resembling the half of a severed orange, and high enough to allow a full-grown man to stand upright without touching the roof. They are represented as having prominent cheek-bones, thick lips, flat noses, and low, narrow foreheads, while their average height is about four feet seven inches.

The next explorer who makes mention of the forest dwarfs is Dr Schweinfurth, a Professor of Heidelberg University, who in three years (1868-1871) penetrated the heart of Africa as far as the previously unknown region of Mombuttu. He gives an extremely interesting account of the dwarfs, whom he describes under the generic term of Akka. According to him, they inhabit the forest region lying to the south of the Mombuttu people, whom they assist against the neighbouring tribes. They are skilful hunters, very cunning and cruel, and have no domestic animals except poultry. Two specimens whom he captured measured respectively four feet one inch and four feet four inches; and he never came across any whose height exceeded four feet ten inches. The personal characteristics of the two captured dwarfs are thus described: 'Their skin was of a dull brown tint, the colour of partially roasted coffee; their heads were large, set on thin, weak necks; chests flat and contracted, with protuberant bellies; hands small and well formed; jaws projecting and very prognathous, their facial angles measuring sixty and sixty-six degrees respectively.'

Emin Pasha during his eight years' residence at the Equator occasionally encountered individuals of the same race. By him they are described as being divided into numerous small tribes, with no settled abodes, leading a nomadic life among the Mombuttu and Amadi. They have neither lances nor spears, but make exclusive use of the bow and arrow. Two distinctly marked types of physiognomy are found among them; some having a pale yellow skin, the colour of ivory, while others possess a dark skin tinged with red. Their general appearance is described in terms nearly identical with those of Dr Schweinfurth, with the addition that their bodies are covered with a thick stiff hair almost resembling felt. Individual specimens measured five feet five inches (a man of exceptional height), three feet six inches, and three feet one inch, the last being a girl of fourteen.

The man, however, to whom we are chiefly indebted for full and accurate information about the forest dwarfs is Mr H. M. Stanley, the result of whose investigations was made known to the world in *Darkest Africa*. In 1875 he first heard rumours of them from Arab traders at Ujiji, on the shores of Lake Tanganyika; and shortly afterwards, during his adventurous descent of the Congo, he actually encountered an isolated member of the Pygmy race.

But in his search for Emin Pasha he passed through the centre of the forest district inhabited by the dwarfs. Ascending the Upper Congo by steamer, he entered the mouth of the Aruwimi River, and formed an intrenched camp at Yambua. Thence pressing forward with the

advance-guard, he traversed the great forest of the Congo, a vast district, as large as the whole of France and Spain, six hundred and twenty miles in length, and upwards of five hundred miles in breadth. There, thickly scattered along the course of the Aruwimi and the Ituri Rivers, he passed through more than one hundred and fifty villages of the dwarfs. Like Emin Pasha, he saw two tribes with different characteristics—the Wambutti to the south, and the Batwa to the north of the district traversed. The Wambutti he describes as having a bricky complexion, long heads, narrow faces, and red ferret eyes, with a sour, anxious look. The Batwa, on the other hand, are of a rich ivory-yellow complexion, with round faces, and gazelle-like eyes, set far apart on broad open foreheads.

The following interesting description of their habits and manner of life occurs in the second volume of *Darkest Africa*: 'The Wambutti—variously called Batwa, Akka, Bazungu—are undersized nomads, dwarfs, or pygmies, living in the uncleared forest. They support themselves upon game, which they are very expert in catching. They plant their camps from two to three miles from the dwellings of the aborigines. A large clearing may have from eight to twelve separate communities, numbering from two thousand to two thousand five hundred souls. With bows and arrows smeared with poison, they kill elephants, buffaloes, and antelopes. When food becomes scarce, they move on to seek other settlements. They live on friendly terms with the larger aborigines, for whom they act as scouts.'

Their dwellings are described as low oval-shaped structures, with doors from two to three feet in height, placed at the ends. The houses are arranged in a rough circle, the centre of which is left clear for the chief and his family. About one hundred yards in advance of the camp, along every path leading away from the settlement, is placed a sentry-house with a doorway looking up the track. The approaches are further protected by poisoned skewers artfully concealed among the dead foliage.

Members of the expedition had frequent opportunities of studying their height and general appearance, as dwarfs were from time to time brought into the camp in order that they might act as guides. The first specimen actually encountered was at the Arab settlement of Ugarowa. 'At this settlement,' says Stanley, 'I saw the first specimen of the dwarfs. She measured thirty-three inches in height, and was a perfectly formed woman about seventeen years old. Her complexion was that of a quadroon, or of the colour of yellow ivory.' On another occasion they captured four women and a boy, the tallest of whom measured only four feet four inches. Again, during the stay at Ibwiri, the wife of a chief was brought into the Fort. She was of a light-brown complexion, with broad round face, large eyes, and small lips, and about four feet four inches in height. Later on, a man was measured by Mr Bonny, the assistant-surgeon of the expedition, whose stature did not exceed four feet. The colour of his skin was coppery, and his fell almost furry. At Kavalli, Emin Pasha, after his meeting with

Stanley, took exhaustive measurements of four specimens—a man, a woman, a boy, and a girl, measuring respectively four feet five, four feet five and a quarter, four feet two inches, and four feet.

An amusing incident occurred during Stanley's second journey through the forest. A member of the expedition having dropped a heavy ammunition-box not far from the camp, returning to look for it, found a number of dwarfs of both sexes watching with excited interest the efforts of two of their strongest men, the Hercules and the Milo of the tribe, to carry off the prize. A few harmless shots sent them scampering off into the depths of the forest, and the ammunition-box was brought safely back to the camp. Another encounter was followed by more serious consequences, two stragglers from the expedition, like the young Nasamonian explorers, being carried off by the dwarfs, and never seen or heard of again.

Now that the truth of this long-established tradition has been thus definitely ascertained, the causes which tended to produce and to perpetuate this stunted branch of the human race will no doubt be thoroughly investigated; and an interesting field of inquiry will be opened both to the theologian and to the man of science. With the rediscovery of this long-buried people, one of the last secrets of the great African Continent may be said to have been unveiled. Henceforth the future history of Africa will doubtless consist in the development of its great internal resources, and in the civilisation of its teeming tribes. Even now, the forerunners of civilisation in the shape of Christian missionaries are slowly winning their way into the heart of the country; it is therefore to be hoped that before long the civilising light of Christianity will shine upon the strange race dwelling in the gloomy forest recesses of the Dark Continent.

PRINCE RUPERT'S EMERALD RING.

ABOUT twenty years ago, I held the rank of Troop-sergeant-major in the 1st Lancers, the regiment being then quartered in Horneleigh. At that period, full arrangements had been made for celebrating the marriage of our Captain, Lord Dasheriff, a very popular, genial, and handsome young fellow, who had succeeded to the title on the death of his father, about two years previously. The lady of the soldier-peer's choice was Miss Daisy Wylkyns, the daughter of Sir Pierce Wylkyns, of Billoby Hall, Yorkshire.

On the day before that fixed for the wedding, the two subalterns of the troop, and the requisite number of non-commissioned officers and men, were, by permission of the commanding officer, despatched by train to the Hall, in order to form a guard of honour at the church door during the time of the marriage. Upon our arrival, a most sumptuous meal was provided for the rank and file in the servants' hall; and beds for the men, which were of the 'shake-down' order, were provided in the Riding-school attached to the stables, about half a mile from the Hall.

Between eight and nine in the evening, just as I was thinking of getting my men marched off to night-quarters, the senior lieutenant, Mr Gloster, sent for me and said: 'Sergeant-major, Lord Dashcliffe wishes a sentry to be placed in the Library where the wedding presents are laid out. Many of the articles are of great value, and he thinks it best to have them watched, in case of accident. So just pick out three of the men and form a guard.—Lord Dashcliffe will remember them for their trouble, which may afford them some consolation, and any three will do.' Accordingly, I picked out three men, took command myself, and one trooper, by name Martin Clements, I ordered to go on duty first.

I bade Clements put on his sword, and we entered the spacious and beautifully fitted-up Library. The sight that met my eyes was dazzling in the extreme. A large table in the centre was literally covered with pieces of plate, from a solid silver service presented by a Prince of the blood-royal, to the modest inkstand we had subscribed for in our own troop. On several side-tables were displayed numerous articles of jewellery, with tickets in front bearing the donors' names, representative of nearly all the best families in England. About a dozen gentlemen were in the room, surrounding a tall, florid-faced, handsome old man, with well-cut, aristocratic features, and the unmistakable bearing of a soldier. The butler, who was standing near, whispered to me: 'That is Major-general Wylkyns, Sir Pierce's brother.'

When the General saw me, he called out: 'I perceive you have got your man on; very good.' Then he said to the others: 'Excuse me a moment, while I show the Sergeant-major round.' In a most gracious and friendly manner, the old officer pointed out to me all the valuables in detail. Then he stopped at one of the side-tables, and picking up a large emerald ring of very antique pattern, said, in a garrulous fashion: 'That is one of my gifts to my niece. You see—isn't the stone magnificent? One of the finest I ever saw.—Well, it was presented to an ancestor of mine by Prince Rupert, some time after Naseby, for services rendered at the battle. I believe the Prince took it from his own finger, or something of the sort. Anyhow, this ring has been in my family for over two centuries. When my aunt died, a couple of years ago, she bequeathed it to me; and now, having no children of my own, I am giving it to my niece.—No, by Jove! it won't go on!' continued the General, as he tried the ring over the glove on the little finger of his right hand. 'I remember when it would, though. My fingers are a trifle gouty nowadays.—But see, Sergeant-major'—and General Wylkyns slipped the ring in rapid succession over all the digits of his left hand—'no chance of a swelling of the muscles here. I'll tell you why. This paw is made of wood and steel springs, and so forth. It takes the place of the hand I lost at Sobroon. I can fish, shoot, hunt, carve, box—do anything with it, in fact.'

While I stood opposite to Clements, I heard the voluble General still talking to a knot of guests on the subject of the ring, when a young

Baronet, Sir Harry Beynell, a well-known character in society and on the turf, observed: 'Look here, General; I wonder if that ring was ever consigned by your folks to the care of Messrs A—— or some bygone "uncle" in the same line of business as that distinguished firm? Perhaps, according to the condition pertaining to a breach of contract in the shape of non-payment of principal and interest, the real one may have been forfeited, and a sham one substituted, for the look of the thing.'

General Wylkyns, appearing a trifle angry, responded: 'By Jove! Beynell, I have heard stories of the same kind about diamonds! Outside the value of this emerald from its associations, I assure you it is intrinsically worth a thousand pounds!'

One of the guests now popped his head into the doorway, and cried: 'I say, you fellows, come to the billiard-room.'

There was immediately an exodus, the last to leave being the General. He had reached the corridor outside, when there was a noise as if he had fallen, and then I heard the old warrior giving vent to a volume of potent imprecations. I rushed outside and said to him: 'Oh, I beg your pardon, sir, but I thought I heard you tumble; I hope you aren't hurt, sir?'

He replied: 'Not at all, Sergeant-major, thank you. My foot slipped on the polished oak floor. I wonder if I've broken my artificial hand?' Having rapidly felt it all over, he growled: 'No; I think not, for a marvel. I'm off to bed.—Good-night, Sergeant-major.'

Turning, I saw Clements at the Library door. 'Sentry-go, Sergeant-major,' the man whispered; 'it's just struck twelve.'

'All right,' I replied. Then I walked to the end of the corridor that ran parallel with the Library, and ascending the stair, called the second man, whose name was Jones.

While I was relieving Clements, Sir Pierce Wylkyns came in with the butler. The Baronet remarked to me: 'Sergeant-major, I think it will be better to lock up all the small articles in a cabinet.—Williams here will clear them away.—Hulloa!' he exclaimed excitedly, 'where on earth is that emerald ring?'

Sure enough, Prince Rupert's emerald was missing!

'I beg pardon, Sir Pierce,' I remarked; 'General Wylkyns had it in his hand only a few minutes ago. Possibly he may have inadvertently placed it in his pocket. He informed me, Sir Pierce, that he was going to bed.'

Sir Pierce fumed for a minute, and then said to the butler: 'Just go and tap at my brother's door—he can't be asleep yet—and ask him to give you the ring.'

Williams disappeared; and Sir Pierce began carefully to place the smaller articles of jewellery on a silver waiter.

When the butler returned, he said to his master: 'I knocked at General Wylkyns's door, Sir Pierce, and told him your message. He called out: "I'm in bed, and shan't get up!" I daresay, Sir Pierce, it's all right.'

'I daresay it is, Williams,' remarked the Baronet carelessly.

When Sir Pierce had placed all the jewels

under lock and key, he bade me good-night, and retired.

Next day, before Lord Dashcliffe and his fair bride went off on their honeymoon, the peer sent me a sovereign, and five shillings for each man of the guard. He also gave orders that the troopers should be allowed out for a stroll round the town of Billoby, if they chose. This indulgence was almost universally taken advantage of.

I did not leave Sir Pierce's grounds, but instead, strolled about the garden and park. Late in the afternoon, when I was returning to the Hall, I met a footman, almost out of breath, who exclaimed: 'Your officer, Mr Gloster, wishes to see you at once!'

I quickened my steps; and approaching the Hall, perceived Mr Gloster pacing about in front of the portico. 'Sergeant-major,' he exclaimed, 'this is an awkward business. General Wylkyns, who, after the breakfast, was applied to on the subject by Sir Pierce, denies that he took the ring out of the Library last night, and avers that he laid it on the table again.—Who was on sentry at the time?'

'Clements, sir,' I answered.

'Was he alone in the room at any period during that portion of the evening?'

'Just a minute or two, sir,' I answered, 'when I was outside ascertaining if the General had hurt himself, as I heard him fall. Then Clements, for the first time, I am almost positive, traversed the whole length of the Library to the door opposite to the western corridor, in order to tell me that it was "sentry-go!"'

'Do you think the man could have the villainy and audacity to steal the ring?' excitedly queried Mr Gloster.

'Surely not, sir,' I replied. 'But of this I am certain—I saw the ring last in General Wylkyns's hand. That was while he was talking to Sir Harry Beynell, who was leaning over the table beside him. There was no other person near it, excepting, perhaps, the first relief, Jones, sir. As I was posting him, Sir Pierce came in, and I remember the man walked about the room while Sir Pierce was speaking to me. The third man, Tomlin, was asleep up-stairs; he didn't go on until two.'

At this instant Sir Pierce and General Wylkyns approached, accompanied by the local Inspector of Police and two of his Sergeants.

General Wylkyns, who looked terribly cut up, said to me sternly: 'Now, Sergeant-major, do you know anything about this ring?'

I replied: 'Only, sir, what I mentioned to Lieutenant Gloster just now. I saw it last in your hands.'

The Inspector interrupted: 'Excuse me, General, but I must first search all concerned—the Sergeant-major, the sentries, and all the men of the guard of honour. Assuming the first sentry to have stolen it, he may have passed the ring to a comrade to avert detection.—Sergeants Price and Davis, go to the Riding-school and carefully overhaul all the soldiers' valises and pouch-belts.—You, Sergeant-major, remain here, and let your men fall in as they arrive. And, please, don't allow a single whisper of the supposed theft to transpire. A constable will be here immediately to assist me, when

each will be searched in turn.—And, General Wylkyns, I must search you first.'

'Me!' exclaimed the surprised General.

'Yes, sir; you may have placed the ring in one of the pockets of your dress suit.'

'I assure you, I examined it carefully a few minutes ago.'

'Still, there may be a hole in the lining, and it has slipped through.—Stop, sir! Have you a valet here?'

'No,' answered the General. 'Sir Pierce's man attended to the clothes I wore at the wedding. My dress suit, which I had on last night, I left on a chair in my dressing-room.'

'Who had access to your bedroom and dressing-room after you left it this morning?'

'I've no idea; possibly, a housemaid or a footman. But I give you my word of honour that I'm certain I laid down the ring before I left the Library last night.'

A rapid search was made of the men, including myself; but nothing came of it.

Clements stoutly and indignantly denied ever having seen the ring, except when General Wylkyns was holding it up for inspection.

I heard the General whisper to Mr Gloster: 'I wonder, now, if that satirical rogue Beynell has annexed the article as a practical joke? He's bad enough, but surely not so bad as that!'

The missing ring threw a complete damper on the conclusion of our otherwise enjoyable outing, and all were glad, consequently, when we entrained and rattled off to London.

A day or two after our return to Horneleigh, and while the story of the lost ring was still the staple subject of barrack gossip, a telegram reached our commanding officer from the Billoby Police Inspector, which read as follows: 'Soldier, description answering to Clements, sent off registered letter while here. Arrest him. Detective leaves to-night.'

Clements, while vigorously protesting his innocence of the charge against him, was confined in the guardroom.

When the Yorkshire detective who had charge of the case reached barracks, the prisoner was at once brought before the commanding officer. The man admitted having sent off a registered letter, containing half a sovereign, to his sweetheart in London, whose business was that of a dressmaker, but who was out of a situation, and required assistance. One five shillings he had received from Lord Dashcliffe; and the other he had saved out of his pay. The registration receipt, which had been found in his pocket, was produced by the Sergeant of the guard. It bore the name 'Emily Hawkins,' with the address, 'Care of Mrs Tucker, 612 Park Street, London.'

The detective remarked: 'My informant at the Billoby Post-office says that the envelope you had registered was bulky.'

'Yes,' spoke the prisoner without hesitation. 'I sent off with the half-sovereign two letters for Miss Hawkins to read, that I had received from my cousins in America. One contained an offer to buy my discharge. I crammed them into the envelope anyhow. Sir,' continued Clements boldly, addressing the commanding officer, 'that night, while on sentry in the

Library, I saw all that went on. The matter of the disappearance of the ring lies between two—General Wylkyns and Sir Harry Beynell.

The accused man was detained in custody until the detective made inquiries in London. He speedily ascertained that Clements's story, in respect of its main details, was perfectly true. The half-sovereign when it arrived had been at once paid by Miss Hawkins to her landlady. The girl's room was carefully searched, but nothing incriminating was found. Her former employers, when applied to, assured the officer that Miss Hawkins was a young person of unexceptionable respectability.

There being nothing to justify the further detention of Clements, he was at once released.

A dark rumour was now afloat—how it originated, no one could tell—that Sir Harry Beynell was the purloiner of Prince Rupert's emerald ring. An allusion made to the affair in a 'society' paper provoked an indignant denial from the Baronet and a threat to horse-whip the editor. The latter applied for a summons; and Sir Harry, in consequence, was bound over to keep the peace. This episode had the effect of making still more public the evil report.

One day Clements applied for a furlough. Many, including myself, were still of opinion that he knew something about the ring, and I took the liberty of stating my views to the Colonel. The theory I advanced was that the man, or rather his sweetheart, had the article secreted somewhere, and that Clements, when he proceeded on leave, meant to realise what he could on it and clear out of the country.

'Thank you, Sergeant-major,' answered the Colonel. 'Your hypothesis is at least reasonable. I'll write at once to Sir Pierce Wylkyns, who will doubtless instruct some of those private detective fellows to keep an eye on Clements. Therefore, in the hope that the mystery may be cleared up, I'll grant the man his furlough.'

Clements, after drawing whatever savings he had deposited in the regimental bank, obtained a month's leave, and left for London. Sir Pierce Wylkyns had given instructions to a well-known private detective agency in the metropolis; and from the time the suspected man left the barrack gate, he was vigilantly shadowed. Late one afternoon, a telegram reached the commanding officer, which contained the startling news: 'Clements and girl arrested. Sergeant-major wanted at Bow Street to-morrow morning, ten.' Therefore, acting upon orders, I caught the evening train to town, and reaching Victoria, put up at an adjacent coffee-house.

On my arrival next morning at Bow Street, I heard particulars of the arrest from a police Sergeant on duty. Clements, accompanied by his sweetheart, had been seen to enter the shop of a dealer in jewellery near Holborn who for some time had been suspected by the police of trafficking in stolen property. The detective looking through the window, perceived that the soldier handed something like a ring to the jeweller for inspection, and the latter took it aside, to submit it, presumably, to the usual tests. Then the detective called to a

passing policeman and informed him of his suspicions. The two entered the shop, and the man in blue demanded to see the article that Clements had offered for sale. The shopkeeper produced a cheap nine-carat article, set with garnets; and the soldier explained that he was exchanging it for a wedding ring, and was prepared to pay any difference in value. (From inquiries made, it appeared Clements was to have been married that very morning in St Pancras Church.) A police Inspector having been called, and the particulars of the case detailed to him, it was decided to take all three into custody on suspicion. The shop had been overhauled, and a large antique emerald ring discovered in a drawer, which was supposed to be the stolen valuable. The jeweller, despite his annoyance, appeared to be half amused, and averred that the emerald was spurious. General Wylkyns had been wired to respecting identification of the missing ring, and had replied, stating that he had left Billoby for London by the last train, and would be in court during the examination of the prisoners.

It was near mid-day when the case was called, and the suspected trio were placed in the dock. The court was crowded, and I could perceive Sir Harry Beynell sitting in the counsel's seat, in company with a barrister whom he had employed to watch the case. Briefly, the Inspector, the constable, and the private detective gave their evidence. I had just been called upon, when there was a bustle at the witnesses' door, and in pushed General Wylkyns and Lord Dashcliffe, the latter having returned from the Continent that very morning. Both appeared to be in a condition of great excitement. The General, addressing the learned magistrate without ceremony, cried: 'I'm very sorry, Your Worship, but will you please stop the hearing of this case? I'm gratified to be able to say that the ring has been found!'

There was what newspaper reporters call a 'sensation' in court; the usher bawled 'Silence!' and the magistrate leaned over his desk in an attitude of attention.

The General went on: 'Your Worship, I must tell you that I wear an artificial left hand. I am a trifle excitable at times, and am apt to smash it, so I keep one or two in stock, in case of accident. Well, last night, Your Worship, before starting for London, I packed up a damaged specimen, intending to have it repaired, when I found the missing article on one of the fingers! I must inadvertently have slipped it on. Here is the ring, Your Worship, presented by Prince Rupert, after Naseby, to one of my ancestors.'

'The soldier and the woman are discharged,' abruptly interrupted the magistrate. This was followed by applause.

Turning to the police Inspector, the bench said: 'Do you wish the other prisoner to be detained? Is there anything respecting him that requires investigation?'

'No, Your Worship,' answered the Inspector. 'Only, in his shop we found a large emerald ring'—

'Which, Your Worship, is spurious!' interrupted the jeweller. 'We'll soon settle that question. I see Mr Habakkuk of Hatton Garden

in court. Perhaps, to save trouble, he will give an opinion upon it.'

'I shall be pleased to be guided by a gentleman of Mr Habakkuk's well-known experience as a lapidary,' spoke the Court suavely.

Mr Habakkuk, who was waiting to give evidence in a charge of an attempted diamond robbery, looked at the ring for a moment, and observed: 'It is an imitation, and a very poor one, Your Worship. Gold may be worth fifteen shillings, or thereabouts.'

'Discharged also,' said the magistrate to the tradesman.

When Clements and his sweetheart—a pretty, modest-looking girl she was, by the way—and I managed to elbow our way out of the crowded court and into the passage, we saw the General and Lord Dashcliffe shaking hands with Sir Harry Beynell.

After General Wylkyns had profusely expressed his regrets to the soldier, Lord Dashcliffe added, on hearing that Clements intended leaving the service, and that he had only been exchanging an old ring for a wedding ring, as he was getting married, 'Here is my present to you on this auspicious occasion;' and the peer placed five sovereigns in Clements's hand. This the General supplemented by a similar sum.

When Clements and his betrothed, pleased and happy, had taken their departure, the General whispered to me: 'Sergeant-major, I didn't wish to say it in court, but the truth is I had taken too much wine that evening. I did break my hand when I fell in the passage; and when I got to my bedroom, I wrapped it in paper, placed it in a portmanteau, and got another out. What a stupid business it has been, to be sure!'

'Wylkyns,' interrupted Sir Harry Beynell in a sneering tone, 'I have been all but called a thief over this lost ring of yours; now I should like to know the value of the article.'

'What!' said the General sharply. 'It was valued at a thousand pounds by a banker, who was introduced to me as an authority on such matters at the Anglo-Indian Club.'

At this moment Mr Habakkuk was passing out of court, and Sir Harry Beynell, accosting him, said: 'Would you be good enough, sir, to give your verdict on this famous emerald ring?—Kindly let the gentleman see it, Wylkyns.'

'Certainly,' responded the General, and he passed the historical bauble to Mr Habakkuk.

The latter, putting a magnifying glass to his eye, intently examined the stone. Then he said with a smile: 'Gentlemen, the value is about two guineas, and that's mostly for the setting!'

'Nonsense!' angrily exclaimed the General, reddening. Sir Harry tittered, and Lord Dashcliffe appeared very interested.

Mr Habakkuk quietly went on: 'Sir, in my business we see queer things, and possess queer secrets. If you knew as much as I do, you might be suspicious of the genuine character of the crown jewels. I think, General, your mother was a Wielden, of Wielden Hall, Norfolk? Well, your grandfather, Squire Wielden, as you know, was a great pal of the Prince Regent's, and went it fast and loose, and lost pots of money card-playing.'

'Yes, by Jove!' stammered the General. 'I am suffering for the Squire's eccentricities now.'

'Well, for five hundred pounds, the Squire sold the undiluted article to my partner Mr Joab's grand-uncle. Why, I can trace the history of the stone ever since. Now, it is in the possession of a New York millionaire, who had it palmed off on him by an Amsterdam firm as a gem presented to Anne Boleyn by Henry VIII., and worn by that lady when she had her head struck off. Whoever the Squire employed to get up that rubbishy make-believe thing, I can't say. It certainly couldn't have cost him much more than a fiver!'

The General looked fairly crestfallen; and the highly gratified Sir Harry Beynell, after exclaiming, 'So this has been a delicious case of much ado about nothing!' burst into a mocking peal of laughter.

When Clements got his discharge, Lord Dashcliffe procured him a situation in one of the Government offices at Whitehall.

General Wylkyns took independent opinion respecting the emerald, but each authority applied to supported the statement of Mr Habakkuk. The story got into the papers, and, in consequence, the poor General was prodigiously chaffed about the business.

On one occasion, within the Anglo-Indian Club, the fiery veteran got so annoyed at the banter he was being subjected to, that he took from his pocket the degraded imposture of an heirloom, erst supposed to have belonged to Prince Rupert, and tossed it into a roaring fire!

THE COMING OF THE MAY.

The chestnut boughs are all aglow;
The gorse illumines the fells;
The hawthorns bend 'neath summer snow;
The violets pave the dells;
The lilies fling their banners free;
Their plumes the cowslips sway;
The foam-white daisies star the lea
At coming of the May.

The skylarks chant their triumph strains
High in the blue above;
The thrushes join in loud refrains
In every vale and grove;
And blackbirds in a happy mood
Sing on from dawn to gray,
And wake the wind-flowers in the wood
At coming of the May.

A scented wealth of bloom is spread
On orchard branches old;
The long day comes in gold and red,
And ends in red and gold;
The brown bees and the butterflies
Flit o'er the heather gay;
Like jets of flame the marsh flowers rise
At coming of the May.

M. ROOK.

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WHEN ARE WE OLD?

By the Author of *How to be Happy though Married*.

A MAN is as old as he feels, and a woman as old as she looks. The number of years is of less importance. There are old men, like the late Oliver Wendell Holmes, in whom youth—the youthful outlook—is perennial. A friend asked Lord Palmerston when he considered a man to be in the prime of life. His lordship immediately replied, 'Seventy-nine.—But,' he added, with a playful smile, 'as I have just entered my eightieth year, perhaps I am myself a little past it!'

Leigh Hunt quotes the following, which he calls 'a delicious memorandum,' from Mrs Inchbald's Diary: 'I dined, drank tea, and supped with Mrs Whitfield. At dark, she and I and her son William walked out and rapped at the doors in New Street, and ran away.' The narrator of this feat of a woman who was then middle-aged and a most popular authoress, adds, 'but such people never grow old.'

Some of us know middle-aged men who think it a hardship not to be allowed to play marbles, and even leap-frog. If they dared, they would still take part in boyish 'larks.' The death of Matthew Arnold, the apostle of 'sweetness and light,' was caused in his sixty-fifth year by leaping over a fence in a fit of juvenile high spirits.

Swedenborg imagines that in heaven the angels advance continually to the prime of youth, so that those who have been there longest are the youngest. Some of us have friends who seem to fulfil this idea. They preserve the freshness, guilelessness, hopefulness, and elasticity of youth. They have put away the weakness, imperfection, and immaturity of childhood; they retain its open mind and heart—'In wit, a man; in simplicity, a child.'

Many young men are more *blase* than their fathers; and there are girls who are more worldly wise and world-worn than their mothers. After talking with the venerable missionary, Dr

Marsh, a young man once said: 'What is the use of being young, when one sees a man of eighty in better spirits than the jolliest among us?' When an old lady who had devoted her life to others was congratulated, at the age of eighty-seven, on her remarkable vigour, she said: 'They never so often told me I was young as since I have grown old.' This reminds us of the lady of ninety who said to Fontenelle, then eighty-five: 'Death appears to have forgotten us.'—'Hush!' whispered the witty old man hastily, putting his finger on his lips.

The writer knows a lady who is 'so well preserved' that she looks almost as young and is as much admired as her handsome daughter, who is engaged to be married. 'How does she do it?' is the question of friends, who wonder and envy as they see her from time to time looking 'younger than ever.' To some extent, no doubt, she does not do it at all. It is done for her by the splendid constitution which she has inherited from a long-lived race. Then she had the advantage of being brought up simply and in the country. The roses of her youth were not blighted by late hours, heated ballrooms, and indigestible suppers. She has had few sorrows of her own; but she never denies sympathy and help to the sorrows of others. And this last fact is perhaps the chief reason why she wears so well, for nothing tends to keep the heart, and therefore the outward appearance, young as the nurture of kindly feelings and the practice of doing good.

'The Lord hath kept me alive,' said Caleb, a young man of eighty-five years (Joshua xiv. 10, 11). 'Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fail; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.' This was the secret of Caleb's prolonged youth. He had 'followed wholly' the Lord his God.

Old age, then, does not depend on years so much as is generally supposed; but if we think

only of years, when does it tap us on the shoulder and say that it has come to keep us company? This varies with each individual and the circumstances of his life. Aristotle said that a man is not at his best until forty-five. Other writers say that he is old then. The threescore years and ten of the Psalmist has been adopted by most people as the normal standard. Dr John Gardner, who has written on 'Longevity,' remarks: 'Long observation has convinced me that sixty-three is an age at which the majority of persons may be termed old.'

This last age, however, is mere infancy compared with the ages said to have been attained by many people. Mr C. Walford, in his *Insurance Guide*, gives a list of two hundred and twenty persons who, he thinks, can be shown to have reached the age of one hundred and twenty years and upwards. An American (Mr Joseph Perkins) has published a work in which he records over ten thousand cases of centenarianism. In his *History and Antiquities of Richmond* (Yorkshire), Clarkson tells the following story in reference to the cause 'Howe v. Wastell,' in which a man called Jenkins gave evidence as to his age. 'When the agent of Mrs Wastell went to him to find out what account he could give about the matter in dispute, he saw an old man sitting at the door, to whom he told his business. The old man said: "Ah can remember nought about it; but thee can find feather i' t' house, an' ah do nought doot he'll tell ye arl about it." When he went into the house he saw another old man sitting over the fire, bowed down with years, to whom he put again his question. Only with difficulty could he make this old man understand what he wanted. But after a little time he got the following answer: "Ah noo nought about it; boot maybe if ye'll go in t' yard ye'll meet w' feather, who maybe can tell ye." The agent upon this thought he had met with a race of antediluvians. However, into the yard he went, and, to his no small astonishment, found a venerable old man with a long beard, and a broad leathern belt about him, chopping sticks. To this man he again told his business, and received such information as in the end recovered the royalty in dispute.'

One of the last services Dean Stanley did for Westminster Abbey was to cause the almost effaced inscription over the celebrated Old Parr's grave to be recut. It is as follows: 'Tho: Parr of y^e County of Salop, Borne in A^D. 1483. He lived in y^e reigns of Ten Princes viz.: K. Edw. 4, K. Edw. 5, K. Rich. 3, K. Hen. 7, K. Hen. 8, K. Edw. 6, Q. Ma., Q. Eliz., K. Ja. & K. Charles. Aged 152 years, and was Buried Here Novemb. 15, 1635.'

'The old Countess of Desmond, who is said to have died at the age of one hundred and forty, is mentioned by Lord Bacon, Archbishop Usher, and Sir William Temple. The first assures us that 'she did dentige [renew her teeth] twice or thrice, casting her old teeth, and others coming in their place.'

These cases of longevity will not seem so very

incredible if we reflect that it is not natural for the lives of men to be as short as they are. The law of Nature is that every animal should live five times the number of years it takes to reach maturity. In the case of man, this is twenty-one, so that the child born with a good constitution should, if he lived a perfectly healthy life, and were not cut off by accidental destructive agencies, live one hundred and five years. There must be something wrong somewhere when he does not. There has been more or less of a murder or of a suicide, or the environment has been unsuitable.

When a certain Frenchwoman, eighty years old, was running over the catalogue of her ailments, her physician at last said to her: 'What would you have, madam? I cannot make you young again!' Ordinary practitioners cannot do this; but there are four famous Doctors who, if they cannot make us young, can keep us for a long time from becoming old. Their names are Temperance, Exercise, Good Air, and Early Hours. Many people do not believe in these physicians, because they are cheap, unaffected, and truthful; but if they were more generally obeyed, old age would stay away much longer, and when it came, would be far less burdensome.

Were people to observe moderation in all things—were our working classes as well fed, clothed, and housed as they might be—and were the rich to abstain from the use of dangerous luxuries, including idleness, no end of diseases and accidents would be averted, and the threescore years and ten would not be the ordinary limit, but the ordinary average of human life—as many living beyond that period as dying before it. Quiet consciences and contented minds keep away sickness and old age. So does the will to be well.

The surest guide to health, say what they will,
Is never to suppose we shall be ill;
Most of those evils we poor mortals know,
From doctors and imagination flow.

As for youthful excesses, they have been well defined as 'drafts upon our old age, payable with interest about thirty years after date.' A young man said to a man of ninety years of age: 'How do you live so long and be so well?' The old man took the youngster to an orchard, and, pointing to some trees full of apples, said: 'I planted these trees when I was a boy, and do you wonder that now I am permitted to gather the fruit of them?' We gather in old age what we plant in our youth. 'As I approve,' says Cicero, 'of a youth that has something of the old man in him, so I am no less pleased with an old man that has something of the youth. He that follows this rule may be old in body, but can never be so in mind.'

The ingredients of health and long life are
Great temperance, open air,
Easy labour, little care.

If men would only take as much care of themselves as they do of watches or other machines of which they have charge, they would not grow old and wear out nearly so soon. Sir Benjamin Richardson relates a con-

versation which he once had with an engineer who had charge of a large stationary engine. The man surprised the eminent physician by telling him that this engine had been working as true as steel ninety years. 'And do you know,' he added, 'it has had eight masters. I am the eighth who has had the care of it; the others are all either dead or worn out, and yet it goes on as if it were as young as ever.—Very strange, sir, isn't it? that an engine should live so much longer than a man; and it is not hard work for us either, or exposed work, for the room is always warm and comfortable, and the place is of course clean and light.'

'What did the men die from?' asked the Doctor.

'Well, three or four, I am afraid, died of drink; another, of bad temper; another, of worry; and so on. But the engine went on all the same.'

'The fate of the engine,' says Dr Richardson, 'its long life and continued industry, puzzled the man. He often in his lonely hours thought of it, and wondered how many men would follow him before the engine began to break down. It did not puzzle me. That engine worked a great many hours a day, truly; but it was equable in its work; it never ran loose; it was true in its vocation; it was bright as a new pin, clean in every point; it was served with the best but simplest fuel-food; it had its furnace tubes clear; it was saved from friction by having its parts oiled; and it drank nothing but water. So it lived on through nearly three generations, with a good chance of living through three more; it was allowed, in fact, to make the most of its physical life. Its masters did not make the most of their lives; they might have been somewhat industrious, but they were not so orderly, so true, so steady, so clean as they made the engine; they had not learned so well how to find the best food and drink for their own labour as they had found for the engine.'

Speaking of Ephraim, the prophet Hosea says: 'Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not.' Many people resemble Ephraim in this respect. They will not recognise the fact that they are getting on in life, and not so young as they were. So they make themselves ridiculous by dressing and acting in a juvenile way. They take liberties with their health, and play games for which they have neither wind nor limb. They force their company upon youngsters, and are indignant when these keep them at a respectful distance.

Others acquiesce too readily in old age. Instead of resisting it, they make 'I'm getting old' an excuse for mental and bodily laziness. Their tempers become grumpy, and they allow themselves to fall into the boring ways of an old fogey.

Athletes are said to have a second breath. After they have exhausted their first strength, there is a rallying of the system, and then they have come to their second breath. When they are on their second breath, they hold out a great while. So it is with our thoughts about growing old. We have a sad feeling to get over, which arises from the consciousness that we are becoming aged; but after men have got

over that, they do not feel old, though they are eighty years of age.

When are we old?

We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;

In feelings, not in figures on a dial.

We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives

Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.

This seems to be what the prophet Isaiah means when he says that in the new Jerusalem 'there shall be no more an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.'

AN ELECTRIC SPARK.*

CHAPTER III.—A VILE BARGAIN.

CAN any one explain why it is that West End money-lenders usually affect streets in which wine-merchants have their offices and cellars?

Mr Lewis Levinson, who always reached his offices in that particularly neat brougham so well known at the principal theatre doors on first-night performances, would have been insulted if any one had spoken of him as a money-lender—his profession being finance, and his place of business in a particularly aristocratic-looking house in St James's, of which the whole basement extending half under the street was extensively cellared. So much was this the case, that when Brant Dalton stepped out of a cab and entered the door, there was a fine strong ether-like odour strangely suggestive of pale dinner sherry chemically matured.

A clerk in a well-furnished office gave him a look of recognition, half-way toward a smile, and thought that Mr Levinson would see him, placed a chair, and went out into the hall, leaving Brant soiling the cushion of the chair by planting one foot thereon, and scowling round the place, biting his under lip and occasionally uttering an angry ejaculation.

'How long's he going to keep me here?' he said, at the end of about a minute; and he walked to the mirror over the fireplace, examined the flower in his button-hole, curled up the ends of his carefully tended moustache, took up his well-brushed hat, and put it on again with the slightest suggestion of a cock, and then saw that the clerk had re-entered the room.

'Well?'

'Mr Levinson will see you, sir.'

'All right. You needn't come; I know the way.'

'Yes, sir, of course; but Mr Levinson prefers his clients to be shown up.'

'Clients? Slaves!' thought Brant as he followed the man up the thickly carpeted stone staircase to the first floor. 'Only let me once get clear of the brute!'

Mr Levinson's business was so private and confidential that he conducted it in no back-

rooms communicating with others, but in the handsome drawing-room provided with double doors, double windows, the surroundings of pictures, sculpture, and bric-à-brac, such as would have formed the nucleus of a museum, while the rich hangings, pieces of valuable tapestry, and thick carpets and Eastern rugs acted as mufflers to voices, even if raised in anger or dispute.

Into this room Brant was ushered, and as the doors closed behind him with a peculiar click which indicated that the clerk had passed through, a keen, dark, slightly gray personage, with the look of one who had been sharpened by long contact with hard men, rose from an easy-chair and held out his hand—a well-shaped, thin, but particularly white hand.

'Ah, my dear Dalton!' he said, 'what a lovely morning. So sorry to bring you here. What is the latest good thing on the turf?'

'Morning! How should I know?' said Brant sulkily and without removing his hat. 'I got your letter: what is it?'

'Bile, I should say, my dear fellow,' came the reply with a smile which showed some very white teeth. 'Try one of these?'

The speaker took a cigarette box from the table and held it out to his visitor, who made an angry gesture.

'No? Well, I will; I've not had my morning whiff yet. Hah!' he continued, as he lit the cigarette at a taper burning on a filigree silver stand. 'These are some choice tobacco sent me from Alexandria. Better try one.'

'I've no time to stop here smoking,' said Brant, snatching one of the little rolls from the box and lighting it impatiently. 'Now, then, Levinson, what is it? If you've dragged me here to tell me my paper's overdue, I knew it. I haven't any money, and I don't know when I shall have, so there!'

'Dear me!' said the keen-looking man, watching his visitor with half-closed eyes as he stood see-sawing heel and toe upon a thick rug. 'Now, don't you think, my dear boy, you could have said that just as easily and far more comfortably if you had taken a chair?'

As he spoke, he let himself subside into the one from which he had risen, and looked mockingly at Brant.

'Hooked, and of course you'll play me as long as you like,' said Brant with quite a sneer; and taking off his hat he banged it down upon a buhl table, laid his ivory-handled cane across it, and hitching up the knees of his trousers, threw himself back in the nearest chair. 'Now, then, say it out, and get it over.'

'My dear Dalton, you would never do for a financier,' said Levinson, with a meaning smile. 'The *suaviter in modo* is wanted there.—Like these cigarettes?'

'Confound the cigarettes! What is it you want?'

'I sent you a line, my dear Dalton, because I wanted to see you.'

'What for?'

'On business.'

'Then you do not send for me because—on account of—money?'

'Yes, I did.'

Brant's manner had been eager on hearing the word business; but it became gloomy and sullen at the financier's last announcement. In fact, his aspect was what is generally known as chop-fallen.

'Don't be disheartened, my dear Dalton. Any one would think you had no expectations.'

'Oh no, they wouldn't,' said Brant; 'not if they saw me here.'

'That's not so bad, my dear Dalton. Any one who says you are not a sharp-witted fellow either does not know you, or is a fool. But you are quite right: if you had no expectations, you would not be here. Who would lend money to a man who had nothing to make a return seem likely? But have another cigarette; they are very short.'

He leaned forward to hand the box, and then took another, lighting it daintily from the stump of the last. Then, after a side-glance through his half-closed eyes had shown him that his visitor had lit the second cigarette, he drew one leg over the other, placed his hands behind his head, and said quietly: 'What would you think, my dear Dalton, if I proposed to place a heavy sum of money in your hands?'

'Two things,' replied Brant shortly. 'At how much per cent. and what for?'

'I'll take it that you have said the two things, my dear Dalton; and I'll answer your questions frankly. It is as well to be quite plain in business: I always am.'

'Yes, you are,' said Brant meaningly.

'An unfair innuendo, my dear Dalton,' said the financier quietly, 'for when you have come to borrow money of me, I have told you what my percentage would be. High, perhaps, but not too high for the risk: and then I have given you a cheque for what you asked; no deduction for interest in advance, no cigars, wine, or paintings: but the cash.'

Brant nodded.

'Be just, then, my dear fellow. Now, then, for my answers. A heavy sum in cash as a *douceur* or fee for what you will do for me. Not a loan. That is an answer to your first question—"What for?" will take longer. Now, then: you have lost pretty heavily lately.'

'How do you know?' cried Brant roughly.

'I pay people to tell me what is going on,' said Levinson quietly. 'And one way and another, you must be rather tightly fixed. Gambling does not pay, my dear Dalton, believe me!'

'Look here; if you're going to lecture me, Mr Levinson, I am off,' cried Brant shortly.

'What an impatient irritable boy it is,' said Levinson, laughing. 'Here; go on with your cigarette and I'll explain. I want you to help me, my dear fellow, and in return I will place such a cheque in your hands as shall make you easy for some time to come.'

'So long as it isn't dirty work, I'm ready,' said Brant; 'so go on.'

'Dirty work! Absurd! A little bit of diplomacy, my dear fellow, nothing more.—Look here: your firm has invented an electro motor of a very peculiar nature. It is a miraculous success, and will be invaluable for naval purposes.'

'What?' cried Brant, with a laugh; 'nonsense!'
'It is a fact,' said Levvinson quietly. 'While you have been enjoying life, like the handsome young butterfly you are, that dear good busy old bee of an uncle of yours has been making honey and sealing it all in private cells without trusting you with the key.'

Brant winced, and Levvinson saw it, but he did not stir.

'Well, my dear Dalton, the invention being a marvel, and likely to prove of incalculable value to a warlike nation, our dear uncle, as a patriot and a business man combined, has sold all rights and the secret of this invention to the Government.'

'Impossible! I should have known,' cried Brant, startled into utterance. 'But how do you know this?'

'By money, my dear Dalton. One can do anything with coin.'

'Oh! Can you?' said Brant sarcastically. 'I have not found it so. But suppose we have produced this wonderful motor: what then?'

Levvinson looked at his visitor for a moment or two, and then turned his eyes to the table, drew forward a silver ash-tray and carefully removed the gray powder from the end of his cigarette.

'That being so—and it is, my dear Dalton—I want the drawings, plans, and descriptions as laid down by the inventor—in other words, the whole scheme.'

'Oh! indeed!' cried Brant with a forced laugh. 'May I ask what for?'

'If you like. I shall simply reply that it would be a pity for the officials in Whitehall to pigeon-hole so valuable an invention, and perhaps never make the smallest use of it.—I should pay very handsomely.'

'I should think you would,' said Brant contemptuously. 'Is that all?'

'Yes, save that I want you to bring me those plans.'

'Oh! to be sure,' cried Brant, gazing hard at the perfectly dressed nonchalant man before him. 'And so you think, because I have stooped to borrow money of you, instead of worrying my uncle, that I should be scoundrel enough to steal them. That I am a thief!'

'Absurd! Never use strong language in business matters, my dear Dalton. As you may surmise, I am only the agent in this case, acting for a foreign Government, which is ready to be generous to any one who will serve it. Steal! Thief! My dear boy, of what are you thinking? Petty transactions between man and man are so dubbed, just as, should you kill me or I killed you, people would call it murder; but if a Government destroyed thousands, it is war. So in this case you *obtain* these plans for me, and I pass them on to a foreign Government, then it becomes diplomacy.'

'Oh, that's diplomacy, is it?' said Brant.

'Yes, my dear Dalton, with a *quid pro quo* to the tune of a thousand pounds.'

'Shared with Mr Lewis Levvinson, eh?' cried Brant, 'and the sharers share a cancelled bill or two.'

'My dear Dalton, you must have got into very bad hands before you came to me.'

Really, my dear boy, your experience of human nature must have been very sad. I must ask you to recollect that you are dealing with a gentleman, whose word of honour in this transaction would be as good as any bond. Bring me the complete scheme of that invention, so that it can be worked out abroad; and I, trusting you that it is complete, will immediately place in your hands Bank of England notes for a thousand pounds.'

'And confoundedly poor pay, too, for making a man turn a thief.'

'Diplomat, my dear Dalton, a diplomat,' said Levvinson, watching him keenly through his half-closed eyes. A thousand pounds is a very serviceable sum—a great deal can be done with it; but I am only the agent acting for a Government willing to be generous. It is my duty of course to study their interests; but I confess it seems to me too small a *douceur* for so important a transaction, and I shall take it upon myself to double the amount named. Two thousand pounds sterling, my dear Dalton, for those plans.'

'Two thousand pounds,' cried Brant, starting up, 'for behaving like a scoundrel, betraying my uncle's trust!'

'You complained, my dear fellow, that very little trust was placed in you.'

'Never you mind that. I'm not going to betray the secrets of our firm. You've got hold of the wrong man, Lewis Levvinson. Pay some one else: that blackguard who has betrayed so much already.'

'Sit down, my dear Dalton. What a hot-blooded, impetuous boy you are. I see now why it is that you so often run short of money. You must curb yourself, and practise calculation a little more. Chess would be the making of you.'

Brant in spite of himself yielded to the man's influence, and sank back in his chair once more, snatched up another cigarette, and began to smoke furiously.

'Ah, that's better,' said Levvinson. 'Very good tobacco that, is it not? The Khedive's special brand. Now, my dear Dalton, do, pray, look at this transaction from a business man's point of view, and as an affair that is no petty question of buying and selling, but a national matter.'

'I do,' said Brant shortly. 'You ask me to rob my uncle and betray my country.'

'Pish! My dear boy, I ask you nothing of the kind. Now listen to reason.'

'I'll have nothing to do with it.'

'Very well; but let me remind you of how matters stand. There, be calm and go on smoking. If you do not put this money in your pocket, some one else will, for I look upon the matter as done. I shall have the drawings and plans—tracings of them, and I shall have to pay; but I would rather put the money in your pocket than in that of any other man.'

'You won't get them,' cried Brant.

'Indeed!—But to continue. You are not well treated at the office: less trusted than one of the clerks.'

'Why, it would ruin the old man.'

'Nonsense! He would lose, of course, and be

furious. But why should you trouble about that? Will he let you have money to live like a gentleman? No; you are forced to come to me.—You are deeply attached to your cousin.'

Brant swung himself round fiercely; but Levinson did not meet his eyes, only went on talking in a quiet convincing tone.

'A sweet lady, my dear Dalton, and worth the winning. But the old man has already nipped your aspirations in the bud, and under the present state of affairs he never will consent to a union. Why not help me in this? It will go a long way toward making you independent of him; and if he went down a little, you would go on and be in a position possibly to dictate.'

Brant threw his half-smoked cigarette into the grate.

'You might—you see I speak plainly—you might injure him a little; but in so doing you would benefit yourself and his daughter. He has had his innings. It is your turn now.'

'To be a thief and a traitor to my country!' cried Brant.

'Absurd boy!' said Levinson, with a little laugh, as if the other's firmness was amusing. 'With three thousand pounds in your pocket, you would be independent of the old man; and if you wished it, independent of me. But if I might advise, I would not throw Lewis Levinson over, my dear Dalton. Oblige me in this, and you will make a good friend. It might be in my power to put a very good thing or two in your way. Come, your hand upon it. Such a trifle—a few hours shut up with the documents and some fine tracing-paper!'

'No,' said Brant firmly. 'I'll be hanged if I stoop so low even for what you hinted at.'

'Or that fine transparent tracing-linen,' continued Levinson, without heeding the interruption. 'Then you double it all, and bring it to me sealed in an envelope; it is a perfectly private transaction in secret service. Then you have herewith bank-notes to the value of four thousand pounds in your pocket.'

As this was said very slowly, and with a slight emphasis upon the four, Brant's breath came heavily, and there was a singing in his ears. He started forward, but threw himself back with his teeth pressed hard together, and something like a faint groan escaped him, as he had a vision of freedom and enjoyment before him, with far onward in the future his cousin Rénée smiling upon his suit: but he uttered no word, and Levinson's clear soft voice went on delivering words which sounded like empty nothings, but were really full of the deepest meaning.

'Then as to the trifling matter outstanding, my dear Dalton, I should feel bound to say to a man who had proved himself so great a friend, "Never worry about that; pay me at your convenience, dear boy."'

'No,' cried Brant, springing up firmly now. 'Tempt some one else, and get the papers if you can. I don't believe there are any such plans in existence; but I'll do no such dirty work, and I'll go straight from here and put the old man upon his guard.'

As he spoke he caught up his hat and cane. And now Levinson rose too, but in the quietest and most deliberate fashion.

'One moment, my dear Dalton,' he said. 'You must forgive me for misjudging you. I never gave you credit for so much firmness and prompt decision. There you are a true diplomat, and ought to rise high in whatever you take up.'

Brant looked at him mockingly as he put on his hat, and then glanced in a mirror.

'You force my hand,' continued Levinson, 'and I must now speak out finally. I tell you frankly that there are those in your uncle's employ who will get me what I want.'

'You cannot get it.'

'I will get it,' said Levinson quietly; 'but I prefer to obtain it without trouble—from you. Now listen: I should detest to do anything unpleasant over your monetary affairs.'

'Threats now?' said Brant mockingly.

'I have not threatened. Don't force me to do so. Once more I ask you to oblige me, and I will now go to the limit entrusted to me. Get me those papers—a trifle in your case, and then feel independent of your uncle, and all he can say or do.'

'I will not.'

'Hear me out, my dear Dalton,' said Levinson very softly. 'Bring what I want, and there shall be no deduction, commission, or paper. I will place in your hands directly the sum that will enable you to carry out every plan you may have *in petto*, for I promise you in the name of the Government for which I act an immediate payment of five thousand pounds.'

'Five thou.?' cried Brant, excitedly.

'Yes: five.—There, your hand upon it as a man,' cried Levinson now quickly as he extended his own.

Brant sprang forward, and in another instant it would have been grasped to seal the iniquitous contract, but with an oath he dashed the extended palm away, strode out of the room, and the doors closed heavily behind him with their peculiar click.

At that moment a large easy-chair half hidden by the hangings at the far window was slowly thrust back, and the figure of a tall slight Spanish-looking man rose from where it had lain back unseen. It was the living presentment of one of Velasquez's handsomest faces above the faultless dress of an English gentleman; and the fresh comer upon the scene stood with his high forehead wrinkled as he buttoned one of his gloves.

'An hour wasted, Mr Levinson. But you have other cards to play?'

There was only a slight foreign accent in the voice, so slight that it was hardly perceptible.

'Oh yes, Count, several; but the hour has not been wasted.'

'I say yes, and it was very wearisome. I do not like playing such a part as this. But you must get these plans.'

'I have got them,' said Levinson.

'Got them?'

'Well, sir, good as got them.'

'But he refused point-blank. He said decisively that he would not.'

'Yes,' said Levinson quietly, as he offered the cigarettes and then the taper; 'but do not have any doubts about that. Talk only. I know my man.'

CURIOSITIES OF ADVERTISING.

ADVERTISEMENT, which somebody has called the breath of trade, and somebody else has styled the lubricating oil that makes the wheel of commerce run, is only about two hundred years old. At all events, it is to the reign of Charles II. that one must look for the first extensive use of the public prints by advertisers; but if one chooses to go back to the stentorian 'What d'ye lack?' of the London 'prentice boys, it will be only to find that one must go farther back still in order to reach the real beginning of the art. For it is an art, as well as a science, and an art which flourishes by expenditure. It is not so very long since Thackeray was moved to moralisation by an advertisement of Warren's blacking on the Egyptian Pyramids, yet such a thing to-day would excite no surprise. Were a traveller across the Kalahari Desert now to come upon a collection of 'Moonshine Hair-wash' coupons, he would simply note it as an instance of enterprise. Blacking on the Pyramids! Why, are not our seas covered with argosies of pills worth a guinea a box? And do not the very clouds rain down upon us eulogies of the virtues of some American watch, or other 'notion,' which the aeronaut takes up with him in lieu of sand ballast?

It was George Cruikshank, if we remember aright, who drew for a blacking-manufacturer a wondrous picture of an astonished cat gazing at herself in the speckless surface of a Hessian boot, polished to refulgence by the use of the blacking. Since then, the art of pictorial advertisement has developed enormously, and if we do not see anything more clever than Cruikshank's design, we see an infinite variety. Who does not know how two great Royal Academicians have immortalised a certain soap? We do not know how much Cruikshank got for his astonished cat, but Messrs Pears are said to have paid £20,000 in the purchase and reproduction of Millais' famous 'Soap Bubbles.' Every street hoarding is a mural exhibition of the art of puff, and these exhibitions are more in keeping with their surroundings than the dreadful signposts that disfigure the fair face of Nature, so that he who runs by rail may read of some vaunted pain-killer or pig-fattener. And in place of Cruikshank's cat, have we not a familiar monkey in full dress careering round the globe in shoes of swiftness in order to spread the glad tidings of something whose virtues are largely expressed in negatives? How familiar has the benevolent Simian become! Yet think of it, how many other familiar forms, faces, and formulas one meets with month after month and year after year, bound up with the monthly copy of our favourite magazine, or showered upon us through our letter-box. Sometimes it is a brilliant butterfly in variegated colours, sometimes a hirsute female or a gurgling baby, and sometimes the plain and positive statement that

'Pumblechook's Paste is the Best,' or the friendly though gratuitous advice—'When you ask for Tommy's Tooth-powder, see that you get it.'

We would all miss these more or less ingenuous and ingenuous announcements, especially the publishers and proprietors of newspapers and periodicals. In fact, but for the advertiser, the modern newspaper would be an impossibility. The advertiser not only purveys for the public—he practically provides the news of the world. Does anybody suppose that the penny he pays for his morning journal will cover the cost of all the reading matter for which he looks daily as eagerly as for his breakfast? Certainly not the least interesting portion of the reading matter for the thoughtful student in what Pope called the proper study of mankind—namely, Man—are the advertising columns. Therein one may find an infinite variety of food for reflection—in the display of the wants, wishes, faults, virtues, rivalries, and eccentricities of all classes of the community. The advertisement sheet is the reflex of the social and industrial life of a people, as well as the patent of its commercial enterprise.

There is both likeness and difference between the advertisements one sees in one's daily paper and those one finds stitched up with the magazines or displayed on the walls. The costliness of the numerous pictorial and other ingenious devices, many of them by renowned artists, must be obvious to the merest tyro; and when to such striking appeals to the eye we find allied presents of books, calendars, and artistic trifles, and generous offers of pianos, bicycles, sewing-machines, and all sorts of things to those who will help forward the work of advertisement, one is lost in wonder how it can pay. Princely incomes are expended by some of the large purveyors in bringing and keeping their wares before the public. When a certain well-known soap concern was not long ago turned into a Limited Liability Company, it was stated that the advertising bill ran over eighty thousand pounds per annum. If we are not mistaken, the late 'Professor' Holloway expended even more in vaunting the virtues of his pills and ointment, and with what pecuniary result is pretty well known. And it has been frequently proved that a business which has been built up by advertising will rise or fall according as the advertising is maintained or reduced. In practical business, indeed, 'once an advertiser, always an advertiser,' seems to be the invariable rule.

Among the most remarkable of modern-day advertisements are those which refer to specifics for every disease under the sun. The number of 'perfect cures' is so large that the only room for wonder is that any disease should remain to be cured. Not less marvellous than the qualities of the medicines are the length and liberality with which some of them are advertised. And the money spent in advertising pills ought to be enough to cure earthquakes—not to mention the endowment of hospitals. But after all, this kind of thing is not new. Here, for instance, is the advertisement of one Thomas Smith, a quack of the last century: 'In King Street, Westminster, at the Queen's Arms

an Corn-cutter liveth THOMAS SMITH, who by experience and ingenuity has learnt the art of taking out and curing all manner of Corns without pain or drawing blood. He likewise takes out all manner of Nails which cause any disaster, trouble, or pain, which no man in England can the like. He cures the Toothache in half an hour, let the pain be never so great, and cleanses and preserves the Teeth. He can, with God's assistance, perform the same in a little time. . . . The famousst Ware in England, which never fails to cure the Toothache in half an hour, price One Shilling the bottle. Likewise a Powder for cleansing the teeth, which makes them as ivory without wearing them, and without prejudice to the gums, One Shilling the box. Also two sorts of Water for curing the Scurvy in the gums: though they are eaten away to the bottom, it will heal them and cause them to grow as firm as ever, very safe—without Mercury or any unwholesome Spirit. To avoid counterfeits, they are only sold at his own house, price of each bottle Half-a-crown, or more, according to the bigness, with directions.'

This is not quite so ingenious as the American dentist who advertised: 'Teeth extracted; without Pain, two dollars; with Pain, one dollar.' This is pithy and to the point. There is no mistaking the intention of the advertiser, and the patient is quite free to make his own choice.

Propos of medical advertisements, we have come across the following in an old Stamford newspaper: 'Whereas the majority of Apothecaries in Boston have agreed to pull down the price of Bleeding to Sixpence, let these certify that Mr RICHARD CLARKE, Apothecary, will bleed anybody at his shop, *gratis*.'

Contrast with the foregoing advertisement of Thomas Smith's, the following, which is a type of what one sees every day in every newspaper in the land: 'All Diseases Cured with HERBS, after failure everywhere; free advice, 10 till 2, and 4 till 8; or write.—Botanic Hall.' Do our people really believe in such professions? Do any suppose that an illiterate herbalist can do what the most highly trained medical skill cannot effect? We fear that many people are innocent and credulous enough to do so, for advertisements cost money, and advertisers could not and would not incur the cost if it did not pay *them*.

Soap, which now is the subject of the most extensive, complicated, and often artistic advertising of the century, was an early material for advertisement. In Dr Robert Chambers's *Book of Days*, for instance, among a number of examples given of curious advertisements in the seventeenth century, we find the following, dated 1680: 'WILLIAM DEVAL, at the sign of the Angel and Stilliards in St Ann's Lane, near Aldersgate, London, maketh Castile, Marble, and White Soap as good as any man sells: tried and proved, and sold at very reasonable rates.'—'As good as any man sells,' observe, not 'matchless,' or capable even of washing a shipwrecked crew ashore, like some modern saponifiers we read of.

In Edinburgh newspapers of 1709 we have seen the following grimly suggestive advertise-

ments: 'All sorts of Dead Cloathes made after the British fashion, are made by JANET CHAMBERS in Patrick Turnbull's, Goldsmith, at the head of Forester's Wynd, at as reasonable rates as anywhere.' And: 'All sorts of Grave Cloathes of woollen, ready made for men, women, and children, as fine and as fashionable as any which are to be sold at MISTRES CHRYSIE'S in Dunse.' What was the British fashion, and what constituted fashionableness in such grave affairs, we are unable to explain; but among the collection of advertisements of Charles II.'s time above referred to is this one: 'At the sign of the Golden Pall and Coffin, a Coffin-maker's shop at the upper end of the Old Change, near Cheepsid, there are ready made to be sold very fashionable laced and plain dressings for the dead of all sizes, with very fashionable coffins, that will secure any corps above ground without any ill scent or other annoyance as long as shall be required.' Happily, this kind of thing is not met with nowadays, although the purveyors of mourning lose no opportunity of letting everybody know where to go for the garb of woe.

Here is the case of a widow who advertises her wants in a recent daily newspaper in a somewhat mysterious manner: 'Would Lady or Gentleman kindly Lend Respectable Young Widow, Good Home, £5 for Rent? Repaid monthly. No. — Office.' This is something like a prize puzzle. Does the 'respectable young widow' want the loan of a good home or a five-pound note, or both? And what is it she proposes to repay monthly? Her need may have been urgent, but her grammar is defective.

Telegraphese is a species of elliptical expression that has resulted from the use of the telegraph. When people have to pay for every word, they necessarily reduce the number as much as possible. The same result may be observed in the 'Wanted' columns of the newspapers, where the most surprising abbreviations may sometimes be seen. Look at the following, for instance: 'General (experienced) Wanted; no family; superior place; references.' No retired military officers, of course, need apply. A general servant is meant; and though the male mind may ponder in amazement over a request for 'Cook (plain): flannel washing; or 'no washing,' he may rest content in the belief that his better-half knows better.

The oddities of foreigners who advertise in English, not exactly 'as she is spoke,' have frequently called up a smile. Here is a specimen of a genuine hotel advertisement of some fifty years ago: 'MR DEWIT in the Golden Apple art of the Burges Gate at Ghent, has the honour to prevent the Persons who would come at his house, that they should find there always good and spacious Lodging, a Table served at their taste, Wine of any quality, &c. Besides he hires horses and chaises, which shall be of a great conveniency for the Traveller. The Bark of Bruges depart and arrives every day before his door. He dares flatter himself that they shall be satisfied, as well with the cheapness of the price as with the cares such an establishment requires.'

As another specimen of foreigners' English

take the following playbill of an English entertainment in Paris in 1829: 'A Grand Entertainment Concert and Ball will be given at Monsieur Lemer pres du Port de Charenton, No. 5. To open with the favourite comic song called the mill after witch will be given a part of Macbeath a song and Resitation after witch a favourite hornpipe. A gentleman a performer in provencal parts will appear in imetations of the great English actars from Paris, afterwards the prinsopal parts of Douglas or the noble shepard after witch a grand terifac combat then to be given a Resitation, comic duet, songs &c., the whole to conclude with a Ball. Music is provided. Enteorncce at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 6 to begin at past 7. Tickets to be had of Mr Joseph Turner, James Riley, John Liwois or at che wouse.'

Among the curiosities of advertising may surely be placed the first advertisement of the first steamer that plied for hire in Great Britain—namely, Henry Bell's *Comet*. Thus ran the advertisement in the *Glasgow Courier* of 1812: 'Steam Passage Boat, the *Comet*, between Glasgow, Greenock, and Helensburgh. For Passengers only. The subscriber having at much expense fitted up a handsome vessel to ply upon the river Clyde between Glasgow and Greenock—to sail by the Power of Wind, Air, and Steam, he intends that the vessel shall leave the Broomielaw on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays about Mid-day, or at such time thereafter as may answer from the state of the tide, and to leave Greenock on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays in the morning to suit the tide. The elegance, comfort, safety, and speed of this vessel require only to be proved to meet the approbation of the Public; and the Proprietor is determined to do everything in his power to merit public encouragement. The terms are for the present—4 shillings for the best cabin and 3 shillings for the second; but beyond these rates nothing is to be allowed to servants or any other person employed about the vessel.'

What would poor neglected Henry Bell have said could he have seen his humble little *Comet*, of whose elegance, comfort, and speed he was so proud, alongside a modern Cunarder or one of the latest palatial river-steamers of the Clyde or Thames, all so well advertised?

In these days of anti-sweating, living-wage, and short-hour movements, it is well to recall that slavery was not confined to America and the West Indies. In a now extinct Edinburgh newspaper of February 1740, we find the following advertisement: 'In August last a Negro run away from Denen, belonging to Captain William Jones of the St David of London. He was spoke with at Dalkeith on Wednesday the 20th instant. Any person who can apprehend him shall have a Guinea of reward and all charges paid.' Only a guinea for recovering the *corpus* of such a piece of property!

Another advertiser somewhat later (1773) in the same paper is more liberal. He announced: 'Ran off a White Negro man who passes by the name of William Northumberland, the property of a gentleman lately from South Carolina. . . . He is supposed to have gone to Leith, in order to secure a passage for

London, and will probably offer to work his passage. . . . It is therefore requested that no gentleman will take him into his service, nor no captain of vessels or others will take him on board their ships. Reward of Two Guineas for his apprehension.' Who, by the way, ever heard of a white negro man?

The Lord Mayor's show is still a popular spectacle, in spite of Progressivism; but it was so popular a hundred and fifty years ago that people were even ready to listen to lectures about it. Here is the advertisement of one of these lecturers of the year 1730: 'At the Oratory, the corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields near Clare Market, this day, being Wednesday, at six of the clock in the Evening, will be a new Riding upon an old Cavalcade, entitled, "The City in its Glory; or my Lord Mayor's Show:" Explaining to all capacities the wonderful Procession so much envy'd in Foreign Parts and nois'd at Paris: on my Lord Mayor's Day: the fine appearance and splendor of the Companies of Trade: Bear and Chain: the Trumpets, Drums, and Cries intermixed: the qualifications of my Lord's Horse, the whole Art and History of the City Ladies and Beaus at the Gape-stare in the Balconies: the Airs, Dress, and Motions: the Two Giants walking out to keep Holiday: like Snails over a Cabbage, says an old author, they all crept along: admir'd by their Wives and huzzaed by the Throng.'

This advertiser seems to have had something of the talent which made the late P. T. Barnum famous. Barnum was the Prince of Advertisers, and floated his Fiji Mermaid so persistently as head-lines before an incredulous public, that they were compelled to go to see her. And doesn't everybody know how the 'moral' qualities of his Exhibition were made capital of by poor Artemus Ward?

The law's expense is not less proverbial than the law's delay, but, according to standing announcements in the daily—particularly the evening—papers, the expense is trifling. See this: 'Law Advice, 1s. till 9. Courts attended, Deeds prepared, Debts recovered. Aliments, Damages, Divorces, Separations.—No. — — — Street.' Advice for a shilling is surely cheap enough; but what about the cost of preparing deeds? Those who contemplate having recourse to a shilling lawyer—for even less serious matters than 'Divorces and Separations'—would do well to consider the same advice may be dear at any price.

There are queer animals in the world as well as queer folks, but surely the horse referred to in this is a phenomenon: 'For Sale, brown mare; would suit coal lorry; goes to bed every night; cheap.—Great Western Road Station.' From one point of view, a horse that goes to bed every night would be cheap at any price, because it would make such a splendid show. But then if it runs in a coal-cart, the laundry bill must be excessively heavy—and few households could provide a bedstead large enough. Nothing is said about a nightcap or foot-warmer for this remarkable animal, whose exemplary conduct outshines that of the man who 'always comes home to tea!'

One has heard a good deal at different times about the quarrels of authors, but perhaps not

many living people have seen the following advertisement, which the author of *Essay on Man* inserted in the *Daily Post* of June 14, 1728: 'Whereas there has been a scandalous paper cried about the streets, under the title of "A Popp upon Pope," insinuating that I was whipped in Ham-walks on Thursday last: This is to give notice that I did not stir out of my house at Twickenham, and that the same is a malicious and ill-grounded report.—ALEXANDER POPE.' Poor Pope, who said his life was one long disease, was justifiably angry on this occasion, though one cannot excuse some of his other bursts of temper.

But what of those people who advertise their family quarrels, and who insist on washing their dirty linen in public? The reader knows the kind of thing we mean, when partners and brothers and married couples fall out. And surely the least edifying and the most lamentable of the curiosities of advertising are the notifications one so frequently sees, that 'I, A. B., hereby give notice that I will not be answerable for any debts contracted by my wife C. D. after this date.'

Said we not that the advertising sheet is the reflex of the social as well as the industrial life of a people? It is a record of sorrows as well as of joys; of tragedy as well as of frivolity—it is, in short, not an epitome of human nature, but human nature writ very large.

RICHARD MAITLAND—CONSUL.

A VICTIM OF THE KOLAO-HWUY.

CHAPTER III.

No human being could look more absolutely limp or less capable of moral effort than the unfortunate Sterling did at this moment. Maitland, however, who knew the demoralising effects of opium, was not to be discouraged. 'Be a man, Sterling,' he said. 'If not for your own sake, for that of your wife. Pull yourself together, and put yourself in my hands. You know I am not a man to say what I don't mean.'

'I know you are not,' replied Sterling. 'If you can drag me out of this bondage, I shall be eternally grateful to you.—But there,' he continued, the abject expression returning once more to his face; 'you can't save me even if you would; and even if you are able, Evelyn will hate me the remainder of my life for this disgrace.'

'No,' said Maitland; 'you wrong her. If I read your wife's character aright—and I think I do—she is one of the best women that God ever made. It will be her delight to help to lead you back to a new and better life.—Now, come along with me—we must get back to the Consulate as quickly as we can.'

As he passed out of the courtyard, Maitland turned towards the door of the saloon, and saw that the two attendants had evidently been watching his interview with Sterling. Of this he thought with nothing but disgust; but now above their heads appeared a face which filled him with serious misgivings. In those malignant features he saw a mixture of hatred and

anger, and felt sure that it belonged to an emissary of the Kolao-hwuy. He was right. Lin had been one of the occupiers of the *divan*, and saw in the presence of the English Consul the possibility that Sterling might escape from him.

With all speed Maitland now hurried his unfortunate young friend back to the Consulate. Having reached it, he put Sterling, who was still weak, dazed, and trembling, into a chair on the veranda, and immediately afterwards sent a servant with a note to Evelyn begging her to come over and take up her quarters at the Consulate.

In a surprisingly short space of time Maitland saw her sedan-chair enter the courtyard. He went to meet her, and without uttering a word, brought her immediately to the veranda. Sterling lay back in the chair in which he had sunk, sleeping heavily. Maitland pointed to him and immediately turned away. For a moment after he had left her, Evelyn stood in a state of hesitation. The man whom she now looked at in his weakness and disgrace, was in no sense the hero of her happy love-dreams. For a brief moment a pang sharper than any sword passed through her heart; but real love, after all, is not easily conquered; the next instant the affectionate girl was kneeling by Sterling's side—her arms were round his neck, her kisses pressed his cheek, and tears for the first time flowed freely from her eyes.

Hasty directions were meanwhile given by the Consul for the reception of his unlooked-for guests. He called his faithful constable Bryce, and gave him stern and rigorous directions that the gates of the consular compound were to be kept carefully shut and guarded, and that the watchmen were to have special orders to be more than usually on the alert. The night was far spent when Maitland at last betook himself to his bed; but at early dawn he was up again and about. He knew only too well that he had not a moment to lose, if Sterling was really to be rescued from the clutches of his formidable enemy.

As soon as the conventionalities would permit, Maitland sent his principal *Tingchai* (messenger) to the Taotai with a message to say that he would call upon him at noon if convenient on a matter of importance.

When Sterling and his wife appeared at breakfast, Maitland did his best to seem unconcerned, and to talk to his unlooked-for guests as if nothing extraordinary had happened. Evelyn's face was white, and there were black lines under her eyes, but otherwise she looked calm and composed. Sterling, on the other hand, was evidently intensely nervous—he ate next to nothing, started at every sound, and looked up apprehensively when a servant happened to enter the room. By nature he had all an Englishman's pluck; but opium had effected the most disastrous results, and, as Maitland saw, he was unable to pull himself together at the present juncture.

After breakfast, the two men went to smoke their Manila cheroots on the veranda. When they found themselves alone, Maitland turned immediately to Sterling and said abruptly: 'Now look here, Sterling. It's no use mincing matters—you're in a frightful mess.'

'I am indeed,' replied Sterling; 'and,' he added—his voice slightly shaking—'I am in a worse mess than even you could possibly dream of.'

'Well, my dear fellow,' said the Consul, 'you must treat me as a man does his doctor—you must tell me everything. I can do nothing to aid you if I don't know all.'

'It is awful,' said Sterling; 'but the lot has fallen on me to murder the Tartar General who has been waging war against the society; and unless by to-morrow night I have done the deed, my life is forfeited.'

Maitland's brow became heavily clouded. 'That certainly is worse than anything I thought of,' he said. 'But, after all, it doesn't matter so long as you are in this Consulate. While you remain here, you are safe against all the wiles of the Kolao-hwuy; but remember, you must do exactly as I tell you.'

'I have promised Evelyn that I will,' replied Sterling; 'and however low I have fallen, please God, at least I'll keep that promise.'

'That's right. Now, you are getting more like yourself. Pray, give me your attention carefully. I have thought matters over, and there is nothing for it but what I now propose to do. I am going this morning to the Taotai to get from him two of his most experienced detectives, who shall come here and guard you night and day until we can ship you to England.'

At these words a ray of real hope lit up Sterling's haggard face. 'How is it possible for me to thank you?' he exclaimed. He sprang from his chair, and suddenly taking the Consul's hand, shook it with a grip and vehemence which was as iron compared with the nerveless twitching of his fingers a short time back. 'Your goodness leaves me no words to express what I feel,' he said. 'But,' he added, 'however terrible my position, it will be simply impossible for me to get away for another month, as Stephenson—one of my partners—will not be out here for two or three mails.'

'Well, never mind,' said Maitland cheerily. 'We'll look after you for that time; and now I must be off to the Yamun.'

Though the Consul had assumed a cheerful air in talking to his guest, his mind in reality was the reverse of easy, and many and dark forebodings seized him as he was borne in his consular chair to the Taotai's residence.

When he approached the Yamun, his Tingchai, taking his card, went ahead to announce his arrival. As soon as the sedan-chair drew up at the Yamun, the centre doors were thrown wide open, and a messenger, bowing low, invited the Consul to enter.

Without dismounting from his chair, the coolies carried him into the compound as far as the steps leading up to the principal hall. Here the Taotai stood ready to receive him.

With many bows, the host conducted his guest into the reception room and placed him immediately in the seat of honour on his left hand. The interchange of many compliments followed. The servants brought in tea, and, as is usual, remained in the apartment within ear-shot of the Consul and his host.

This state of affairs did not, however, at all

suit Maitland's purpose, and he leaned over to the Taotai and whispered a request that they might be left alone for a few moments. The Taotai immediately issued a command that the room was to be cleared. The moment this was done, Maitland began to speak about his business. He told his terrible tale in brief clear words which it would have been impossible to misunderstand. He described the young Englishman in graphic touches, just alluding to the weakness which had made him a prey of the terrible Kolao-hwuy, and dwelling also on many good points in his character. He described the threats which had been employed to induce him to attend the initiation ceremony, and spoke in graphic words of his present bitter repentance. He finally ended by saying that he was certain Sterling would gladly lay all the information he possessed before the authorities.

On hearing these last words, the Taotai's brow cleared. 'That condition alone saves your friend from being accused of the crime of belonging to the society,' he said. 'Can you give me the name of the man who entrapped him?'

'Yes,' said Maitland; 'his name is Lin. I saw him for a moment last night at the opium den, when I went to look for poor Sterling. He is as ill-favoured a scoundrel as ever I saw; and from the expression of his face, I feel sure he was vowing vengeance on Sterling for allowing himself to be drawn out of his clutches.'

'I will send to the opium shop and secure that fellow at least,' said the Taotai. 'The question now, however, is this: What is to be done with the Englishman? As you are aware, his life is in immediate danger; and I shall want him to give evidence against these men as I catch them.'

'That is what I came about,' said Maitland. 'At present, Sterling is in my Consulate, and as long as he remains within the compound, he is safe. He has, however, his business to attend to, and what I would ask Your Excellency is this: send me two of your sharpest detectives—so that one can be on duty night and day—to follow Sterling when his business calls him beyond the protection of my flag.'

'I will do it,' said the Taotai, 'on the distinct understanding that he shall be forthcoming whenever I want him to give information or take evidence from him.'

'Agreed,' said Maitland.—'Now, I will no longer detain Your Excellency.'

So saying, he drank off his cup of tea as the signal of the conclusion of his visit. The Taotai conducted him with courteous ceremony to his chair, and bowed low in response to Maitland's parting salutations.

On arriving at the Consulate, Maitland went at once to the veranda, where, as he expected, he found Sterling and his wife. They were talking earnestly together, and Sterling's face looked animated, and even hopeful again. When they saw Maitland, they hurried to meet him.

'What news?' said Sterling.

'I have arranged everything satisfactorily,' replied the Consul. 'The detectives will be

here in half an hour, and one will always be ready to go with you whenever business calls you to the hong or elsewhere.'

'How can we thank you?' said Evelyn, her bright eyes filling with tears as she raised them to Maitland's face.

Sterling said nothing; but the expression of his face showed plainly that he would now leave no stone unturned to regain that strength and manhood which the use of opium had deprived him of.

Tiffin was announced, and afterwards the two men smoked their cigars in comparative peace. Alas! this peace was soon to be broken. Maitland had just risen to see to the duties of his office, when Sterling's 'boy' came forward with a scared face, holding a piece of paper in his hand.

'Me findee this peecce chit on master's table,' he said as he handed the note to the Consul.

Maitland took it and translated the Chinese characters, which were as follows: '*The die is cast; your death-warrant is signed.*'

Maitland crushed the paper in his hand, and called Sterling to follow him. 'Read that,' he said. 'The scoundrels are evidently determined to have a shy at you; but we will be one too many for them.'

Sterling turned pale as he read the missive. 'For God's sake, don't tell Evelyn,' he exclaimed.

'Not I,' answered Maitland. He took the paper from Sterling and locked it up in his secret drawer.

Sterling went slowly back to where his wife was sitting. She had returned to her place in the veranda. It was comparatively cool there; and relieved from some of her worst fears, and having absolute confidence in Maitland, she was idly employing her fingers with some gaily coloured embroidery, which she was preparing to ornament her own pretty drawing-room. The many-coloured silks and wools lay in her lap—a bright colour was in her cheeks; and her beautiful dark eyes, full of love and relief, looked full at her husband as he approached her. Her attitude and expression stabbed the unfortunate young man to the heart. Her quick eyes saw all too soon that there was some fresh trouble.

'Sit down by me, Wilfrid,' she said. She made a great effort to speak cheerfully. 'See how natural and peaceful everything seems, and you certainly are safe here. Now you must keep up your courage—it is that dreadful opium that has upset your nerves.'

'It has been the cause from first to last of my undoing, Evelyn.'

'Why do you look so pale now? Is there anything fresh the matter?'

'No, no, my darling. I am in a mess, and must get out of it as best I can.'

'And the Consul is so kind and brave. Was there ever a man like him?' exclaimed Evelyn.

'If I do escape, Evelyn, I shall certainly owe my life to him.'

'You are perfectly safe, so long as you stay here.'

'But I can't stay here always, Evelyn—that is just the point. I must get back to business this afternoon.'

Evelyn's face turned very white at these

words. 'You must not stir until the detectives come,' she said.

Sterling laughed impatiently. 'To tell the truth,' he said after a pause, 'I don't much believe in them. What are two detectives, sharp as they doubtless may be, against the machinations of a society like the Kolao-hwuy? But there, my darling, I am frightening you. What a brute I am! There, Evelyn, don't cry. I wonder you care a bit for a fellow like me; but if my life is of any value to you, I will certainly do all in my power to preserve it for your sake.—Now, let me help you to match these silks. You know my eye for colour is more perfect than your own.'

Evelyn tried to smile, and to keep back the tears which ever and anon filled her eyes.

As long as her husband was by her side, she felt that he was safe, but she dreaded indescribably the moment when he must leave her. An important meeting was to be held in his office that afternoon; and as his clerks knew nothing of the scrape into which he had got himself, it was all important that he should attend it. As the moments flew by, he became more and more restless, and even went into the compound to ask Bryce if the detectives whom the Taotai had promised to send had yet arrived.

After a time, two quietly dressed and rather stupid-looking Chinamen were seen to enter the compound. They had a short consultation with Bryce, who a moment or two afterwards put in his appearance on the veranda. He asked Sterling to step outside with him.

The young man complied. The Chinamen, who called themselves Foo and Chang, bowed a low obeisance to Sterling. They then told him in a few words that he might now feel himself absolutely safe. They assured him that they would not intrude themselves on his notice in any way; but also, never for a single moment would they allow him out of their sight.

'You are safe now,' said Foo. 'Your Excellency may go in and out exactly as you please. We know the emissaries of the Kolao-hwuy, every single man of them, and no harm can possibly happen to you.'

The man called Chang further told Sterling that Lin had been arrested by the Taotai, and was now in custody in the prison-house of his Yamun.

This fact went further than anything else to reassure the Englishman, and he went back to say 'Good-bye' to his wife in better spirits.

'It's all right,' he said. 'If ever there was a brick in the world, it's our good friend Maitland. I will go at once to my hong, see my people, transact all the necessary business, and be back with you before dark. Keep up your courage, my dear wife; I verily believe the danger is past.'

To Sterling's astonishment, it was just at this juncture, however, that all poor Evelyn's self-control gave way. 'I can't bear it,' she sobbed. 'I feel that the danger is not past. As you said yourself, what can two men do against hundreds?—Oh, don't leave me, Wilfrid. Stay here, or at least allow me to accompany you.'

'That would indeed be folly,' answered the young man. 'What could you do, dearest, at a meeting of my tea-tasters?'

'Nothing,' she answered with a heavy sigh. 'Oh, why are women so useless, when they love so much?'

'Useless!' echoed Sterling. 'It is love like theirs—like yours, that keeps the world straight.—Now, good-bye. Don't despair. I vow and declare that I'll be back with you before you have time to miss me.'

Evelyn made a great effort to check her tears; but when Sterling had really gone, she flung herself back into the deep chair in which she had been sitting on the veranda and gave way to a burst of terrible grief.

'How can I bear it?' she moaned. 'All the terrors of last night were nothing to what I am now enduring. No; my fancies are not really nervous. I feel that some terrible fate is going to overtake my husband.'

Poor Evelyn never forgot the slow torture of the next two hours. Maitland was busy over the duties of his office. She was absolutely alone, and the time seemed to crawl on leaden wings. She became more and more nervous, until at last her dread reached the culminating point of agony. 'If Wilfrid is not in by dusk,' she said to herself, 'I will go myself to the hong. I cannot endure this suspense any longer.'

At this moment there was a commotion in the compound. Evelyn, peering through the dusk, which was already beginning to set in, saw the detective Chang enter hurriedly, go up to Bryce, and speak to him.

This was enough. As if wings were to her feet, she flew down-stairs, and running out, went up to the constable and laid her shaking hand on his arm. 'What is it? what is it?' she gasped in a choking voice.

Bryce was much startled when he saw her. 'Won't you come in, Mrs Sterling?' he said. 'I will take you at once to my master.'

'Oh, I know there is bad news,' she gasped. 'You have something to say,' she continued, fixing her eyes on Chang and speaking in a new tone of command. 'I insist upon knowing immediately. Where is Mr Sterling? Why have you left him?'

The man threw up his hands in despair. 'He have vanished,' he exclaimed. 'The Englishman turned a corner and vanished before my very eyes.'

A LOST PAGE OF BRITISH HISTORY.

JUNE is generally a month of comparative tranquillity, from a meteorological point of view. Then 'the summer's sun does brightly blaze, and breezes light the water's bosom gently brush.' The June of 1650 was, however, a month of extreme boisterousness; for days and weeks together winds and rains prevailed, and the sea was much tormented. The meteorological condition of the atmosphere was in keeping with the political and ecclesiastical condition of our country, for it was then passing through a period that will ever remain prominent in the pages of history. To picture here the condition of things then existing is needless, for the history of the Commonwealth is closely wrapped around the minds of every

one. Suffice it to say that Charles II. was then a refugee in Holland; Cromwell's soldiers filled our barracks; Cromwell's frigates kept watch along our coasts; and the Solemn League and Covenant remained unsigned. Overtures had been made to the absent king that he should recognise the last-mentioned document; but promise of that recognition was not granted till a second deputation from Scotland had waited on Charles. That promise being given, the king set sail, from the not too hospitable shores of Holland, on the morning of Sunday the 12th of June 1650, and a course was steered for the British coast; nor did the king lack company, for Walker, in his *Historical Discourses*, informs us that 'the chief persons of quality that waited upon him were the Dukes of Buckingham and Hamilton; the Earls of Cleveland, Bramford, Dumferline, Lauderdale, and Carnwarth; and the Lords Wentworth, Wilmot, Wedrington, and Sincleer; besides his own servants, the Scottish Commissioners, and divers other persons (as well as soldiers) of quality, courage, and fidelity.'

The first stage of the historic voyage—according to the testimony of a fellow-passenger with the king—was successfully accomplished. The weather was fine, the wind was favourable, and we may safely assume the company was happy. But alas! all too suddenly were these favourable conditions reversed. Lowering clouds darkened the face of the wind-tormented waters, and the lumbering hulk (a Dutch man-of-war belonging to the Prince of Orange) with its royal cargo struggled in the teeth of a rising gale. Night closed in, and the darkness added fresh discomfiture to the situation. Head-winds sorely impeded progress, and for days and nights together the billows raged round the now all but stationary and sadly battered ship. If we could have stepped on board just at that juncture, the scene presented to us would certainly have been one entirely out of keeping with the presence of royalty. Under the most favourable circumstances, the berths afforded to passengers must have been the very opposite of luxurious, for the deck accommodation was inadequate, the cabin conveniences of a very third-rate order, and all pretensions to anything like moderate comfort, under the circumstances, could not have been entertained. It is easy for us to imagine, too, that the physical condition of the party must have been reduced to the lowest ebb; for none of them, we may assume, were practical sailors, and, consequently, the effects of some weeks 'of stormy and contrary winds' must have put all thought of comfort out of the question, and must have played sad havoc with nightly rest. Those of the party addicted to the horrors of sea-sickness must have prayed that the waters would engulf them.

But still another calamity was in store for the luckless passengers and their royal superior. The limited stock of provisions on board went done long before the destined haven was reached—for the voyage had already been protracted long beyond anticipations. A fresh supply of provisions would have to be secured at all hazards; and with this end in view Holy Island was called at, though such an act made

the king and his companions run a grave risk of being seized by a Government frigate. No such mishap occurred, however, and with abundance of provisions on board, the voyage was renewed. It was the intention of Charles to proceed forthwith to Shetland, 'where seven ships of the States, guarding the herring-fishing, were, by the Prince of Orange's orders, to have joined with the king, the better to secure his passage.' Whether the commander had miscalculated his bearings or no we cannot say, but certain it is that the desired destination was not reached. After floundering forward for seven days 'in no very good weather, quite unexpectedly—altogether contrary to expectations—land was discovered, 'which,' records one of the passengers, 'was found to be Caithness, in the north of Scotland.'

On Sunday morning, the 22d day of June (old style) 1650, a man-of-war could have been seen from several vantage-points along the shore making slow headway down the now still waters of the Moray Firth. At first, the ungainly hulk was deemed to be a Government war-vessel; but on closer inspection, its peculiar build betrayed its nationality. When opposite the quaint little village of Garmouth, which nestles almost on the margin of the Firth, the foreign craft tacked landward, and made for the rough natural harbour formed at the mouth of the river Spey. The crew, however, unacquainted as they were with the peculiarly dangerous characteristics of the river's mouth, did not notice that the tide had almost fully ebbcd, and that, in consequence, the harbour basin was extremely shallow. It was not long, therefore, before they became convinced that to enter the harbour under existing circumstances would be a physical impossibility. A boat was lowered, and into it Charles stepped, followed by the more illustrious members of his retinue. But before *terra firma* was reached, a very ludicrous incident took place. The oarsmen had rowed forward only a short distance when the boat, probably grounding on one of the hidden sandbanks which are so common along this coast, stuck fast, and refused to budge. What was to be done? To go back to the ship was impossible: to reach the shore was equally impossible, unless, indeed, the party cared to wade the goodly piece of deep water that lay between them and it. History relates that Charles II. found himself in many queer plights in his day; and probably the royal dignitary who dressed in buckskin breeches and carried a tashed riding-whip under his arm, in order to escape his enemies would not object to be seen floundering through the water on the back of a humble dependent. The king's companions were, however, saved the exertion that such an exhibition would entail. Old Thomas Milne, the local ferryman, a man described as being 'little of stature, but more than ordinarily robust,' and who from the shore had seen the boat stick fast, took compassion on the party in their perplexity. Tucking up his moleskin breeches, he strode into the current, and was soon by the boat's side. Milne, honest fellow, as he doubtless was, knew nought of the superior department that is wont to be displayed

in the presence of royalty; indeed, probably he did not know he was offering his services to a king, when, turning round his broad shoulders, and slightly stooping down, he simply said in the broadest of broad Scotch, 'Loup on!' The monarch did not readily comply with the abrupt invitation thus laconically given; but eyed suspiciously the little fellow, and then cast a furtive and fearful glance at the threatening water beyond. Milne at once perceived the dubiousness and uncertainty thus unmistakably expressed, and, looking Charles full in the face, said, with just the slightest twinkle of mischief in his keen, honest eye: 'I may be leetle o' statur; but I'se be bound I'm baith strong an' stedly; an' mony's the weightier burden I've carried in my day!'

The tone of voice in which these words were uttered at once banished all uncertainty from the 'Merry Monarch's' mind, and he, to the no small amusement of his companions, at once mounted the back of the little ferryman, and, next minute, found himself on dry land. Local tradition does not tell if Milne received any royal favours for this piece of gallant service to his king; but certain it is that both he and his descendants—the last of whom, bearing the name and title, died at Garmouth recently—received, and were afterwards known by, the sobriquet of 'King Milne.'

It is hardly possible to trace with any great degree of precision the immediately subsequent movements and actions of Charles. It is held by some that the Solemn League and Covenant was signed on board ship while the vessel lay in the ofing at Spey's bar. But other authorities contradict this, arguing—and local tradition conclusively supports the contention—that the king signed the Covenant in a house in Garmouth, and that he was afterwards entertained by the knight of Innes, the then superior of the place. Until within quite a recent date, part of the gable of this house stood; and as long as a remnant of the wall was left, tourists and others were wont to visit Garmouth and carry away with them a morsel of the clay of which the lowly though historic building was built. So eminent an authority as Sir Thomas Dick Lauder declares, 'It was in this very house that the clergy of Moray presented Charles with the "Solemn League and Covenant," which he signed.' This fact is slightly alluded to in the title as given in the printed copies of the 'Confession of Faith' of the Scottish Church, where it is said 'that it was taken and subscribed by King Charles II. at Spey, June 23d, 1650; and at Scoon, January 1st, 1651.' According to the same authority, the house referred to was two storeys high, built of clay and straw, its door being approached by an outside stair. Its apartments consisted of a kitchen and three rooms, the upper of which was 'pannelled all round.' In this room, it is supposed, Charles subscribed the Covenant.

Immediately on the king's landing, word was sent by the Commissioners to the magistrates of Aberdeen; and the letter, which was dated 'Speymouth, June 23d, 1650,' is carefully recorded in the Council register of the Granite

City. It ran thus: 'Worshipfull and good Friends—We have directed these to let you know that the king is safely arrived, and intends, if God permits, to be in Aberdeen on Thursday at night: therefore, you will take care to provide such lodgings for him and for the Commissioners and for the train as may be best had on such short advertisement. And we beseech you let nothing be wanting which may testify your affection to the native king, who has fully assured all the desire of his people.'

For several days longer Charles and his retinue remained in the Garmouth district, enjoying the unstinted hospitality of local magnates; and on reaching Aberdeen he was, according to Walker, 'received with real expressions of joy by the people.'

It is unnecessary that we should here further detail the progress of Charles, for his subsequent joys and triumphs, cares and crosses, are fully chronicled in the open pages of British History.

MY FIRST RAVEN.

A **TAME** raven which was kept in our neighbourhood had for long attracted my attention, and in time became an object of much interest to me. It may be that a sort of weird influence was exercised over me by this dark bird of the mountain and corrie, so strangely at home in the courtyard of a cottage against which were exposed, like gibbeted highwaymen, the bleached and tattered remains of many of its predatory congeners. Over these ensigns of mortality it would at times perch and croak loudly and mournfully, as if bewailing their fate or chanting their requiem. Being clever and intelligent, as also thoroughly domesticated, it had learned several tricks, and could utter a few words in a deep guttural voice. An impartial witness of its ongoings might have said that it was little better than a confirmed rogue and nuisance—the terror of little children, whose heels it pecked; the plague of the dogs, whose tails it pulled; the pest of the poultry yards, which it plundered of eggs and chickens. But if it was a troublesome pet, it certainly was an unusual one. So prejudiced had I become in its favour, that I resolved as soon as possible to become possessed of such another.

A pair of ravens year by year nested a few miles distant on the rocks of the South Ayrshire coast, where Loch Ryan opens its haven of refuge to storm-tossed sailors. Often have I watched and admired them as in their bold flight, upborne on the breeze, they circled and towered and plunged above the crest of the highest hill in the range, which hemmed in our glen on its north-western side—their wild notes all the while resounding far and near. No one could have observed their aerial evolutions or studied their habits in their native haunts without acknowledging that, on account of their daring and hardihood, their wonderfully developed sense of sight or smell—for from their dizzy heights they mark the carrion, be it leagues away—the wild scenes amid which they live and move, the wide area of the globe over which they wander free, being veritable 'citizens of the

world'—ravens are among the most notable of our birds, and lend a peculiar interest and charm to those localities which they still frequent.

Usually, the brood were hatched early in March. One year the young were taken as early as the middle of February. The spring, however, was now drawing to a close, and I had quite given up hope of having my desire gratified that season, when a gamekeeper, to whom I had communicated my wish, told me that, though the ravens had deserted their first nest, he had discovered another midway on the face of a high cliff, overlooking the sea, and that, by peering from a precipice opposite, he could see in it the young ready to take wing. Early next morning we set off together in a drizzle of rain; the mist hung like a chill curtain upon the hillsides, and the long grass and heather of the moorland were drenched with the moisture. The plan which approved itself to my guide was to take his boat, which he kept on the pebbly beach of Finnart Bay, and make our way by sea to the foot of the cliff on which the ravens had built their nest. By rowing round, the weary trudge over rough and broken ground, and the dangerous climbing over slippery rocks, would be avoided. But on reaching the bay the experienced eye of the gamekeeper at once told him that with the strong tidal swell from the Atlantic any attempt to land among rocks so rugged, and on a coast so full of hidden perils, would be hazardous in the extreme. Before leaving the boat, he took with him a large rod and tackle, used for fishing off the rocks.

Ascending the steep brow of a hill and looking northward, we saw stretched at the foot a long broken line of cliff, ravine, and precipice, over which spread the mist. This scene, which was the haunt of these hardy birds, was magnificent in its wild savage grandeur. At one place, high above the sea, the hillside was strewn with the wreckage of a ship, lately dashed to pieces against this iron-bound coast. Ere we had journeyed far, the conviction was borne in upon the mind that this region, so inhospitable to man, so dangerous to his herds, was at once a home and refuge to many helpless creatures, against which he waged a relentless war of extermination. Save for the rock-doves, which in large numbers bred in the caves, the martins that hung their frail nests upon the cliffs, or the noisy choughs that now and then visited these giddy heights, there was not a bird or beast that found in this solitude a resting-place but against it my companion had proclaimed himself the foe. Were there not such fastnesses, to which our persecuted fauna could resort, their sadly diminished numbers would certainly be reduced even more than they are. From a rocky precipice covered with ivy and scraggy juniper there flew out a kestrel, engaged in rearing her brood. On another, bare and exposed to sunlight and storm, a hooded crow had brought forth several young, their bodies black as night, while breasts, shoulders, and back were mantled in gray. At a ravine where a rivulet, after many leaps, lost itself in the sea, we clambered down into a cave to inspect traps set for otters. To

my relief, their cruel jaws were innocent of the vermin; so, after destroying as best we could all trace of our visit, we regained our former track, where the bent of the hillside seemed to spring from out the brow of the rocks. In a cave where the chambers, festooned with the tender fronds of maiden-hair and thongs of hartstongue, decreased in size as you penetrated their darkness, a pair of foxes had that season hidden their cubs, which were discovered and captured, and afterwards sold for the purpose of affording elsewhere sport to the huntsmen. A considerable stretch of coast-line, made up of frowning precipice and treacherous rock, inaccessible to human foot, was appropriated by a crowd of evil-looking skarts or cormorants, which the gamekeeper misnamed 'cameronians.' Tier above tier they squatted in the midst of their foul-smelling offal, the deposit of centuries. Now and then, one, taking alarm, would awkwardly waddle to the edge and throw itself into the sea; but once in that element, its movements were nimble and graceful as it swam and dived and rose again to the surface far distant from where it disappeared. On the huge side of a cave, up the mouth of which, opening wide to the sea, the waves roared and dashed themselves to spray in tempest, and murmured and danced in calm, the peregrine falcon had built its eyrie; but the young had been taken ere they could fly, and perhaps caged in the tainted atmosphere of some bird-shop, were now awaiting a purchaser. At last, after a rough scramble over rocks, leaping over gorges where the gurgle of the waters underneath was heard, creeping along ledges where one false step meant death, then descending as near as possible to the tide-mark, and turning the corner of a huge rock, before us rose the cliff from which the ravens' brood were looking down.

The usual method of securing the eggs and young of birds which nest on these cliffs is for a man or boy bound to a rope to be let down from the top. Such hazardous work demands a cool head and no small amount of daring. This procedure was of no avail here, as the cliff leaned over considerably; and had a person been let down, he would have hung wide of the nest by many yards. The gamekeeper, however, was prepared for the emergency. I had wondered at his bringing the fishing-rod and tackle from the boat. But now, with a look that told me he knew his business, he got ready the rod, and attaching to it a strong line with large hooks, he began to lash vigorously the face of the cliff, aiming at the nest. After a few throws, he landed the hooks in the midst of the young ravens. In an instant, one, two, three, they sprang into the air, and after circling for a brief space in their virgin flight, dropped wearied into the sea! Had it been possible to have brought round the boat, they could have been rescued little the worse for their mishap; but now, all that could be done was to shout to and encourage the retriever, which at the gamekeeper's word had plunged into the waves, and was struggling hard to reach the drowning birds. By this untoward event our toil seemed doomed to failure. Hope revived when, after climbing the precipice, from

which a view of the nest could be got, a young one was seen crouching in the further corner. Descending, the keeper again plied his rod; the hooks at one time caught among the twigs of which the nest was made, tearing away the front, but failed to attach themselves to the bird. My own attempts to wield the ponderous implement were in vain; it required the arm of a strong man and the art of an expert angler. When the afternoon was drawing to a close, one lucky cast of the hooks at last caught the bird, and in a moment it was landed at our feet, safe and sound.

It was not my fortune to retain this raven for long. After a few weeks' confinement, it seemed tame enough to be allowed some liberty, and in a little while it was hopping about among the poultry, doing its best to persuade them that it was one of themselves. But one day, suddenly, without the least warning, the old pair swooped down from the heavens. Not deigning to alight, they uttered a call, which was at once recognised; and in an instant the young raven, which before had never shown any inclination to fly, was on the wing—the parents passing and repassing under it, as if, in their eagerness to rescue their lost nestling, they would bear it upon their backs. For a while after this they frequented the glen; whether it was because they expected to discover and lure away others of their missing family, I know not. Only this remains to be told, that all my careful searchings for the escaped one were in vain, as never did they permit it to be seen, but kept it well out of danger's way.

MEMORIES.

A LITTLE window, and a broad expanse
Of sky and sea,
A little window where the stars look in,
And waves beat ceaselessly;
Where, through the night, across the silvery foam,
The moonlight falls, like blessed thoughts of home.

A little space within a crowded ship,
A restless heart;
A little time to pause awhile and think
O'er lives apart;
To pause and think, while others pray and sleep;
A little while to bow the head and weep.

A little window, but a heaven of rest
Bent over all,
Where, through the silence of the star-lit dusk,
The angels call,
Where the dead faces of the vanished years
Look in and smile, across a sea of tears.

A quiet room—a quiet heart at peace
With earth and sea;
A little corner—but a glimpse of heaven,
An angel's company;
Oh steadfast soul, oh floweret pure and white,
Still on my lips I feel thy last 'Good-night.'

M. F. T.

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TWO PER CENT.

FOR more than twelve months the official rate of discount at the Bank of England has stood at two per cent., without sign of movement, a phenomenon not altogether but almost without precedent in the history of the Bank rate. In those foreign countries where the general conditions of the money market approach most nearly to those prevailing in London, such as France and Germany, there is, as a rule, a much greater steadiness in the charge for loanable capital; the variations are neither so extreme nor so frequent. It is indeed a complaint often heard from our merchants and traders that the impossibility of foreseeing these changes imposes an additional difficulty in the way of profitable business. At the present moment the tendency is rather to complain of a steadiness that too much resembles stagnation. It may be worth our while to inquire what are the principal causes affecting the rate, and particularly why for so long a period it has stood at this low point.

Seeing that the interest allowed for money deposited with bankers necessarily fluctuates with that which is charged for the loan of it, the matter is one which touches not business men alone, but the entire community. No doubt it is true that the paramount importance of the Bank of England rate has to a large extent declined with the development of banking, and with the rise in our own country and abroad of joint-stock institutions, the amount of whose resources in capital and deposits may rival and in some instances overtop the Bank's own. An incident which Cobden narrates as coming under his observation when travelling in a steamer off the coast of Greece, is a well-known illustration of the world-wide influence of the Bank rate—a little boat putting off from the shore with no other errand than to inquire how it stood! Great changes in this respect, as in so many other conditions of commerce, the past forty years have indeed witnessed; the

money markets of the world and the masses of capital employed in them have now a magnitude hitherto undreamt of. It is well understood nowadays that the official rate is frequently ineffectual in ordinary times, neither controlling nor representing the current value of money—a circumstance never more evident than during last year, when the open market lent freely for short periods at one, or three-quarters, or even one-half per cent., while bankers and bill-brokers considered themselves happy in getting from one and a half to one and three-quarters or thereabout for the discount of good commercial bills, and had often to be content with much less. Yet even now the rule adopted by the banks in fixing the rate of interest for deposits is to follow the Bank of England rate at a little distance, generally one per cent. or one-half per cent. below it, although the practice has been somewhat modified very recently, in view of the unreality or ineffectuality to which we have referred.

The present condition of the money market is most anomalous, nor is there any class of the commercial community to which it can be said to be quite satisfactory. Obviously the business of bankers must be unremunerative, with a rate so low, and an ever-growing mass of deposits for which a suitable outlet can scarcely be found. It might appear to be possible for them at any time to invest their funds so as to secure a return of about three per cent. with absolute safety; that is, about double what they allow for deposits, seeing that 'gilt-edged' securities are still to be had, although the prices of them have of late risen to an extraordinary degree. But it is only a comparatively small proportion of their resources which prudent bankers will employ in such a manner. It is a recognised rule that banks cannot, like a Trust Company or an Insurance Company, place their means freely in fixed and dead investments; the reason being, that they are liable to be called upon to repay their deposits at a moment when all such investments are

falling in value, and cannot be disposed of in heavy amounts without a serious sacrifice. The same considerations do not affect merchants, and it might be supposed that a state of things in which bills can be discounted or advances obtained at so trifling a charge, would be an ideal one for traders. But the price of loanable capital may be so low as to indicate an unhealthy state of business; and when it remains low for a long period, it does indicate that trade is shrinking in volume or becoming less profitable. Thriving conditions of commerce do not usually accompany either extreme; so that it has often been considered that it is when about four per cent. is being charged and freely paid for the loan of money, we are to look for signs of active and profitable trade.

Some light may be thrown on the causes of the present stagnation if we recall what has generally taken place at those crises when the rate of discount has risen to its highest point. In the course of the last half-century many such crises have occurred, and we have always found the immediate starting-point of a rapid rise in the rate to be a threatened scarcity of loanable capital, generally exhibited most visibly in an undue decline in the Bank's reserve—the last line of defence in the citadel of finance. The condition precedent to such a situation has invariably been a period of more than ordinarily active trade and speculation, of rising prices, and of inflation in one or more forms of enterprise. These periods have commonly issued in disasters that have made too deep an impression to be forgotten, and have alternated with times of sluggishness and depression. Trained observers have told us lately that symptoms are now to be discerned which foretell the approach of happier times for the commercial community. Nothing could be more welcome, for the depression has been very deep and prolonged; it is only to be hoped that when the revival comes, it will not be in the form of a renewed outburst of financial recklessness. We must guard ourselves against thinking that recent years have been a period of privation or more than ordinary suffering for the people generally. Prices have fallen in almost every branch of production, and profits have declined; but neither has the bulk of trade diminished nor has the standard of wages been lowered; where, at least, this has occurred, it has been in quite exceptional instances. Low prices, and especially prices continuously falling, are grief and pain to merchant and manufacturer, to farmer and tradesman; but they wear another aspect to the great body of consumers. It might, indeed, very fairly be argued that the growing cheapness of nearly all articles has made the last twenty years a time of unusual prosperity for the working population. Yet every one can see that this process must have its limits, and that it not only inflicts

severe loss on important classes, but cannot be carried very far without in time affecting adversely those who for the present reap its benefits. Profits may reach vanishing-point, and thus employment be curtailed by the discouragement or stoppage of an industry.

Some remarkable theories have been broached in order to account for the origin and long continuance of the present depression. A very active section of the commercial community both at home and abroad trace it to the demonetisation of silver, pointing out that since 1873 the fall of prices has been almost continuous—a fact to be explained only, as bimetallicists affirm, by the shrinkage of our measure of value. Since 1870 both Germany and Italy have adopted a gold standard, and in 1873 France was obliged to close her mints to the free coinage of silver. Thereupon—the argument runs—followed a greatly increased demand for gold as coinage, as well as a hoarding of the metal to an unprecedented extent in the war-chests and national banks of Russia, Germany, and France. So that the general fall of prices since that date is to be interpreted rather as an appreciation of gold. The remedy they propose is in some way to rehabilitate silver, to link it with gold at a ratio fixed by statute and by international agreement, and thus very largely to increase if not even to double the mass of metallic money. For some years this theory has been the subject of very warm controversy; the bimetallic view has of late attracted some very able and distinguished advocates, though it is still very far from being accepted or even considered by the general public, without whose approval so delicate a matter as the coin of the realm is little likely to be meddled with by responsible statesmen.

The leading arguments on the other side are almost too well known or too obvious to be cited here. The present plethora of gold in the money market is taken to be a sign that there is no such scarcity as is affirmed; while the greatly increased production of the metal in recent years is relied upon to meet all probable requirements. There are, further, the practical answers which perhaps weigh most with our financiers and investors—that we are a creditor country, and should be unwilling to receive the payment of, say, a hundred millions annually in silver rather than in gold; that with our present standard, we have enjoyed much prosperity, and that the risks of so great a change may be very real, even if it is not easy to define them beforehand. Then, again, the fall of prices can be otherwise explained, particularly by the immense advance in methods of manufacture, in the means of communication and of transport. In the near future more will be heard of this controversy, one feature of which is certainly remarkable—the absolute confidence on either side of equally able and well-informed disputants.

Another view of the reasons why the rate of interest continues so long at its present low

point is that the natural and ordinary course of commerce will bring about this result, and that the tendency which has long prevailed for the value of loanable capital to fall is only being somewhat more clearly manifested than heretofore. This we take to be a theory by no means free from doubt. The rate of interest perhaps tends in the long run to fall; but in a very long period of years it has not actually fallen so decidedly as many suppose. William Paterson, the founder of the Bank of England, and projector of the Darien scheme, writing in the beginning of the eighteenth century on the redemption of the National Debt, declared that the Dutch at that time obtained money 'at three per cent., or under, simply by the punctuality of their payments.' If that was the case almost two centuries ago, then the value of money lent on good security has not altered even to the extent that might have been expected, and the alleged permanent tendency in this direction scarcely explains sufficiently a downward movement so considerable as the last few years have witnessed.

We believe that the present stagnation may be accounted for without the exercise of so much ingenuity and without the aid of any far-fetched theories. It has been the rule in our commercial affairs, exemplified by several striking instances within living memory, that periods of inflation and periods of depression should alternate, a time of undue eagerness in trade and recklessness in speculation generally terminating in a disastrous crisis, and being followed by a period of slack trade and extreme caution in every kind of enterprise. For some years past we have been at the lowest point of this cycle, and if we have waited longer than usual for the reaction towards prosperous times, it is because the excesses of the latest period of activity resulted in a more than usually severe shock to credit.

A noticeable feature of those outbreaks of speculative mania which lead in the first place to financial crises, and then by a natural sequence to distress and dullness in trade, is that they usually expend their energy in some one particular direction; as in 1825, in overtrading and foreign loans; in 1835 and 1836, in the formation of joint-stock companies; and in the years preceding 1847, in railway enterprises. But since 1890, when a terrible crisis was very narrowly escaped, the evidence of speculative recklessness has not been confined to any one kind of investment. The year just named brought to its height, and also for a little time to its close, the insatiable demand for the wretched securities offered to lenders by some South American States—a demand stimulated inordinately by the fact that firms of the highest standing and of world-wide reputation introduced these securities to the public, and were themselves holders of them to a vast amount. To common-sense people it appears a mystery why States whose governments are unstable and in too many cases corrupt, should have found it so easy to borrow in the money markets of Europe. Whatever may be the natural resources of a country, if there is a plentiful lack of men of character and principle to direct its affairs, then to avoid

touching the obligations of such a State would seem to be the only wisdom. But high interest and the sanction of great financial names combined to form a temptation too powerful to be resisted. It may well be feared that even now, after the serious breakdown of 1890, the lesson has been partially forgotten, and that some of the worst defaulters now enjoy a higher credit than their history justifies.

South America, however, has not been the only theatre of overstrained credit in recent times. Somewhat more than two years ago symptoms of financial weakness began to appear in our Australian colonies, and developed with great rapidity into a serious crisis. Bank after bank of high standing and widespread connections closed its doors, and could only reopen them after a reconstruction involving considerable concessions on the part of its creditors. No such financial disturbance, of course, can happen anywhere without affecting many people in this country; but, owing to the fact that the Australian banks have always with large classes of our population been a favourite and thoroughly trusted channel of investment in the shape of deposits, the recent breakdown was felt with especial severity. Overtrading in Australia had taken the shape of a land boom, supported and stimulated by the deposit money with which the banks were overloaded. It appeared also that the Government finance in many of these colonies had been conducted in a much too sanguine spirit, and that a burden of debt disproportionate to their present resources had been recklessly accumulated. Our colonies, it is needless to say, are in a very different position from the South American States to which we have referred, especially in the character of their people and the honour of their Governments; but from this very fact the shock of the disaster was felt more widely; nothing, indeed, that has happened of late years has proved a more serious discouragement to enterprise and investment than the Australian crisis.

The two great sources of trouble which have now been specified might be sufficient in themselves to account for all the recent depression; but much has been done to aggravate the mischief by the fraud and neglect disclosed in the failure of the 'Liberator' and of some gigantic 'Trusts,' Building Societies and Trust Companies alike, if managed with care and prudence, should be among the safest of enterprises; but the history of finance may be ransacked in vain to find a more deplorable exhibition of folly and criminality than was displayed in these insolvencies. Perhaps the most disheartening feature of all was the revelation that the most reputable names on a prospectus or on a directorate are no safeguard to the investor under present conditions; he can derive no assurance therefrom that fraud will be guarded against by the vigilance of directors, or that their shrewdness may be trusted to save the concern from the most childish mismanagement. The natural result is that the investing public have become timid, and seek for absolute safety before everything else. This, we believe, is the explanation of the extraordinary price of Consols and of other 'gilt-edged' securities; and the dullness of trade,

the stagnation of the money market, and the unprecedented continuance of a Bank rate of two per cent., appear to us attributable to the same causes.

AN ELECTRIC SPARK.*

CHAPTER IV.—UNCLE AND NEPHEW.

'I'M going to see how I stand,' said Brant Dalton. 'If the old man thinks that he is to do just as he likes with me, he is mistaken. I want to get clear of the miserable Israelite. Lewis! and Levvinson! Bah! Hang it all, if I were a Jew, I wouldn't be ashamed of it. Why should they be? Grand old nation enough. Why can't he call himself Levison or Levi, like a man?'

This was as he walked from his chambers in the Temple toward the offices, stopping once at a shop to purchase an expensive button-hole, and then marching along as if the pavement were set aside for his especial benefit, and he expected every one to give way.

His thoughts were busy, too, over his cousin, who, he told himself, must be brought to book, for he was tired of being played with at fast and loose.

It was about half an hour after his usual time when he entered the offices; and going up to the principal room, the old clerk Hamber looked up from his work and said, 'Good-morning, sir,' with a large paper knife across his mouth like a bit.

'Morning.—Mr Dalton come?'

'Yes, sir; been here nearly an hour,' said Hamber.

Brant grunted, and went into a little room at the back, which he had taken to for some months past for his special office.

At the end of a quarter of an hour he was out again, and his eye wandered about the place; but no one took any notice of him, and he went back to look over the *Times*, the work of the office going steadily on without much help from him.

'India—the Burmese—Money Market,' he muttered as he turned over the sheets. 'Hang money! I wish there wasn't such a thing on the face of the earth.'

He tossed the paper aside and went out into the principal office again, where pens and rulers were at work, calculations being made to scale; and old Hamber was busily mixing some Indian ink on a white earthenware slab, and holding a camel-hair pencil in his lips.

Just then, Wynyan entered the office quickly, and Brant crossed to meet him, while the old clerk slowly left his chair to follow, but hesitated, wrinkled his forehead, looked perplexed, and began to arrange his thin gray hair with the cedar handle of the camel-hair brush.

'Oh, there you are, Mr Wynyan,' said Brant, in a supercilious way. 'Things all right at the works?'

'I have not been there this morning,' replied the young engineer.

'Not been there? Well, somebody must go. I thought you were down there.'

'I have been to the works, Mr Brant,' said Hamber, interposing; 'and Mr Dalton would be glad if you would step into his room, sir—as soon as you got back, sir.'

'Ah! Why didn't you tell me before?' cried Brant haughtily.

'Not you, sir; Mr Wynyan, sir,' said the old clerk; and Brant turned sharply round, walked to his room, and went in and banged the door. 'Wynyan,' he muttered, 'Wynyan, always Wynyan. If ever poor wretch was driven—It's fate!'

He took up the *Times* again, and the first words his eyes lit upon were 'Money Market.' The paper was tossed aside once more, and he walked up and down till he heard Wynyan's voice in the office.

'I can't stand it,' he said to himself. 'I'll bring things to a climax somehow.'

Leaving his place, he walked sharply across to his uncle's private room; to find the table covered with drawings, and the old engineer in the little inner office, where the safe was built into the wall.

'That you, Wynyan?'

Brant stifled his ejaculation. 'No, uncle.'

'You, Brant?' said the old man, coming hurriedly out. 'Yes? What do you want? I'm very busy this morning.'

'Oh, I won't keep you long, uncle,' cried his nephew. 'I only want a few words with you.'

'Well—what is it? Money again?'

'Yes, uncle; I want some money for one thing.'

'Then we will soon settle one thing,' said the engineer with a grim smile. 'You are no use to me here in the business, Brant; but in the hope that you may alter some day, and cease to be ornamental, I pay you, as my brother's son, five hundred a year, which is more than I have paid Wynyan. My house is always open to you to have as many meals as you like; my wines and cigars are at your service; and all you have to do is to walk in here and read the newspapers.'

'Yes, you've often told me that,' said Brant sulkily.

'Here's the rest of it then, my boy. You draw your salary quarterly; and you have, Hamber tells me, drawn two quarters in advance, so we'll settle the thing promptly.—No, Brant; I cannot let you have any more money.'

'But I want a few hundreds badly, uncle,' cried the young man, almost imploringly.

'What for?'

'To extricate myself—to pay a debt of honour.'

'Dishonour, boy. Not a penny. Now then: the other thing?'

'It's about my position here,' said Brant bitterly.

'Well, sir, it's a very good one.'

'No, sir; it is not,' cried the young man warmly. 'I have no encouragement. I seem to be left out of everything.'

'Your own fault, Brant.'

'Was it my fault that I was kept in ignorance of this new invention?'

'What new invention?' said Dalton, with his massive face turning hard.

'This electric motor.'

'Who told you a new electric motor had been invented here?'

'I asked you, sir, why this was kept a secret from me,' said Brant, evading the question.

'Inventors as a rule keep their schemes to themselves. You could have been of no service to Mr Wynyan and me, so we kept our own counsel, and worked while you played.'

'Yes,' cried Brant bitterly. 'Mr Wynyan!—always Mr Wynyan.'

'A gentleman to whom I must request you to be a little more respectful. I have noticed several things lately, Brant Dalton, that I must ask you to alter.'

'A miserable prig!'

'A gentleman, sir, and one whom I can trust.'

'How can you expect me to behave respectfully to a man who regularly ousts me from my position? I thought I was to become a partner some day. But when am I asked to join in any of the business consultations? Why, old Hamber and the clerks laugh at my position.'

'I'll tell you, Brant,' said the old engineer, with his manner changing and becoming fatherly; 'you have driven me into a corner, and I must say things to you that I would rather have left unsaid. You ask me why you are left out of the consultations. I will tell you—Because I cannot trust you yet.'

'Not trust me, uncle?'

'No, Brant; and I grieve to say it. Most of my business dealings are of great importance, and signify thousands gained or lost. They require clear cool heads to deal with. How can I place faith in a man whose mind is given up to the new ballet or the next race, and who gambles?'

'Has that contemptible prig Wynyan dared to tell you that?' said the young man hotly.

'Mr Wynyan has not mentioned your name to me; but I know these things as a fact, just as I know that you are in debt and visit the money-lenders.'

'Then some one has been maligning me,' cried Brant hotly.

'No: people from whom you borrowed have applied to me for payment, and for a time I paid the amounts due by my dead brother's son. I soon found, though, that it was pouring water into a sieve, and stopped. You see, I know more, Brant, than you imagined.'

'Calumnies, sir.'

'I do not call the reports by that name, boy; and I tell you plainly that if you were not my nephew, and I did not hope soon to see an end to the wild-oats business, I should long ago have told you that you are not fit for my profession, and suggested ranching, squatting, or something of the kind.'

'You misjudge me,' cried Brant passionately, 'because you have given all the trust due to me to this man, this Wynyan.'

'I would rather have trusted you, my boy, that you know,' said Dalton, growing calmer as his nephew became more heated.

'A nice confidential man! Yes, I have treated him as he deserved—a hound. A hired servant, who, knowing he is high in favour with you, cannot contain himself, and must be insolent to me.'

'Rubbish, boy! You are in a passion. Don't make a donkey of yourself.'

'Ah, you don't believe me. Mr Wynyan is too honourable and trustworthy for that? Why, I could soon open your eyes to what he is, if I would stoop to such a thing.—Yes, you drive me to it. I will tell you. While you have been petting him and blinding yourself to what he is, the scoundrel—a hired servant—has dared to raise his eyes to *Rénée*.'

'Indeed!' said Dalton quietly. 'I thought he was too much occupied over our work. But if he has, pray, what is that to you?'

'Uncle! Are you mad? You would not let that bound?—'

'Silence, sir! No such language as that concerning Mr Wynyan. Answer my question, if you please—this time. I said, what is that to you?'

'I told you a year ago,' said the young man sulkily.

'Yes; and I told you then that the notion was outrageous; and after what I said, I supposed you would come to your senses—that you had forgotten all that folly. *Rénée*, if she marries, will choose her own husband, and he will not be her cousin.'

Brant winced and ground his teeth.

'So once for all, let that miserable notion be buried. It is utter madness—unnatural—un—Pooh! *Rénée* would laugh at you for an idiot. But I have no more time to waste upon you now. I will just say this: If I believed in you now, I'd pay off every shilling you owe, and let you start fair; but I can't: you've deceived me too often. Your creditors must wait while you retrench. Such people as they are deserve to wait. You have five hundred a year, so set to work and live on one hundred: that will leave four to pay off debts for a few years. When I was your age, I lived on fifty, and thought myself well off. There; I've done: behave yourself towards Mr Wynyan, and act as a Dalton should, that is, like an honest man. Prove to me that I can trust you, and then I will. Now be off.'

'He treats me like a schoolboy,' muttered Brant. 'Behave myself to Mr Wynyan! Yes, I'll behave myself to Mr Wynyan. The insolent overbearing prig. I always hated him. He has got the length of the old lunatic's foot, and no mistake. Actually encouraged the idea. Live on a hundred a year, eh? All right, uncle; it's to be a game of chess, then, is it? Perhaps I can get the better of your pawn, my beloved uncle. Suppose I play the Queen.'

(To be continued.)

THE HABITS AND TASTES OF LEPIDOPTERA.

By CHARLES J. MANSFORD, B.A.

MUCH as we have already learned about the habits and tastes of butterflies and moths, there seems still much more to be taught us from the open book of Nature. Every collector or entomologist is aware how very local many species are wont to be. Although the food-plant may abound in every nook and corner of a country, and, to all appearances, every necessary condition for some insect's life is

fulfilled, yet nowhere can this same insect be found except, perhaps, in a space a few yards square.

Quite a flutter was produced among entomologists, some years ago, by the discovery of a small moth (*Albulalis*); and the discoverer thereof was able to keep his secret to himself for a long time, during which he reaped no slight benefit pecuniarily by disposing of the insects to less fortunate collectors. This moth was found first in a small plantation on the estate of the Earl of Darnley, where it is common enough during the month of July, although in no other part of the British Isles has it, so far as the writer is aware, been discovered.

A knowledge of the geographical distribution of plants is, however, leading up to a more sound knowledge of the general distribution of Lepidoptera, although it will appear from the above that no account, even then, can be made for insects that are only on the wing for a few weeks or days, and rarely leave the narrow bounds within which they, willingly it would seem, imprison themselves.

So much attention has of late been turned to Japan, that it may not seem out of place to comment on the fact that no less than six per cent. of English Lepidoptera are taken in that country. For a knowledge of the butterflies and moths of Japan we are largely indebted to Mr Jonas, whose splendid collection was placed at the disposal of the British Museum. Turning over the leaves of the catalogue of this collection, the English collector will recognise many old friends; and a reference to the Flora of Japan will explain the wherefore of this.

In Europe, the year 1894 has been a bad one, the unsettled weather making collecting difficult, and, moreover, damaging the slender wings of the mature insect. Curious enough it is, too, that Nature, so careful to preserve the species, and so careless of the life of the individual specimen, should endow a moth or butterfly with a life that is frail in the extreme, if we except the hawk-moths, which cling tenaciously to life even when chloroform is administered. While the mature insect dies when pinched or struck down by the hand, the egg from which the moth or butterfly comes forth is able to endure extremes of heat and cold with perfect immunity from death. A temperature of ten degrees Fahrenheit has failed to freeze the young blood of the tiny life within the tiny shell no larger than a pin's head; a cluster of butterfly eggs, upon a withered stalk of grass, has defied the burning heat of the sun glaring down upon the sand of the Sahara.

Entomologists visiting Greenland have found the same species of moths and butterflies existing there as at Grindelwald, and among the Swiss mountains generally. When Europe emerged from its glacial state, many scores of insects were forced slowly but surely to migrate up the mountain sides or to emigrate to frozen Arctic lands.

Brazil is probably the best hunting-ground in the world, so far as the aggregate number of species to be found is concerned; out of a total of ten thousand species, no fewer than five thousand are said to be found there. In Peru, Mr W. H. Gates is reported to have taken seven hundred different species in a single year.

Perhaps the great discoveries yet to be made will emanate from Borneo. Already collectors have touched its shores; but within its confines there exist, in all likelihood, species absolutely unknown to the world, and thither entomologists who now explore the Alps in search of fresh species would do well to direct their footsteps.

There is another more remarkable fact than that of the localness of Lepidoptera that is engaging the thought of many collectors: this is the keen sense of taste or smell which butterflies and moths possess. The connection in the human being between taste and smell is so intimate that it is a matter of difficulty to say where the one ends and the other begins. Certainly, with regard to moths and butterflies, one is at a loss to say why certain smells and the evaporation of certain liquids should attract them.

The common notion that the quest of honey is the sole object for which a moth or butterfly exists, has long been exploded by the experience and experiments of even the tyro in entomology.

Among moths, the Noctuæ, and among butterflies, the Vanessa, have long been lured to destruction by the simple device of treacling. This, for the benefit of the uninitiated, may be briefly explained as smearing the boles of trees with a decoction of brown sugar, beer, and rum. The process here mentioned has resulted in the discovery of many species of Noctuæ and a few geometers, that otherwise might never have been known to the entomologist.

Granted that the mixture of beer and rum is intended to intoxicate the insects—a result known from the effect of mixing drinks among mankind—is it the sugar, the rum, or the beer which attracts Lepidoptera? It may be all three; certainly the smell of beer has some attraction in itself for moths, which the writer has tested by smearing trees with beer alone, and neglecting both the rum and sugar, or treacle.

Sweetness, either in honeyed or other form, cannot be, then, the sole attraction for insects. Further, it has been shown that strength of smell, rather than sweetness, has the greater effect. In the case of the Purple Emperor (*Apatura iris*), the old mode of catching this prize by means of a net attached to a pole twenty feet long has been superseded by the discovery of the insect's taste for game. The word 'game' is used of malice aforethought, for the beautiful insect delights in the taste of the juice of a much decomposed cat, or the fragrant essence it is able to distil from a hare's skin that has been kept in the sun until ripe for operations. These juices, too, seem to intoxicate, though to a less degree, as do the sugar, rum, and beer.

Apart from atmospheric conditions, which

largely settle whether an insect shall remain at home or not, it has been found that in some years 'sugaring' does not pay. For some perverse reason, the insects refuse to accept the airy invitation to a drunken carousal, at the end of which they will be transferred to the collector's pill-boxes or relaxing box. Experience here again seems to point to the fact that pungency and not sweetness attracts, for, among entomologists, the use of methylated spirits instead of rum as a bait for the unwary butterfly and moth is coming into rather common use; and by its means, or by means of some other liquid still more pungent, we may yet discover new species, and so enrich our knowledge of the wonders which the world contains.

RICHARD MAITLAND—CONSUL.

A VICTIM OF THE KOLAO-HWUY.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

ALL Evelyn's worst fears were immediately realised. With wild despair at her heart, she rushed into Maitland's office. One glance at her face revealed to the Consul that something had happened.

'All is lost! They have taken him,' she said with a bitter cry. As she spoke, she sank into a chair and rocked herself to and fro in her misery.

'Tell me exactly what you have heard,' said Maitland, taking her hand.

Evelyn looked up at him—her throat was choking, and try as she would, no further words would come. Fortunately, at this moment the detective appeared at the door. It must be a circumstance of more than usual excitement to effect any change in the stolid features of a Chinaman, but the man, to Maitland's horror, showed manifest signs of agitation. His yellow complexion showed a greenish tinge, his eyes were bloodshot, and the hand in which he held his fan trembled visibly.

'What has happened?' asked the Consul, speaking in Chinese.

'I will tell Your Excellency,' replied the detective. 'I went with His Honour to his hong this afternoon, and waited there until he had finished transacting business. At six o'clock he told me to follow him to the Consulate. I did so; but happening to meet an acquaintance close to the corner of the Street of Longevity, I stopped for an instant to speak to him. I then turned the corner, and His Honour was nowhere to be seen. I searched for him everywhere, and made inquiries of the bystanders, but could neither hear nor see anything of him. The only man who could throw the least light on the subject was a shopkeeper, who said that he had noticed three men hanging about the corner of the street all the afternoon; but when I questioned him further, he denied having seen any gentleman pass.'

'You have betrayed your trust,' said Maitland, 'and have allowed the members of that abominable society to carry off the Englishman, who was under the direct protection of the

Taotai. If he is not found and brought back alive, your head may be lost.'

'Have mercy, Your Excellency!' cried the man in an agony of terror. 'I stopped for only one instant, and I have made every possible effort to get news of His Honour.'

'You must follow me to the Taotai's Yamun,' said Maitland.

Glancing at Evelyn, who, wrapped in the stupor of despair, took no notice of him, Maitland hurried from the room. A moment later, he was being carried as fast as four stalwart coolies could bear him.

As he entered the Yamun, he saw by the number of Tingchais about that the court was sitting. On reaching the tribunal, he found the Taotai seated by a table with a prisoner in the courtyard before him. Maitland was too pre-occupied to recognise the culprit. He hurried forward as the Taotai rose to receive him. 'I have bad news, Your Excellency,' he said.

'What is it?' asked the Taotai. His tone expressed sympathy, for Maitland's perturbation was too evident not to be noticed at once.

'Sterling has been carried off by the Kolao-hwuy,' exclaimed the Consul.

'Where and how?' asked the Taotai. 'Were not my detectives with him?'

'That is true,' replied Maitland; 'but, unfortunately, the detective Chang, who was following the Englishman from his hong to my Consulate, turned for a moment to speak to an acquaintance: at that instant, Sterling was carried off. A shopkeeper who stood near said that he saw three men loitering near the corner of the street for some time—they, doubtless, were emissaries of the Kolao-hwuy, and did their fell work while Chang's attention was otherwise engaged.'

'The scoundrels!' exclaimed the Taotai fiercely. He raised his head, saw Chang, and called to him in angry tones: 'How dared you lose sight of the Englishman for a moment?'

The man immediately fell on his knees, and with loud protestations declared how diligently he had sought Sterling the instant he discovered he had been carried off.

'You have been shamefully neglectful,' said the Taotai; 'and the only way in which you can save yourself from the consequences of your crime will be by bringing the Englishman back again safe and sound. Go at once and bring the shopkeeper who saw the three men.'

The detective hurried off, and the Taotai turned to Maitland. 'I was examining a man connected with this pestilential society as Your Excellency came in,' he said. 'Perhaps he may be able to throw some light on the matter.'

On hearing these words, Maitland turned and looked at the prisoner. He immediately recognised him as the man whom he had seen the night before at the opium den. The features were, however, altered. Then they had been full of malignant hate, now they were expressive of a queer mixture of agony and obstinacy. This state of things was easily explained. An executioner was driving wedges into wooden boots which were crushing the man's ankle bones and knee joints. Infuriated as Maitland felt, he could not but experience a pang of compassion for the wretched sufferer.

'Is it necessary, Your Excellency,' he said to the Taotai, 'to use such torture to this miserable man?'

'It is,' he replied. 'He is one of the most obdurate villains I have ever come across. If you will stand by me now, I will proceed with his examination.—The Englishman Sterling,' said the Taotai, raising his voice and looking full at the half-fainting prisoner, 'was carried off to-day by your vile society. Tell me, who planned the capture?'

'I don't know,' answered Lin defiantly.

'Put in another wedge,' said the Taotai to the executioner. This order was immediately obeyed. With a heavy blow, the man drove in a wedge, and Liu's whole frame quivered with the agony.

'Tell me who planned the capture,' repeated the Taotai.

Lin made no answer; and at a nod from the Taotai, the executioner drove the wedge to the head. The pain was more than human strength could endure, and Lin fell back in a dead-faint.

'Carry him away for the present,' said the Taotai, 'and bring him back when he has recovered consciousness.—Now,' he said, turning to Maitland, 'we must see what can be done to save your friend, and— Ah, here comes the shopkeeper. I will first question him.'

'Did you see the Englishman?'

'I did not, Your Excellency.'

The shopkeeper confessed to having seen three men hanging about the street corner. 'They were all three tall; one had a black complexion; another was deeply marked with small-pox; and the third had only one eye.'

'This crime,' said the Taotai, 'was committed at your door; and unless the Englishman is recovered, you and those in your neighbourhood will be punished for allowing such a disgraceful matter to happen in your street. Now go, and come back to-morrow morning with some news, or else beware.'

The shopkeeper on being dismissed struck his head three times on the pavement, and then hurriedly rose and departed.

'I would impress on Your Excellency,' said Maitland, turning to the Taotai, 'that what we do, we must do quickly. It may be that even now Sterling has been murdered.'

'I doubt it,' said the Taotai. 'According to their rules and practices, the society will hold a meeting before deciding on the Englishman's immediate fate. My hope is in Lin. Up to now, he has been obstinate; but I think I know of a way of making him speak.' Here the Taotai gave a grim smile.

Maitland could not help shuddering. After a pause, he asked, under his breath: 'When shall I hear from you?'

'To-morrow morning at latest. I hope by that time to be able to give you some definite news. We shall have to follow your friend to the "Willow Lodge," and it is possible we may have to go in force.—What number of Englishmen can you bring?'

'There is not an Englishman in the settlement who will not gladly aid me,' said Maitland. 'I should think I could count upon twenty.'

'That will be quite enough. I shall bring about twice that number.'

Maitland now hurried back to the Consulate. As he entered his compound, Evelyn, who had evidently been waiting for him, came forward. He could not help starting when he glanced at her. The change in her appearance was almost indescribable. Yesterday, she had been a bright and happy-looking girl, with the fresh colour and bloom of youth. Now, her cheeks were deadly pale, and deep black rims surrounded her eyes, which were red and staring. She was twisting the remains of her handkerchief, which was little more than a shred, in her nerveless hands. In a hollow voice, which had lost all its old ring, she demanded hoarsely: 'Have you any news?'

'Not yet,' replied the Consul, trying to assume a cheerful tone; 'but I hope to have something to tell you soon,' he added. 'Now go and lie down—you are looking ill and exhausted.'

'How can I rest?' she replied. 'At this very moment those wretches may be murdering my husband. Do you think, under such circumstances, it is possible for me to rest?'

The repetition of almost his own words gave Maitland a shock. 'My dear,' he said suddenly, 'you must not give up hope. I quite think that we may be able to give you back your husband safe and sound.'

'Are you telling me the truth?' asked the poor girl; 'or are you only trying to comfort me? Ever since you left me,' continued Evelyn, 'I have been praying to God. I have been begging of Him to save my husband; although I pray, I seem to be absolutely without hope.—Oh, I know you are doing your best, and you are kind, very kind; but I have no hope, none—none.'

'Your feelings are quite natural,' said the Consul. 'The position is a terrible one. I can't deny this fact for a moment; but you may absolutely depend on all being done that can be done. Come, let me take you to your room. Rest assured that I will bring you news the instant it arrives.'

Overmastered by Maitland's strong will, Evelyn obeyed like a child. She went to her room—but to rest was impossible. When she found herself alone, she threw herself upon a sofa, where she tossed about in agony, listening to every sound. At times, too, she rushed to the veranda which overlooked the courtyard, in the vain hope that some messenger might be arriving with tidings. As night came on, she fell into a feverish and fitful sleep, which was broken by wild dreams and imaginings. At daylight she rose, and seating herself on the veranda, waited for Maitland's appearance. Her restlessness was over for the present—she sat motionless, in a partially stunned condition.

At nine o'clock a note came from the Taotai, asking the Consul to call upon him. Maitland received it with a sense of disappointment. He had fully expected that some definite news would be forthcoming. He went immediately to the veranda, where Evelyn was sitting, and told her that the Taotai had sent for him.

She raised her eyes to his face. 'I hoped you would have had news this morning.'

'I certainly hoped to have heard something,' said Maitland; 'but perhaps I may have news

for you when I return. I judge from the tone of the Taotai's note that he knows more than he chooses to say.—Now I will go, and be back with you as quickly as possible.

The Taotai received Maitland cordially, and told him that the torture which had been applied to Lin had at last had the desired effect—he had confessed that it was at his instigation a party of three members of the Kolao-hwuy had been told off to kidnap Sterling; that he had probably been carried off to one of their secret resorts; and that a council would most likely be held that evening, at which he was to be brought up for judgment and sentence.

'The scoundrel admitted,' said the Taotai, 'that the sentence would probably be death, and that by *Lingche*, or the lingering process.'

Maitland's face grew cold and stern. 'How are we to prevent this horrible atrocity?' he said.

'We can do nothing till evening. The movement of a body of men in the direction of the Yellow Lodge by daylight would be the instant signal for the removal of your friend to some inaccessible fortress. I would suggest that we start about an hour after sunset; that should bring us to the Yellow Lodge about the time when the members meet.'

'But how are we to find our way?'

The Taotai gave a grim smile. 'I have reduced Lin to a state of compliance,' he said. 'I have given him a respite from torture, on condition that he leads us direct to the meeting-place.'

'Can you trust him?' asked Maitland.

'I think I can. He knows that at the slightest deception, the executioner, whom I shall take with me, will at once behead him. It is fortunate that we have not to go for some hours, as at present he is unconscious, and I have left him in the hands of the jailers until his senses return.'

As Maitland returned to the Consulate, his feelings were of a mixed nature. He fully believed that the Taotai would do everything in his power to save Sterling and to seize the leaders of the Kolao-hwuy. Self-interest, if no other motive, would prompt him to this course. A capture of so important a kind would certainly lead to his being promoted to a higher office; but he also felt that the chances of saving his unfortunate young friend were but slight. He recalled Evelyn's words—her despair—the dumb misery of her face.

'She has reasons for her dark forebodings,' murmured the Consul under his breath. 'I know only too well the cruel barbarity of the League. The slightest mistake in the expedition for capture will lead to Sterling's instant execution. Yes, I confess I feel almost as hopeless as that poor girl at this moment.' Full of heavy fears, Maitland entered the Consulate. Evelyn saw him, but she seemed to read his thoughts, and made no effort to rise and meet him.

'I must keep my alarms in check for her sake,' thought the Consul. He came forward boldly and made valiant efforts to cheer the unhappy young wife. She listened to his story, standing before him like a block of marble.

Her face was white and motionless—her eyes sought the ground. When Maitland had finished speaking, Evelyn said, in a quiet, determined voice: 'I will go with you.'

Maitland endeavoured to show her the fearful risk she was running. But when she declared she would lose her senses if left behind, he saw she spoke truly, and consented to her going, on condition that she took some refreshment, went straight to bed, and undertook to obey him implicitly when on the expedition.

The day which followed was one of terrible suspense. The Consul found it impossible to settle to his ordinary duties. The feeling of hopeless despair which had seized him as he was returning from the Taotai's Yamun increased as the hours flew on. Half an hour before the appointed time, he knocked at Evelyn's door and told her to be ready when he sent for her.

As the clock struck eight, the Taotai was seen to arrive at the trysting-place. A moment later he was met by Maitland, Mrs Sterling, and a party of stalwart Englishmen. Maitland and Evelyn were carried in sedan-chairs; but Bryce, Captain Jeffreys, and other friends of the Consul's, accompanied the expedition on foot.

'I don't like the lady coming; but I suppose there is no help for it,' said the Taotai, pointing with a shrug of his shoulders to Evelyn's chair. The party immediately departed in silence. As they moved on, Maitland glanced at a figure which was borne at the head of the procession in a chair, and recognised with some difficulty that it was Lin. His features expressed intense suffering, and he appeared more dead than alive. Now and then he was seen to open his eyes, and to direct the bearers on the desired road. They went slowly forward in the intense darkness. To both Evelyn and Maitland the distance seemed interminable. They passed the bridge where Sterling had been met on his first expedition, and reached the Hall of Fidelity and Loyalty. When they came to this spot, Maitland fancied that he heard a movement amongst the trees. His thought was evidently shared by Lin, for he partly raised himself and turned towards the thicket that covered the hills.

Maitland whispered his suspicions that they had been seen, to the Taotai, who immediately gave orders to the coolies to go as fast as they could. Though the way was steep and rugged, the coolies carried their burdens quickly over the ground. They passed the Pavilion of the Black River, and the Palace of Justice, and at last Lin whispered to the man beside him: 'Tell His Excellency we are close there.'

Maitland overheard the words, and getting out of his chair, went immediately to Evelyn's side. 'You must stay here with Bryce,' he said; 'I dare not take you another step.' Evelyn strongly objected to remain, and was only persuaded when she heard that her presence might interfere with the saving of her husband.

The Taotai, who seemed impatient at the brief delay which Maitland had caused while talking to Evelyn, immediately ordered the party to hurry forward.

For a moment they halted to gain breath for the last spring, and finally, at a command from the Taotai, they rushed into the Yellow Lodge. The sound of hurrying feet told them that their presence had been discovered, and that their quarry were fleeing. Maitland rushed forward with a few of the first soldiers, and almost immediately found himself within the inner hall. At the first glance, he thought that it was empty; but peering through the gloom, he discovered one motionless figure which appeared to be standing with outstretched arms in front of the tribunal. The Consul rushed forward, and, to his inexpressible distress, saw that it was the form of his friend. The unfortunate Sterling was fastened to the cross, with the wooden tally recording his sentence over his head. Maitland's eyes quickly read the following sentence: 'The English traitor to the Kolahwuy, sentenced to death by the Lingche process.' The unfortunate man's head had fallen forward on his breast. His face was ashen pale. Maitland's first impression was that he was already dead. A cry, however, from one of the soldiers quickly and joyfully undeceived him.

'The Englishman is safe—he is unhurt—we are in time,' said the man. 'Cut him down—he is unhurt.'

This was done in a moment; and Sterling, still unconscious, was dragged out of the hall into the outer air.

Had the rescue party been two minutes later, the dread sentence would have been carried out to the full. As it was, Sterling was safe. He opened his dazed eyes and looked around him. 'Where am I?' he gasped. 'Is it over? I can bear nothing further.'

'It's all right, old fellow,' said Maitland in his ear. 'Keep up your courage. Your wife is waiting for you not a hundred yards away—you will soon be well enough for me to take you to her.'

Maitland poured some brandy out of a flask which he was carrying, and induced Sterling to swallow the stimulant. His colour returned almost on the instant, and he sprang to his feet. 'How can I thank you?' he said with a gasp.—'Where is Evelyn? Take me to her.'

The return journey was made without adventure; and a week later, Sterling and his wife were shipped off to England, from which haven of refuge they are never likely to return to the horrors of the Celestial City.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE discovery of Argon in the atmosphere has led to an interesting and quite unexpected development, an account of which was given at the recent anniversary meeting of the Chemical Society by Professor Ramsay. He explained that he had been led to repeat certain experiments which had previously been made by Hillebrand on the rare mineral called Clèveite. Upon boiling with weak sulphuric acid, this mineral gave off a gas hitherto supposed to be nitrogen. But he found that the gas was almost free from nitrogen, and showed in his spectroscopic all the prominent Argon lines. In addition

to these, he had found a bright yellow line, which had previously only been seen in the solar spectrum, and which had been attributed to a hypothetical element to which the name Helium had been given. Professor Ramsay's observations were corroborated by Mr Crookes, who pointed out that although the brilliant yellow line apparently occupied the position of the well-known yellow lines due to sodium, 'examination with high powers showed, however, that the line remained rigorously single, when the sodium lines would be widely separated.' The list of terrestrial elements must therefore receive an additional member in Helium, which until the other day was supposed to be peculiar to the sun.

Stupendous engineering undertakings are marking the closing years of the nineteenth century, and among them must be named the Blackwall Tunnel beneath the Thames, now approaching completion. The first Thames Tunnel, the work of Brunel, was almost useless until a railway company took possession of it; but at the same time it was regarded as a wonderful triumph of the engineer's art. It cannot, however, be named in the same breath with the new tunnel which is boring its way beneath the same river between Greenwich and Blackwall. The work has been carried out on the shield and compressed-air principle, upon a scale never before attempted, the diameter of the tunnel being more than twenty-four feet. Its length is nearly a mile and a quarter, of which about twelve hundred feet pass beneath the river. One unlooked-for difficulty was found in passing through a mass of flint ballast which occurred nearly in the centre of the boring. This necessitated the sinking in the river above of ten thousand yards of puddled clay to cover the weak place. The men who are engaged in the work of advancing the shield and clearing away the debris have to carry on their labours in a chamber where the air-pressure is twenty-three pounds on the square inch. It may be noted that Brunel devised the shield method of cutting tunnels, and that Lord Cochrane patented the use of compressed air for such operations more than sixty years ago.

Referring to a note which appeared some time ago in our columns with reference to the necessity of securing efficient ventilation in ships conveying such cargoes as jute, cotton, &c., an esteemed correspondent at Natal proposes a plan which seems to be as practical as it is novel. He suggests that a number of perforated pipes might be laid through the whole of the cargo, such pipes to be supplied with air by means of a steam-pump or in some other available manner. In case of fire, the pipes could be charged with water, so that they would fulfil a double office. When not in use, the tubes could be carried as ballast.

The annual Report of Dr Clouston, Physician Superintendent of Morningside Asylum, Edinburgh, contains a remarkable testimony to the value of the new treatment of Myxœdema, or mucous swelling, already noticed in this *Journal* (May 6, 1893), in certain forms of mental disease. The new mode of treatment was devised by Dr Bruce, one of the assistant

physicians, and consists in the employment of thyroid extract. In addition to many patients who were greatly improved by the treatment, three had been cured whom the Superintendent had regarded as quite beyond hope. These cases were so striking that he regarded them as miracles of healing. The same Report alludes to the practice of making photo-micrographs of brain sections, and projecting such pictures on a screen by means of a lantern, for the education of students. It thus becomes possible to show in a graphic manner why one man is under the delusion that he is somebody else, and why another commits suicide. This is regarded as a long step in advance in the study of morbid psychology.

'The calm, quiet, innocent recreation of angling,' as old Izaak Walton called it three hundred years ago, has many followers among those who can afford no more expensive form of sport; and for the benefit of these worthy persons, a movement is on foot to urge the London County Council to utilise some of the lakes in the parks under their control as hatcheries or rearing-ponds. These reservoirs would be emptied from time to time, and the fish turned into the public rivers. It is calculated that hundreds of acres of water are available for this purpose, and that the authorities who spend so much upon grounds for cricket, football, and other pastimes, might reasonably benefit the anglers in the manner indicated. It is curious to watch some of these humble fishermen on a summer evening standing for hours at the ponds at Hampstead Heath, and elsewhere in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, holding a rod and line, and never apparently catching anything but the proverbial cold. One of these ponds, by the way, was cleaned out a short time ago, and yielded two cartloads of medium-sized fish.

It is stated that the peat deposits of Great Britain cover an area of six million acres to an average depth of twelve feet, and it is obvious that in such an enormous mass of fuel there must be stored up a corresponding amount of energy. Hitherto, peat has not been much used as a fuel for steam-engines, for it contains much water, and produces a great deal of ash; moreover, it can only be used profitably where it occurs. A recent invention, however, shows that peat may have a future before it as a gas-producer for gas-engines. Mr B. H. Thwaite, C.E., has constructed a gas-generator in which the ash cannot accumulate, and he has found that by working a gas-engine in conjunction with it, he can produce from brown peat half the power which would be obtained from the same weight of good coal. It would thus appear possible for dwellers in peat districts to get motive-power without coal and without water or boiler.

While most things nowadays are machine-made, the familiar cigar has hitherto resisted all mechanical attempts to fashion it, and has continued to be literally 'manufactured,' that is, made with the hand. But at last a contrivance has been introduced by the Honduras Government Banking and Trading Company which is said to conquer all difficulties, and to turn out machine-made cigars of far more

perfect shape and finish than those due to the most nimble fingers. The foundation or inside of the cigar is placed in a mould, and four curved jaws press it into shape. The outside wrapper of tobacco is then fed into the machine by an attendant, is rolled round the moulded part automatically, and is finally sealed at the pointed end by a drop of gum, which presents itself at the right time and place. The cigars so made are uniform in length and shape, and the leaf in the interior is so evenly distributed that the 'draw' is far better than in many hand-made cigars. The contrivance is known as the Jean Reuse Cigar-making Machine.

Crawford's Patent Portable Balcony is a temporary iron-work screen or guard which can be placed upon any window ledge while the glass is being cleaned. It is secured in place by counter-weights, which hang towards the floor inside the window, and seems to well answer the purpose for which it is designed. It is needless to remind our readers that many fatal accidents have been recorded in connection with domestic window-cleaning, and an invention which promises immunity from such disasters is worthy of mention in these columns. The contrivance is made by Messrs Musgrave & Company of London and Manchester.

We recently called attention to a voting machine which had been patented in the United States. We now learn that a previous patent had been granted to Mr O. Sheppard of Bridgend, South Wales, for a machine very similar in design. By this contrivance votes are recorded in absolute secrecy, and every safeguard is provided against fraud. The illiterate voter is also cared for, and can take part in an election if only he can distinguish one colour from another. The device has been warmly approved by many members of Parliament; but it awaits a special Act to make it supersede the present cumbrous system of voting.

On both sides of the Falls of Niagara, works are in progress which will, when complete, generate from that mighty force of water, which for countless centuries has been running to waste, electric energy equivalent to three-quarters of a million horse-power. What this means may be partly conceived when we state that a few years ago an official estimate put the whole of the machinery at work in New York State at 450,000 horse-power. Unfortunately, there is a difficulty in conveying this subtle form of energy over long distances without serious loss by leakage; but Mr Nicholas Tesla, one of the foremost electricians in America, is said to have overcome this problem, although no particulars have been given of the method by which he has done it.

A very simple and effective method of obtaining from a photograph a block for the printing-press was invented some years ago by Mr Leon Warnerke, a Russian gentleman, to whom photography is much indebted for other advances. This invention was, however, before its time, but it has recently been revived under the encouraging demand that now exists for photo-mechanical means of illustration. Here is the process

in brief. A specially prepared gelatinous paper, sensitive to light, is exposed beneath a line-screen negative—that is, a negative which has been cut up into dots by the interposition of a ruled screen. The paper, after exposure and development, is pressed into contact with a plate of copper, to which it firmly adheres, and is then laved with hot water. Under this treatment the paper and unaltered gelatine come away, leaving the image, which has become insoluble under development, upon the copper plate. The metal is now placed in a series of baths of perchloride of iron, each one varying in strength, by which the copper is etched away except in those parts covered by the gelatine dots which form the image. After being mounted on wood, to make it type high, the copper becomes a block ready for the printing-press. From specimens which we have seen, we can testify to the practicability and beauty of the process.

Compressed gases for all kinds of purposes are now supplied commercially to an enormous extent, and many thousands of steel cylinders containing oxygen, hydrogen, nitrous oxide, or carbonic acid gas are in daily use. The cylinders are made of the best mild steel, and are tested to double the pressure which under normal conditions they will be called upon to bear. A small cylinder of this description, supposed to contain oxygen, recently exploded at a London railway station, unfortunately killing the man who carried it. At the coroner's inquest it was rendered apparent that the cylinder in reality contained an explosive mixture of gases, which were fired by the unsuspected presence of some oxidisable substance. It is now proposed that the compressed-gas industry should be placed, like the trade in explosives, under some kind of Government control, and that all containing vessels should have a stamp like the proof-mark on a firearm.

Any one in the constant habit of using the telephone will know that a difficulty in hearing one's correspondent often arises from the presence of induction noises. This is due to the well-known fact that a wire conveying a current will induce a current in another wire in its neighbourhood. This phenomenon has led to the belief that it would be possible to send electrical signals between two places although no metallic conductor in the form of a telegraph or telephone wire acted as a bridge between them. Practice bore out theory, and experiments between Kintyre and Arran, on the Clyde, and in Wales, showed that within certain limits telegraphic communication without lines of communication was possible. Recently, the cable which runs from a point not far from Oban to Mull got out of order, and for some days telegraphic communication was carried on across the Sound of Mull, where the waterway measures about two miles across without any communicating wires. Wires there were already running along the coast on the Mull side; and corresponding wires had to be erected on the Argyllshire side, and the current generated in the one induced the necessary current in the other. The most daring of romance writers would hardly have ventured upon such a possibility as this.

A new method of preserving wood is known in America as Vulcanising or Haskinising, after the name of its inventor, Colonel S. E. Haskin. Hitherto, all methods of preserving wood have been based upon the assumption that the sap must be discharged from out the pores, and must be replaced by some chemical antiseptic body such as creosote. Colonel Haskin holds that this system is wrong in theory, and that the sap being the life-blood of the wood, should remain, being subjected to special treatment. By certain processes in which heat plays a very important part the sap is rendered insoluble, and the wood is no longer capable of absorbing moisture. This vulcanised wood is coming into use for all kinds of constructive work. It is odourless, can in the process be charged with any desired stain; it works well under all cutting-tools, and is practically indestructible. Specimens have recently been on view in London, and have met with much attention among builders, furniture manufacturers, and others.

M. Charpy has recently published the results of certain experiments which he has made regarding the changes which take place in steel under the operation called tempering. He has found that tempering will diminish the length of a steel bar, while at the same time the metal has imparted to it great resistance to bending, shock, or breaking stress. The amount of change depends upon the chemical constitution and nature of the tempering bath, and in every case this change takes place at a temperature of about 700 degrees Centigrade. No action takes place below this temperature, and no advantage seems to be gained in exceeding it.

A strange relic of troublous times, when civil war was rife in the land, has recently come to light at the church of Teynham, in Kent. The west door of this edifice has been undergoing repair, and the removal of sundry coats of paint and patches has revealed the original oaken door in a fine state of preservation, save that it is scarred in various places with bullet-marks. Some of the leaden missiles are of large size, and still remain embedded in the wood. It has been suggested that the shots were fired by Cromwell's soldiers; for this particular building is believed to have sustained much damage at their hands, notably in the destruction of valuable stained glass; and it is assumed that the west door being shut against them, guns of large calibre, fired from a rest, were brought against the woodwork, in order to force an entrance. There are also distinct signs of fire having been applied to the door.

Several alarming explosions having occurred in London and elsewhere, by which the pavement in the streets was torn up over the sunken boxes containing electric-light apparatus, a Committee of experts was appointed to investigate the cause of the accidents. They have now issued their Report, which reveals a very curious state of things. It appears that on the insulators of the electric-light mains incrustations have formed, embedded in which have been found globules of metallic potassium and sodium, which metals it will be remembered take fire by contact with water. It is assumed with regard to the formation of the metals in

such a strange situation that they 'have been produced by the electrolytic decomposition of alkaline salts chiefly derived from the soil.' The wooden bearers of the insulators had acted as conductors of moisture from the ground, and some of them were found to be saturated with alkaline salts. The explosions themselves were doubtless due to an accumulation of gas from leaky and adjacent pipes mingling with the air in the boxes and fired by the metals named. This Report calls to mind the fact that both sodium and potassium—which are unknown in nature in an uncombined state—were both produced by Davy at the beginning of this century by passing a powerful electric current through the alkalis.

The Royal United Service Institution now finds a home in handsome premises adjoining the large banqueting hall which until lately formed one of the Chapels Royal, Whitehall, and the latter building is converted into its Museum, which formerly was hidden away in very shabby rooms. This Museum contains a very valuable collection of models, arms, and armour, ordnance, and other things pertaining to naval and military matters. It seems a pity that, at a time when every inducement to enlist should be held out to aspiring youth by making both services popular, a collection such as this cannot be visited by the public without payment for admission, while all other museums are free. It is a penny-wise and pound-foolish policy.

An Antarctic expedition is to start from New York on the 1st of September next, under the command of Mr F. A. Cook, who went out with Lieutenant Peary as ethnologist and surgeon, and has twice since been on Arctic voyages.

KATIE.

THERE are few more cheerful places on a cold winter night than a smithy with its roaring fire. The ruddy glow and sparkle of light, the interested faces of the village loungers, the roar of the bellows, and the cheerful ring of the smith's hammer on the anvil, all combine to make up a comfortable rural picture of light and warmth. The smithy at Godscroft on a cold December evening was no exception to this rule; it was warm and bright, and filled to overflowing with village gossips, met to talk over the events of the day. The group of men collected round the fire was just such a group as may be found round any smithy fire in the country, hard-headed, hard-featured, hard-fisted, shrewd, sensible men; keen politicians, learned in polemical controversy, fond of argument on most subjects, and able to take an intelligent, although often prejudiced, interest in almost all the leading topics of the day.

Such were the loungers collected round the smithy fire at Godscroft, listening eagerly to a man who was in many respects dissimilar to them. There was about him an easy breadth, a freedom, an expansiveness of gesture and

manner, which suggested colonial life. He had an air as if the village street were scarcely wide enough for his swinging stride, as if he felt the little world of the smithy, the arena of the intellectual heroes of Godscroft, narrow and circumscribed. He was good-looking, with a sun-embrowned complexion, and dark eyes with a merry twinkle in them; while a strong squarely-cut chin and jaw gave character to a face that would otherwise have been only weakly good-natured. A large wiry-haired dog, of a mongrel and nondescript type, lay at his feet, and formed the theme of conversation.

'It's a bonny dog o' its kind, and a guid dog, I'se warrant; but I will never allow that it's a collie,' said one speaker.

'Did I ever say that it was? It has nothing of the collie about it, although it has more than a collie's intelligence.'

'It's a dour-looking beast,' said another. 'It reminds me of a wolf I once saw in Wombwell's menagerie, that came round this country-side four years ago come Lammas.—Ye'll mind it, Geordie?'

'You're none so handsome yourself, Jock,' said the stranger, 'that you should object to the want of beauty in others. Did you never hear tell of the old proverb, "Handsome is as handsome does?" Bill, here, is better than he is bonny, and that he has proved.'

'Tell us all about it. It's just grand to hear ye telling these outlandish stories,' said one of the bystanders.

'It would be away out there in Australia, I'se warrant,' said another.

'Yes, boys, it was,' said the tall, bronzed, bearded man who owned Bill; and he tossed back his hair and gave his forehead a rub, as if to quicken the bump of memory, and straightway began.

'You want Bill's story, mates. Well, here it is. Some of you here, I don't doubt, will remember that when the old man died in the hard winter of '70, I left the old country, that was pretty well used up for me, to try my luck in the Australian gold-fields, where they used to tell us down here that the gold might be got for the mere trouble of lifting it up. What I got, and that was never very much, took a precious deal of hard work, I can tell you; and what with one thing and another, I tired of it, and went up the country to a big squatter, a kenneled man and a kindly, for he was one of Hunter of Godscroft's sons, and hired myself to be one of his shepherds. I had a good berth with him, nothing to complain of, either in the way of work, or meat, or wages; but it was an out-station, and it was terribly lonesome. I missed my mother, poor old body, more than I can tell you. Many a time it would have done my heart good just to have heard the click of her knitting needles, or seen the whisk of the skirts of her old black gown; and sometimes I laughed, and sometimes I almost shed tears, when I thought how it would have amused her to have seen me with my sleeves turned up kneading damper, or toasting a bit of mutton at the smoky fire.

'However, it was better, as I often said to myself, to be alone than tethered to a bad neighbour; and my sheep kept me in so much

work that I had very little time for thinking. Every now and again they would take a wandering fit, and I would get up some fine morning and find the half of the hirsel gone; and nothing for it but to scour the country far and near till I came upon the track of them. I have seen me ride fifty miles before I came up with them.'

'Eh, man, but ye would be fearsome when ye did,' said an old school-fellow appreciatively.

The big Australian withered him with a look, and went calmly on.

'I was out one day after a lot of these long-legged woolly trespassers, that were as swift as deer, and as cunning as the oldest fox in your spinneys here; and I had not seen as much as a print of one of their feet. I had been riding since the morning broke, and I was spent with hunger and fatigue, when the night came down upon me pitch dark, not a star visible—a deep Egyptian darkness that could almost be felt. I could not so much as see my hand when I held it up before me.'

'Ye were aye a bauld billy,' said another retrospective school-fellow, 'but that would daunton ye. What did ye do?'

'What could I do? To turn back was more dangerous than to go forward. I let my horse solve the difficulty; he seemed to see what was before him; I could not; and we went on, and on, and on till I saw a shimmering gleam flash through the mirk darkness of the night, and heard the rush of water. It was a creek, as we call them in those parts; and as the horse made no pause, I rode boldly on, and by God's mercy, rather than my own good guidance, we stumbled on a place that was fordable, and got safely to the other side. The steep bank was overgrown with bush, as I could see by a glint of moonlight that flashed out all of a sudden, and I was just taking a look round to see if I could make out where I was, when my ears were pierced by the most awful cry I think I have ever heard. It was so loud, and so shrill, and so full of pain, that it fairly made my blood run cold. I leaped out of the saddle in sheer fright, and looked round me like a man bewildered. The wide bare pastures and scrubby bush around were void of any human habitation, and yet it was like the cry of some poor human creature in the extremity of distress. It was so ghastly, so unearthly, that the horse I was riding, although he was a steady old brute, shied, and swerved sharply round. He was in such a panic, that I could not help remembering mother's old-world stories about ghosts, although I tried to tell myself that there was no such thing. However, ghost or no ghost, I was bound to go on; so I set a stout heart to a stey brae; and when I found that I could not force the terrified brute up the bank, I dismounted, and tied him to a young gum-tree.

'I had scarcely set my face to the bank again, when the same cry sounded out once more. I tell you, mates, it made the blood run cold round my heart, it was so shrilly wild, so unearthly, so despairing; and to make it worse, the black night came down on me again mirk and heavy, like the blackness of the parish mortcloth I used to wonder at when I

was a boy. I had not the least idea in what direction to turn, and was standing irresolute, when I heard the cry again, and it sounded nearer, and was so distinct that I thought I could go straight to the very spot it came from. The bank was so steep that I had to scramble up on my hands and knees, often slipping back and stopping to listen; but I could hear nothing except the soft gurgling plash of the water down beneath me. I was not sure which way to turn, when I heard the cry again right out of the scrub before me. I was in the right direction—that was one good thing; but I will never deny that I was frightened a bit, it was such a terrible cry, and the spot was so lonely. I had that spirit in me, though, that I would not go back; and I crept forward on my hands and knees towards the top of the bank, which was covered with a close low bush. It was a bit of a climb, and I had stopped a minute to get my breath, when I thought I heard a low moaning noise close to me. I gripped my revolver, but it was of little use in the darkness, so I took out instead a big bowie-knife I always carried, and held it ready in my hand. The next moment there was a sort of hurtling rush through the air above me, and something leaped right down upon my shoulders. I gave a yell, and then another; and then away down the bank we rolled, riving and tearing at each other in an agony of mortal fright. As soon as I could get my right hand free, I gave a desperate thrust with the knife; and with a yell of rage and pain, the creature dropped off from me; and I heard the thud of its fall on some projecting rock or bush that had caught it in its downward descent.

'I was more frightened than hurt, and soon scrambled to my feet. As a smoker is never without matches, I soon had a light, with which I groped my way down to where the creature lay, and what do you think I found?'

'A teeger, maybe,' said another old school-fellow.

'Ye silly gowk, there are no tigers in Australia. I found Bill; but my word, he was not the comfortable well-fed beast he is to-day. I don't think I ever saw such a dog as he looked then, either before or since. He was a gaunt, starved skeleton, bleeding slowly from a wound in the side which he had got in his struggle with me. He made no attempt to escape, but lifted his head and gave me a look so pathetic, so almost human in its mute, reproachful appeal for help, that it fairly went to my heart. I spoke gently to him; and he looked up at me as if he would fain have spoken and told me his story. He let me stanch the blood that was trickling from his side; and I bound up the wound as well as I could. He then staggered to his feet and whined, and caught my sleeve with his teeth, and showed me as plainly as if he had spoken that he wanted me to follow him.

'I took up the lantern and he wagged his tail and licked my hand; and we scrambled up the bank together, and then, always whining and looking back, he led the way into the bush. The brushwood was so thick and dense that I was almost bent; I could scarcely force my way through; but whenever I stopped to

get a mouthful of breath, he whined and fawned on me, and pulled at my sleeve, and showed such an agony of distress, that I could not but pity the poor dumb beast, and make all the haste I could to follow. By this time the day was beginning to break, and it was not so dark as it had been. He had led me to a sort of cave formed by a shelf of rock projecting from the bank, and there, wrapped in a tartan shawl, was a sight that brought my heart to my mouth. A girl, a bit lassie, so sorely wasted and spent that I lifted her up in my arms like a child and carried her out to the open. Her eyes were closed, and she seemed too far gone for speech; but there was life in her still, as I could see by the flickering of her eyelids when I stooped down to look at her.

‘As for the dog, who had crawled after us, he looked up in my face with his pathetic eyes full of a dumb prayer for help; and then—for he was fairly beat, and could not, I believe, have dragged his trembling limbs another step—he stretched himself out on the grass beside her and licked her little wasted hand. I was in such a state of excitement myself that I fairly trembled. I scarcely knew what to do; but I got some water and laved her face and moistened her lips; and when she had swallowed a few drops, she came round so far that she could utter a word or two in a faint whisper.

‘Thus, bit by bit I got her story. She and her father had been on their way home from the gold-fields, and he had a considerable sum of money on him, how much she scarcely knew, and it made little matter, for it was all gone. In a darksome gully on the road, he had been set upon and robbed and murdered; and she had fled into the bush like a distracted creature, and wandered about day and night till Bill had come back to her; and she had followed him to this cave, where she had lived for some weeks on such berries and roots as she could find. She was afraid to leave its poor shelter, for she had lost her way completely, and was thoroughly bewildered; and so, when the supplies of roots and berries—never very plentiful in an Australian bush—began to run short, she gave herself up for lost, and lay down in despair to die.

‘Poor thing! My heart was in my mouth as I listened. Gaunt and haggard as she was, it was easy to see that she had been a bonny lassie; and her voice was so soft and sweet that it was like a song from Paradise. “You must not speak of dying,” I said—“you that have all your life before you, and can scarcely tell yet how pleasant a thing it is to live.”

“I have no desire to live longer,” she said. “I have nothing to live for, now that my father is gone;” and she closed her eyes and shuddered.

‘She spoke with a pretty accent, and her voice sounded in my lonely ears like the sweetest music I had ever heard; but although she was so gentle and sweet, she quite knocked all the conceit out of me, and I could only stare at her and mumble, “No, no; you must not talk of dying.”

‘When she revived a little, I carried her down to the place where I had left my horse, and

by his aid I got her home to my hut, where she lay for many days more dead than alive. She wanted nothing but a sip of water or tea; and when she came round a little, a mouthful of damper. It was poor fare for an invalid, and one, too, who had evidently been daintily nurtured; and I expected nothing but that it would kill her outright. She rallied, however, and got up at last, and crept to the door; and the fresh air helped to strengthen her; and, as was natural for so young a creature, the heavy cloud of grief that had overshadowed her lightened a little, and she began to sing softly to herself, in a sorrowful heart-broken way, that saddened me to hear, but was better for herself, maybe, than the silent despair in which she had been since the day I found her.

‘As for Bill here, he had got better long before she was able to move about; and although he always took a charge of her, he showed a great affection for me, and liked nothing better than to follow me about.

‘I could make out nothing clearly about Katie—for that she told me was her name—except that she was the daughter of a poor gentleman; that her mother was dead; and that she and her father had always been all in all to each other. He had made money at the diggings, but that was gone; she was all that was left; and I could see for myself that she was the bonniest bit lassie that ever gladdened a man’s heart. Her eyes were bright and blue, like the dewy blue-bells I used to gather when I was a laddie on the Godscroft rigs; her hair had the colour and glint of burnished gold; and her cheeks began to show the loveliest colour, like that of the sweet fresh wild-roses.

‘I think I see her as if it were but yesterday shaking back the curling hair from her brow, and lifting her bonny bit face to mine, and asking how she was to do this, and what she was to make of that, for she had never been used to work; and I had to show her how the simplest things were done; but she was quick at the uptake, and never needed to be told a thing twice; and I liked her to ask my advice, for when she did so, her eyes would shine like gems, and her face would flush up almost as if she liked me; but that, I told myself, was impossible.

‘The long and the short of it was that I began to like her too well for my own peace. The only happy moments in my life were spent in watching her, or listening with the keenest delight to every word she uttered. She told me often about the books she had read; and she spoke sometimes of the life she had led, a life altogether unlike mine. My heart sank within me when I thought it over. What was I that I should think of winning her love; I had nothing to offer her but the true affection of a fond, loving heart. I could not even tell her how well I liked her. I trembled before her like an aspen leaf, and could scarcely get out a word if it were to save my life. That was a rough time on me, mates. I was so wretched, that I got sour and gruff, and spoke sharply to the very creature I could have fallen down and worshipped. So, from less to more, she got to think that I was tired of her presence there; and one evening—

how well I remember it—she was standing full in the blaze of the firelight, her figure erect, her hands loosely clasped before her, her bonny blue eyes fixed wistfully on mine.

"I must have been a great trouble to you," she said quietly. "And you have been very good to me. But now I feel quite strong. If you will put me on the right road to-morrow. I will go away with Bill, and never trouble you any more."

"Where?" I almost shouted, clutching Bill's collar as I spoke.

"To the city; it was there my father was going."

"Have you any friends there?"

"No; I have no friends anywhere; but I have learned to work. I shall find work there, I hope."

"Stay with me, Katie," I cried in utter despair. "I have not much to offer you; but I love you—you must have seen how I love you."

"She did not answer me in words, but she stole her little soft hand into mine. How happy I was! I could scarcely believe in my own good fortune, for I had never dared to hope that it was possible that she could like me.

"There was nothing to be gained by waiting. Handsome trousseaux are not easily come by out in the Australian bush. We went down to the station, where the parson chanced to be making his rounds, and were married. The very loneliness of our life made our happiness deeper, I think. We were like Adam and Eve in Paradise. I never saw the sun shine so brightly as it did that spring, or the grass look so fresh and green; and my bonny bit lassie was as pleased as a queen and as blithe as a mavis. If I were to speak for ever, I could never tell you of all the true and tender feeling of a lad and his lass who love each other as we did. Earth was like heaven to us, and that lonely little hut an Eden. Woes me! we were driven too soon from its shelter.

"She was as merry as a linnet, as I said before, and her eyes glanced like diamonds, and her cheek bloomed like the red, red rose; but for all that, the canker was at the root of my bonny flower. She complained of no pain, and she seemed to grow bonnier and bonnier every day; yet she grew weaker also, and she knew it herself; but I struggled sore not to see it.

"When I cannot stay any longer with you, John," she said, "promise to bury me beside my father."

"For I had gone out to the bush and looked for the murdered man, and found him lying where she had covered him up with leaves and moss. A ghastly object he was to look at, with his skull beaten in, and his clothes all covered with clotted blood; and I had laid him in a decent grave, and happit him up close and warm—for love of her, that was even then the very light of my eyes.

"Don't speak in that way, Katie," I cried; "I cannot bear it. Oh, my lassie, you are better to-day—tell me that you feel stronger!"

"I think I do," she answered, looking wistfully at me; but that very night, when we were sitting on a bench I had put up outside the door, she leaned her head against my

shoulder, and I thought she was tired, and was falling asleep; but after a few minutes she opened her eyes, and there was a solemn far-away look in their blue depths that fairly frightened me. "John," she whispered so low, that I could just hear her by bending down my ear to her mouth—"John, you have been a dear good husband to me. Kiss me, and hold me fast, for I feel as if I were slipping away."

"Woes me, how gladly would I have held her fast for ever; but I could not; she was slipping away from me, and from all things earthly. There was a flutter of her bonny white eyelids, a long, long gasping breath, and she was gone. Bill, there, is all that I have left of her, and rough, mongrel tyke as he is, the money is not coined that could buy him from me!"

He drew his large brown hand across his eyes. 'It is years since now, and the world has used me not unkindly. I am a prosperous man; and my wife up there'—and he pointed to the village inn behind him—'is a good woman, and has made me an excellent wife, and we are happy enough. I have nothing to complain of; but oh! I never lay my hand on Bill's rough head but I think of my lost love, and the place where she lies by the side of her murdered father far out in the Australian bush.'

A LULLABY.

HUSH-A-BYE, baby!
 Mother will sing to thee.
 Soft is the moan of the wind in the tree.
 Angels are listening,
 Bright stars are glistening,
 Like sentinels watching my baby and me.

Hush-a-bye, baby!
 What shall I sing to thee?
 Sinketh the bird to her nest on the lea;
 Shadows are creeping,
 Moonbeams are peeping,
 Twilight is deepening o'er moorland and sea.

Lullaby, dearie!
 Mother is near thee.
 Bright may the dreams of my little one be.
 Angels defend thee;
 God His love send thee,
 And carefully guard both my baby and me.

GERALD HAYWARD.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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AN UNAUTHORISED INTERVENTION.*

BEING A PASSAGE IN THE CAREER OF A CENTRAL AMERICAN DIPLOMATIST.

By DAVID LAWSON JOHNSTONE, AUTHOR OF 'THE REBEL COMMODORE,' &c.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

'WELL, good-bye,' said Sir Ralph, rising. 'I hope you will have a good time in the States, Thorold. You will go straight on to 'Frisco, of course?'

'Oh, I suppose so.'

'It will be better. I only mentioned it in case you had a fancy to land in San Estevan. The trouble there seems to be coming to a head, you know, and a man with your reputation for getting into scrapes cannot afford to run risks—nor we to allow you.—I think that's all.'

Jack Thorold laughed as he shook hands with his chief. 'Most reputations would be the better of being pricked,' he remarked, 'and mine has been ready for the needle for a long time.—Good-bye, sir. Don't hesitate to telegraph if I am wanted in Salvatierra before my leave's up.'

'Thanks,' said the chief, quite gravely. 'But we shall try to get along for two months without your assistance.'

Providence and the Foreign Office had assigned to Sir Ralph Petre the arduous task of watching over Her Majesty's interests in a group of little republics on the Pacific coast, most of them addicted to the engrossing amusement of revolution; and the same authorities had saddled Sir Ralph, who was a worthy man and did not deserve it, with Mr Jack Thorold as his second secretary. One is afraid that neither was sufficiently grateful. Jack had devoted five years of his life to the service of his country and his own entertainment, and the occupations were inclined to clash. He was popular with everybody, except with his supe-

riors for the time being; and he was so charmingly irresponsible, and did outrageous things—considered from an official standpoint—with such an unconscious air, that the most easy-going diplomatist was forced in his own defence to get rid of him as quickly as possible. Thus, having exhausted the influence of his relatives and the patience of Downing Street, and gone the round of the smaller European legations, he had been banished for his good to a place where opportunities for mischief were of the smallest. He did not like it—for the American Spaniard is prone to jealousy, and the details of Spanish American politics are somewhat sordid—but for twelve months he had made the best of the situation, and added not more than half-a-dozen wrinkles to his chief's brow. Now he was free for a time. It had been his intention to visit the Western States, and try to get some shooting. But Sir Ralph, in the innocence of his heart, had given him a new idea. The worthy knight had failed altogether to comprehend his junior's nature, or he would never have mentioned the troubles in the neighbouring republic of San Estevan—still less would he have barred him from going thither. It may be said at once that Jack *did* go to San Estevan, and underwent some remarkable experiences. The story is told here because—for reasons that are good and sufficient—it is not to be found in the archives of the Foreign Office.

Within twenty-four hours of his interview with Sir Ralph, Jack was quite at home on board the Pacific mail steamer *Idaho*, northward bound for San Francisco, touching *en route*

at various points of Central America and Mexico. He had arrived at the port of New Salvatierra from the capital as she was getting up steam, and had swung his luggage—it consisted of a gun-case and a small portmanteau—on board when the engines were actually moving. The first-mate stood fuming at the gangway.

'Come! hurry up, sir!' he cried. 'Do you wish to be left behind?'

'A moment, please.' Jack paid his boatmen, and, without undue haste, began to climb the steps.

'Hurry up, sir! hurry up!' repeated the mate.

Jack stopped, and pulled out his watch. 'Why should I?' he asked, with an aggrieved air. 'You will pardon me, but it still wants two minutes of the advertised time of starting.'

This was at five o'clock; before dinner, he had heard the captain's family history over a glass of sherry-and-bitters, and was on excellent terms with his fellow-passengers.

Sir Ralph's hint played hide-and-seek with his conscience all that night; and on the morrow, while the *Idaho* ran northward within sight of the blue range of the San Estevan mountains, that troublesome little State was more in his thoughts than was altogether safe. For the first time it struck him as a grievance that he had never set foot in it. His chief had visited it more than once during the past year, but had always left him in Salvatierra. Its reputation, of course, was not unknown to him. Although one of the smallest republics of the group, it was undoubtedly the worst governed and most corrupt and most turbulent; which meant much. For ten years General Melgarejo, with the army behind him, had ruled it as Dictator, suppressing the numerous attempts at revolution with rigour, choking all progress, and ultimately landing it in bankruptcy. Now, by all accounts, the tide was turning. Melgarejo was confronted with the most serious rebellion of the long series; the whole country beyond the capital and the seaboard was said to be in arms against him; his back was to the wall; and, as Sir Ralph had indicated, it was an open question what the upshot would be. Jack, on his part, was sorely tempted to find out for himself.

At dinner-time that evening he was still in doubt, but made an opportunity to bring the talk round to the subject.

'You touch at San Estevan, I suppose, captain?' he inquired, in an indifferent tone.

'We'll be off Sainpacho in a matter of three or four hours,' replied the captain. 'But I guess you won't see much, sir. Not that there's much to see—barring surf, and there's no scenery in *that*. It'll be dark, of course; but we've only to land the mails and some cargo, so that don't matter neither. A two-hours' job, say—and quite long enough. It's not exactly what you call a health-resort, Sainpacho isn't.'

'The same remark might fit the whole republic just now, I believe.'

'Well, it isn't the healthiest spot in the world for an honest man, if all's true that's told,' admitted the captain.

The parable was taken up by another passenger. 'How's the revolution going?' he asked.

'Looks as if Melgarejo was going to be euchred this game,' said the captain. 'No funds; and can't get 'em at any price. I heard a good yarn about him last trip,' he went on. 'It seems he bought a couple of old Gatlings from Mexico, and for a while carried everything before him. This didn't suit the rebels, as they call 'em. So they made a surprise raid one night, and collared all the Gatling ammunition. Melgarejo can't move until he gets more from the States; and if the rebels can manage to capture the guns before it turns up—well, it's all over with him.'

'And a good job, too,' remarked somebody.

'I'm not so sure, now. It depends. They say the rebel leaders don't hit it off together; and if they fall out over the spoils—as they're morally certain to do—it may mean six of the one and half-a-dozen of the other. That's the worst of these revolutions. They're like liqueur-drinking: you can't break yourself off the habit. Here, there's only one man that can pull 'em through.'

'And that is?'

'Young Juan Tovar.'

'I'm afraid I never heard of him,' said Jack. 'But if he can, why doesn't he?'

'Never heard of Tovar?' asked the captain. 'The old man, Juan's father, was the best President that San Estevan ever had—and a long way the best in Central America, for the matter of that. As straight as old Job, sir. In five years he showed what the republic could do under honest rule: paid up the interest like a man, developed trade, built the railroad from Sainpacho to the capital, encouraged enterprise of every sort. Tell you for a fact, sir, the country was never so flourishing. I used to lift five times the amount of cargo myself; and if that ain't proof, I'll be glad to hear what is. Then he went down under this blackguard Melgarejo, who was his Minister of War, and had him treacherously shot in the back one fine morning. And his son? Oh, he was a lad of sixteen or so then, and managed to give 'em the slip. He's been all over since—in the States and England—doing a bit of fighting in Brazil and Chili—waiting his chance, so to speak. They tell me he's got plenty of sand—a second edition of his father for brains and grit. Well, you may lay to it that the biggest part of the people look back upon these times with considerable regret, and after ten years of Melgarejo, swear by the name of Tovar. The youngster has only to turn up to have half the army and the whole country with him in a fortnight.'

'Then why doesn't he?' repeated Jack, quite eagerly. All this information had not tended to lessen his interest in the affairs of San Estevan.

'I was coming to that. Melgarejo, for all he's a sweep, ain't much of a fool. He's hand in glove with the surrounding States—birds of a feather—and they watch the frontiers for him. So young Tovar's choked off there; and if he tries the front-door entrance by steamer—then, I guess, I wouldn't risk the lowest insurance premium on record on his life. They say, too, that the President's spies have been dogging him for years. And *that's* why, sir.—

But it's too good a night to waste here, now that dinner's over, gentlemen. In an hour or two we'll maybe have some fresher news to discuss about this revolution.'

As they rose to go on deck, Jack's eyes happened to meet those of his neighbour. He was a young Spanish-American of the name of Valdez, understood to be a Chileño, and while he had taken no part in the conversation, had evidently followed it with interest. Now he smiled to the Englishman.

'What do you think, sir?' he inquired, in perfect English.

Jack caught his meaning at once. 'That if I were this young fellow,' he replied, 'I shouldn't think twice about running the risk, big as it is. There's bound to be a flaw somewhere.'

'I think the same,' said the other.

For half-an-hour thereafter Jack paced the deck, idly thinking. The sun had dropped into the Pacific, which for once did not belie its name; the night was calm, the sky bright with a thousand stars; and perhaps the dim phosphorescent gleam from the water, the witchery of the tropic evening, insensibly affected his decision. Like most men, although he was unaware of it himself—and, like them, would have scouted the idea—he was very susceptible to the romantic. He did not argue the matter out in his mind: he never did. Stopping, he leaned over the starboard rail. All at once he saw the twinkle of a light in the distance, doubtless from some point on the shore—the San Estevan shore. Then, yawning, he tossed his cigar into the water. His decision was taken.

'Is it not a beautiful evening, Mr Thorold?' said a voice in his ear.

Turning, he recognised his neighbour at dinner. Señor Valdez was smiling pleasantly: a clean-built young fellow, something of his own age and height, with a face telling of some power and considerable decision. Jack liked his appearance, and returned the greeting; and for a little the two walked up and down, conversing on this and that.

At last Valdez recurred to the old subject. 'You seem to have some interest in San Estevan, Mr Thorold?' said he.

'I mean to land at Sampacho to-night,' said Jack, quietly.

'Indeed?' There was a moment's pause.

'For pleasure, I presume?'

'And in the pursuit of knowledge, of course. It is the proper thing to add.'

'You know the country?'

'I was never there, I am glad to say. Knowledge of a country is sometimes a dangerous thing.'

'Ah!' said Valdez, and was silent for a minute. Then: 'You may see some fighting, if the captain is right.'

'Frankly, I might never have thought of going otherwise,' replied Jack, laughing. 'The captain has made me anxious to see this terrible Melgarejo before he's thrown. Good-luck to the rebels, say I! Isn't it curious, now, how the mind of the average man has an abstract sympathy with rebels? I know I have, at least.' He broke off. 'Do you know the country, señor?'

'I?—Oh, I am a native,' said Valdez.

'Of San Estevan?' Jack wheeled round upon him, wondering from his tone if he had put his foot in it. 'Then perhaps you are going to land also?' he asked.

Valdez smiled. 'Thanks; but I am not quite tired of my life,' he answered. 'The truth is, Mr Thorold, that Melgarejo and I have several old scores between us. I am one of his exiles, and have been lucky enough to cross him in one or two pet schemes. So he does not love me; and I'—his voice took on a more bitter tone—'well, I should give much to have him within ten feet of my revolver. I do not think his army would be of much use to him *then*.—But pardon me,' he went on; 'I must not trouble you with my ambitions. Such talk always sounds foolish.—You are quite determined to go to San Estevan?'

'Quite!'

'Pray, consider.' He laid his hand on Jack's arm. 'It may be dangerous—it will certainly be uncomfortable. For one thing, you will have to stay all night in Sampacho, and it is a most miserable place. Then the risks of war'—

'My dear fellow, you are really making me more eager to go. Any way, my mind's made up. It will do me a world of good to rough it for one night; and as to San Estevan, it will be a service if you can recommend me a decent hotel in the city.'

Valdez shrugged his shoulders in deprecation.

'It is your own affair,' he said.

'And the hotel?'

'The *Casa Bolívar* is said to be good.'

Jack thanked him, and the subject was dropped by common consent: there was no more to be said. Then, after a minute, Valdez made his excuses and went below.

'Good-luck, amigo mio,' he said, as they shook hands. 'Something tells me we shall meet again.'

As for Thorold, he paced the deck for a little longer, wrestling with some new ideas to which the conversation had given birth. Whatever the result, it did not change his intention.

Before ten o'clock the *Idaho* was riding at anchor a full mile off the port (humorously so called) of Sampacho, which was as near as she dared venture; and the lights of the village were before Jack Thorold, and the sound of the surf was loud in his ears, as he stepped into the boat to be rowed ashore with the mails. He was the only stranger to land, and captain and passengers bade him farewell at the gangway with a pleasant exaggeration of concern—all except Valdez, who did not again appear. Jack was in high spirits. There was a suggestion of adventure in the affair that was very congenial to his mood. A heavy swell was running; and it was a matter requiring some delicacy of management to approach the jetty through the surf, and some nerve to catch and mount the rope-ladder that at one moment swung high above the water, and at the next was immersed in it to the highest rung. But at last it was done in safety, and Jack Thorold set foot for the first time in the republic of San Estevan.

Involuntarily he shivered as he paused for a moment to take in the scene. The air was thick and close, and smelt of malaria; and the crowd of Ladinos (Ladino or Mestizo—half-breed, applied to the descendant of white men and Indians in whatever degree) and Indians on the jetty—Custom-house officials, soldiers in ragged uniforms, hangers-on of the port—looked far from prepossessing under the light of half-a-dozen miserable lamps. He noticed first that the soldiers largely predominated, but were in no apparent order; secondly, that they were armed with rifle and bayonet; and, last of all—this with a mild surprise—that his own appearance had evidently caused some excitement; for he was being scrutinised from head to foot with distinct curiosity, while mysterious nods and winks were circulating amongst the on-lookers. He could not understand it, but stood the ordeal with his customary modesty. For perhaps a minute he awaited a sequel; and, just as he was despairing of one, a fellow in Indian dress hustled roughly against him.

'A thousand pardons, señor,' he said, aloud; and then, in English: 'Follow me—quick! quick!'

Jack turned upon him like a shot, only to find that he was gazing unconcernedly out to sea. At first, in his astonishment, he could do nothing but stare at the man's profile. There was little doubt in his mind that it was he for whom the remark was intended; and the small amount remaining was presently dispelled by a gentle pressure of the stranger's foot upon his. His curiosity mastered his instinct of prudence.

'Why, what's this?' he demanded.

'H'sh! they're watching us—take no notice, on your life!' was the quick reply. Louder, in Spanish: '*Si, señor*: she sails in an hour for the north.' Dropping again into English, he whispered: 'Follow me at once—it's the only chance—don't hesitate to use your revolver if necessary! Ready? This way, then—come!'

The stranger edged away as he spoke; and his tone was so peremptory that Jack—who had a curious feeling that he was somebody else, and as such bound to obey the command—was half-tempted to see the affair through, be the consequences what they might. But at that moment a sharp whistle sounded; all at once, as it seemed, he was surrounded by soldiers; his bag was seized by one, his gun-case by another; and so, before he had time to realise the position, he was hustled into the badly-lit shed that did duty for a Custom-house. How the thing had been done, and why, were equally beyond him. He glanced around. He was the centre of a motley crowd which occupied the room and blocked up the doors, and one and all were eyeing him harder than ever. But of the mysterious English-speaking Indian there was no sign. Somehow, he was glad of it.

It was a minute or two before he had quite recovered his equanimity, and then he observed that several personages in uniform, apparently officers, had drawn aside from the ruck and were conferring in undertones, throwing an occasional look in his direction. He waited in patience; the commoner onlookers did the same,

alternately regarding him and the group. He was just beginning to think that the conduct of the officials of San Estevan was somewhat wanting both in business-like despatch and in courtesy to foreigners, when at length the conference broke up, an officer detached himself from his comrades and left the hut; and at the command of another—a middle-aged man, with an air of authority—the shed was cleared of all except those in uniform, perhaps a dozen in number. To these Jack took off his hat, and suggested in Spanish—he spoke it better than most natives—that it might be convenient to examine his luggage and allow him to discover a night's lodging.

The middle-aged officer returned the salutation. 'I am quite at your service, señor,' he said, civilly enough.

Jack bowed; and the spectators, forgetting even their cigarettes, craned forward to watch the inspection of his solitary valise. In a gentle way, he felt interested in *their* obvious interest. It was so incomprehensible. Truth to tell, the ceremony could scarcely have been more thorough if the Custom-house had been on the Pyrenees, and he a suspected *contrabandista*. In the end he was even a little sorry for the searchers' disappointment, though he could not guess what it was that they had expected to find. But his ordeal was not yet over. The fruitless examination was followed by another spell of whispering, and that in turn by a keen interrogation regarding his name, nationality, destination, and purpose in visiting San Estevan. Jack, repelling an impulse to do otherwise, answered with a reasonable amount of truth. He did not deem it necessary to mention his connection with the British Legation.

Still the officer did not appear to be satisfied. 'You have a passport, perhaps?' he suggested.

'Is it needful?' asked Jack. 'I was not aware, or I could easily have got one.'

'It is usual, especially when one visits San Estevan for pleasure.' He repeated the word doubtfully, as if he failed to grasp the idea of anybody doing such an idiotic act. 'Business, one can understand—*si*! But pleasure!—And then, señor, you speak the language very well for an Englishman.'

Jack laughed outright. 'Pardon me,' he said, 'but that does not strike me as a reason for keeping me out of the country—or out of my bed, which is more important just now. And if there is nothing else, señor,' he went on, 'perhaps you will be good enough to direct me to a lodging. I should be obliged.'

'A minute, if you please,' replied the officer. He rejoined the others, and the whispered conversation was renewed with many head-shakings and doubtful glances towards the Englishman. For him, the farce was beginning to lose its interest—it was being unduly prolonged, to his mind—when one phrase that he overheard set his wits a-puzzling again. 'If only the Commandante would come!' said somebody. Then there *was* method in all this confabulation: for some unaccountable reason he was being detained: he was practically a prisoner. He whistled softly to himself. He had wished for an adventure, and here was an adventure

already to his hand! And, before the whistle had died away, one of the doors swung open, and several more officers entered.

'The Commandante!'

That in hand, the middle-aged spokesman advanced to meet the leader—a stout, surly-faced soldier, in the uniform of a colonel of infantry.

'We were waiting for you, Señor Coronel,' he said.

The colonel waved him aside. 'Pshaw! there could be no doubt,' he answered, a little contemptuously. Then he advanced to Jack, bowing ironically. 'Don Juan Tovar, I believe?' said he. 'I am happy to welcome you back to San Estevan, señor—and grieved that it is my duty to make you my prisoner as a rebel to the Government of the republic!'

THE RUSSIAN VOLUNTEER FLEET.

A STUDY FOR ENGLISHMEN.

By JOHN DILL ROSS.

THE clouds of national prejudice which have so long separated Englishmen and Russians are at last clearing away, and as the two great nations are beginning to know more about each other, the old-time feuds are fast disappearing, to be replaced, it is sincerely to be hoped, by feelings of friendship which must necessarily work to the best interests of both empires, and of peace throughout Europe and Asia. The popular feeling that the Prince of Wales has done much to improve our relations with the great Russian Empire is no doubt based on good grounds, and than this, His Royal Highness could hardly render a greater service to his country.

The Russian Volunteer Fleet has often been written about in the English press, and news of the movements of these ships is frequently to be found amidst the ample telegraphic despatches of the *Times*. Like many things Russian, however, the *flotte patriotique* has been written about with a marvellous ignorance of the origin and aims of the fleet. Even the *Times*, in publishing a Shanghai telegram, dated 23d September, to the effect that the ships of the fleet were being concentrated at Vladivostok, presumably in response to the course of the Japanese invasion of China, gave wings to a *canard* of the wildest breed. Inquiries made immediately on the publication of the telegram at once showed it to be pure invention, and the 'Volunteers' have quietly carried out their usual service without the slightest reference to events in China. Journalists of the more sensational order have, moreover, filled columns in British newspapers both at home and abroad with wonderful stories about the prison-ships of the fleet, wherein clanking chains, ingenious arrangements for boiling refractory prisoners in superheated steam, and other romantic details, are sketched in with a bold hand. As a matter of fact, however, the prison-ships of the fleet are the outcome of the studies of the best English and Russian prison authorities, and are admirably suited for their purpose. Indeed, to most minds the lot of the Russian convict transported to Siberia under the present system would appear infinitely pref-

erable to our own more rigid and scientific system of penal servitude.

The *Dobru Volna Flot* (the 'Fleet of the Good Will') is the *flotte patriotique* of the *Journal de St Petersburg* and of the French press, while it is known to us as the Russian Volunteer Fleet. The origin of this truly extraordinary fleet was the enthusiasm of the Russian people during the Russo-Turkish war. It was then found that the Russian Government had not sufficient transports at its command for the purposes of the war, and it was proposed to meet this deficiency by means of a fleet bought and paid for by the people. The idea was a splendid success—subscriptions poured in on every hand, and in a few days amounted to some millions of roubles. Wealthy merchants guaranteed annual contributions; and naval officers, not content with fighting their country's battles, offered the Government a share of their pay. The patriotic spirit of the people carried everything before it, and when a Committee was formed to administer the funds so lavishly subscribed, the Volunteer Fleet commenced its successful and honourable career.

The first vessels purchased were such of the Atlantic liners or other suitable ships as were immediately available for the intended transport service; and at the termination of the war, the Russian Government had several fine steamers at its disposal which were no longer required as 'troopers' in the Black Sea. It was then very wisely decided to utilise these ships in improving the communications by sea between Russia and Siberia, and at the same time to make them useful in developing Russian commerce with the Far East. Both these objects have been attained to such an extent that the Volunteer Fleet is becoming of greater importance every year. The old vessels purchased during the war have long since been sold out of the service, and have been replaced by the finest ships which the Tyne and the Clyde can build for the Committee. Such splendid ships as the *Petersburg*, *Saratoff*, and *Orël* can steam their eighteen knots, and have developed even higher speeds than that in their trial trips. They are by far the fastest ships running a regular service east of the Suez Canal.

These steamers are variously employed on their voyages to Vladivostok. Some carry troops; others take emigrants from the more crowded districts of Russia to make a new home for themselves in Siberia, a magnificent country, capable of supporting a vast population; while such vessels as the *Yaroslavl* and the *Tamboff* have been especially designed and built at very great cost for the transport of convicts. Railway material and military stores are shipped by these steamers in very large quantities. On the return journey to Russia, they often bring home time-expired troops; but this does not prevent them from loading immense quantities of tea at Hankow for Odessa. The Volunteer Fleet has had a marked influence on the tea-trade of China. The difference between the present direct communication from Hankow to Odessa at a moderate freight, and the old slow, costly, and uncertain overland route, is enormous, and it simply enables the Russian merchants of to-day to pay prices for the finer

teas which English buyers cannot approach. A trade of less but increasing importance is that in oil-seeds, pepper, and other tropical produce from the Straits Settlements and Ceylon to Odessa. This development of Russian trade with the Far East is capable of still greater expansion, and it is difficult to see how it could have been accomplished without the agency of the Volunteer Fleet.

There is of course the political aspect of the Volunteer Fleet—perhaps the point which is of the greatest general interest to us. The officers of the fleet are all officers of the Imperial navy, and although the ships carry no armament, the facilities doubtless exist for placing it on board either at Sebastopol or Vladivostok as occasion may require. Here, then, we have ships capable of carrying from fifteen hundred to two thousand troops, of a speed which no vessel east of the Suez Canal can approach, and of an almost indefinite coal-endurance, for the 'Volunteers' have a bunker capacity of several hundreds of tons, and would most likely be at their best steaming trim with something like two thousand tons of coals in their holds as dead-weight. What six or seven such cruisers might do amongst our shipping all the way from Suez to Japan it is hard to say. There would be no catching them or escaping them. Our Atlantic 'flyers,' even if they had not other work to do, could not possibly get to the Straits of Malacca or the China Sea in time; and it is as well to remember that the Peninsular and Oriental liner which finds its way to the Far East is but a twelve or thirteen knot craft, sent there most likely because she is not fast enough for their Australian service. Then, again, those who have any experience of the Eastern extension cables will know how prone they are to get out of order in times of profoundest peace. Of what service they would be to us during a war is highly problematical; and in the event of these cables being 'interrupted' at a critical period, a really fast steamer might be well nigh invaluable to us. It might not be convenient at such a juncture to detach the admiral's flagship, or even a first-class cruiser, for service either as a despatch-boat or a transport. We certainly should have no other vessels capable of developing a high speed at our disposal, as matters now stand.

Even with the sincerest desire for amicable relations with all foreign powers, and especially with Russia, it seems inconsistent, to say the least of it, to spend millions on our navy and our fortified coaling stations in the Far East, while the fastest steamers in seas where British interests are so important fly a foreign flag. Our Russian friends are surely teaching us that we should have vessels of a certain type designed for permanent service in Eastern waters.

Perhaps I may be allowed to close this brief sketch with some personal experiences of the Volunteer Fleet. Last year I had the pleasure of coming home from the Straits *via* Russia in the *Orël*. I fancy that I am not far wrong in saying that I am perhaps the only English passenger to whom this privilege has been accorded. Of the voyage itself it is only necessary to remark that I was indulged in the luxury of a cabin all to myself, and that I was

treated with the greatest kindness and courtesy by every one on board. The points which struck me most were in the first place the care and skill with which the ship was navigated; and secondly, the admirable conduct and discipline of the troops on board, who were over a thousand in number. It is well worth recording that when the *Vladivostok* of the Volunteer Fleet was wrecked off the coast of Japan in 1893, in a dense fog, which had lasted for days, and although a nasty sea was running at the time, her commander nevertheless landed over a thousand soldiers and sailors, and some two hundred women and children, without the loss of a single life, an achievement which surely reflects the highest credit on both officers and men.

The *Orël* is a splendid sea-boat. Crossing the Indian Ocean in June, we had the full force of the monsoon against us all the way from Acheen Head to the Red Sea. She steamed an easy thirteen knots with only two of her four boilers under pressure, and the great steamer was as lively in the waves as a yacht.

An historical interest attaches to the *Orël* since she took the late Emperor of Russia on his last sea-voyage to Livadia. The Prince and Princess of Wales also travelled in her on their sad journey thither. The Princess seems to have won all hearts on board the *Orël*, as Her Royal Highness always does wherever she goes; nor, indeed, is this the first time that members of our royal family have sailed on board of a ship of the Russian Volunteer Fleet.

AN ELECTRIC SPARK.*

By G. MANVILLE FENN.

CHAPTER V.—THE LIGHT THAT WOULD NOT BURN.

EVERY one was too busy in the outer office to take any notice of the comings and goings of Brant Dalton; and something like bitterness assailed him as he saw how the business would go steadily on in a firm, in which he had always expected to hold a partnership, whether he were present or no. Old Hamber, who sat there looking as if he were about to torture a plan with a sharp-pointed pair of compasses, did not even raise his eyes when the young man almost pushed his elbow on his way to the door, and then down into the street.

'There's only one way out of it,' he said to himself—'money. Don't think I was ever so short in my life.'

People have very different notions upon what is termed being short of money. Brant had special ideas of his own, and raised his cane as soon as he saw a good cab. 'Covent Garden,' he cried as he stepped in; and as he stepped out at the St Paul's end of the central avenue he said 'Wait!'

The cabman glanced at his fare, and thought of the Russell Street end, and the possibility of an exit being made there, but concluded that he would be safe, and waited while Brant

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sauntered amongst the flowers till he saw what he wanted, and entered a shop.

'Put that in a neat box,' he said, pointing with his cane to a large bouquet of white lilies evidently just made up from the morning's flowers, artificially dew-wet, but exhaling their sweet perfume; and while the attendant's deft fingers were busy, he looked round and made a set at a white rose, hesitated, turned a little aside, and stooped to smell at a vase of orange blossoms.

As he raised his eyes, he caught those of the pretty attendant, who smiled at him with a good deal of meaning in her glance. Brant smiled too, for they both thought of the same thing; and both from a business point of view in the shape of an early order for a special occasion.

'Here, take this out,' he said, tapping the breast of his coat, 'and put in one of those.' He pointed to some delicate buttonhole bouquets of lily of the valley; and the rose he wore was removed and the lilies took their place. 'Thanks: how much?'

'Sixteen and six, sir.'

Brant put down a sovereign, received his change, and turned to go. 'Send the box to my hansom.'

In another minute he was going west, and checked the cab in Piccadilly at a perfumer's shop, which he entered, and after selecting a large square-cut glass bottle of scent, began to take off his glove.

'Such a trifle, sir,' said the attendant; 'shall I put it to your account?'

'Yes, may as well,' said Brant; and he once more entered the cab. 'Look sharp: South Audley Street.'

There he alighted, paid, took his bouquet box, and ringing at the door of one of the lately-built mansions, was admitted by a servant in quiet livery.

'At home?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Bring up that box.' Then, quite at home, he deliberately went up the broad staircase, where there was an ample display of the owner's wealth; but everything in the furnishing and decoration was in excellent taste.

Brant went up very slowly, with his brow slightly wrinkled, for he was calculating his move before playing his queen, the move meaning so much to him just then. He kept in front of the man, opened the drawing-room door himself, and crossed to where Rénée was seated writing, and Miss Bryne lay back on a lounge, looking very sad and pensive, as she worked silken flowers upon a square of cambric.

'Morning!' cried the visitor loudly. Then to the man: 'Set it down on that chair.'

'One moment, Brant,' said Rénée, looking up with a smile.—'Stop a moment, William. I want this note taken to Miss Endoza.'

The man waited while the note was finished and directed, and then receiving his instructions to wait for an answer, left the room.

'Have you come from the office?' cried Rénée eagerly.

'Yes: just come. Old man's all right. Busy as a whole hive of bees.—I say, Ren, I want to talk to you about him.'

'About Papa?'—very eagerly; and Miss Bryne let her work fall in her lap.

'Yes.—Nothing private, auntie,' said Brant, addressing the elder lady. 'It's for you, too.'

'But is it something serious, Brant, dear?'

'Serious and not serious,' he replied.

'Pray, don't trifle with me, Brant,' cried Rénée, with her face growing troubled, and more winsome in its sadness; 'we are so anxious about Papa's health. It is about that, isn't it?'

'Yes: that's it,' said the young man, beginning to unfasten the string of the box, which he had taken upon his knees, as he sat in a very low chair. 'You people think me very careless and unfeeling; but I'm not, you know, and the old man worries me a great deal.'

'But why—what about?—what have you seen?' cried Rénée, laying her soft white hand upon the knot in the string, so as to prison her cousin's fingers at the same time.

'Gently, Ren. I can't answer three questions at once.—There—oh, I say, dear, don't cry; it hurts me, and there's nothing to cry about.'

'But you are keeping me on the rack. Do, do leave that box alone.'

'All right. Then it's this. Here's what's the matter: Uncle's just like a horse who will persist in dragging a wagon with three horses' loads up the biggest hills he can find.'

'Quite right, my dear,' said Miss Bryne; 'and a very good simile. What I always tell him: he works far too hard.'

'That's it,' said Brant, vainly trying to retain his cousin's hand, which she now hastily withdrew, and sat back in her chair. 'And now look here, Ren; I know auntie has always done her best, but she has no influence over him. You are the only one who can do it: he must have some rest.'

'Yes, he ought to rest,' said Rénée, pressing her white teeth upon her lower lip, and trying hard to keep back the tears which brimmed in her eyes.

'Then you must make him drop a lot of the work: leave it to us. Mr Wynyan and I could relieve him of more than half. We'd undertake it all, if he'd let us. Then he could go trips with you, dear, and give up all this confounded express-train way of living.'

'Yes: high pressure, high pressure,' said Miss Bryne with a sigh.

'That's it. But it's getting to be regular electricity now,' continued Brant; 'and what for? He has plenty of money, and he ought to make me do the work, while he takes it coolly.'

Rénée bowed her head and pressed her hands together: she could not trust herself to speak.

'I know you people think me idle and careless, but I'm not; 'pon my soul, I'm not, Ren. But what's a fellow to do? Here I go down to the office of a morning, wanting to pitch into the work and do all kinds of things; but do you think he'll let me? Not he. I'm pitchforked on one side; nobody can do it but himself. And it's so with Wynyan's work and the clerks'; he must do it all himself. Flesh and blood can't stand the strain. He'll break down as sure as a gun.'

'Yes, yes,' said *Rénée*, with her tears now beginning to flow; 'but what can be done?'

'What can be done?' she says, cried *Brant* angrily, turning to *Miss Bryne*. 'That's why I've come this morning, when I knew I could catch you both. I want you to help me spur her on, auntie, to coax him and wheelex him.—Oh, you soon can, I know, *Ren*. And I say you know, dear; promise me you'll try.'

'Yes, *Brant*, I have tried; but I do promise you. I will indeed; I'll strain every nerve.'

'That's right,' he cried. 'Do everything you can. You're worth a dozen of old *Kilpatrick*. You're the doctor for him; and if he resists, make him. We'll keep things going at the office.—There now; my mind's at rest. Look here: I happened to come through *Covent Garden* this morning and saw these. You like lilies, don't you?'

'Oh, how sweet!' cried the girl excitedly, as the great bunch of silvery white flowers was taken out of the box. 'Lovely—lovely! Oh, *Brant*, what a good thoughtful boy you are!'

'I thought you'd like them,' said *Brant*.—'Ha, ha! Look at auntie's pliz. Envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness.'

'That I'm sure there is not,' cried *Miss Bryne* indignantly.

'Oh yes: jealous as a female *Othello*,' cried *Brant* boisterously, as he rose laughing, and thrust his hand into his pocket to tear the paper away from the bottle within. 'Did um neglect a dear old auntie, then, and not give her anything to smell nice?—There, and there, and there.—Come and have a sniff, *Ren*,' he said as he loosened the stopper and cleverly sprinkled a few drops over lace and dress.

'*Brant*, you shouldn't.—Oh, how delicious! You brought that for me, my dear?'

'Of course I did. The new scent.'

'Then you're a dear good thoughtful boy,' cried *Miss Bryne*; 'and I'm very, very much obliged to you for it.—Look, *Rénée*, what a splendid great bottle.—There, *Brant*, my dear,' she continued, kissing him.

'Thank you, auntie,' cried the young man, returning the salute; and in a quick whisper: 'Cut. Want so to talk to her!—Bah, don't wipe it off. Scent don't spoil anything.'

'But silk does spot, my dear,' said *Miss Bryne*, crossing to *Rénée*, and playfully sprinkling her in turn, before going on toward the door.

'Are you going, aunt?' said *Rénée*.

'Back directly, my dear. Do you remember where that spray diffuser was put?'

'No; I really do not,' said *Rénée*; but the door was already closing, and the girl rose to place her bouquet in a great bronze bowl.

STRANGERS WITHIN OUR GATES.

ABOUT eight years ago, in consequence of the existence of widespread distress in East London, public attention was directed to the growth in that neighbourhood of a large foreign population, and its competition in certain industries with the English working-classes. Inquiries, official and unofficial, took place; but no sufficient data were obtainable for arriving at a satisfactory conclusion as to the extent and

character of the competition complained of. Since then, however, the Board of Trade has exhaustively investigated the subject, and from a Report presented by that body to Parliament we derive a mass of interesting information respecting foreign immigrants, their number, and the social and economical results of their residence here. This information has been collected from many sources, and scrutinised and commented upon by competent officials; and now for the first time we have tangible and reliable materials for a complete examination of this highly important question.

An Act of the reign of *William IV.* provided for the preparation of a record of aliens arriving from foreign ports. A return was to be compiled for each vessel, showing the name, occupation, and description of every alien on board. This, however, had fallen into disuse; and in 1890 it was revived to a certain extent, being applied to twenty-six of the principal ports in Great Britain, and to such deck passengers as were unprovided with through-tickets for, say, America, and who, presumably, intended to settle here. From these lists we learn that the European immigrants arriving in this country during the years 1891, 1892, and 1893 numbered respectively 28,000, 22,000, and 23,000, Russia and Poland contributing the largest proportion. The figures for last year show that 7700 Russians and Poles arrived; 4600 Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes; and 6500 Germans. From the Census of 1891 we learn that in that year we had in the United Kingdom 220,000 foreigners, Germany ranking first with 53,000, while Russians and Poles numbered 48,000. Nine-tenths of these were found in England and Wales, where they numbered 6.8 per thousand of the population. Edinburgh, Leith, and Glasgow absorbed half of the 8500 foreigners in Scotland, where in every 1000 of the population 2.1 were aliens. In Ireland the proportion was 2.7; but considerably more than half of the 13,000 aliens in that country were Irish Americans. From these figures, then, we may assume that there are in our midst about a quarter of a million of foreigners. These are of many nationalities and of many occupations; and, generally speaking, they are distributed pretty equally through the great towns, assimilating easily with those among whom their lot is cast, and making estimable citizens. But there is one section of immigrants whose ways are not our ways, and who steadfastly resist every tendency towards assimilation, who, while timidly herding together in a few localities, and limiting themselves to a few vocations, are bold and successful operators in trade—who are a peculiar people, and picturesque in their incongruity with their surroundings. These are arrivals from Russia and Poland, the great bulk of whom are Jews, and it is with these that we have to deal in this

paper. A few figures will show how the tide of emigration from these countries has increased. In 1871 we had in Great Britain 10,000 Russians and Poles; in 1881, 15,000; and in 1891, 47,700. In 1881, the United States received 15,000; and each year the number seeking admission has increased, until, in 1891, the subjects of the Czar entering the States reached 104,500. No other European country can show such an increase in emigration. Most of those who come to Great Britain settle down in London. Leeds has some 5000, and Manchester an equal number; but the great bulk are found in the metropolis, and in a small portion of it. In Mile End, they form nearly 30 per cent. of the population; in Whitechapel, nearly 19; while in Shoreditch, Hackney, and Stepney the percentage is infinitesimal. Manchester and Leeds also have their Jewish quarters, two districts in the former city having respectively $3\frac{1}{2}$ and 8 per cent. of Jews; while one district of Leeds has $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The way in which they congregate in a few trades is striking also. Shoe and slipper making, tailoring and other branches of the clothing trade, absorb nearly all. Others make cigars, or are workers in wood; there are some hundreds engaged as clerks; many become hawkers when their special trade is slack; but extremely few engage in outdoor labour. Out of 23,000 in London whose occupations have been ascertained, only 69 were seamen, and 12 labourers, carters, and railway employees.

We may now follow one of these Russian or Polish Jews from the steamer which brings him to the Thames. He is accosted off Gravesend by officials of the Customs and of the Sanitary Authority, and if he be trim and neat and knows exactly to what part of London he is going, there is no further interference; but should he be unprovided with an address, he is handed over to an agent of the Jews' Shelter in Leman Street, an institution supported by wealthy adherents of that creed. Here he is allowed to remain for a period not exceeding fourteen days, and his future address is on his departure communicated by the managers to the Sanitary Authority. He knows nothing of the great city, is ignorant of the world, and his tongue is confined to the dialect of his native district; but he probably has hopes from a friend or from some former neighbour now settled in London. Him he seeks, and in all likelihood finds him a tailor or shoemaker, perhaps a master on a small scale.

Now, the new-comer knows no trade, or if he does, English and Russian methods are different, and he has to commence afresh as a 'greener,' content with what would to a British workman be starvation wages. His want of skill closes to him the better class of workshops; while he is unwelcome in non-Jewish factories through his Sabbath falling on a Gentile working-day; and even if his lack of English permitted him to go far afield, the popular prejudice against him would discourage it. Almost as a matter of necessity, therefore, he attaches himself to one of the Jewish colonies, and to one of the trades in which there is the best opening for inexperienced persons.

But there are other causes for his seeking the

fellowship of his compatriots and co-religionists. The Jewish colony in East London is a comparatively old one, dating from the beginning of the sixteenth century, and in its midst have grown up institutions for the supply of its wants, physical, educational, and religious. There the immigrant is near the various bodies organised in order to give him and his like assistance, as a weekly allowance, a grant wherewith to purchase stock, or a premium for his admission to some factory. There his children may be clothed and educated, and partially boarded free of expense to him; there the wealthy members of his faith have established soup-kitchens; there the special forms of Jewish food are most readily obtainable. Finally, he has there the *chevras*, or Jews' clubs and minor synagogues; and it is his delight when work is slack to descend from his narrow and dirty attic and in the *chevra* hear the Talmud read, perchance himself expounding one of its chapters from the raised desk, and join in the eager discussion which follows, when hairs are split, and theological subtleties woven with astonishing zeal. This zeal is, by the way, supposed to not wholly spring from piety, being alleged to be partly due to a desire for intellectual exercise, which will bear fruit when trade rivals have to be met and advantageous bargains struck.

Having become, then, a tailor or shoemaker, or a furrier, or a wood-worker, he in time acquires skill; but his wishes never stray towards the great factories. His heart is in petty trade; he loves independence; and his ambition is to become a 'chamber-master,' a position whose profits are comparatively large, and which—materials being given out by the factories—requires very little capital. 'A Jew,' it has been said, 'is either a sweater or sweatee,' the fact being that appeals to the 'dignity of labour' do not touch him; though clannish to a degree in matters of race and religion, his lack of *esprit de corps* in those of trade makes him hated and despised by the Unions, and his only idea of a 'standard wage' is to get what he can. As a beginner, therefore, he works for a pittance; as an employer he is a hard taskmaster; and in either case tenacious of his rights.

The Jew whom we have seen enter the Thames will probably end his days among his brethren in East London, even should he become wealthy. The Jewish Committee and other charitable bodies of the kind have tried to diminish the congestion in that neighbourhood, but without avail as regards the first generation; but they are more fortunate with the children of the immigrants, who are taught English, and are free from the timidity and prejudices of their parents. It is said, indeed, that the younger people are becoming anglicised more rapidly than some of the elders like, and do not always betray that reverence for the customs and traditions of Judaism that is thought desirable. However, in spite of this, and of warnings sent broadcast over the Continent as to the crowded state of the British labour market, the Jewish population of East London continues to increase, though not at the same rate as three or four years ago, a circumstance affording

much satisfaction to its charitable associations, whose resources were becoming strained.

Here it may be well to consider the pecuniary position of these immigrants from Russia and Poland. Arriving, as a rule, haggard and travel-stained, they are hastily written down as paupers. This is not so, however. Almost invariably they possess a little money, and many have exhibited on arriving as much as thirty pounds; and on a given day of this year there were in East London workhouses only twenty-four Jewish inmates, while thirty-four were in receipt of medical aid. True, their philanthropic agencies are active; but even these only distribute an average annual sum of four-and-sixpence per head of the Russo-Polish population, which may be estimated at 80,000; and this is less than the expenditure per head on the whole population of London in the shape of poor relief. Add to this that these immigrants are not at all delicate about seeking assistance, and the conclusion is forced upon us that the term 'paupers' is not applicable to them. In this connection it may be observed that while what we understand as an independent spirit is conspicuous by its absence, inasmuch as charity is habitually sought when it is not needed, yet the receipt of dolus in no degree diminishes their industry or tends to produce that demoralisation which so generally accompanies it. Gambling is a vice to which these Jews are sometimes prone, but from drunkenness and idleness they are notably free. Of crime, too, there is less than among the general population of the country; and by those conversant with their habits they are pronounced to be on the whole a peaceful and law-abiding community.

There remains to be considered the important question of the social and economic effects of the presence in our midst of colonies of people whose views of life are so different from those of the native working-classes. It must in the first place be borne in mind that this difference is acute only in the case of immigrants, and that, as has already been said, their children easily assimilate with English people, and adopt English ideas. It is also to be noticed that, even in streets which they monopolise, their sanitary surroundings are year by year improving, and that their workshops are gradually losing the den-like character which has for so long been their reproach.

The weightiest charge levelled against the foreign Jews has been that they competed unfairly with the native workman. It will be well to briefly summarise what the Board of Trade officials have to say on the point. *Prima facie*, if the number of workers be increased, the labour of each is diminished—if the quantity of work remain stationary. It is asserted, however, that it has not remained stationary in this case, and that the cheap labour of the Jews has—to take the boot and shoe trade as an example—created new branches, or taken trade away from foreign countries.

This matter is closely argued by the chief of the Labour Department, and it will be sufficient for us to state his conclusions. It is contended that, speaking generally, the Jew tailor, boot-maker, or slippermaker is employed on a different class of goods from the Englishman, goods

the manufacture of which in this country was prohibited by the English scale of wages, and which have since the influx of Jews into England found a prominent place among our exports. In the tailoring trade, it is said, there are virtually English and Jewish departments, and the two peoples hardly come into collision at all; but in shoemaking, these spheres sometimes overlap, and as it was in this trade that complaints were most rife, the conditions under which it was carried on were closely studied.

Apparently, the introduction of machinery into the making of boots and shoes is responsible for much of what is attributed to Jewish competition. The trade is being revolutionised by machinery and the concentration of work in factories; and the contest between the latter and home-workers is keen where Jews are unknown. In the Leicester Co-operative Society's factory a boot passes through fifty-nine distinct machines and ninety-eight distinct processes, and it is held that there is here a far more powerful rival to the English hand-worker than is the Jewish 'sweater.' The influence of the Jew is suggested to consist in this—that he has somewhat prolonged the period of transition from hand-labour in small workshops to machine-labour in factories by his low standard of comfort and his taste for petty handicraft.

It would be unfair to omit all reference to the action of the London Bootmakers' Union, which five years ago persuaded the masters to provide workshops. This was a deathblow to a large proportion of the 'sweaters,' and very many masters of the latter class are now journeymen in these new factories. Such a man under the old system took out boots to finish, himself paring the soles and heels, and employing a 'team' of from two to four less skilled assistants to perform the rest of the operation. In addition to his work, he provided room, firelight, and tools, and took half of the earnings. He might thus earn five pounds a week, while his wages in a factory would amount to about two pounds.

Broadly speaking, therefore, the tendency is towards concentration; but it is admitted that there are influences at work in the opposite direction. The factory being closed to the unskilled 'greener,' he is driven towards the small shop of a fellow-countryman, who despises trade agreements; and these shops are the parents of a new system of home-work on a petty scale. It will be seen from the foregoing that the question is an extremely complicated one, and not to be pronounced upon lightly.

Before leaving it, a few words may be said upon the position in this matter of Jewish women, a branch of the subject which has been exhaustively investigated by Miss Collet, one of the Labour Correspondents of the Board of Trade. Among the Russo-Polish immigrants, the women are only half as many as the men, and their competition is consequently so much the less formidable. Their rivals are their countrymen and English women. They appear to be better workers than the latter, and earn larger wages in the tailoring and cap-making trades, which principally occupy them. But, on the other hand, they marry young, and rarely work afterwards. On this point, Miss Collet

supplies conclusive figures. Taking some of these at random, we find that in one district and trade only one working Jewess in 41 is married, while every third working English woman is; in another case, the respective proportions are one in 83 and one in 17; and in another, that half of the English women are married, and only one Jewess in 161. In this contest with the opposite sex, the male foreigner is often beaten. In certain classes of work, he is better than a woman; but he is being rapidly displaced in factories—even those owned by Jews—by Jewish and English women, who are cheaper and more docile. We have remarked that the Jewish woman earns more per day—but perhaps not per week, which with her consists of only five days—than her English sister in the same trade, and the remark may be applied to other trades, the Jewish tailoress making more money than the girls employed in, say, the jam, rope, and match industries.

In conclusion, then, the competition of the female portion of the Russo-Polish immigrants may be set aside as slight in extent and temporary in duration. That of the male portion, if serious at all, is only so during the earlier years of their residence here; and its importance is likely to diminish with the falling-off in the number of immigrants, which has been noticeable for a year or two. On the other hand, it is fairly well established that they have increased the volume of production, and thereby extended our foreign trade. Lastly, they are consumers as well as producers, and must be to that extent a source of wealth. Without entering upon the question of the propriety of total or partial exclusion, it may be urged that in their own interests and those of their neighbours in London and the other great towns which they affect, more stringent sanitary regulations as regards both workshops and dwellings might with advantage be enforced on the Russian and Polish Jews who find an asylum in this country, and whose standard of cleanliness is admittedly not high.

THE PRESSGANG IN ORKNEY.

THOUGH the practice of impressing seamen to man the royal navy commenced in England as early as 1355, immediately after the country had been desolated by a noisome pestilence which had scarcely left a State of Europe or Asia free from its ravages, it was only at the close of the past and the beginning of the present century that the pressgang became particularly oppressive. The cause of this was the outbreak of the French Revolutionary War in 1792.

Amongst the evils which arose from that dreadful struggle, none was felt more keenly, or was more openly resisted and denounced by the people, than the pressgang. Owing to the long continuance of the war with the French, and the many bloody engagements which ensued by land and sea, it was found impossible to fill up the ever-recurring vacancies in the navy by the usual means. The Government therefore resorted to the pressgang. This iniquitous sys-

tem was loathed by the people, not so much that they were unwilling to fight for king and country, as because of the unfair way in which they were treated. Men of wealth and position were never impressed; but the working-classes, especially those accustomed to a seafaring life, were remorselessly torn from hearth and home wherever they could be found.

The mode adopted in Orkney for choosing the victims who were to be despatched to the seat of war seems to have been very simple. The landlords and principal tenants in each parish met in private and made a selection. A list of those names was handed to the pressgang or constables; but the general inhabitants being kept in ignorance of those chosen, were naturally in dread of being captured, and went into hiding. On the other hand, if the constables met a person likely to be suitable for the service, they were not very particular whether he had been specially named to them or not. They placed the king's baton on the unfortunate man's shoulder, and that settled the question.

People had therefore to defend themselves, and adopted many devices to retain their freedom. Holes were made in the floors of houses, and recesses were cunningly formed in presses, peat-stacks, and elsewhere, to be handy hiding-places in the event of a surprise. Those who were afraid to risk such methods of concealment went off to the crags, or roamed day and night amongst the hills. In harvest-time, when all hands were required for cutting corn, horses were usually kept within easy distance, to provide a ready means of escape, and mothers and daughters were stationed on rising ground, so that they might watch for and signal the approach of the dreaded pressgang. Occasionally, the fair sex assumed the aggressive attitude, and in one case in Sandwick a woman, in protecting her lover, struck a constable with a shearing-hook. It is said that the weapon entered the man's side, and that the wound proved fatal.

The memory of a great wrong done to a community dies hard. Thus it is that on the long winter evenings, as Orcadians gather nightly around their blazing peat-fires, they still recount stories setting forth the evil deeds of the pressgang, though the heroes and victims of that trying time have long since been gathered to their rest. The object of this paper is to reproduce a number of the more interesting of these anecdotes.

A very good story is told of how a man escaped serving his king and country. He was being hotly pursued by the pressgang through Kirkwall, when he took refuge in a garden in Victoria Street. At that time most of the houses on the west side of the town had jetties running into the 'Peerie' Sea, which were used for taking in peats, and occasionally for landing smuggled goods. The man referred to—his name seems to be forgotten now—got a hint that his pursuers had found out his hiding-place, so that he plunged into the Peerie Sea and made his way up Wideford Hill, past the lands of Grainbank. In the distance he could see the pressgang hurrying along the route he had so recently trod himself, so that it looked as if

his capture would only be the matter of a few minutes. In this dilemma he determined to secure his freedom by strategy. He therefore divested himself of his clothes, rolled in a bed of nettles, and again dressed before the pressgang came upon the scene. The constables indulged in some banter at the expense of their prisoner, because he had allowed himself to be so easily captured; but the laugh was soon turned the other way. In the natural course of events the man was taken before a doctor, and when examined, his body was found to be one mass of blisters. As it was believed that the captive was suffering from some sort of skin disease, he was declared unfit for His Majesty's service; but it turned out that the man was on the eve of being married, and, rather than be parted from his lady-love, he took that awful plunge amongst the nettles.

One morning the occupants of the little croft of Fingerow, Scapa, near Kirkwall, thought they might risk commencing their harvest. The pressgang had not been seen for some days, and it was hoped they had given up the search in that district as fruitless. Thomas Sinclair, the tenant of Fingerow, therefore went down with his hook to a field of barley below the house; but he had only got a small patch of the crop cut, when he received a signal that the pressgang was approaching. He had no time to escape down the face of the cliffs, which had been his usual hiding-place, so he crawled away into the middle of the field of barley. The two officers who were in search of him—Peter Wick and Joseph Tait—poked into every corner and cranny of the house, and were closely followed by Sinclair's sister. As Wick and Tait visited one place after another at the steading without finding their man, Kirsty Sinclair, who was armed with a shearing-hook, gave a derisive cheer, at the same time waving over her head the rusty weapon she carried. The conduct of Kirsty, however, instead of driving the officers off the place, as was intended, only made them the more determined in their search, as they were sure Sinclair was somewhere on the croft. When they reached the field of barley, and saw one small patch cut, they concluded that their man was probably hidden amongst the long straw. That the search might be thorough, Wick went down one rig, whilst Tait went up the other. The officers were thus slowly but surely closing in upon their man. At length Tait got his eye upon Sinclair and made a rush at him. Sinclair determined to fight for his liberty, and struck out at Tait with a heavy batten of wood. The attack was so sudden and unexpected that the officer with one blow was laid senseless. Peter Wick, the other constable, then rushed upon Sinclair, and the two had a severe encounter. Wick, however, was an old 'Nor-waster' with a powerful arm, and he used his fists so effectually that his opponent was speedily put *hors de combat*. Kirsty Sinclair meantime was not idle. Thinking her brother had been killed, she rushed up behind Wick with the hook which she had in her hand, and dealt a blow at the back of his head. Fortunately for the officer, the weapon stuck in the collar of his coat, and before the enraged

woman could get it out to use it again, she was thrown on the ground beside her brother. It turned out that Tait had merely been stunned by the blow he had received, and in a short time was able, with the assistance of his companion, to return to Kirkwall.

As for the Sinclairs—brother and sister—they were left lying in the field bleeding and helpless. Some war-vessels happened to be anchored in Kirkwall Bay at the time, and the constables having reported their experiences at Fingerow, a few sailors were sent ashore to assist in bringing Sinclair into town. That same night, Wick returned to the croft accompanied by these sailors, dragged Sinclair out of bed, and told him he was their prisoner. The poor man was ill-fitted for such a journey, after the mauling he had received earlier in the day, and he frequently lay down on the road. Some of the sailors, however, had a 'rattan,' which they vigorously applied to Sinclair's back on such occasions, so that before he reached the town his skin was broken and lacerated. When taken before a doctor the next day, the poor fellow's body was such a mass of sores that he was considered unfit for service in the navy, and therefore sent home again. As he had resisted the constables in the discharge of their duties, however, and had attacked them with a bludgeon, his only cow was taken from him, and presented to Tait as consolation for the injuries he had sustained.

It was not an easy matter to get married in pressgang times. Robert Miller, a Kirkwall man, found this to be the case. He returned from the whale-fishing one autumn, fully resolved that he should take unto himself a wife. But the pressgang got on his track, and he soon saw that if he was to get his heart's desire, he would require to exert both pluck and perseverance. At length the fateful night arrived. The company had gathered, and the minister was in the house of the bride prepared to proceed with the ceremony, when the dreaded pressgang made its appearance. Ladies are not usually of a belligerent disposition, but when they saw, as in this instance, the likelihood of a marriage being spoiled by interlopers, they rose up in wrath against them. They assailed the members of the pressgang both with tongue and missiles, so that these gentlemen were glad to beat a hasty retreat. After this little episode, a back window of the house was lifted, and the bridegroom, dressed in woman's clothes, bounded into the room. The doors having been barricaded, to prevent a surprise, the clergyman proceeded to perform the ceremony, and surely no bridegroom was ever married in such a strange garb! Miller was never captured. He lived to a ripe old age, and was the first beadle of the Kirkwall Free Church.

Many anecdotes are told of the tricks adopted by those who were captured by the pressgang, to escape service, and some of these have a humour of their own. Walter Rossie, who belonged to Stroma, happened to be in Flotta one day, and was captured by the pressgang. He was a strong, healthy-looking man, and was considered by his acquaintances to be very clever. When he was put on board ship, he at once began to play the fool. Every means that

could be thought of was used for the purpose of getting Rossie to commit himself, but without avail. At last the captain of the vessel took him in hand. He pitched a silver coin to Rossie, and asked him what he would do with it. The malingering took the coin, turned it carefully over, and then declared it would make a fine 'henchling'-stone. Throwing it overboard, he clapped his hands, and gleefully chuckled as he saw it bounding out of the water once or twice before it finally disappeared. That was enough for the captain. He declared that the Orcadian who thought so lightly of money as to pitch it in the sea must be a hopeless fool indeed, and he at once ordered Rossie to be put ashore.

One day the people of Burray saw the press-gang leave Holm, and, suspecting that they would have to receive these unwelcome visitors, they sent out Harry Wyllie and Solomon Guthrie as a pair of decoy birds. Wyllie and Guthrie acted as if they had been taken by surprise, made for Glimpse Holm, and pulled up their boat there, at the same time crawling beneath it. The members of the press-gang pulled with might and main in the same direction, assured that they were about to make a capture. Arriving at the little island, they turned up the Burray boat, and ordered the two men to get up and accompany them. When Harry Wyllie had struggled off the ground, it was discovered that he had a club-foot, whilst Solomon Guthrie sported a wooden leg! It is needless to add that the press-gang would not take a gift of either; and when they subsequently found, on going to Burray, that there was not a man on the island, they could not help seeing that they had been cleverly tricked.

A man named Tom Brock, belonging to Stronsay, had several narrow escapes in press-gang times. One night when he had just retired to bed, the constables forced the door, entered the house, and ordered him to get up, as he was now their prisoner. Brock occupied one of those old-fashioned box-beds which were so common in bygone days, and he asked that he might be allowed to dress there. His request was granted, and he closed the doors, that he might have a little more privacy. His wife then began to abuse the press-gang for their hard-heartedness in taking her husband away from his poor children. At last the constables thought Brock had had ample time to dress, and told him so. Mrs Brock then began to plead with Thomas not to leave her, and the constables, thinking to put an end to the painful scene, threw open the doors of the bed. Presto! their man was gone. Brock had previously loosened two boards at the back of the bed, which gave him communication with a window, and at the time he was supposed to be dressing and comforting his weeping wife, he was fleeing across country on horseback, putting as great a distance as possible between him and the press-gang. He ultimately found a safe hiding-place amongst the crags, and was never captured.

In press-gang times courtship was carried on under great difficulties. A number of young people were enjoying their Yule feast at a

farmhouse in the vicinity of the old palace in the barony of Birsay. Fun and frolic were running high, when all at once the warning cry ran through the building that the press-gang was approaching. Amongst those present were John Johnston, locally known as 'Johnnie o' Smerchants,' and Sandy Cumloquoy. There was a strong suspicion that these were the men wanted, and they naturally made a rush for their freedom. The result of the hunt was the capture of the former. As Johnnie o' Smerchants was brought back past the old palace, he was met by his sweetheart, Kitty Cumloquoy. Kitty went almost distracted when she saw her lover being led away a prisoner by the press-gang. She 'murmelted sorely,' to use an old Orcadian phrase, the hard fate which so rudely parted her from her Johnnie, especially at such a festive season; but she determined that he should not leave his native place without a farewell gift. Accordingly, she parcelled up some Christmas cheer in the shape of bread and cheese, and just as the press-gang was tearing her from her lover's arms, she placed her love-offering in his hands. It so happened that Johnnie o' Smerchants, in the course of his service in the navy, was drafted into the same vessel with one of his captors, a sergeant, who had been foremost in laying hands upon him that night of the Yule feast. This man had committed some offence, and, as a punishment, was sentenced to receive a number of lashes. Johnnie, curiously enough, was one of the sailors ordered to administer the 'cat,' and he applied it with such pith to the back of his old enemy, that the commander of the squad at the close of the punishment exclaimed: 'That man did his duty.'

When Johnnie o' Smerchants got his discharge and returned to his island home, Kitty Cumloquoy was still single. He called on her, and showed her portions of the bread and cheese she had given him on that doleful night when they were wrenched from each other's arms. Through all the battles in which he had been engaged, he had carried it as a token and for a sign. A marriage speedily followed.

Early in the present century there was a public-house in Bridge Street, Kirkwall, which was a favourite resort of the press-gang, especially on market days, and not a few young men got into trouble there. The method adopted for trapping unsuspecting youth was somewhat as follows. One of the press-gang would take up a position at a window up-stairs, whilst two of his companions were secreted near the front of the building on the ground-floor. If a likely-looking young man was seen passing along the street, a shilling was dropped over the upper window. The youth would stop, pick it up, and whilst he was so engaged, the press-gang pounced upon him. The baton was then laid on his shoulder, and he was blandly told that, having accepted the shilling, he would now have to go and serve His Majesty. Many a young man was captured in this way, and there is no doubt that such tactics as these helped considerably to rouse the feelings of the people against the press-gang.

One of the most touching incidents that

occurred in Orkney in pressgang times was in connection with the capture of David Cromarty, North-house, Deerness. He was sitting smoking one day when his wife gave the alarm that the pressgang was approaching. David was prepared for such an eventuality, and had so constructed the shelves of a press that they came out on hinges and gave sufficient room behind as a hiding-place. When the pressgang entered the house, Mrs Cromarty was busily engaged at her spinning-wheel, and she put on such a bold front that the constables began to suspect that their man had made good his escape. Her three-year-old child David was playing at her feet on the floor, whilst the pressgang was searching the 'hallan' and the 'peat-neuk' for his father; and the little fellow clapped his hands in glee as he saw them going everywhere but the right place. At last, when they were on the point of leaving, the child, evidently thinking he was witnessing a game at hide-and-seek, innocently shouted: 'Da's in the press!' The mother tried to drown his voice, but this only made him the more determined to let himself be heard, and he finished up by pointing to his father's place of concealment. Who can describe the anguish of the poor woman as she saw the constables, by accepting the information so innocently given, capture her husband?

The man who was looked upon as the greatest hero in Deerness in those days was Andrew Papley. The constables, after a long search, at last found him in the west end of the parish, and chased him into the adjoining parish of Holm. Papley launched a boat and put off to sea, where he was promptly followed by the pressgang. For a while, he seemed to be holding his own, but at last one of his oars broke, and he was forced to take refuge in one of the many caves which stud the coast at that place. Being discovered in this retreat he resolved to make a dash for liberty. Arming himself with the broken oar, he rushed at his captors, dealing Magnus Budge a terrific blow on the nose. As Papley was courting the sister of the other constable, he thought he had little to fear from that individual, and was passing him with a friendly nod; but the officer tripped him up, and he was marched off a prisoner to Kirkwall. As things turned out, however, Papley had never to engage in active service. By the time he reached Leith, news had been received of the great victory at Waterloo, and he was therefore allowed to return home. As for Magnus Budge, he carried to the grave the mark of the blow which he received from Papley. A growth, said to be as large as a tomato, developed on the point of his nose, which was always alluded to as the pressgang mark, and some people are still alive who knew the man, and testify to the truth of the story as to the way in which he received the injury.

As showing how heroic the fair daughters of Orcadia can be when occasion demands it, one more anecdote may be given. In pressgang times a large vessel hove-to off the Moul Head of Deerness, signalling for a pilot. In response, a crew of four men at once put off to offer their services. As they neared the ship, how-

ever, they began to suspect that she was a cruiser in disguise, and they therefore resolved to return to the shore as speedily as possible. The moment the Deerness men put about, a boat manned by blue-jackets shot round the offside of the disguised vessel. A most exciting race then ensued. Though the natives had fewer oars, they knew the tidal currents better than their pursuers, and therefore managed for a time to retain their lead. Two young women—Barbara Wick and Barbara Dinnie—having noticed the contest, at once concluded what it meant. They therefore threw aside their cards and spinning-wheels, and rushed to the cliffs, gathering a lapful of stones apiece as they ran. Barbara Wick then took up her stand at the top of the Gate, as it was called, and eagerly watched the close of the exciting chase, whilst her companion continued to gather stones. In the Deerness boat was her avowed lover, and she was resolved that he would not be captured if she could prevent it. The man-of-war boat, after getting through the tideway, was gradually gaining ground, and it looked as if it were impossible for the men to land and get up the cliffs in time to escape. Barbara, who was watching the race with breathless anxiety, seeing her friends hesitate, as if not sure where to find a landing-place, by voice and signal directed them into a safe *voie*. As they jumped ashore, they were assisted by the intrepid woman, and, as they scrambled up the crags, she boldly covered their retreat. As soon as the Deerness men had got safely over the rocks, Barbara turned and faced the foe alone. When the sailors landed, they tried to mount the crags, but were assailed with a shower of stones. The moment a tar tried to move upwards, a stone was sent towards him with unerring aim, with the result that the woman was enabled for a long time to hold the passage. By-and-by, however, her supply of stones ran out, and one of the sailors made a dash for her. Taking her in his arms, he attempted to implant a kiss on her lips. But Barbara was strong as she was bold, and she succeeded in hurling her assailant down the pass upon his companions, so that they were all precipitated to the shore in a struggling mass. After that, the sailors beat an inglorious retreat.

RAIN-GAMBLING IN CALCUTTA.

TEN o'clock in the morning found us in a *gharry ticca*; jolt, squeak, shake, over tramway lines that bend axle-trees and set teeth on edge, and we are in the busy Strand. Past banks we go and warehouses, shipping offices and places of business, past trucks and trams and carts of every sort. This is the port of Calcutta; and by the quays lie many ships, P. and O. steamers, to take the elect to England; the Burma boats, to take unlucky soldiers to Burma; the opium ships, which trade with China; and many a tall sailing-ship from Bristol, Dundee, and other British ports. We meet a string of bullock-carts, and thread through them, our *gharry wallah* and the other dirty ruffian who acts as *syce* discoursing shrilly. The nearly naked

bullock-drivers answer by convulsive twisting of the much-enduring bullock's tail, and we shave past, turning right-handed into Harrison Road. Harrison Road is a Calcutta glory. It has electric light. Native houses are here exalted; they have several storeys, some one, some two, some three, and stand at many and interesting angles to the street. Here is one with the end of it sharpened like the bow of a boat, for no apparent reason. It is three storeys high, and for blank idiocy of design stands alone in my memory. On, past a dirty, muddy recess by the side of the road, where are fakirs, cows, a few booths, and general filth. One wild man of them, a few weeks back, stabbed a policeman in the road in broad daylight, by way of protest against 'moving on.' The fakirs are mostly naked, but some are covered with ashes. Strange objects to European eyes in a big street of a big city; but the Anglo-Indian loses all faculty of surprise—a naked fakir, and 'Colonel' Lucy Booth, with her loose hair, her peculiar dress, and eloquent enthusiasm, create about the same amount of languid interest. It is only those who have the art or means of idling, that retain the faculty of looking for the sake of looking.

Here we are! a narrow muddy lane, native shops on each side, where they sell grain and *ghee* and sweetmeats. Overhead, the houses almost touch. A crowd is always passing through—every sort of man treads the 'Afim-a-chow-rusta' (the Opium Road). Does it not lead from the Opium Exchange past the house of Chooni Lall, the *marwari*? Come in, then, and smell the *genius loci*. Up a high step, down a short and narrow passage, and babel! bedlam! a shouting, roaring, sweating, jostling, laughing crowd—white men, black men, brown men, Chinamen—specimens of every sort of indweller in heterogeneous Calcutta, save only of the Sahib, the lord of the earth. There is a square court all round it—the stalls of the *marwaris* on one side; stairs lead up to the watch-tower. A fat *marwari*, with nothing on but a loin-cloth and a heavy gold chain, leans over a rail half-way up. He holds up three fingers, shouting the odds down to the din below. How the folds of flesh thicken and settle round his middle as he bends sideways! On one roof is the tank, some six feet square, perhaps two or three inches deep, with a spout that leads into the court below. In the tank is a nail bent flat upon its side. When that nail is covered with water, the spout runs, and bets are decided.

Come down again to where old Chooni Lall himself sits cross-legged—cheery, genial, and wrinkled. He is always glad to see you. He never mentions a bet. You ask the price, unable in the clamour of tongues to hear and understand. He murmurs six and a half. Come, let us bet, and see how it is done. Here

goes for ten rupees. The broker holds it up—more shouting, more laughing, more fingers held up. He tells you he has sold it at seven; the price is rising. Supposing that it rains between now and nine o'clock at night, we shall win six rupees for every rupee of our stake, our own rupee making up seven, the quoted price. Chooni Lall will take an anna in every rupee for brokerage. He is already worth many lakhs, for fortunes are won and lost here every day in the monsoon. The very sugar-cane seller at the door, who doles out sticks of sugar-cane for two *pice*, is worth thousands of rupees. You can bet either way for or against the rain, for to-day or to-morrow or against any fixed day, if you can find a taker. You can take your choice of the two periods of hours from six A.M. till noon, or from six A.M. till nine P.M. Of course, to a man who bets that rain will fall in the first period, far longer odds are offered. It rarely rains, even in the monsoon, between those hours; and I have seen four hundred to one offered.

Rich men deposit large sums with Chooni Lall—he is also a banker—and lay odds on the rain falling within a certain month. For the month in which the monsoon usually breaks, they lay five and six to one on the rain; and it would undoubtedly be a very good bet. Brokers themselves bet but rarely—their brokerage pays them; but of course there comes often a certainty of winning by easy hedging. The odds are not hard to foretell. Every bet is sold in the open market, and the price recorded. The place is really a sort of rain exchange, and as in the monsoon weather it is constantly full, there is never any difficulty in betting either way, supposing you be willing to take the current price.

Here is the place of payment. A piece of fat, good-natured copper-coloured *babudom* sits on the *charpoy* lading out rupees. Your name, your bet; he refers back, deducts brokerage, and hands over. There is no such thing known as non-payment, no welters in this court, and no racecourse thieves.

The natives of India, grasping, penurious Shylocks as so many of them are, yet gamble *de race* all of them. How they shout! One cannot understand what is going on, a curious mixture of Bengali and Hindustani wrapping up terms of art that are utterly bewildering. Some red-turbaned ruffian comes out of the crowd on a sudden, and laughs foolishly as he hands over two rupees. It is put up to auction, and is sold at eight. This is evidently a sensitive market. He watches with eager eyes his name written in the big book in Nagri characters, and departs nervously, to pass a day of fears and hopes, of vows and prayers to many gods—a day of movement of life new to him, and surely cheap at two rupees.

Here is a talkative Eurasian, explaining how to win a fortune. 'First you bet, then you eat' (that is, hedge); 'the odds are always shorter

towards the evening; then you bet again and eat again; and so on.' How excitedly he reckons up his rows of figures, his thin mean face working, his brown eyes gleaming. A fatherly policeman reminds him gently that the odds will not always shorten, and he starts as if some one had struck him, jabbers wildly in Hindustani, to stop, suddenly clutching at some delusive calculation. The policeman winks solemnly at us, and Chooni Lall's wrinkled smile is a little more marked. But the arithmetical Goanese cares for none of these things; he ciphers absorbed, hearing nothing, seeing nothing, not even that burly Rajput jostling past him.

What a picture it would make! the quaint court with its narrow veranda under the tank; the steep wooden stairs; the four-storeyed watch tower; the *marwari* stalls; the crowd, the wonderful moving crowd; men stirred out of their habitual sluggishness, their apathetic animalism, and by what? *Auri sacra fames*—the weird lust of gold. It is a study in *sepia*, the many shades of brown touched by the white of a babu's shirt, the flash of white teeth, or the white of eyes turned upwards to the Tower of Destiny. And over all, the unwinking sun of Bengal staring down even into this stuffy courtyard, as if there were no such thing as rain in the world. 'Ten,' they shout, and in five minutes it is twenty. Business is slackening; there is not much taking of the long odds.

Let us go up the tower. Its only other occupants are the paid watchers looking for clouds to rise from the bay to southward. We watch too, gradually falling into a lazy dream in the sunshine, staring over flat Bengal. And the clamour from below comes up to us a confused murmur of voices—the heavy refrain of the terrible gambling melody, a melody made of the tearing sound of falling money—of straining eyes, and grinning lips drawn back—of corded veins and rigid muscles—of trickling drops of sweat on tense brown faces—of men absorbed and drunk—a song of the mad joy of winning, the wild exhilaration over money, well-loved money, won without toil, its bitter wages—won by no strain of lazy limb and sleepy head. Yes, there is that swirl in the lilt of it. And the curses, the despair, the growing, growing blackness of loss, that can ill be borne by minds unbalanced; the sense of wrong, the mastering angry envy that another man should win while we lose; the grinding, crushing emptiness, the blank and dread to-morrow. This, too, the sharp dull voice of loss. Strophe and antistrophe they call against each other in that devil's chorus.

But the watcher says something and waves a signal. The noise below redoubles, and we forget to dream any more. Up comes a cloud rapidly, menacingly. Threes, twos, level money. The crowd surges, and half the sky is covered; the wind sighs a little. Two to one the tank runs. Ten to one. How the odds alter! The first drops come down like blood, as it were. The biggest, ugliest, richest *marwari* offers one thousand to one the tank runs. Once a poor coolie won his ease for ever by taking odds like this for his month's pay; but now none answers.

The place is getting curiously silent. **Splash!** **Splash!** One thousand to one! **Another** minute will do it!

The wind veers; the cloud rolls aside to break elsewhere. Immortal gods! one thousand to one. It makes even hardened gamblers take a little breath.

The tank is quickly dried. It was within the merest ace of overflowing. Away out of this, all sensible people; for this kind is a very potent devil, that takes little men by the neck and shakes them ratwise till their little individualities drop out like false teeth.

So we drove home—and my globe-trotter said it was an interesting place.

A MOORLAND REVERIE.

By hedgerows where the wild-rose clings,
And honeysuckles droop and trail,
And dragon-flies in burnished mail
Flit by and flash their jewelled rings;

By many a winding woodland way,
By sunny glades, and valleys cool
With moss, and fern, and reedy pool.
Where wayward watercourses stray;

I gain the moor: a soft air blows
Sweet-scented from the burning gorse;
And fresh from waters at their source
In runnels that the red deer knows.

Soft grassy billows fall and swell
O'er leagues of countless flowers ablaze
In thymy hollows; a golden haze
To purple melts on the distant fell.

I watch the heron floating by,
The hawk on level pinions hung,
Or plover anxious for her young
With wavering flight and wailing cry.

No city's tumult sounds to fret
The silence of this place of peace.
It gives from toil a sweet release,
And joys that leave no late regret.

And all my soul in peace I steep;
And Fame that ever walks with Fear,
And Love whose harvest is a tear,
Seem mocking dreams that mar a sleep.

Through field and woodland here I rove,
Aloof from Glory's headlong race,
Heedless of Beauty's fleeting grace
And casting loose the chains they wove.

For other pleasures now I prove;
My heart of passion dispossessed,
I find on Nature's sheltering breast
Delights that these could never move.

But Twilight now with shadows stoled,
One silver star set on her brow,
Steals down the western hills—and now
Her feet are on the fading wold.

G. C. P.

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NEWSPAPER OBITUARIES.

By a JOURNALIST.

A LARGE portion of my yearly income is earned by the writing of newspaper obituaries. As a journalist I have made that sort of work a specialty, and I find it pays excellently well. You may imagine it is a rather gruesome occupation; that it reminds one too forcibly of 'graves and worms and epitaphs;' and that, like the undertaker's mute, I must be a person of sad and solemn visage. But if you think so, you are much mistaken. My occupation has no depressing effect whatever on my countenance; and at the social gatherings of the London Press Club, up Wine Office Court, Fleet Street, my laugh rings the loudest and the merriest. And I cannot see why it should be otherwise. As an obituary writer, I live and move and have my being in the companionship of great men and women of all classes—poets, artists, statesmen, politicians, soldiers, scientists, and *littérateurs*. I trace their careers; I record their achievements; I note their influence on their time. What other effect could such employment have on the character of a man but to strengthen, enlarge, and ennoble it?

You must not suppose that the obituary is written in the newspaper office when the news of the death of some public personage arrives. All the big daily papers have obituaries of every man and woman of distinction who are advanced in years pigeon-holed, or 'in pickle,' as the phrase goes in journalistic circles. Some of these obituaries are brief; others extend to three or four or five columns, according to the relative importance of the subject; but they are all at the editor's hand, ready for publication at any moment, and he is thus enabled to give a sketch, columns long, of the career of a public man, a few hours, in some instances, after that career has closed for ever.

Of course, it happens now and then that

the newspapers are caught napping. A young public man, who would seem in the natural course of things to have a long lease of life, is suddenly and unexpectedly cut down by death, and there is no obituary ready for publication. In such a case, which fortunately is very rare, the best that is possible in the circumstances is done with the aid of a biographical dictionary, like *Men of the Time* and other books of reference. But an obituary turned out under such difficulties is, as a rule, little more than a string of dates.

The sudden death of Mr Parnell, for instance, was an event for which the newspapers were entirely unprepared. This was all the more vexatious, from the editor's point of view, as the leader of the Irish Nationalists was at the time one of the most prominent and interesting personages on the public stage of this kingdom, and columns of excellent 'copy' could have been made out of the events of his varied and exciting career, if only time had been given to prepare it. As it was, the obituaries of Mr Parnell were, with a few exceptions, dull and meagre, and entirely unworthy both of the subject and of the Press.

The average newspaper reader will read with greater interest and more at length the obituary of a public man who is suddenly cut off, than the obituary of one who has had a long illness, and for whose death the public are prepared. But of course it is of the latter that the best obituary is published. When a public man becomes seriously ill, his obituary is taken from the pigeon-hole, carefully gone over, freshened and brightened and brought up to date by the addition of the more recent events of his career. Of that phase of journalism we have had some illustrations within the past few years in the excellent obituaries which were published of Lord Tennyson, Professor Tyndall, Dr Oliver Wendell Holmes, and Mr J. A. Froude, all of whom had a long struggle with death before they finally succumbed.

There are many obituaries pigeon-holed in

newspaper offices the writers of which will never see them in print, for they themselves have died before the subjects of their biographical essays. A curious instance of this is afforded by the case of the *Times* obituary of Earl Russell (better known as 'Lord John Russell'), who died in 1878 at the ripe old age of eighty-six years, sixty-five of which were spent in public life. The obituary was written twenty years before the Earl's death. It was added to as time went on; but—strange fatality!—every one of its contributors died before the subject himself. In the end, notwithstanding the general freedom from superstition of journalists, no one could be got to touch the biography until the time came for its publication.

To take another instance. There is not a daily newspaper in the kingdom that has not had in readiness for years an obituary of Mr Gladstone. Twenty years ago, in 1875, the aged statesman wrote to Lord Granville resigning the leadership of the Liberal party, as, he said, he was too old for public affairs, and it was time for him to turn his thoughts to the other world. But, as every one knows, he came back to public life after a few years of retirement, and since then has made more history than in the previous forty years of his public career. When he goes, what excitement and confusion the event will create in the newspaper offices of the kingdom! Mr J. M. Barrie, in his entertaining story of newspaper life, *When a Man's Single*, tells us that the foreman printer and the sub-editor of the *Silchester Daily Mirror* often talked with bated breath of the amount of copy that would come in should anything happen to Mr Gladstone. 'The sub-editor, if he was in a despondent mood, predicted,' writes Mr Barrie facetiously, 'that it would occur at midnight. Thinking of this had made him a Conservative.'

Such an event occurring late at night would completely upset the internal economy of every newspaper office in the country. At midnight, the next morning's paper is practically all in type; and should the prophecy which the sub-editor of the *Mirror* indulged in when in a despondent mood come true, from five to ten columns of the matter in type would have to be discarded from the account of Mr Gladstone's long and eminent career.

The dangerous illness of the Prince of Wales, in December 1871, was the cause of events—curious and amusing—which will ever find a place in the history of British journalism. The death of the Prince seemed inevitable; for the doctors had begun to despair. One day the announcement went forth that His Royal Highness could not survive many hours, and accordingly every daily newspaper in the kingdom had its obituary of the Prince 'set,' or put into type. But the expected telegram announcing the death never came, and so at midnight, when the hour for going to press was close at hand, many a newspaper editor who had relied on his biographical sketch of the Prince filling six or eight columns of his paper, was compelled to fill up the blank columns with 'standing' matter of all kinds, such as old advertisements and older news. The principal newspaper editors subsequently sent the Prince, at his own request,

'proofs' of the obituaries; and pasted in a bulky scrap-book, they now form one of the strangest and most curious objects to be seen at Marlborough House.

The eccentric Lord Brougham also had the unique experience of being able to read his own obituaries in the newspapers. He was said to have circulated the report of his death in order to see how he would be referred to in the Press; and as many unpleasant things were written of his erratic political career, he could, in that case, hardly have enjoyed the outcome of the experiment. 'I wonder what the *Times* will say of me?' Lord Elgin—who brought the celebrated sculptures known as 'the Elgin Marbles' from Athens early in the century—was heard to murmur to himself on his death-bed in 1841; but his curiosity was not satisfied.

Robert Louis Stevenson had, like the Prince of Wales, the pleasure—the melancholy pleasure, perhaps—of reading before his death the good things the Press would write of him when he was no more. 'It has been a source of interest and amusement to me in this island home,' he once said to a visitor to Samoa, 'to read from time to time my obituary notices. The news travels so far before it can be contradicted, that it often becomes exciting. However, the climate is so admirable, that instead of furnishing the journals with interesting matter for paragraphs, I am likely to supply my editors with copy for a considerable time to come.' When the news reached this country in December of 1894 that the great novelist was dead, it was believed and hoped by many to be an unfounded rumour, and that once again Mr Stevenson would be able to read his obituary notices. But, alas! the announcement was only too true.

A still rarer experience is for one to write one's own obituary for a newspaper. Miss Harriet Martineau, the celebrated author, who was for many years a leader-writer on the staff of the *Daily News*, actually wrote the obituary which appeared in the issue of that journal for June 29, 1876, two days after her death. A more excellent or impartial review of her career could hardly have been produced. She says she had 'small imaginative and suggestive powers, and therefore no approach to genius;' and that 'she could popularise, though she could neither discover nor invent.' This remarkable obituary, which fills three and a half columns of the *Daily News*, was published precisely as it was written in 1855, when the author and the subject of it felt that her end was at hand. But she lived for twenty-one years after, during which the obituary notice lay in a pigeon-hole in the *Daily News* office.

But probably the most extraordinary circumstances in connection with this subject were two recent libel actions against London evening papers for statements contained in obituaries. In one case a man fell from a train in motion on a Welsh railway and was killed. There was nothing on his person to lead to his identification; but as some sketch-books belonging to an artist connected with a London weekly illustrated paper were found in an empty carriage of the train, it was presumed the dead man was the artist, and a telegram

to that effect was sent, in the ordinary course, to the London newspapers.

One of the evening journals published a sketch of the artist's life, in which it was said that if the deceased had only had more application and steadiness he would have attained a far higher position in illustrated journalism. But the artist was not dead at all; he had simply forgotten his paraphernalia in the railway carriage, and on returning to London, brought an action against the evening paper for libel, which he alleged was contained in its comments in the obituary notice. The action was settled out of Court by the payment of substantial damages.

In the other and more recent case, the person who complained of being slandered in an obituary was a music-hall artist. The notice of his death was complimentary to him as a singer, but it insinuated that he was an agent of the Irish-American dynamitards, and as such, frequently travelled between London, New York, and Paris. The newspaper in question got the news from an outside contributor—it was sent, probably, as a stupid or malicious practical joke; but the music-hall artist was handsomely compensated for its publication.

The obituary writer must be a diligent and omnivorous reader of newspapers and magazines and of current literature; and when he reads, he must always have beside him pencil and note-book, scissors, paste, and scrap-book. Thanks to my own extensive scrap-books and note-books, which I have indexed on a most elaborate scale, I can turn out at a few hours' notice a biographical sketch, from three to six columns long, of any of the thirty or forty leading men and women of the day in politics, literature, art, or science. It is only by such a system that full and accurate obituaries can be written. The public careers of these distinguished personages are recorded from day to day, from week to week, in the newspapers, and from month to month in the magazines, while occasionally, glimpses behind the scenes in their private lives are afforded by the autobiographies and reminiscences of contemporaries, which form a not insignificant part of current literature; and one needs to be very alert, and very laborious in the use of pencil and scissors and paste-brush, to keep note-books and scrap-books fully up to date.

Occasionally, men and women spring suddenly into fame. I may mention as recent instances Mr Crockett and Mr John Davidson in literature; Mrs Patrick Campbell on the stage; and Mr Asquith in politics. In some of these cases it is not easy to trace the career of a man up to the point at which he achieved renown, and his movements and doings became of interest to the general public. I have, therefore, often written to a man for necessary information which I could obtain from no other source, telling him, of course, I needed it for a biographical sketch, but refraining from mentioning the melancholy occasion on which that sketch would be published; and, as a rule, I have always attained the desired object.

In one instance, however—the case of a man who is still alive, and holds a very warm

corner in the hearts of millions of the people of these islands—I inadvertently mentioned the object for which I wanted the information I asked for, and as my letter reached him on his birthday, of all days of the year, I am afraid it was a most unseasonable and perhaps a most unwelcome communication. Nevertheless, it evoked the following genial reply:

'DEAR SIR—You acted the part of the skeleton at the feast in my household this morning, and acted it, I must say, in a becomingly gruesome fashion. At the breakfast table, while I was happily receiving the congratulations of my family on my seventy-sixth birthday—for I was born three-quarters of a century ago to-day—I opened your letter; and when I read of the purpose for which you require the information you asked for, truly the subsequent proceedings interested me no more. A moment after I was told I looked as if I might live for ever, comes your reminder that the newspapers are making preparations for my death! Well, now, wasn't that provoking! However, I'll forgive your untimely intrusion if you promise not to be too hard on me in your sketch of my career. I only hope that the newspapers circulate in Paradise, in order that I may read there what you have got to say of me.'

He gave me the information I desired; and in a letter of apology and thanks I sent him, I told him of the profound conviction which prevails in journalistic circles that the best guarantee of a long life is to have one's obituary pigeon-holed in a newspaper office, of which there are two remarkable illustrations in the cases of Earl Russell and Harriet Martineau.

AN ELECTRIC SPARK.*

CHAPTER V. (continued).

'I'm glad I spoke out about that, Ren,' said Brant, placing his foot upon a chair, resting his arm upon his knee, and speaking in a low, thoughtful manner. 'I must make more of a push of it now over the business, and insist upon taking my place there. I'm afraid I've been a bit careless.'

Rénée looked at him wistfully.

'Yes,' he said; 'that has been it, Ren. The old man made it too easy for me, and a young fellow likes a bit of pleasure: races and all that sort of thing.'

'It has troubled Papa a great deal, Brant,' said Rénée.

'S'pose so. But half of it was his fault; and it wasn't pleasant for us to have rows about it. Dear old boy; he's a good fellow, and we can't have him knocking up from too much work.'

'No, Brant, and it troubles me greatly.'

'Of course it does. I haven't noticed it so much till lately. Then the change came upon me all at once, and I felt startled.'

'Brant!'

'There, there; don't take it like that. Noth-

ing the matter but that he is fagged out, poor old boy. But there; I'll—we, I mean—we'll soon put that right: you work at home, I at the office.'

'Thank you, Brant, dear; we will indeed.'

'He won't like it at first; but he'll soon get used to it. So hard, you know, to alter a man's habits.'

'But, Brant, speak frankly to me. Dr Kilpatrick never will.'

'Of course he won't—doctors are such humbugs. They pretend things are worse than they are, and play mystery and hocus-pocus to make you think they are wonderfully clever when the patient gets well. No; there's nothing radically wrong with him, only fagged out. Worries too much. More he makes, the more he wants to make; and money doesn't mean happiness, Ren.'

'No, Brant.'

'It's very well, of course; but you want something else, or it's of no use.—Well, there; I must be off directly. I shall go straight back to the office, and there's going to be a bit of rebellion. I don't care what he says; I shall stick to the work and relieve him all I can.'

'Thank you, Brant. I know you will.'

'Yes. There's no nonsense about it now, Ren—I mean work, and to hold my own at the office: he must make me a junior partner.'

Rénée shook her head. 'I'm afraid he would not yet.'

'He must, dear. It is necessary for my position. Hang the money! I don't want that. I can get on with what I have now; but if a fellow is to command, he must have his commission. I'm only a sort of clerk, and there must be some change made.'

Rénée shook her head: she was too much in her father's confidence not to know a good deal about her cousin's career in Great George Street.

'Don't do that, my dear,' he said quietly. 'You must work with me for his sake. Ren, I'm four-and-twenty next year; I know all the flum of a fashionable man's life. It won't do. A fellow wants something more solid. Thank goodness, my life's mapped out, and Robert Dalton & Co. shan't stand still, I promise you. I mean to make you all proud of me and of what I do. He's a fine old fellow, and he has done a deal for me; and I'll let him see that I've got some of the right stuff in me after all.'

'Thank you, Brant,' cried Rénée, placing her hands in his. 'You don't know how happy you have made me,' she cried, the husky tone of his voice impressing her. 'I always told Papa that you would see through your folly soon, and be to us the good loving boy again that you were when you first came.'

'Thank you, too, dear,' he cried warmly, as he held her hands, but turned away his head a little. 'I say, don't think me a soft.'

'I am only too glad to see you moved, Brant, dear.'

'Are you, Ren? And you will help me in my plans?'

'Of course, dear; and if they result in weaning Papa from so much weary toil and restore him to his health, I shall be happy indeed.'

'Then you shall be happy, Ren,' he said earnestly—'Now, listen: I must be a partner for the sake of the position. You'll help me in that, too, for all our sakes?'

'Of course I will, dear.'

'Mind, it is for his sake. But once done, the rest will follow.'

'Yes, I see,' said Rénée.

'And you do believe in me now?'

'Yes, indeed I do,' she said, looking him full in his eyes.

'Thank you, dear,' he cried, folding her in his arms and kissing her warmly as he took her quite by surprise. 'We must make him consent to an early marriage, and'—

'Brant!' she exclaimed wildly as she wrested herself free, and gazed at him wide-eyed, cheek flaming, and astonished.

'Why, what's the matter, dear?' he said, trying to catch her to his breast again.

'Don't!'

Only that one word, but accompanied by a look full of indignation.

'Why, you silly little thing!' he said, laughing. 'Woman's nature. You love me, and promise me everything I could wish for, and then look flashes of lightning at me for trying to steal a kiss. What a naughty little cousin!'

'Brant!' she cried excitedly, 'you misunderstand me.'

'Oh, no; I don't, pussy. If there is any one I understand, it is you.—But there, so long as we understand each other, that will do. You know I love you, and have for these two years past, as a man loves the first woman who ever made his heart beat fast. I can wait. We have others to think of now more than of ourselves. We must study him, Ren, dear.'

'Brant,' she cried in horror at his quiet assumption of a right to speak as he did, 'are you mad?'

'Very nearly, dear—with joy. My darling cousin has shown me the secret of her dear little heart, and I know she loves me.'

'Oh yes,' she cried wildly. 'Cousin Brant, if I made you think I loved you, it was as my cousin—as my brother.'

'What!' he cried, laughing. 'Nonsense, Ren, dear. You don't know yourself yet. There; I love you all the better for your sweet girlish innocence.'

'No, no, Brant; don't—don't talk like that,' she cried wildly.

'Why, what has come to you, darling?' he said tenderly, as she turned hysterical.

'Don't—don't touch me,' she cried, almost fiercely. 'It is all a dreadful misunderstanding.'

'Is it?' he cried, with a hard look in his eyes, and his whole manner changing. 'I'll show you that it is not. You can't draw back now, Ren, for a girlish whim. Recollect, it is for poor uncle's sake, as well as our happiness. —Why, what do you mean? One minute you are all loving and kind; the next, ready to make me think— But there, nonsense! I know I startled you. I'll wait for a bit, and you'll soon think differently. Misunderstanding? Oh no, Ren, dear, there is no misunderstanding now. I take it that you have promised to be my little wife.'

'Brant,' she said, growing perfectly calm now, and speaking with quiet womanly dignity, 'listen to me.'

'Listen to you? Yes, I like to,' he said playfully.

'Oh, don't speak to me like that, Brant,' she said, losing her firmness for a moment.

'I can't guide my tongue when I speak to you, Ren—dear,' he said.

'Listen to me: you are purposely trifling.'

'No: serious as a judge,' he replied.

'Brant, stop this mocking way. You shall listen to me seriously. We were children together, and to me you have always seemed like a brother.'

'Nonsense!' he said sharply, and with the blood now beginning to tingle in his cheeks. 'I have always thought of you as my little wife. I told uncle I meant to marry you over a year ago, and again this morning.'

'Oh, no, no, no,' she cried excitedly.

'Don't be so silly, Ren. We are man and woman now, bound together to help him, perhaps to save his life.'

'Bound to help my dear father,' she cried, 'but not like that.'

There was such a look of horror in her eyes that he began to lose patience, but he mastered his rising temper, and said firmly: 'Yes: bound like that—for his sake.'

'But it is impossible,' she cried; 'never speak to me again like this.'

'What?' he cried, with his temper getting the upper hand for the moment; but he was master of himself again directly, and laughed unpleasantly. 'What an absurd girl you are! There; all right: hold me off a bit. I know.'

'Oh Brant,' she cried in so piteous a tone that he was startled, and gazed at her fiercely. 'You do not know.'

'What?' he cried. 'You mean— No: it isn't that,' he said in a low menacing tone. 'It couldn't be. Ren, I'm a man now—a man of strong feeling. I love you, and you are going to be my wife. Soon, too, for many reasons; so be sensible and wise, dear. Why, if it had been that which I thought, instead of a bit of coquetry on your part, I'd— Yes, I'd kill him.'

'Brant!'

'As I would some dog that had bitten me.'

She looked at him with the pupils of her eyes dilating, and the rage with which he had battled had had its way.

'Then it is,' he cried, catching her wrist. 'I suspected it; but I wouldn't believe it of you. What has he dared to say?'

She wrested her hand away, and looked at him defiantly.

'Yes,' he continued, 'I'd shoot him like a dog. And as for you— There; pish! you make me angry, dear. I couldn't help it. That's impossible. I won't say what I was going to— Yes; I will. Look here, then. You are only a girl, so let me tell you that it is dangerous to trifle with a strong man's love. If such a thing were possible—that you had listened to another, sooner than he should rob me of you—of one whom I have always looked upon as my wife—I'd—kill you.'

Brant seemed another man. His words came

in a savage whisper, which, in spite of her indignation, made *Rénée* shrink from him in horror, and for the moment, trembling. But in a short time she had recovered herself and spoke up bravely.

'You have no right to talk to me like that, Brant,' she cried. 'It is cruel and insulting.'

'Then there is something,' he said.

She made no reply, but looked in his eyes defiantly—the girl no longer, a strong woman now.

'Then that insolent pauper—that miserable time-serving sneak, Wynyan, has spoken to you. I suspected him. The hound! Mr Paul Wynyan, eh?'

She looked at him scornfully, but she was very white.

'Right! You don't deny it,' he continued. 'Not the first clerk who has made love to his master's daughter.'

'Brant, you have said enough.' She spoke quietly now. 'Pray, go, before you say words which must cause a cruel estrangement between us.'

'How sentimentally romantic we are! Cause an estrangement between us? Oh, do not think it, fairest cousin. So I'm to be honoured by having the proud young porter—I mean engineer, for a relative. Is it really he?—You are silent. Better tell me, so that I shall not make any mistake. It would be so sad if I did him a mischief, and he proved to be the wrong man.—Not a word? Then I suppose I am correct. Now, listen to me. I mean to be uncle's partner, and your husband; so I shall just go straight back to the office and thrash Wynyan till he cannot stand, and then bring the dog into uncle's room, and make him confess that he has taken advantage of his position of trust to address his master's daughter, and— Here, what are you going to do?' he cried as she darted to and rang the bell.

'Send for some one to protect me from your violence and insult, sir.'

'Then you set me at defiance?'

'Yes.'

'You throw over your poor suffering father.'

'Did you ring, ma'am?'

'Ask Miss Bryne to come here.'

The man withdrew.

'War, is it, then?' cried Brant, striding to the table and snatching the flowers he had brought from where they stood, and raising them to dash them down upon the carpet, only checking the impulse.

'No, no; I won't do that,' he said with a mocking laugh. 'It would be a pity. Get some wire, dear, and make them into a wreath to send to our dear Paul when I have had my interview with him. Don't make a mistake, Ren; I mean what I say, and'— He paused as he reached the door. 'Recollect, you are going to be my wife.'

He strode out of the house, and had hard work to check himself in a mad desire to give a slashing stroke at the neck of a marble statue on the landing, and then from banging the door.

He grew calmer, though, as he reached the street with a grim kind of calmness, and he

said to himself: 'That settles it. Fate had nothing else. It would have given me time, and I could have borrowed then of anybody. Well, all right. I wanted to be an honest man. Never mind; there's little Bella Endoza after all.'

CHAPTER VI.—A POOR CONSOLER.

That spray producer took so long in finding. 'Poor fellow!' said Miss Bryne, smiling in a late twilight fashion. 'I could see it in his eye. He has been very naughty, I'm afraid; but if he loves her, and is a good boy now, why should it not be so? I don't think dear Rénée loves him; but she has grieved a great deal about him when Robert has been put out; and though they are cousins, he might make her very happy; and it would be so sad for either of them to suffer a disappointment in early youth, as some one did whom I once knew.'

Miss Bryne sighed, and looked in the glass at her pleasant, amiable, but decidedly *passé* aspect, and mused upon the past.

'It is a terrible thing this love, and I fear me that it produces more pain than pleasure in the world. But dearest Rénée would make any man happy and good if he could win her.—Lilies! How suitable a present for her. Scent only—memories of the dead flowers—for poor me. Heigh-ho! never mind; I will not murmur. It might have been, had he lived; and now—who knows what may be.'

Miss Bryne stood with her brow wrinkled, looking very dreamy for a time. Then the smile came faintly upon her lip again.

'I think I'll leave them together a little longer. No: perhaps I ought not to. I'll go down now.' At that moment a sound which came in through the open window made her start. 'Why, he has gone!' she said in surprise; and then in a hurried manner she descended to the drawing-room, where Rénée stood trembling and agitated, face to face with a something which had crept into her breast, and of whose presence she had not been fully aware till her cousin rudely dragged the veil aside.

Miss Bryne entered softly and quickly. 'I really cannot find the spray producer anywhere, my dear.' Then archly: 'I hope you did not think me long?'

At these words Rénée slowly turned her face, and Miss Bryne's manner changed. That face was easy to read; and hurrying to her niece's side, she caught the agitated girl in her arms.

'Rénée, my darling, what is the matter?'

It was like the touch of the discharging rod upon a Leyden jar. One moment Rénée had stood there overcharged with human electricity, a passionate, indignant woman, vibrating with the intense storm evoked by that which she had gone through; the next, the cloud had burst with its rain, and she was sobbing with an hysterical rush of tears in Miss Bryne's arms.

'Yes? No?' mused the elder lady as she caressingly tried to soothe and comfort her charge. 'Oh, this love, this love!' she said to herself. 'It must be so. The reaction that is sure to come after the self-surrender—this owing to the passion so deeply hidden in the

breast. Ah, what we poor trembling women suffer for their sake.'

'It is, yes,' mused Miss Bryne as she gently led Rénée to a couch, and drew the agitated face down till it was hidden in her breast. 'He has told her, and she loves him; but the poor heart rebels still against its master. Ah, so like—so like. But it is nature, I suppose; and throughout nature is so cruel, even the gentle birds can peck. Oh, how well I know.'

'Rénée, dearest,' she whispered, 'what is it?'

There was no reply.

'Can you not confide in me, my own?'

Still no reply, but Rénée's arms tightened about her aunt's neck.

'That is right, dear. I know your brave little heart feels crushed, and you cannot trust yourself to speak. But let me help you, dearest. It will do you good, I know: I could not help seeing what he meant by bringing those flowers and asking me to go.'

Rénée raised her head with her face now flushed and her eyes flashing.

'Did Brant ask you to go, aunt?'

'Yes, dearest.—But don't, pray, don't look at me like that.'

'How could you, aunt! How could you!' cried Rénée, shrinking away in her indignation.

'My darling, I did it for the best; and I thought perhaps that—that—though you might think like this, you would thank me afterwards.'

'Oh aunt! shame!' cried Rénée angrily.

'Don't speak to me like that, dearest,' pleaded Miss Bryne. 'But tell me: Brant did come to propose to you?'

'Yes: my cousin!'

'Well, yes, dear, the relationship is near; but then we have precedent amongst people in the highest ranks of society. And besides, love, dear Brant is like myself, related in the second degree. Really, dearest, I do not think you need raise that as an obstacle. Of course it was quite right to name it at first.'

Rénée's weakness had passed away, and she looked at her aunt with an air of perplexity mingled with contempt and indignation, which increased when Miss Bryne drew her closer once more and kissed her tenderly.

'You are agitated now, dearest,' whispered Miss Bryne, 'and it is only natural, my love. Ah Rénée, my child, I have suffered too. But you might confide in me, dear. It would make me so happy to feel that I was everything to you, and I know, darling, it would comfort this brave little throbbing heart.'

'Aunt, I have nothing to confide more than you know,' said Rénée coldly.

'My darling!' said Miss Bryne reproachfully.

'Well, what do you wish me to say? I have always thought of Brant as my brother. He took me by surprise, and I felt that it was dreadful.'

'Yes, dear, at first. It is how a woman should feel. But afterwards?'

'Afterwards, I made him passionately angry, and he left me after saying the cruellest things.'

'But you had relented first, dear?'

'Relented? Oh aunt, this is too dreadful. How can you be so weak?'

'Because I am a suffering woman, my child, and we are all alike. I could confide in you, dearest, and I should like you to confide in me. But there; I know what it is. One feels the pain, the agony of it all; but, *Rénée*, dearest, we should not quite believe in our hearts: they are liable to deceive us, and to prompt us to say things which may cause us to repent for years.—No, no; don't try to leave me, dear. I want to sympathise with you as I can. You know once, dear—ah, so many years ago! there was some one who never would have proposed to me; but if he had, I know then that I should have indignantly refused him, and then relented ever after. Come, try and believe in me, and make me the receptacle of all your thoughts, love; and think, I beg of you, for the sake of your father's happiness, don't be too ready to treat all that has passed as final. You may see later on that it was to be, only you checked the current of two loving hearts. If Brant loves you, as I think he does, ought you to blast his hopes?'

'Aunt, dear, I cannot bear this. Please, say no more. There; I must—I must go.'

'Yes, dear, you shall. I know solitude is so great a comfort at such times. But so is sympathy, dearest—a woman's sympathy, especially of one who is perhaps as weak as yourself. You want it now, if ever.'

'Yes,' thought *Rénée* in the solitude of her own room, 'I want it now, if ever. Poor aunt! And yet she loves me very dearly, in her way.'

GINSENG.

THE most prized drug in the entire Chinese pharmacopœia—that medley of fearful and wonderful things—is the famous Ginseng, the root of a plant belonging to the Ivy tribe, which has for centuries been regarded as a very elixir of life, and supposed to be endowed with almost miraculous properties. While of prime importance in China and Japan, its use is by no means confined to these countries. It is the principal tonic used in Central Asia, and in Oriental countries generally, and indeed was at one time introduced into Europe, where it met with some favour, until sarsaparilla supplanted it in popularity.

So great is the demand for ginseng in China, that the finest kinds command enormous prices; the drug, according to quality, selling at from six dollars to four hundred dollars an ounce. Doubtless, its dearness contributes largely, with such a people as the Chinese, to raise its celebrity so high. The rich and the mandarins probably use it mainly out of pure ostentation, as its cost puts it beyond the reach of the common people. To meet the wants of the poorer classes, many other roots are substituted, the most important of which is American ginseng, the product of an allied species, which is largely im-

ported from the United States. This American ginseng is said to be much used in the domestic medicine of the States to the west of the Alleghanies; but it is regarded by regular medical practitioners as quite worthless.

Notwithstanding the firm belief which the Chinese have in the extraordinary powers of the genuine native root, Europeans have hitherto failed to find any remarkable properties in it, and it has no active principle and no medicinal action. Like the mandrake, which was accounted so potent in former days, it no doubt derives its virtues largely from the faith of the patient. Dr Porter Smith, however, mentions having seen some cases in which life appeared to have been prolonged for a time by its use. M. Maack states that a Cossack of his party, having accidentally chopped off a finger with an axe, applied an ointment made of ginseng to the wound, which healed rapidly. The Chinese believe it to be a sovereign remedy for almost all diseases, and more particularly for exhaustion of body or mind. M. Huc says that 'they report marvels of its curative powers, and no doubt it is for Chinese organisations a tonic of very great effect for old and weak persons; but its nature is too heating, the Chinese physicians admit, for the European temperament, already, in their opinion, too hot.'

At one time the ginseng grown in Manchuria was considered to be the finest, and it became so scarce in consequence, that an Imperial edict was issued prohibiting its collection. All the supplies of the drug collected in the Chinese Empire are Imperial property, and are sold to those allowed to deal in it at its weight in gold. The ginseng obtained in Corea is now accounted most valuable. The root of the wild plant is preferred to that of the cultivated, and the quality of the drug is supposed to improve with the age of the plant. The export from Corea is a strict monopoly, the punishment for smuggling it out being death. The total export is only about twenty-seven thousand pounds annually; but owing to its great value, even this small quantity yields a considerable revenue, which is said to be the king's personal perquisite. Ginseng is also grown in Japan, where it was introduced from Corea, but as there the plant grows much more luxuriantly than in its native country, the root is considered less active, and is not so much esteemed.

Though the product of the wild ginseng is most valued, the plant is carefully cultivated in some parts of Corea. It is raised from seed which is sown in March. The seedlings are transplanted frequently during the first two or three years, and great care is taken to shade them from the sun and rain. Healthy plants mature in about four years, but the roots are not usually taken up until the sixth season. Ordinary ginseng is prepared by simply drying the root in the sun or over a charcoal fire. To make red or clarified ginseng, the root is placed in wicker baskets, which are put in a large earthenware vessel with a closely fitting cover, and pierced in the bottom with holes. The whole is then set over boiling water and steamed for about four hours. The ginseng is

afterwards dried until it assumes a hard resinous, translucent appearance, which is a proof of its good quality. That of the best quality is generally sold in hard, rather brittle, translucent pieces, about the size of the little finger, and from two to four inches in length. Its taste is mucilaginous, sweetish, and slightly bitter and aromatic.

The greatest care is taken of the pieces of the finest quality. M. Huc says that throughout China no chemist's shop is unprovided with more or less of it. According to the account given by Lockhart (*Medical Missionary in China*) of a visit to a ginseng merchant, it is stored in small boxes lined with sheet-lead, which are kept in larger boxes containing quicklime for absorbing moisture. The pieces of the precious drug are further enclosed in silk wrappers and kept in little silk-lined boxes. The merchant, when showing a piece bared of its wrappings to Mr Lockhart for his inspection, requested him not to breathe on or handle it, while he dilated on its merits, and related the marvellous cures he had known it to effect. The root is covered, according to quality, with the finest embroidered silk, plain cotton cloth, or paper.

In China, ginseng is often sent to friends as a valuable present, and in such cases there is usually presented along with the drug a small finely finished double kettle for its preparation. The inner kettle is made of silver, and between it and the outside copper vessel is a small space for holding water. The silver kettle fits in a ring near the top of the outer covering, and is furnished with a cup-like cover, in which rice is put, with a little water. The ginseng is placed in the inner vessel, the cover put on, and the whole apparatus set on the fire. When the rice in the cover is cooked, the medicine is ready, and is eaten by the patient, who drinks the ginseng tea at the same time.

The dose of the root is from sixty to ninety grains. During the use of the drug, tea-drinking is prohibited for at least a month, without any other change of diet. It is taken in the morning before breakfast, and sometimes in the evening before going to bed.

In India, Persia, and Afghanistan, ginseng is known as *chob-chini*, the 'Chinese wood.' In these countries it is prepared either as a powder, which is compounded of ginseng, with gum-mastic and sugar-candy, equal parts of each, about a drachm being taken once a day, early in the morning; or as a decoction, in the preparation of which an ounce of fine parings is boiled for a quarter of an hour in a pint of water. There are two ways in which the tonic is taken. The first is a truly Oriental luxurious method, affected by wealthy people, and especially by Afghan princes. The patient retires to a garden, where his senses are soothed by listening to music, the song of birds, and the bubbling of a flowing stream, and enjoying the balmy breeze. He avoids everything likely to trouble and annoy him, and will not even open a letter lest it should contain bad news; and the doctor forbids any one to contradict him. Some grandees of Central Asia go through a course of forty days of this pleasant regimen every second year. The other and

more commonplace method of taking ginseng requires no other precautions than the avoiding of acids, salt, and pepper, and choosing summertime, as cold is supposed to cause rheumatism.

AN UNAUTHORISED INTERVENTION.*

CHAPTER II.

INSTINCTIVELY, in his utter amazement, Jack advanced a step. At a sign from the colonel, who had evidently mistaken his meaning, half-a-dozen revolvers were pointed at his head.

'Resistance is useless, señor,' said the officer. 'The house is surrounded—and the soldiers have their orders. Surely Don Juan, after his long absence, isn't already tired of his native country? It would be a pity if he were to share the fate of his distinguished father—just yet.'

His tone was not very pleasant; but of course Jack had not the same reason to resent it as the real Juan Tovar might have had, any more than he had the inclination to resent the laugh with which the words were received. He confronted the colonel quite calmly: the instant's thought had shown him the position—and its possibilities.

'I am sorry to disappoint you, Señor Coronel,' he said, very slowly; 'but might it not be as well to make sure, first of all, that you have the right man?'

The colonel threw out his palms in a significant gesture.

'Because, in the other case,' Jack went on, unheeding, 'it may prove very uncomfortable for the Señor Coronel and his Government if they detain a British subject without reasonable cause, and without reasonable inquiry. That, of course,' he added, 'is a matter for the Señor Coronel. I am powerless.'

'Ca! I am glad Don Juan recognises the facts—for his own sake.' He resumed his tone of irony. 'And so you are a British subject now, señor? I was aware of your residence in England for a year or two, but not that it absolved you from the risks of meddling with the affairs of San Estevan.'

'I have nothing more to say,' replied Jack, 'except this: I have already given your subordinates all particulars of myself; the *Idaho* is still at anchor, and you may easily satisfy yourself of their truth; and if not, I shall hold myself free to take such steps as I may think proper to get reparation for this outrage. You have heard my protest, Señor Coronel. The rest is for yourself.'

Then he lit a cigar carelessly, by way of hinting that he had no further interest in the proceedings. The onlookers exchanged glances: they seemed struck by his attitude of indifference. But the colonel, who was an obstinate man by nature, and incapable of more than one idea at a time, smiled blandly in the consciousness of his superior presence.

'Oh! it is good acting,' he remarked. 'But

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Don Juan does not flatter our intelligence. We expected him; we did not expect (even we) that he would land at Sampacho labelled with his name and object, or without a story. When he left Valparaiso on the 14th'— He paused for a contradiction.

Jack calmly blew out his match. 'We seem to be losing time,' he said.

'Then you surrender to the charge, señor?'

'Pardon me: I submit to force. You have my warning of the probable consequences.' And seeing no alternative, he handed over his revolver as he spoke.

'Don Juan is wise,' replied the colonel, accepting the weapon. 'You have no other arms on your person? Very good!—For myself, I am quite ready to take the responsibility for my action, either now or when the British Government chooses to interfere.'

'Now that we understand each other, I am at your service. May I ask what you intend to do with me?'

'Pray, assure yourself, señor. On my part, nothing very terrible,' said the officer, unbending under the obvious delusion that his prisoner had thrown up his hand. 'I shall only have the honour to conduct you to-morrow to the city of San Estevan. My own duty ends when I deliver you to the military Governor: it is for him, under the instructions of His Excellency the President, to deal with serious cases of rebellion—such as this.'

'And in the meantime?'

'I am afraid you must spend the night in close custody. Believe me, however, that we shall do our utmost to make your visit to the republic—which,' said he, with grim humour, 'may not be a long one—as comfortable as we can.'

With that he turned to give some instructions to his subordinates, and for a minute Jack was left to his own thoughts. These, one must admit, were scarcely so desponding as they should have been. Indeed, he smiled to himself as he pictured the look on Sir Ralph Petre's face if that worthy diplomatist were to see him in his present plight, held prisoner as a dangerous rebel within ten minutes of his landing, and now watched over in every movement by a dozen pairs of keen and suspicious eyes!

His pleasant musings were broken by the colonel's voice. 'Now, Don Juan,' he said.

'I am ready, Señor Coronel,' he answered. 'But, first, there is one favour that I must beg of you.'

The colonel bowed. 'If it is within my power'—

'I have simply to ask you to address me, while we are together, by the name I have given. It isn't a matter of much importance, perhaps; but I have no wish to pose, even for a day or two, as a man whom I have never seen.'

'Oh! as you please,' said the other, laughing carelessly.

He signed to his officers, and preceded Jack to the door. Outside, the street was occupied by an imposing array of soldiers under arms, and beyond them the presence of the curious villagers was dimly to be discerned in the

shadow of the houses. Jack took his place by the colonel's side; the troops closed round; and, at the word of command, the party moved off in dead silence through the line of tumble-down huts. It was a novel experience to the Englishman, and in his state of mind not altogether an unpleasant one, to feel himself the central figure of all this hubbub. For once in his life, at least, he was a personage of some importance. The sensation was still fresh when they drew up presently before a low, white-washed building, and the information was vouchsafed to him that he had reached his lodging for the night. The larger portion of his guard was told off for various duties around and about the house; and, surrounded by the rest, he was conducted through a vile *patio*—which seemed to be used chiefly for stabling purposes—to an equally vile chamber, furnished only with a pallet and a couple of chairs, and far from clean. Here he had a last tussle with the Commandante. Learning that he was expected, for precaution's sake, to share the little room with two soldiers, he objected in the strongest terms. They could post half-a-dozen outside his door, and another half-dozen at the window, and as many around the place as they chose; but he insisted so energetically upon privacy within it, that at last the officer gave in. Then he wished his prisoner '*Buenas noches*,' and withdrew with his men.

Left to his meditations, Jack threw himself upon the pallet and indulged in a hearty bout of laughter. At the moment, it was the ludicrous side of the position that struck him most of all. He did not blame his captors overmuch. Evidently they had some ground to expect the arrival of the redoubtable Juan Tovar; he was not surprised, after what he had heard on board the *Idaho*, to find how much they feared him; and, for all that he knew to the contrary, they might be as much alike as twin-brothers. He amused himself with the fancy of the Señor Coronel's disappointment when the mistake was discovered, and hugged the anticipation of his own part in the scene. And in the meantime? Well, he felt no inclination to hurry on the crisis; the adventure pleased him; and as he meant to be as comfortable as circumstances would permit, he set himself for slumber with an easy conscience. Almost the last sound that came to his ears before he fell off was the steam-whistle of the *Idaho* as she resumed her voyage northward. It mingled in his dreams all that night with the tramp-tramp of the sentinels outside his door.

Even the annoyances of the next morning did not serve to depress his spirits. His toilet was made, his breakfast eaten, under the eyes of his guards; he loitered for two hours in the *patio*, stared at by a succession of unwashed warriors. They did not grow in one's favour under the light of day: their uniforms seemed more ragged, their demeanour more villainous, their whole appearance as far removed from soldierly smartness as could well be imagined. He was relieved at half-past nine by the coming of the colonel, with the welcome news that everything was in readiness for his departure—if the señor pleased.

'The señor is only too glad,' he returned.

The scene in the village was a repetition of that of the previous evening. The most elaborate precautions had evidently been taken to ensure his safe custody and prevent the possibility of a rescue. He had the usual escort; from the inn to the railway depôt, not more than a thousand yards in distance, the road was lined by troops; the brown-faced villagers had been crushed back into the spaces between the huts, whence they watched the procession with curious eyes; and the little station itself was occupied by the military, to the total exclusion of the populace. By this time Jack had become rather indifferent to their presence, and glanced with more interest at the train. It consisted, first, of a fairly-powerful engine, badly in need of some paint; a carriage of four compartments, which had probably been condemned as antiquated by the most backward railway company in England ten years before; five or six open wagons, in one of which a crowd of natives with market baskets were huddled, having apparently been evicted from their legitimate places; and, lastly, the conductor's van. Everywhere there were soldiers—in three of the four compartments, in the van, even on the engine. If this were on his account alone, then indeed were the authorities in a nervous state.

The second compartment was empty: the colonel motioned him to take his seat in it.

'After you, señor,' said he, stepping aside.

'My thanks—no! My place is on the engine.'

Jack stared at him. 'On the engine! But that will be a little uncomfortable, won't it?' he suggested.

'Doubtless,' said the other, with a shrug of his shoulders. 'It is only a matter of precaution.'

'But surely you don't fear a rescue, Señor Coronel?'

'Oh! it is always as well to be prepared for one,' was the reply. 'And now, if I may trouble you'—

Jack stepped in without another word, and was followed by four under-officers. Just then his thoughts were too busy with this new development to notice that they showed their revolvers very ostentatiously. What if the colonel's fears were realised? He recollected the English-speaking Indian, and for the first time saw the full significance of the incident. If he, too, had mistaken him for Tovar, he could not gainsay the possibility of a rescue being attempted. And in that event? It sounded very well and very romantic in theory: it was not unlikely to be somewhat unpleasant for him in solid reality. And a slight shiver ran through him as his eyes fell on his companions' revolvers.

He was still in his reverie when the train started on its way across the broad stretch of jungle which intervenes between the seaboard and the foot-hills. It was the beginning of a long and tedious journey. From Sampacho to the capital it is little more than forty miles; but of that nearly the half is a steady climb across the great mountain-range of San Estevan, beyond which the city lies; and this upward trip, according to one of the officers, was never done in less than seven hours. Then the day

was uncomfortably hot; his guards were not inclined to be sociable; and to a man wedged in the middle of a railway carriage, while the train crawls along at seven or eight miles an hour, the best scenery loses its attraction—although Jack, to be honest, did not trouble himself much with scenery under the best of circumstances. For one thing, however, he had the opportunity of deciding his plan of campaign without interruption. Barring the undesirable chance of a rescue, he felt little dread of the upshot. If the worst came to the worst, he had always the British Consul at San Estevan, Mr Chalmers, upon whom to fall back. He knew Chalmers well, having met him frequently at Salvatierra; but for divers reasons, not unconnected with Sir Ralph Petre, he did not wish to trouble him unless in the last resort, and of that he had no fear. Sooner or later, the discovery of his identity must be made; there was sure to be somebody in the capital who knew young Tovar. Meanwhile, he concluded, it was no business of his to help a tottering Government. All his sympathies were with the other side; and if by doing nothing he could confirm his captors in their mistake without compromising himself, and thus perhaps render the rebels some assistance—why, it was no more than the authorities deserved. He mapped out his course of action accordingly. It was one that might entail some discomfort, but of that he thought nothing: it was an experience in the present, and for the future it would at least be something worth telling in the smoking-room of his club.

The day passed slowly and without incident. Before long the train was toiling painfully through the mountain-passes, now ascending successive plateaux by gentle gradients, now skirting the edge of a picturesque ravine; the vegetation began to lose its distinctive tropical character, to approach more nearly to that of Europe; and, after the sultry heat of the coast-region, the freshness of the hill-air was delightful. Even here the colonel did not relax his precautions. At every little station at which they stopped—although scarcely a native was ever to be seen, save one or two who left or joined the party in the wagon behind—a number of soldiers descended and patrolled the line on both sides until they were ready to start again.

It was not until late in the afternoon that the monotony was broken. They had climbed the three thousand feet to the great plain of San Estevan; the mountains were behind them at last; and, as they drew up at a wayside station, Jack learned with relief that they had now a level run of barely ten miles to the capital. Then he chanced to glance out of the window. The station stood in the middle of an orange grove, the trees coming right up to the barriers; and through these, at this moment, several of his Indian fellow-travellers—they of the wagon—were passing between a file of the military. Jack started as he noticed the last one, who had halted for an instant to address a soldier. He saw only the man's profile, but it was enough: he could have sworn to it anywhere as that of his English-speaking acquaintance of the previous evening. Suddenly there

was a commotion. The soldier seemed to hustle the Indian; quick as a flash, the latter turned upon him, struck him heavily in the face, and sent him reeling amongst his comrades; then, in a couple of bounds, he sought refuge in the orange grove; and, wheeling for a second before he disappeared behind the trees, he shook his fist and shouted: 'Viva Tovar! Viva la Libertad!'

Immediately all was confusion. The soldiers rushed to the barriers; a few shots were fired; the hotter spirits, without waiting for the order, started in chase; the colonel ran up hot-foot, commanding and gesticulating. This Jack saw, and no more. He had risen in his excitement; and now he was roughly pressed back into his seat by his guards, and, with four revolvers staring him in the face, persuaded to remain there. But the issue of the episode was soon apparent. The colonel had evidently chosen the wiser part; for in another minute the train was again in motion, and did not stop until it reached the terminus at San Estevan. Here there were more soldiers, information of the capture having doubtless been sent on by telegraph; and as Jack descended at the invitation of the colonel, who looked none the better for his ride on the engine, an officer came forward to meet them.

'Is this the man, Señor Coronel?' he asked, saluting.

'Yes.'

'Then everything is ready for his reception. The Governor would like to examine him at once.'

So the critical moment was at hand! They passed outside, where a two-horse carriage was in waiting, surrounded—Jack was pleased to see—by a half-troop of cavalry. Beyond, a small crowd of loafers had gathered. There was no demonstration; he was hustled into the conveyance, followed by the colonel and another; the soldiers closed round; and off they went at full speed through one badly-paved street after another, each lined in sombre uniformity with one-storeyed, flat-roofed houses. The shaking and jolting were terrible, for the carriage seemed innocent of springs; but the journey was short, and in five minutes they dashed into the Plaza, and drew up before a large building on the farther side. Five o'clock was just striking on a neighbouring clock; and through the window of the coach the prisoner observed that more troops were manœuvring in the square, and that cannon were placed to command the approaches. He had a vague wonder if all the inhabitants of San Estevan were soldiers. Since his landing, he had seen few who were not.

Now, with half-a-dozen around him, he was conducted into the courtyard of the building; and there the colonel left him to kick his heels, and be stared at by those going out and in. For twenty minutes he awaited the Governor's pleasure, and then he was summoned into his presence—he and his escort. Presently he found himself in a large room, a soldier on either side, the others at the door. Behind a table, on which lay his gun-case and the contents of his bag, three men were seated—one of them the colonel; another, a youngish, sharp-faced

man in uniform; and the third, an older man in civilian's dress. He learned afterwards that the officer was General Ferreira, military Governor of the city; and his companion, Señor Elias, the President's chief secretary.

The two looked him over, somewhat insolently. Then Ferreira nodded.

'There is no doubt, Elias,' said he.

'No—I suppose not,' replied Elias, after another scrutiny. 'Still, he does not resemble his father so much as he promised ten years ago. He was only a boy then, of course.'

'Oh! they always change.' He turned to the soldiers. 'Search him!' he cried sharply.

Jack was taken by surprise, and before he recovered, the men had laid down their arms and gripped him. But he resisted instinctively, with all his strength, protesting with every muscle against the outrage. He was no weakling, and the guards soon discovered that they had their work cut out for them. For a minute Ferreira watched the struggle, smiling. Then, at a signal from him, the other soldiers advanced to their comrades' aid: Jack was thrown to the floor; and in a minute more, notwithstanding his efforts, the Governor's purpose had been accomplished. After all, it was fruitless. The only document found in his possession was a letter of credit upon a San Francisco banker, payable to John Thorold.

Jack rose to his feet. Hot with righteous indignation as he was, he saw his opportunity, and waited patiently until Ferreira and his colleagues had studied the paper.

'Well, Señor Tovar?' asked the general, looking up.

'I am waiting for your apology,' he said. 'You will find my name, and the proof of your mistake, in that paper.'

'Indeed?' said Ferreira, sneering. 'An apology?'

'Let me assure you, señor, that you will have to give it sooner or later,' he returned. 'That is quite certain; meanwhile, you will excuse me if I refuse to hold any communication with you until you have done so.'

'So you still deny your identity? I am afraid I must convince Señor Tovar'—this, nevertheless, with a side-glance at Elias. 'The document? Oh! we shall come to that presently. The apology, too—it also must wait a little.'

Jack folded his hands behind him. 'Very well,' he said: 'you understand, señor, that I have nothing whatever to say to you—and, for the rest, I am in your hands.'

'Let us begin at the beginning, then,' the general went on, unheeding his interruption. 'It is now about three months since you took up your residence in Valparaiso, where we happen to have a trusty agent. This is his report'—picking out a paper from the mass before him. "'About five feet ten inches in height, black hair, dark eyes, heavy dark moustache, is twenty-six years old, but looks thirty, speaks English well—will probably attempt to pass for an Englishman or American.'" He was right, you see. And the description—is it not good?'

Jack could not deny it, even to them: it fitted him well enough, although it was suffi-

ciently general to fit thousands of young men. But, true to his plan, he said nothing.

'Well, your preparations did not escape our agent,' continued Ferreira. 'The three months passed. Then, four days ago, we received a telegram warning us that you had left on the 14th on board the *Idaho* steamer, presumably bound for Sampacho. The *Idaho* arrived last evening: you were the only passenger to land.' He paused, as if this put the matter beyond doubt, but resumed as the prisoner still kept silence: 'On the wharf, you are met by an accomplice, with whom you have a whispered consultation. You are about to follow him, but the soldiers prevent the movement just in time.' He broke off, and turned to the colonel: 'By the way, what became of the accomplice?'

'He escaped in the confusion of the moment, general—we were more anxious to secure Señor Tovar.'

'He has not been seen since?'

'No.'

Jack smiled to himself, both because he could have told them differently—and for another reason.

'Is that enough?' asked Ferreira. 'If not—well, here are your clothes, your gun, all marked with the initials of your name. The English name also? Pah! It is to be supposed that even a fool, far less a clever man like Don Juan Tovar, would provide himself with an English name which corresponded with his initials, and even with a banker's letter in that name!—But enough of this!' said he, rising impatiently.—'Señor Elias, I presume that you are satisfied?'

Elias bowed.

'And you, Señor Coronel?'

'Quite!' replied the colonel.

Ferreira turned again to Jack. 'Then, Juan Tovar, I have to inform you that you will be held in strict confinement for the present, until I can report to His Excellency the President at the seat of war—and then, to-morrow or next day,' he added, in his former tone, 'I hope to make my apology to you in the Plaza, with a company of soldiers to witness it!'

Jack's answer was a broad smile, which meant very plainly that the general could do as he pleased. For, now that the conversation had given him the clue to the whole mystery, the threat had no terrors for him.

'Meanwhile, if you have nothing to say'—

'Nothing—except that I am very hungry, and should be glad of some dinner,' he said quietly.

Ferreira looked at him with more approval than he had yet shown, and also with some perplexity: he could appreciate his coolness, even if he could not quite understand it. But, before he had time to reply, a new sound came to his ears, startling him and the others into immediate attention: the sound of distant firing. For a minute or two they listened, speaking not a word, and then an officer flung himself unceremoniously into the room: 'General, the town has risen!—'

Ferreira silenced the man with a quick gesture, and drew him aside. And Jack, straining his ears, overheard these snatches from the whispered communication: 'News has spread—'

Tovar—armed mob—fired on soldiers!'—and overheard, too, the peremptory command of the general: 'You have the order: clear the streets at once, and at whatever cost!'

AN OLD ENGLISH TOPOGRAPHER.

WHEN Thomas Baskerville, in 1678, rode at his own sweet will from one English town to another, he never dreamed the record of his journeyings would, two centuries later, rank among historical documents, and, as such, be given to the world at the public expense.

Holding inns to be the chief things about which the well-provided traveller has to concern himself, Baskerville is careful to set down those at which he stayed, the sort of entertainment they provided, with a word or two about the landlord or landlady. An inn exactly to his liking was the 'Black Swan' at Hereford, kept by an honest, ingenious gentleman, whose spouse was a distiller of incomparable strong waters; for at this hostelry was to be had a morning draught of two, three, four, or five year old beer, or brave red-streak cider, a beverage brought to such perfection by our traveller's own uncle, Lord Scudamore, that the Prince of Tuscany, imbibing it at Oxford, dubbed it 'Vin de Scudamore.' In the course of his wanderings, Baskerville came across several 'gentle' and 'genteel' hosts and hostesses, but missed seeing the landlord of the best inn in 'Chetnam,' by reason of that gentleman having just been hanged for making money by coining it. Belated one December night in Gloucestershire, Baskerville and half-a-dozen companions stumbled upon an inn at Withington, at which they found a conscionable landlord and landlady, 'for, being seven men and horses, we had good fires, excellent ale, of which we drank very freely, a good dish of steaks or fried beef, a dish of birds we had killed, well roasted, strong water, and for breakfast, bread and cheese and cold neats' tongues well boiled, hay, and each horse his peck of oats; and all this for seventeen shillings.'

The liquors in vogue in Charles II.'s days were canary at two shillings, sherry at twenty pence, claret 'as good as in London' at a shilling a bottle, sack at half-a-crown a quart, strong waters, ale, beer, cider, and mum. At York, Baskerville found his host's strong, sluggish ale so little to his liking, that he betook himself to a barber's house and regaled himself with 'China ale' at sixpence a quart. He was puzzled by the barber asking if he would bite—an inquiry explained by that worthy saying anybody who had a mind to drink at his house was welcome to roast beef and such-like victuals for nothing. At an inn between Skipton and Leeds the same hospitality was displayed, showing that the free lunch is by no means an American invention.

The inns of Northampton might be 'such gallant and stately structures the like is scarcely elsewhere to be seen;' but for a sumptuous signpost, the 'Scole Inn,' near St Edmundsbury, bore away the bell. It is thus described: 'The signpost, having most of the effigies cut in full proportion, is contrived with these poetical

fancies for supporters to the post. On the further side of the way there is Cerberus or a large dog with three heads on one side; and Charon with a boat rowing an old woman with a letter in her hand, on the other side. The other figures are Saturn, with a child in his arms, eating it up; Diana, with a crescent moon on her head; Actæon, with his hounds eating him, and the effigies of his huntsmen. Here also are cut in wood the effigies of Justice, Prudence, Temperance, and Fortitude; Neptune, the sea-god, with his sceptre or trident; and for a weathercock, a man taking the altitude with a quadrant. Moreover, this signpost is adorned with two figures of lions, two of harts, the one painted on a board, the other cut in wood in full proportion of it; ten escutcheons; two figures of angels; Bacchus, the god of wine; and a whale's head spewing up Jonas; with other figures and flourishes.' Truly, thirsty wayfarers could scarcely miss finding the 'Scole Inn.'

Considerations of space forbid the attempting to summarise what Baskerville has to say of the many towns he halted at; but it may be noted that Leicester is stigmatised as a stinking old town on a dull river, Newmarket dismissed as a poor thoroughfare town, environed with a rare downy open country, having nothing remarkable save the king's house, lately built for his use when coming there for hunting or racing; York is pronounced to need a purgation of fire if it desire to emulate the beauty of London and Northampton; while Nottingham is extolled as a paradise restored, 'for here you find large streets, fair-built houses, fine women, and many coaches rattling about, and their shops full of merchantable riches. The town is situated upon a pleasant rock of freestone, in which every one may have cellars, and that without the trouble of springs or moisture, so that, excepting Bridgnorth in Shropshire, you cannot find such another town in England. It is divided into the upper and lower towns; for when you have a mind to leave the more spacious parts on the plain of the hill, and will go down to the lower streets by the river, you must descend down right many stairs ere you get to the bottom; and here you find another town full of shops and people, who have a convenience to cut in the rock warehouses, stables, or what rooms else they please for their peculiar uses.'

Oxonian as he was, Baskerville could not but admire Cambridge with its fourteen churches, and its colleges of St John's, Trinity, Clare, King's, and Trinity Hall, having fair bridges over the river, leading to delicate bowling-greens and fine gardens; but the black dirty streets eclipsed the splendour of the buildings, and for situation, air, and magnificent architecture Cambridge could not compare with his own Alma Mater; although the Cantabs had a better fashion for undergraduates' caps to keep off the sun, and the tufts of the masters' caps were four or five inches long. In the fields a mile beyond Cambridge, the greatest fair in England was held every September. Here, at fair time, were to be seen large streets and shops full of all the varieties of wares to be found in London itself, besides quantities of

wool and iron, heaps of salt-fish, carts laden with oysters, while the river was thick-set with provision-laden boats. 'The concourse of this fair,' says our tourist, 'must doubtless contribute very great riches to Cambridge; and the farmers of Stourbridge fields are also enriched by it, for, besides the great rates that are given where shops and victualling houses do stand, the soil is greatly enriched with oyster-shells and other muck.'

In the river by Chatham, Baskerville beheld thirty stout war-ships riding; and at Gillingham went aboard the pride of the royal navy, the *Royal Sovereign*, requiring a crew of seven hundred men when on service. 'She carries,' says he, 'between eighty and a hundred guns. The gunrooms—for she hath three decks and two gunrooms, one under another—are about sixty paces long. Her stern and quarters are curiously carved and painted with imagery work in poetical fancies, and richly overlaid with gold. In the lanthorn that is erected in the midst of the stern, I stood upright. The king's cabin is richly painted and gilded; and so is the great cabin.'

Two hundred years ago, Beccles in Suffolk—thanks to being blessed or otherwise with an abundance of common land—was ruled by the 'Grass Stewards,' and had more than its fair share of poor folk; 'for customs permitting them if able to rent a house of so much per annum, to enjoy the profits of the common, so, when their stock fails them, they come to the parish's charge.'

Doncaster then prided itself upon its coloured stockings for horsemen's wear, in the vending of which the women went from inn to inn, following travellers even into their chambers, and taking no denial. The women of Harrogate (Harrogate) were equally bent upon business, bringing water from the wells to travellers at their lodgings.

When Charles II. ruled the land, all strangers entering Southampton had to satisfy the authorities as to whom they were, whence they came, and what they wanted there. Stone was so scarce Gravesend way, that the names of the occupiers of churchyard ground were inscribed on logs of wood, fastened to posts at each end of the grave; and for want of better fuel, the people of Wilts used cow-dung, which they dried in summer by daubing it against their houses and walls. Norwich butchers were compelled to sell all meat killed in the fore-part of the week by Thursday night, in order to encourage the sale of fish on the following days. A pleasanter peculiarity of the place was the annual feast of the mayor, aldermen, and liverymen, kept in the town-hall, whereunto ladies were invited and presented with march-panes to take home with them. With like gallantry the trade-companies of Newbury allowed the sex to participate in the merry meetings they delighted in holding, on which occasions the men, arrayed in their best clothes, marched through the town with the town music playing before them, the women following after, finely dressed and all in steeple-crowned hats, 'a pleasant sight to behold.'

Another pleasant sight to Baskerville's eyes was a strange bird that fell a victim to the

gun of one of his companions at Hosbury Bridge, near Gloucester. This ornithological curiosity was nearly as big as a wind-thrush; the head, resembling that of a bullfinch, bore a fine tuft of feathers of a cinnamon colour; the feathers of the neck, breast, and part of the wings, being something darker. The upper part of the tail was ash-coloured, with a ring of black; the extreme part of the tail feathers bearing another ring of flame or gold colour. Upon the 'prime flying feathers of the wings,' mostly black, were white spots 'answerable to each other;' while nine of the largest feathers were tipped with white and lemon, the seven lesser ones being tipped white, and having ends of a brilliant vermilion hue—a *rara avis* indeed.

At the end of the notes of a journey in 1681, we find enumerated all the highest reputed commodities of the period, the English items running as follows: Herefordshire cider, Derby ale, Cheddar cheese, Pumfret (Pontefract) liquorice, Tewkesbury mustard balls (to be dissolved in vinegar or verjuice), Banbury cakes, Witney blankets, Norwich stuffs, Colchester baize, Shropshire coal, Beamdown samphire, Saffron-Walden saffron, Burford saddles, St Albans straw tankards and pots, Dunstable straw hats and Dunstable larks, Studley carrots, Besselsleigh (near Abingdon) turnips, Stroud water-reeds, Windsor Forest turf, Glastonbury peat, Hol barley broth, Lancashire lasses, Warleat oysters; Yarmouth, Lowestoft, and Norfolk herrings; Thames sprats, Severn salmon, Dorset 'base,' Avon Salisbury graylings, Minihend mussels, Ock eels, Gloucester lampreys, Newbury crawfish, Cornish and Devonshire pilchards, Pembroke new-found-out anchovies, made of young shad, and

Arundel mullets, as they say here,
Are the best in England for good cheer,
But at sixpence the pound are pretty dear.

And we are furthermore told of

Dorsetshire ewes for early lambs,
And Warwickshire breeds most excellent rams,

and assured that 'Hampshire honey is current goods for every one's money.'

MY FIRST SHIPWRECK.

By R. C. DOWIE.

THE island of Newfoundland, which has lately achieved an unenviable prominence in the public press owing to the failure of its banks, and consequent serious financial difficulties, is chiefly famous for its abundant fisheries, which seem, in spite of a great many unfair attempted methods of capture, to be practically inexhaustible. The island, however, is famous, or rather notorious, for possessing a feature of a very different nature, yet one well known to and understood by seafaring men whose lot it is to trade to and from St John's either to Great Britain eastward, or south-westward to Halifax, Nova Scotia. And that feature is the ever-present danger of shipwreck, with the odds more in favour of total loss than against it, together

with a substantial risk of death in trying to reach a shore so precipitously rocky as to fitly merit, even when ice is absent, the title of 'ironbound.'

Fishing-boats, schooners, and sailing-ships are not the only wrecks; steamers of large tonnage, sometimes carrying passengers and mails in addition to much valuable freight, as well as 'tramps,' come to irretrievable disaster, and often form rich spoil for the fishing population in these regions. In fact, a large portion of the coast of Newfoundland might be dotted with crosses every few miles at irregular intervals, but clustering thickly in the vicinity of Cape Race, showing the localities where steamers have been totally or occasionally only partially wrecked, and where many lives have been sacrificed. The reasons for this are not at all far to seek. Towards the end of spring and during summer, when the ice breaks up far to the northward, the Arctic current sweeps it south in large fields, floes, or detached bergs along the coast of Newfoundland, and with the ice comes the fog.

Another factor which has often been lost sight of, but which combines with the ice and fog and rockbound coast to render disaster likely to ships in these latitudes, is a current or series of currents which set shorewards in the neighbourhood of Cape Race. In spite of Admiralty charts and books on navigation, it is very difficult to ascertain exactly the speed and direction of these currents; and inshore the problem is further complicated by the tides having to be taken into consideration. The only really safe rule is to keep the open sea, and give the coast as wide a berth as possible.

No event of any importance had occurred on the outward trip from England in the good ship —, nor on the beginning of the homeward run until after we left Halifax, Nova Scotia, for St John's, Newfoundland, a run of about five hundred and fifty nautical miles.

The second day out was inclined to be foggy, and the ship was not making her usual speed, while during the night the fog came down at intervals and lifted again. On the morning of the last day it was my duty to go on watch at eight o'clock. The engineer relieved said, 'She's been doing a good deal of half-speed; but I think you're all right now'—the telegraph then showing full speed ahead, although, as a matter of fact, shortly afterwards, owing to 'cleaning fires,' the speed was not more than three-quarters. Still, continued the second engineer, 'I would not go far from the throttle-valve.'

Things were not very comfortable below that morning. The telegraph soon rang half-speed again, then full speed for a few minutes, and then half-speed again. Shortly after nine o'clock, just when the steam showed signs of a steady rise, the telegraph again rang full speed ahead. Leaving the throttle-valve in charge of the stoker, I looked round the stoke-hold, saw the water was at the right level in the boilers, the cleaning of the fires was finished, and that things seemed generally to be shaping better. In a few minutes, however, the order came

suddenly, 'Stop;' and as I shut the throttle-valve, the thought flashed through my mind that the next order would be, 'Full speed astern.' Before the engines stopped, the telegraph rang this order sharply twice. The engines were at once reversed, and the throttle-valve opened again.

Owing to the way on the ship, and the momentum of the shaft, it was perhaps two minutes before the engines could be made to go full speed astern, during which time the second-officer had twice called down through the skylight the last order. The steamer, however, had now struck, and though rhythmically lifted with the swell of the waves, the engines were powerless to drag her off.

Five minutes after the steamer struck or ran aground, the fog lifted, and disclosed the land, with a group of fishermen in the foreground, some two hundred yards away. Fortunately, there was no sea on, only a heaving swell. This caused the ship to bump from side to side on the boulders below, gradually tearing holes in her plates from end to end along the keel. When we first struck, the four firemen and trimmers bolted up the ladder, and were never again seen below. The donkeyman and three stokers, however, who were all old hands from previous voyages, remained staunch, and were ready for any job when required. That was a difficult twenty minutes for the engine-room staff to bear, before they knew where the ship was, and were quite uncertain what would happen next. I remember logging the engine 'movements' on the slate, with a view to future eventualities; sounded, by order of the chief-engineer, the ballast tank underneath the engine-room, and on the second trial found it was rapidly filling with water.

Orders from the captain to drive her nearer inshore had little or no effect in moving the doomed vessel. In about an hour we were slowly driven from the engine-room by the incoming water, which gradually became high enough to put out the boiler fires; and the last order I recollect executing below was to 'case' the safety-valves, though the steam had been escaping with a roar some time before. A few tools were brought up, which it was considered might be useful on deck; and it seemed a pity to leave the engine oil-kettle always so brightly burnished; so I took it away; and it came in handy to make coffee in during the night, after several boilings to rid it of its oily flavour. On reaching the deck, it appeared that many of the passengers, of whom there were about one hundred and fifty-five, and certainly all the women and children, had been safely got ashore at a landing-place about half a mile away, in the ship's own boats, manned by some of the officers, stewards, and crew.

Before this took place, our captain had offered three pounds to eight fishermen to convey a message to the nearest telegraph station, and they asked five, which he agreed to give. When the message was written, the fishermen had changed their minds, and raised their terms, asking a pound an oar. They reckoned without their host, as, on hearing this, the captain changed his mind, and said he did not require their services; the message being afterwards

sent at a much cheaper rate by a trusty member of the crew, accompanied by a fisherman as guide. The immediate business on hand was hoisting out as much of the passengers' luggage as possible before the water reached it, and some was got out in this way, until the water rose to the same level inside the ship as outside, which was about twenty-eight feet, so that she only sank some four or five feet altogether.

About this time some of the fishermen became very annoying, and even threatening, boarding the ship to see what they could pick up, and refusing to go off. After getting ashore, and later in the day, some of them said coolly this would not be a good wreck—by which they meant they would not make much out of it.

The time arrived for us to follow the passengers ashore, and here we were most fortunate in saving all our luggage and effects, including beds, which latter served very well for one night. Rowing ashore was nothing; indeed, we came back to the ship a second time. The cabins had then been pretty successfully looted, and there was little more that was worth saving.

On shore, the saloon passengers, who could well afford to pay for it, succeeded in obtaining very fair accommodation in some of the cottages of the more well-to-do fishermen.

One or two interesting facts transpired in conversation with the officers. It appears that some time before we went ashore, on heaving the lead only a depth of seven fathoms was found; and the ship's course was altered until deep water was reached. Unfortunately, the ship was not kept long enough on this course to clear Cape Race, and the strength of the current was miscalculated, tending to bring us still closer inshore.

Although once more on *terra firma*, and heartily glad to be out of an awkward predicament, our troubles were not altogether over. For some hours, stores had been steadily brought ashore in the ship's boats, a process that interested the fishermen extremely. This interest was shown by their anxiety to assist in landing and carrying the stuff ashore, though they were not so particular in taking it to its proper destination; and it was an amusing sight to see a stalwart fisherman carrying off a side of beef on his shoulder, pursued by our chief steward, to whom the freebooter explained that he had misunderstood the directions given him. Our crew, distributed among the boats, had had no proper meal since breakfast; and in order to encourage them to work well, grog had been served out in liberal fashion.

All the officers, including the purser, doctor, and engineers, had been allotted various duties; the former two, assisted by the second-engineer, doing their best in arranging accommodation—no easy task—for the shipwrecked passengers, chiefly steerage, in the fishermen's cottages.

The women and children suffered a good deal of discomfort. In the first place, there was no bread, except in the form of hard biscuits. Another great difficulty was the want of fire and cooking utensils, chiefly kettles, to boil water and make tea or coffee in. I had been placed in charge of a boat-shed roughly extemporised

as a store, and was occupied in serving out tinned meat, of which there was plenty, and tea and coffee to all who came and asked for it.

And so the afternoon wore away. Fortunately, the temperature was not cold; the season was mild September even in that inhospitable climate; and there was still a touch of August in the air, while we felt none of those winged pests, the mosquitoes.

Most of the passengers and crew had now either obtained lodgings for the night, or been assigned out-houses or boat-sheds which would have to serve on a communistic system.

The distinctive feature of this little fishing hamlet with its scattered cottages, whose name I forget, was the odour of dried fish. It was everywhere: lines of fish were ranged along the beach; and in some other places they were stacked in tiers.

We obtained for a lodging a wooden shed fairly well constructed, with a second storey, that simply reeked with the smell of dried fish. The fish almost covered the floor to a depth of two feet, and a tarpaulin was spread over it. One had to get used to the smell. Still, our night's rest was comfortable and undisturbed—at least mine was; and one heard no complaint on this score.

After breakfast, which was not a thing to be specially treasured in one's memory, left to our own devices, we three engineers went on an exploring expedition. At the outset, however, we were somewhat delayed by the news that one of Her Majesty's gunboats had arrived; and very soon a boat came off from her, and a lieutenant at the head of his men marched ashore. There was a business-like air about the blue-jackets that produced a salutary effect for the time being amongst the fishermen. By this time we were heartily tired of the harpy-like instincts of the younger members of the community, though it is but just to say that some of the elder men did not at all approve of their actions. The country was wild and desolate in appearance—a mixture of rock and heath, intersected here and there by streams; and there seemed an extraordinary absence of animal life. We heard that it was a bad year for 'partridges' (a kind of grouse), and only saw about half-a-dozen, and found a few small trout in the pools.

After our walk, the next important matter was dinner. This we got at one of the fishermen's cottages, after the inmates had been served, which was rather cool, considering it was all the ship's provisions that were consumed; however, we managed to get enough to eat. It had now been decided that the gunboat should take the saloon passengers off, and steam to St John's; while the others and crew should walk to Trepassey—said to be five or six miles away: it proved quite ten—and await another steamer, which was to call next day.

There was no choice; so, leaving our luggage, the whole company started off along a fairly good road. I have never quite understood how the women and children managed this walk, but they did, and the conclusion is that necessity is a great stimulant. After reaching Trepassey, which is rather an important

fishing village, it took about an hour to get all the people billeted successfully. We were hospitably received by the fisher folk, who seemed mostly fairly well-to-do. Trepassey is at one side of a spade-shaped bay, possessing deep water, mostly engirt with precipitous cliffs, and forms a fairly safe harbour, being landlocked on three sides.

It will always be memorable to seafarers, as it was close to here that the terrible wreck of the *Anglo-Saxon* occurred, when some two hundred and eighty people lost their lives. Some miles away from where we were could plainly be discerned the cemetery where they lie, the stones gleaming white in the sunlight amid the green turf—a sight that aroused the deepest emotions, as we thought how easily their fate might have been ours. That evening was a comfortable one for us, owing to the kindness of our hosts, and no doubt in one way our coming must have been a welcome event in the monotony of their lives.

A small steamer successfully brought us to St John's next day. Shortly afterwards, we were paid off by the Board of Trade, our pay being reckoned up to the day our ship was wrecked (as the law—a bad one for the sailor—prescribes); and after only three days' detention in St John's, we embarked on a mail steamer that had called for us; and in due course, with a fair north-westerly gale behind us, reached England. And so ended my first and, I hope, my last shipwreck. It only remains to add that the captain and those of his officers mentioned staid on the _____ a week, and by her for a month, when a westerly gale came on and completely broke her up.

WILD-FLOWERS.

Oh, beautiful blossoms, pure and sweet,
Agleam with dew from the country ways,
To me, at work in a city street,
You bring fair visions of bygone days—
Glad days, when I hid in a mist of green
To watch Spring's delicate buds unfold;
And all the riches I cared to glean
Were daisy silver and buttercup gold.

'Tis true you come of a lowly race,
Nursed by the sunshine, fed by the showers;
And yet you are heirs to a nameless grace
Which I fail to find in my hothouse flowers;
And you breathe on me with your honeyed lips,
Till in thought I stand on the wind-swept fells,
Where the brown bees hum o'er the ferny dips,
Or ring faint peals on the heather bells.

I close my eyes on the crowded street,
I shut my ears to the city's roar,
And am out in the open with flying feet—
Off, off to your emerald haunts once more!
But the harsh wheels grate on the stones below,
And a sparrow chirps at the murky pane,
And my bright dreams fade in an overflow
Of passionate longing and tender pain.

E. MATHESON.

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THE BI-CENTENARY OF THE BANK OF SCOTLAND.

ON the 17th of July the Bank of Scotland reaches the venerable age of two hundred years. This is a unique event in the history of Scottish banking, which is known all the world over for its solidity and practical utility. In fact, if any general characterisation of the system be asked, the answer is that here theory and practice go hand in hand, and that the public weal is one of the great ends which the system subserves. But whatever Scottish banking may be to-day, its lot was cast in very different times when the Bank of Scotland was founded. Scotland was then a poor country, of undeveloped resources, backward agriculture, and had suffered much through injuries inflicted on her by civil war. Her population was only about one million, and the national revenue scarcely £100,000 sterling. The richer inhabitants of the metropolis were located in those 'closes' which so much puzzle foreigners, and bear so great a resemblance to the labyrinthine lanes of Genoa and other Continental cities, all converging on the main place of public and business resort.

Just one year before the foundation of the Bank of Scotland, William Paterson, a famous Scotsman, had established the Bank of England. This in turn led to the idea of a similar bank in Scotland. John Holland, the Englishman who has been so much and so closely associated with the origin of the Bank of Scotland, tells of a Scotsman coming to him with the germ of his idea. 'In the autumn of the year 1695,' Holland says, 'an earnest and ingenious friend of mine, a Scottish gentleman, importuned me one day to think of a bank for Scotland. I told him I had done with framing of schemes for banks, and all other public societies, and resolved, as in some measure I had done a few years before, to lead a country life. He replied that I should have an Act of Parliament upon my own conditions. Upon this I immediately

drew up so much of the constitution as was necessary to be in the Act; and in three or four days he brought me a formal Bill drawn up in the Scottish style; and he told me that he had spoken to most of his nation that were in town, and that he had good reason to believe the Bill would pass that session.'

Holland drafted the Bill for the establishment of the Scottish bank on the model of that for the Bank of England, and it received the assent of the Scottish Parliament on the 17th of July 1695. So great was the foresight displayed, that the leading principles of the Act remain to this day. One of these is the joint-stock principle, by which a certain amount of capital is put as it were into a joint purse, to be used for the benefit of all, while each retains the right to his own proportion of the total amount. This joint-stock in the case of the Bank of Scotland has been increased from time to time to suit the bank's business requirements, and to enable it to be of more use to the community. All the ten Scottish banks carrying on business to-day are founded on the joint-stock principle, and all the private bankers in Scotland have long ago disappeared.

Scotland owes to John Holland a debt of gratitude, for he came to that country and resided there until the bank which he founded had fairly taken root. After he returned to England and was ensconced in that rural retreat for which he so long yearned, the adventurers—that is, shareholders of the bank—made a graceful acknowledgment of his services. They sent him what was termed 'a compliment of silver plate to his Lady' of the value of about £150. He appears to have been very grateful for this token of regard, as English friends had not spoken too well to him of Scotsmen and the Scottish bank. Holland made a visit to Scotland in 1709, the bank paying his expenses for the journey. In addition, he received a percentage of each year's profits after the adventurers had drawn their share. He was appointed first Governor of the bank, and held office for

one year. Holland was a merchant of the Staple, and had, in association with James Foulis (one of the directors of the new bank), made an effort to introduce into Scotland the manufacture of Colchester baizes. He died in 1722.

The bank had for capital only £100,000 sterling, or £1,200,000 Scots. To raise this capital, two Committees were appointed, one in London, and one in Edinburgh; and these received subscriptions, which were paid into the bank's coffers in Edinburgh on the 25th of March 1696, and formed the first cash entry in the bank's books. The nature of its business at this time was the circulating of notes. Although its constitution contained ample provision for receiving money from the beginning, it was purely and simply a lending bank at the outset. To get its notes floated, it opened branches at various provincial towns, where its notes were taken readily enough, because they could be used for making payments in Edinburgh; but the question was, how could the bank get at the money which had been paid for the notes at its branches? As there was not sufficient trade to admit of the bank selling bills on these places so as to obtain this note money, the Directors had no alternative but to close these branches, and to have the money brought to Edinburgh by horse-carriage—an expensive proceeding in those days of a silver currency.

But the bank lent money on bonds with personal security, and in this way put its notes into the hands of the public. These notes acted as advertisements of the bank, and as pioneers of banking credit, which later on took the form of deposits. Loans were also given on pledges of plate accompanied by a personal bond bearing interest, as well as on heritable bonds. Although the bank was in no way under obligation to the State, it bore a share at its own expense in the calling in of the old and substitution of the new coinage. It had to debit its profit and loss account in one case with a sum of £82, 'for so much loss on £906, 15s. sterling of miln'd Scots money received in behoir the Proclamation crying doune the same was published.' In connection with this crying down of the specie, a run was made on the bank in December 1704, through the action of the Government; and the bank in consequence stopped payment temporarily, because its specie was exhausted. It petitioned the Privy Council to inspect the bank's books, with the result that it was found the bank had sufficient to pay all its bills and debts, 'and that with a considerable overplus.' So ended the first run on the bank.

Another scare which the bank had was a few years later—namely, in March 1708—when the French fleet appeared at the mouth of the Firth of Forth. At that time the bank had a large sum lying in the Scottish Mint in ingots, and a considerable sum in the bank, brought in to be recoined, besides a large sum in specie, which could not well have been carried off and concealed. Happily, the French fleet bore off, and all fears were at an end. In 1715, when the rebellion broke out, the whole specie in the bank was drawn out, the directors privately

encouraging the demand, lest the money should fall into the hands of the insurgents. But they took care to retain the whole of the cash belonging to the Government; and after all the rest of the bank's money had been issued, they delivered the public money, amounting to about £30,000, to the authorities, who lodged it for safety in the Castle vaults. This stoppage of payments by the bank lasted for a few months only, and the bank paid interest on its notes after it had resumed ordinary payments.

In 1745 the Bank of Scotland could do practically no business, because of the presence in Edinburgh of the Highland army under Prince Charlie. As soon as news came of the Prince's approach to the metropolis, all the effects of the bank were removed to the Castle and deposited for safety in one of the dungeons, as was done in 1715. Prince Charlie was very troublesome to the Royal Bank of Scotland, and his Secretary, Mr Murray of Broughton, seems to have collected as many Royal Bank notes as he could lay hands on and to have protested them for non-payment. The Prince was, however, very friendly with the Bank of Scotland, whose former Treasurer, Mr David Drummond, was believed to be of Jacobite tendencies, though, with the prudence common to all bankers, he took good care not to reveal them. Mr Drummond had acted as Treasurer to a fund raised after the suppression of the rebellion in 1715 for the defence of prisoners put on their trial for high-treason. When the Royal Bank was pressed for payment of its notes, its Cashier had to arrange with the Highlanders and General Guest, the Castle commander, before he could get his bank's money out of the Castle to satisfy the Prince's demands. During this time, exchanges of notes proceeded between the two banks, and these took place within the Castle. The Highland guard extended to the Weigh House, and the Castle guns kept firing on them. It needed, therefore, a flag of truce to be displayed pending these banking exchange operations. Such was the state of things that a diarist of the period, Mr John Campbell, Cashier of the Royal Bank of Scotland, says that at that time there was 'no sermon in the churches;' and on several Sundays he remarks, 'I was not abroad all this day.' On Charles withdrawing on the 18th of November 1745, Mr Campbell writes: 'Wrote to Lord Justice-clerk about bank affairs, and advised him the Old Bank [Bank of Scotland] had opened shop.' Thus passed away this scare.

The first office of the bank was in the second storey of Paterson's Land, in the Parliament Close, which was bought from Sir Alexander Seton of Pitmedden for a little over a thousand pounds sterling, his lady receiving a gratuity of fifteen guineas for consenting to the purchase. The bank's annual meetings were held there for two years; but owing to a fire which raged in the Parliament Close on the 3d of February 1700, the bank betook itself to 'the first storey of the new stone land over against the head of Forrester's Wynd.' A contemporary account says, 'The directors and others concerned did with great care and diligence carry off all the cash, bank-notes, books, and

papers in the office; being assisted by a party of soldiers brought from the castle by the Earl of Leven, then Governor thereof, and Governor of the bank.' In 1702, two years later, the bank's office was on the south side of the Land Mercat (Lawnmarket). The Old Bank Close, High Street—of which the site then occupied by the bank is now to be found at the corner of Melbourne Place and Victoria Street—became for long the abode of the bank, the actual building where business was carried on being known as Gourlay's House. In 1713 the bank expended money in making 'repairs' in the house and office. When, in the first quarter of the century, the 'Old Bank House' was taken down, it was found that all the shutters communicated by wire with a row of bells within the building; and this shows the old plan adopted for sounding an alarm in the event of an attempt at robbery. Below the level of the street, a stone-built recess with an arched roof is still to be seen, which is believed to have been used as the bank's safe. This bank building appears to have had no fewer than forty-four windows in 1727, judging by a glazier's account of that time. Some of the items are interesting:

To one chess lozen [pane] put in the staire window,	3½d.
9 be 6½ inches.....	
To dight [dicht—that is, clean] 44 windows.....	7s. 4d.
To a chess lozen of crown glass put in, 14½ be	
14½.....	2s. 2d.

This is the famous crown glass with the well-known knot in the centre.

The bank had a small staff at first. The Treasurer was then, as now, the chief officer, and he lived at that time in the bank house. His salary was £100, and he had an allowance of £15 for coal and candle to the office. George Watson, the founder of Watson's Hospital, was the first Auditor, his salary being £60. He had also two assistants, and the Treasurer had one. The Secretary had the same salary as the two tellers—namely, £25; while the liveried officer had £12 per annum. In the tellers' cash books one is struck with the religious inscriptions on some of the leaves. One of these runs thus:

In my beginning, God me speed
In grace and vertue to proceed—

and was duly signed. Another bore the words 'Laus Deo;' while the boards of several of the books were adorned by such drawings as that of a fish in circular form (said to be emblematic of eternity), and of Cupids blowing trumpets. Spite of all these spiritual spurs to duty, it is sad to relate that in the summer of 1705—ten years after the bank's foundation—one of the tellers went off with £425, a large sum in these poverty-stricken times. He was apprehended, tried, and sentenced to be set on the cockstool (pillory) with a paper on his breast, and to be detained in prison till he satisfied the bank and relieved his cautioners. Among the bank's staff, Mr David Drummond, Treasurer, must be reckoned one of the most notable, his services in that high capacity having been rendered for fully forty years. Another official whom Kay's famous portraits have caricatured into some-

thing of a public character, was Mr George Sandy, for long Secretary of the Bank of Scotland. It is puzzling to know how so hard-working, quiet-living, well-read, and inoffensive a man as Mr Sandy was seized upon as a type of a section of Edinburgh Society, and deemed worthy of reproduction. No man led a more self-contained life or did less to gain notoriety.

In the telling-room of the bank's principal office hangs a portrait, by Sir John Watson Gordon, of Archibald Bennet, Secretary of the Bank of Scotland from 1824 to 1868. A strong fresh-coloured face it is, of the homely country type, with kindly shrewd eyes, that seem intuitively to take in the situation, and to read a would-be borrower at a glance. In the entrance hall above the fireplace is a very fine portrait, by Sir Henry Raeburn, of the Right Hon. Henry Dundas (Viscount Melville), who was for many years Governor of the bank. An outstanding public personage also was Patrick Miller of Dalswinton, who for about forty years was Deputy-governor of the bank. He is sometimes said to have been the inventor of carronade guns; he was eminent as an agriculturist; and spent much time and money on experiments in shipbuilding. In 1788 he had a boat constructed with double or twin hulls, and paddles between them, and fitted with a steam-engine by Symington; and this boat he tried on the lake at Dalswinton, in presence of Robert Burns the poet (who was then a tenant of Mr Miller's at Ellisland), Mr Alexander Nasmyth, and a few others. Mr Miller, at the annual meeting of shareholders in March 1796, alluded to the bank's Centenary, and said that the bank had proved of great utility to the trade, manufacturers, and agricultural improvements of the country.

The bank has naturally sought to encourage Scottish industries, and this is shown in the manufacture of its paper for notes. The first large notes were made in 1696, twenty-shilling notes, as they were termed, being only issued on the 7th of April 1704. In 1729 the bank's paper was manufactured at Giffordhall, near Haddington. Attendants had to be present in the bank's interest, and their account was paid by the bank. One item was 'ale and bread furnished to the workmen, 10s.;' and another for 'drink-money to servants, £4, 17s. 6d.' The items are suggestive, although it is possible they only represented drink-money in name. In 1735 the bank got its twenty-shilling bank-notes made at Collingtoun Mill (Colinton Mill), and there is an 'account for drink-money' in connection with it. A barber came twice from Edinburgh to shave the officials, and received three shillings for his professional attendance. Green tea must have cost at this time 2s. per pound, for in the bill, a quarter-pound sells for six shillings. At this Colinton Mill the bank appears to have kept all the employees in food during the time the paper was being manufactured. A man was engaged twelve days at the paper mill in dressing meat, and he cut up in that time two hundred pounds of it. Meat and mutton cost only 2½d. per pound in these good old days. A hen is charged at 8d.; a duck at 9d.; 1 'sollan gouss,' 1s. 8d.; a dozen of eggs, 3d.; 6 chickens,

only 1s. 4d.; and a wild-fowl, 10d.; cheese cost 4d. per pound, and bacon 8d. per pound. In 1769 the bank's note-paper was made at Redhaugh Miln (Redhall Mill).

In the course of its existence, some out-of-the-way donations have been given by the Bank of Scotland. Its name has figured frequently in the books of the Edinburgh City Chamberlain in connection with public charities. At the Centennial meeting of 1796, the Directors unanimously voted 300 guineas towards defraying the expenses of selling meal at reduced prices to the poor of Edinburgh and Leith. When the present head-office buildings were being erected in 1802, there was a splendid illumination held by the bank on the 1st of April, in honour of the treaty of peace which had been signed at Amiens on the 27th of March. The rejoicing was general in Edinburgh and Leith, and the masons employed in the construction of the bank evidently desired to participate in it, for they sent the following petition to the banking authorities: 'Gentlemen Directors of the Bank of Scotland—We your humble petitioners, masons and laborers, of which their is imployed 38 masons and 40 laborers, and as this is a day of publik rejoisin we expect something from you to reas our spirets in the evening.' The Directors voted a sum of £5 to these petitioners on the occasion. In 1780 the bank paid over to the City Chamberlain £50 as its subscription for building a battery betwixt North Leith and Newhaven. This is evidently what is now known as Leith Fort.

On the 12th of August 1806, the bank entered its new premises in Bank Street, which were subsequently enlarged and embellished by the late Mr David Bryce, R.S.A., as instructed by the Directors of the bank, in 1868. The site on which the bank building stands is one of the most commanding in Edinburgh. It is in a line with the Castle, and faces the monument to Sir Walter Scott.

It is curious, at this date, to note the amount of friction which existed between some rival banking companies at an early period, and how certain devices were adopted to which no Scottish bank would now condescend. In *Memoirs of a Banking House*, by Sir W. Forbes, edited by Robert Chambers, we are told that the banks would hoard up a quantity of each other's notes, and endeavour, by presenting them suddenly, to create embarrassment. On the establishment of the Royal Bank in 1727 there was a good deal of angry rivalry between it and the Bank of Scotland, which considered itself ill-used by the government of George I. when that bank received its charter. This feeling finds vent in a pamphlet which appeared in 1728, entitled, 'An Historical Account of the Establishment, Progress, and State of the Bank of Scotland; and of the several attempts that have been made against it, and the several interruptions and inconveniences which the company has encountered.' The action of the Royal Bank in purchasing all the notes of the Bank of Scotland that could be secured, did once land the bank in considerable difficulties.

The paid-up capital of the bank in 1695 was £10,000 sterling; now it is £1,250,000. Its first balance sheet showed £63,199 of assets;

in 1804, 1½ millions; that of the present year shows over 18 millions. The rate of dividend was high during its early years, ranging from 12 to 30 per cent., then it fell to 7 or 8 per cent., at which it remained for the first portion of the century. The dividend is now 12 per cent. The average rate of dividend and bonus paid from 1699 to 1810 was £9, 19s.; from 1810 to 1881, £9, 4s. 11d.; and from 1699 to 1881, £9, 13s. 9d. The bank's stock averaged in price £156 from 1800 to 1810; from 1810 to 1881, £216; and from 1800 to 1881, £212. It is now selling at £325. Formerly, the stock used to be sold by public roup; but such transactions now take place in the Stock Exchange. The bank's branches in 1815 numbered only 18; there are now 117, including an office in London.

The question has frequently been asked whether the liability of the bank's shareholders is limited. The bank does not attach the word 'Limited' to its designation, as it could not register under the Limited Liability Company Act, passed after the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank, which was a bank of unlimited liability. The bank is a corporation, and in terms of the Acts of Parliament which relate to it, the proportion of stock called up is now two-thirds in the case of each proprietor. The liability of a holder is one-half of his actual holding—thus, a holder of £100 stock is liable for a further sum of £50.

There appears to exist a popular belief that the magnificent buildings of this and the other Scottish banks have been erected out of unclaimed funds. But this is quite a fallacy, as a reference to the published balance sheets of the various banks will show, for therein will be found an entry debiting the costs of such to a Heritable Property account, to which it is usual to apply a sum annually out of the bank's profits in reduction of the amount.

One historical reference before closing. While Sir Walter Scott was a partner of Messrs Ballantyne & Co., this firm was largely indebted to the bank, and for long withheld the fact of Sir Walter's partnership with them. The first occasion on which the authorship of the *Waverley Novels* was authoritatively announced was to the Directors of the Bank of Scotland, and it was made at the desire of Sir Walter by Mr John Gibson, W.S., his man of business. But the Bank has all along been bound up in a multitude of ways with the history-making personages of Scotland.

AN ELECTRIC SPARK.*

CHAPTER VII.—THE BLACK SHADOW.

'COUNT VILLAR ENDOZA and Miss Endoza,' announced the servant at the house in South Audley Street; and the tall, stately, Spanish grudee-like visitor to Mr Lewis Levvinson's entered the drawing-room with his daughter, who, all dark eyes, diamonds and diaphané, a study in black and white, held her cheek to Miss Bryne, and then kissed Rénée effusively; while in turn her father bent gracefully over

the elder lady's hand and lowered the sole ornament he wore, a sparkling order-cross which depended from its ribbon till it touched the lady's glove.

'So chivalrous—so like the old régime,' thought Miss Bryne, whose heart fluttered as she faintly returned the pressure of the Count's hand, and then trembled as she met his eyes.

'It is always a delight to visit your charming home, Miss Bryne,' he said. Then turning to Rénéé, he went through the same ceremony with his order, but only smiled and nodded, to pass on to the old engineer, shake hands, and then draw him aside and lay his hands upon the Englishman's broad shoulders, turning his head to glance for a moment at where Rénéé and Isabel were now seated, the latter softly agitating an enormous black ostrich feather fan for the benefit of both.

'My dear Dalton,' he said softly, 'when I am at home I gaze at my child, think of her dead mother, and feel that she has left to me an angel of light—the most beautiful of her sex. When I come here, I find that she is rivalled by another—yours. How beautiful they are! England—Spanish America—earth's fairest children. Ah, we two—old—old!'

'Fogies,' suggested Dalton, smiling.

'Yes; that is the word—*fogeese*—two old *fogeese* ought to be very proud.'

'And so we are, Count: Heaven bless them both!'

'Yes, Heaven bless them both,' said the Count.—'But how is it with you? Very busy? Are you lighting up more dark cities? My dear Dalton, I hope to have some fresh project for you ere long. The President, the Governor, and the people are enchanted with the electric light. You were quite satisfied, I hope?'

'Perfectly, sir. Nothing could have been more prompt and business-like.'

'That is well,' said the Count with dignity. 'I am proud to represent a Government so correct in every way to the manufacturers of this great business nation. It is a privilege, Señor Dalton, which reconciles me to my exile from my beautiful land.—Ah, did not see you at first, my dear Señor Brant,' he continued impressively, shaking hands and inquiring with the greatest solicitude after the young man's health.—'And the good doctor, too. So pleased to meet you out of that terrible room where you make your patients wait as a Cabinet Minister does his people who seek an audience.'

The doctor crossed to talk to Miss Bryne, trying hard to be chatty; but his every advance was received with a gentle tolerance; and at the end of a minute he walked sulkily away. He went into the next drawing-room, where his eye rested on the pleasant, slightly flushed face of Miss Bryne, who was seated glancing from time to time at Villar Endoza as he talked quietly to Brant.

'You see, my dear Señor Brant, after six years' residence in London in the service of my country'—

'Where you haven't lost much time, sir, for you speak our language like a native.'

'Thank you: I try hard,' said the Count, gravely accepting the compliment, and then

smiling sadly at Miss Bryne, whose eye he caught. 'But I was going to say that your country seems to me more the home of elderly, thoughtful, money-making business men than of the young.'

'Oh, it isn't a bad place when you have the cash,' said Brant, watching Isabel as he spoke.

'The cash? The large income? no: that may make a difference; but if I were a young man of your age and talent in what you call it—*mechanessim*'—

'Mechanism.'

'Thank you, my dear Señor Brant. If I were such as you, I should kiss my fingers to London, and then ship for such a country as mine. Ah, my dear Señor Brant, you should see Decongagua with its sunny plains, rich valleys, and its great volcano, now all fire, now calmly serene in its mantle of virgin snow. It is like our women—an emblem of their nature: now beautiful in repose, now grand in fiery passion. Ah, you should see our women of the sun.'

'Needn't go to Central America for that, sir,' said Brant bluntly. 'I don't believe there is a more beautiful face there than there is at this moment in here—in this room.'

'Ah, you mean my dear child's sweet friend, Miss Dalton.'

'No; I don't, sir,' said Brant. 'I mean Miss Isabel.'

The Count softly took the young man's hand, pressed it, and let it go. 'I thank you, Señor,' he said softly. 'I am a father; yes, you are right, and I am proud.—But we are speaking of her land—of mine. At your age, with introductions, you would achieve greatness; you would win orders'—he suggested his own as he spoke. 'Titles we do not give. Mine is the old Spanish ennoblement.—But think it over, my dear señor. We are a rising nation; and, should you care to go, for the sake of my friendship with your uncle, I am at your service. Charming climate, beauty, wine, women, a paradise to live in. Think, my dear señor, of my words.'

Brant's cheeks flushed, then turned pale, for the servant just then announced Mr Wynyan; and Paul entered, quiet, firm, and gentlemanly, to receive Miss Bryne's greetings, and then stand talking for a few moments to Rénéé.

'You're late, Wynyan,' said Dalton, joining them from where he had been chatting to the doctor. 'Glad you've come, though.'

The time glided on with wonderful rapidity, as it seemed to Paul, who felt as if he were in some blissful state of unreality, where everything was tinged by delight, though all appeared to progress in the most realistic way. For a short time he was seated beside Isabel Endoza talking about Decongagua and its beauties, and listening to her rapturous praise of London.

Then came a quiet chat with the doctor, full of requests to him to spare his principal all he could. Then he was back with Rénéé, saying little, but drinking in her words, which took the form of a prayer—a repetition of the doctor's—that he would spare her father in every way.

His promise was given quietly and calmly,

for whatever moved beneath, Paul Wynyan's surface was unruffled.

To play propriety well, Miss Bryne joined them; and at the same moment, Brant, whose manner was one moment repellent, the next suggestive of malice, as he looked from one to the other.

Soon after, Wynyan was led by Dalton to the Count, who took him by the coat and talked of the engineering works done by Robert Dalton & Company for the Republic of Decongagua.

'Evening, Count,' said the doctor, interrupting their conversation. 'Patient to see. You follow my advice.'

'Going so soon, Doctor Kilpatrick?' said Miss Bryne, after the doctor had bidden *Rénée* and her friend good-night.

'Yes, ma'am. As our foreign friend said, I have affairs. Good-night.' He shook hands with her calmly enough; and Miss Bryne uttered a sigh of relief as she saw him go to the door with her half-brother, and then her eyes were directed sadly at the Spanish-American envoy, who was earnestly talking to Wynyan.

'Bear it in mind, my dear sir,' he said. 'The Decongagua Government would not be ungrateful to a gentleman of your ability, should you ever seek a change. A lovely country, fair women, honours, wealth, orders of merit, await the enterprising man of talent.' 'Oh, thank you, Count. I do not think I shall leave England,' said Wynyan thoughtfully.

'Who knows, my dear sir? there are changes. But remember, in gratitude for what you have done for my country, I am your friend. My house at the Embassy is open to you at any time.—Now, a few words with my charming hostess, and then we depart.'

The Decongaguan envoy went smiling across the room to where Brant was hard at work trying to pique his cousin by being very attentive to Isabel, who accepted his advances after the fashion attributed to finished coquettes.

'Ah, my sweet one,' said the Count, 'I have been telling Mr Brant Dalton of the beauty of our land. You must add your praise. Now, I am going to chat for five minutes with our hostess, and then the carriage must be ordered up.'

'Oh Papa! So soon?'

'You forget that we must look in at our other friends, my child, and it is growing late.'

'And is Decongagua so lovely a place, then?' said Brant, as the Count went over to where Miss Bryne was palpitating with pleasure at his approach.

'Indescribably beautiful,' she said.

'Ah, I should go and see for myself if you were over there.'

'Perhaps I shall be—soon,' said the girl archly, as she made play with her eyes.

'Then I shall come over and perhaps stay,' he whispered.

'What nonsense!' she replied. 'Why, what would dearest *Rénée* say?'

'What she liked,' he whispered earnestly.

'I know better,' was the reply. 'How wicked men can be! one never can believe them.'

'In Decongagua?' said Brant.

'No: I mean here.—There; I thought so. I can read your face easily enough: you are looking daggers because that nice, handsome Mr Wynyan has gone over to talk to dearest *Rénée*.'

It required no great penetration to read the young man's face just then, and his blundering efforts to carry on the flirtation were transparent in the extreme: setting the mischievous, abnormally sharp girl laughing at him maliciously, so that Brant's temper was getting pretty well ruffled when the Count rejoined them, after making Miss Bryne almost happy over the few scraps of warm flattering politeness he had bestowed upon her.'

'Now, my dearest one,' he said, 'come and say good-night to Mr Dalton.'

'So glad that you came in, Count,' said the latter. 'I'm afraid that I am a poor society man; but you must excuse it, and you too, little one.'

'You know I am so glad to come,' cried Isabel, reaching up to kiss him. 'I am never so happy anywhere as with you and dearest *Rénée*.'

'That's right, then,' cried Dalton, patting the little hand he held; 'come and be happy often; *Rénée* is always glad.'

'She makes our life a pleasure,' said the Count—'*Rénée* and our dear Miss Bryne.'

'Don't be flowery, Jacob,' muttered Dalton to himself. Then he was about to offer his arm to Isabel, who had just taken an affectionate leave of *Rénée* and her aunt; but Brant was eager to perform that office, and the Count nodded and smiled as the young people went down to the carriage, following directly after with Dalton, who passed out talking with him.

'I think I will now take my leave,' said Wynyan, joining the two ladies, when involuntarily *Rénée* glanced at the great clock upon the mantel-piece.

'It is very early yet,' she said naively. 'Perhaps my father would like to talk to you when he comes back, he has seen so little of you to-night.'

'I am almost afraid to stay,' said Wynyan, more eagerly than was his wont, for the half-invitation sent a thrill of pleasure through him, though all the while he felt that it was given solely from a desire to gratify the father. 'Mr Dalton looked tired, and he might want to talk business.'

'Then don't let him, Mr Wynyan,' said Miss Bryne with a look that endorsed her niece's invitation to him to stay.

'I'll try my best,' said Wynyan; and then he stopped short, for Robert Dalton's voice was heard speaking loudly, and he saw *Rénée* change colour. But the voices were hushed directly, and the two gentlemen returned, Brant looking angry, and then furious, as he saw Wynyan talking to his cousin.

Rénée noticed his manner and his savage glance, but her attention was taken off directly by the change which came over her father, who caught at a chair-back; and she flew to his side, Wynyan as quickly supporting him on the other.

'Papa—father!' cried Rénée, 'you are ill!'
'No: nothing much,' he said huskily. 'Better directly. I'll go to my own room.'

'Can I do anything?' said Wynyan hastily.
'Let me fetch Doctor Kilpatrick back.'

'No, no: it is not necessary,' said Dalton faintly. 'I shall be better in a few minutes.—Walk with me, Rénée.—Yes, thank you, Sarah,' he sighed, as Miss Bryne caught his hand, then left it, and hurried back to where Wynyan was standing, Brant having run to open the door.

'Don't go, Mr Wynyan; I'll be back directly, and tell you how he is. I may ask you to go for the doctor.'

At that moment Dalton turned, looking very white, and nodded to the young engineer. 'Only a slight attack of faintness,' he said. 'I am very sorry.'

The next moment the door closed, and Brant came across to Wynyan with his face flushed and a heavy scowl upon his brow. 'Well, Mr Wynyan,' he said, 'surely you can see that you are not wanted here now.'

'I beg your pardon?' was the quiet reply.

'Oh, hang your pardon, sir!' cried Brant; 'have you no knowledge whatever of society manners, sir? This is not Great George Street. My uncle has been taken ill.'

'Yes, I am aware of that,' said Wynyan gravely.

'Then why the deuce don't you clear out, sir? Because my uncle is good enough to let you drop in here, it does not mean that you are to set up your confounded tent. And look here, Mr Wynyan, you may as well take a bit of advice. I have seen a good deal, sir, and I noticed several little bits of confounded presumption on your part to-night. My uncle is too easy to mind it, and my aunt cannot speak; but I can, and, hang it, I will. If ever you come here again, just please to recollect that you are the paid servant of Dalton & Company, and behave accordingly. Some men in my position would have kicked you out of the house for less than I've noticed; but I don't want to quarrel with every impertinent beggar I come across.'

Wynyan made no reply, only looked firmly at the speaker, while the pulses in his temples throbbled with a heavy beat.

'Well, do you understand me?' continued Brant.

'Perfectly, sir,' replied Wynyan.

'Then why don't you go? Are you so thick-skinned that I am to ring for one of the servants to show you the door?'

A red spot was rising fast in each of the young engineer's cheeks, for Brant had gone pretty well to the limit that he could bear; but at that moment a scene was arrested by the return of Miss Bryne.

'He is better,' she said hurriedly; 'and I don't think we need have the doctor to-night.'

'Then we need not ask Mr Wynyan to wait,' said Brant mockingly. 'You see, he has to be at the office in good time in the morning.'

The sting had been bitter enough before, and biting his lip, Wynyan turned to the speaker, but he said nothing, for Miss Bryne took it all in the most innocent manner, and held out her hand warmly to the visitor.

'No; we will not keep you, Mr Wynyan. Thank you, though, so very much. Brant here shall stay for a bit, and fetch the doctor if we want him. Oh this dreadful work! Good-night. We have been so glad to see you. I will apologise to Rénée for you—I mean I apologise for her not coming down.'

Rénée! Her name seemed to sweep away every feeling of anger in the young man's breast, and he went out of the house calm and restful.

Rénée! She filled his inner nature as he walked slowly back to his chambers, seeing her bright and happy as the hostess, full of solicitude, the tender woman, as she flew to her father's side.

Rénée, Rénée: there was no room in his mind for Brant. There was something so gentle, too, in her words to him that night, enough, surely, to give him hope; and her manner and Brant's toward Isabel Endoza were enough to set him at rest. The cousin? Why should he trouble about him and his ill-conditioned manner. Brant was jealous of him—of the confidential position with his uncle, and of his intimacy at the house.

'Perhaps I should feel the same under the circumstances, even if I did not show it in the same way.'

Then he thought over his last conversation with Dalton, and his promise, modestly enough, hardly giving himself credit for all he had done in the great invention.

'Partner,' he said softly; 'there is no hurry: Jacob served long for his Rachel. It will be time enough to think then. Partner! Oh, I have no room for thoughts of poor Brant.'

R H U B A R B.

It is now many centuries since the Arabians first introduced into Europe, from China, Tibet, and elsewhere, the dried medicinal roots known in commerce under the generic name of Turkey Rhubarb, with the pharmaceutic preparations of which we are all more or less familiar. About 1573 the living plant came to be cultivated—for medicine only—in our own south-eastern counties, but the home-grown roots were never equal in quality to those obtained from the East. Our occasional enforced acquaintance with 'Rheum Officinale' is very unlike our voluntary, common knowledge of the sub-acid, succulent leaf-stalks of *R. Rhaponticum* (Linnæus), which a cook who knows her business can make so tempting in the form of domestic pies, puddings, compôtes, and preserves, not forgetting the excellent effervescing wine yielded by its juices, after a certain amount of fermentation. The rhubarb of our kitchen garden differs considerably in appearance from that from which medicine—so safe for children, and so valuable for adults—is obtained, and its recognition as a wholesome culinary article of food is of comparatively recent date. Its culture, for uses other than for decocting doctors' stuff, was still experimental in 1820, when Mr Wyatt of Deptford sent five bundles of the leaf stalks of rhubarb for sale to the borough market, and

had three returned to him because no one would buy the novel esculent. Now the quantity of rhubarb which arrives every week in Covent Garden alone from January to August may be counted by tons, and its money value by thousands of pounds, and so cheaply is it sold, that all classes from the richest to the poorest can buy it.

Theoretically a vegetable, but practically a fruit, this perennial is closely allied to the *Rumex* family—our Docks and Sorrels—which it resembles in more ways than one, but especially in the form of its flowers and the acidity of its flavour. Rhubarb is the only known herbaceous plant bearing a gum similar to that obtained from trees; and if we trouble to examine the thick ribs of the broad, palm-like leaves and the green supporting stems in the months of June and July, we find exuding from them a clear mucilaginous substance that hardens into tiny drops of gum. This is the time for blooming; and the handsome clusters of loose, cream-coloured panicles, if allowed to do so, produce an abundance of seed. But if the plant exhausts itself by expanding flowers and ripening seed in the autumn, only a poor crop of leaves can be expected in the spring; so the gardener's knife quickly puts an end to a thing of beauty, equal if not superior to many blossoms we spend time and money over to bring to perfection. The quicker propagation by offsets is now very generally preferred by the market gardener to the slower process of raising seedling rhubarb. The strongest of the eyes, or buds, shooting out at the base, immediately above the pendulous finger-like tap roots, are carefully detached, with the delicate fibres uninjured, and a portion of the root itself. Crowns grown from buds are stronger, and come quicker to perfection than seedlings, and suffer less from the attacks of snails, slugs, and other destructive garden pests.

An accommodating crop, requiring little attention, rhubarb, with moderate care and liberal treatment, can be raised with profit on almost any part of cultivated land. London market gardeners often grow it between the rows of orchard trees, where it remains permanently, the older crowns lifted in rotation for early forcing, and younger ones planted in their place. A constant succession must be kept up to fill the gaps left by the old plants, which after a spring in the hotbeds are of little worth, and are generally thrown out on the rubbish heap. Forcing can be carried on at any season; but in this as in most other things there is an unwritten law, and those whose trade it is to cater for the public have to study its unaccountable freaks, one of which is, that where rhubarb is concerned, it will have none of it before the New Year. Directly Christmas is over, our markets and fruit shops have an extra note of colour in the bunches of vivid crimson stalks and delicate amber leaves of rhubarb, almost as tempting to look at as the pure white narcissus and deep purple violets among which they lie. The costly flowers, however, come from the sunny South, whilst our favourite table delicacy is a speciality of home growth, not yet encroached upon—like so many other products—by rival supplies from abroad.

Except as an occasional ornamental plant in their flower-borders, foreigners almost ignore rhubarb, and the question may be asked, why we do not send any surplus fruit, after our own needs are satisfied, over to them. Our merchants would gladly welcome this extra source of profit; but 'Protection' stands in the way. Thousands of tons of garden produce from every port of the world are landed on our shores—a gain to the consumer, but a ruinous loss to the horticulturist—but we in return are excluded by prohibitive tariffs from the Continental markets, which on the one hand cheapen our productions, and on the other seriously diminish our exports.

Several methods are practised for forcing rhubarb. The essential factors are a steady heat and the exclusion of light. A considerable quantity of the earliest comes from Yorkshire, grown in disused coal-mines, where the requisite conditions for a quick and successful crop are at hand, without the usual initial cost of artificial means. Houses where early peaches, mushrooms, or cucumbers are raised, vineries and conservatories, are all utilised, and in these the crowns are placed under pots or in pits, or else simply covered with matting. But for market supplies, the forcing is done in pits; and trenches, dug in the open, and prepared with six or eight inches of well-rotted manure, covered with a few inches of rich loam. On this, about the middle of October or beginning of November, are put the crowns intended to be ready for January, the variety 'Red Champagne' being a favourite kind for its rich colour and vigorous growth. To vegetate naturally, the roots are planted about three and a half feet apart; but for forcing, they are crowded together as thickly as the fingers are upon the hand. The trenches, hooped across, are further covered well in with straw, litter, or mats, with a tall drain-tile here and there, to carry off any injurious steamy heat. After six or eight weeks, the stalks will be ready to gather; and after sorting, fifteen to twenty of them are made into flat 'market bundles,' arranged alternately in yellow heads and crimson tails, firmly bound at each end with rods, or withes from the osier beds. A bunch this size once brought eightpence to the grower; but in these times of depression they now fetch less than half that price. Rhubarb suffers from any prolonged frost, like that experienced in the early part of 1895, and the small profits now possible to make out of a market garden are still further curtailed. The experience of a well-known supplier of Covent Garden, whose extensive grounds are near Kew, is that of one, out of many, who had to face disastrous financial losses in this memorable season, when the ground was iron-bound for two whole months. Not only were his rhubarb crops several weeks behind, but four acres of celery, calculated to bring in eighty pounds an acre, and twenty acres of cabbage worth thirty pounds an acre, were so completely destroyed, that the whole had to be ploughed up, instead of giving the looked-for return for the expensive labour and anxious care expended on their cultivation.

The cherry, pear, and plum trees are in their full beauty of snowy blossom when the forced

crop of rhubarb is about exhausted, and that grown naturally is just ready, having had the protection of a loose covering of straw, to avert damage from treacherous white frosts, so apt to come in the early mornings of spring. Inferior in delicacy, from the stronger fibre, and dull in colour where the other was brilliant, this latter kind is still an immense favourite, and continues to be largely consumed even after the vernal blooms have brought us the ripe fruits of summer. Every cottager has his clump of rhubarb, too often put in some out-of-the-way corner, where, spite of neglect, it still supplies many a pudding for the Sunday's dinner. A little more care would soon repay the extra labour bestowed upon it. Each crown should be placed on a raised mound of rich, deep soil, and trenched round, for it is a plant impatient of water, suffering less from the want than from a superabundance of it. It is better for the plants not to allow them to flower, nor yet to gather any leaf-stalks after August, so that time is given to allow of the crowns ripening for another year's crop. With fair treatment and with very little expense, a garden, however small, ought to give its owner an abundance of this delicious wholesome fruit for at least six months in the year.

AN UNAUTHORISED INTERVENTION.*

CHAPTER III.

JACK THOROLD could scarcely credit the testimony of his ears. That the citizens—or some of them—had risen against the Government, and on his behalf: surely the news was enough to upset the nerves of the most impassive of diplomatists! But, with an effort, he managed to suppress all signs of the excitement that burned within him. His chief anxiety, after the first shock, was regarding the result to himself. He had not long to wait. The officer having hurriedly withdrawn, Ferreira and his companions laid their heads together. The prisoner could not doubt that he was the object of the conference, and it flattered him a little, even in the midst of his danger, to think that his disposal was deemed more urgent than a serious rebellion in the streets.

Presently the colonel raised his voice somewhat: 'Why not take him to the castle, then?' he asked.

'You are right, colonel,' replied Ferreira, after a second's deliberation. 'The castle be it! It will certainly be much safer—in case of accidents.'

Elias interposed, with an inaudible remark.

'Oh, there's no fear,' said the general. 'He can stay here for an hour. They will be dispersed in half that time.'

They exchanged views for a few minutes longer, Jack wondering the while where 'the castle' might be, and what they intended to do with him there; and then, returning to the table, Ferreira addressed him as if nothing had happened: 'As you are hungry, señor, orders

will be given at once to prepare some dinner for you; and afterwards'—

'Thanks. And afterwards?'

'That you will learn in good time,' he answered, dryly.

So he was conducted by his escort to another room, and in due course served with a meal that did credit to Ferreira's cook and cellar. As the result, having lit a cigar, he could contemplate the future with some degree of philosophy. The room overlooked the *patio*; through the open window came the echoes of an intermittent rifle-fire; and the muttered conversation of the soldiers standing by the door, whose attention seemed to be divided between himself and the doings outside, was a pleasing tribute to the sensation that he had unwittingly caused. Fully an hour passed: the sounds of firing became more distant, but did not altogether die away: the rebels must still be holding out. And it would soon be night, when their chances of a successful resistance would be enormously increased.

At last he heard the champing of horses in the courtyard beneath; then the door was thrown open, and Ferreira appeared alone. Jack tried in vain to gather from the general's countenance some hint of his feelings.

'Can you ride?' he asked abruptly.

'Of course.'

'Then be good enough to follow me.'

Motioning the soldiers to fall in behind the captive, he led the way down-stairs to the *patio*. It was almost filled by a squadron of cavalry—probably the full force of that arm in the capital—and at the door stood a couple of orderlies with spare horses. Ferreira indicated the troopers with a sweep of his hand: they had their swords drawn.

'One word, Señor Tovar,' he said, more gravely than he had yet spoken. 'There is trouble in the city; I must do my duty; and I have to warn you that if you make any attempt to escape or to open communication with the rebels, or if a rescue seems likely—well, my men will know exactly what to do. You understand me, I hope?'

Jack nodded: he understood only too well, and was not particularly charmed.

'That is well.—Mount, if you please!'

He obeyed, having no alternative; while Ferreira, who was evidently afraid to trust his important charge to a subordinate, took his place at the head of the squadron. A minute later, it had formed up in the Plaza, eight men abreast. In spite of his misgivings, or perhaps because of them, Jack had the curiosity to master his bearings. His own position was in the fifth rank from the front. The great square was empty, save for a company of infantry around the guns at each corner; the sun was going down behind the houses; and the din of the fighting, albeit distinct enough, seemed to come from the opposite direction to that in which they were facing. He was devoutly thankful that it was so.

His thankfulness was somewhat premature. The word was given, and at a hand-gallop they emerged from the Plaza into a broad, straight thoroughfare leading northward. It was also deserted; only here and there a head showed

at a balconied window, to be withdrawn at once; for in Central America, under martial law, curiosity has perils that make quiet-living people shun it like the yellow fever. Presently the squadron turned into a narrower street, running at right angles with the other; and, as they advanced, the houses became less and less pretentious in appearance, and in many cases were separated by stretches of garden-wall. Still, though they were plainly approaching the poorer districts of the town, the inhabitants remained invisible. Ferreira seemed to have his doubts, for the additional precaution was taken of throwing out an advance-party. Nor was it long in being justified. All at once they were aware of a noise that could not be mistaken—the noise of shouting, punctuated by occasional volleys and isolated shots. It grew louder and louder as they neared a little square into which several streets debouched, and before long a struggling, confused mass was to be discerned right in their path. Here, it was obvious, soldiers were in conflict with the populace. Jack's pulses began to beat faster. Then the advance-guard fell back; a quick order was issued, and the ranks closed up; and, glancing round, the Englishman noticed that a couple of officers had posted themselves at either end of his line. The fact, with Ferreira's warning in his recollection, was more significant than pleasant.

But he had little leisure for thought. They were now within fifty yards of the square; and suddenly the clamour increased in volume, a shot or two whizzed over their heads, and a portion of the crowd seemed to break away and rush pell-mell towards them.

'Halt!' cried Ferreira, to Jack's surprise.

Next moment, the cause was evident. The Governor had realised the truth—that the soldiers had been dispersed and driven back by the mob, and were now fleeing, routed, to the shelter of the cavalry. And perhaps, considering the *morale* of the San Estevan troops, it was not surprising: there were less than a hundred of them, while the citizens must have outnumbered them by five to one. Certainly they did not look particularly soldierly as they dashed past in panic, and it is questionable if they heard or heeded Ferreira's injunction to form behind. At any rate, Jack saw no more of them.

The refugees were not pursued, and for a minute crowd and cavalry confronted each other in dead silence, the former drawing instinctively together, the latter awaiting the word of their commander. In the space between the two bodies lay a number of dead and wounded, and it was somewhat pathetic to observe the efforts of the injured to crawl away from the scene of danger. Only, this was no time for pathos. The spell was broken by the citizens with a defiant shout, in which Jack recognised the name of his prototype. A scattering volley from rifles and revolvers followed. A man in the front rank was hit; several horses began to rear and plunge. Ferreira cast a quick glance behind him, and then the command rang out: 'Charge!'

The rebels were wise in their generation; for, as the horsemen swept down upon them, they

parted on this side and that and left a clear lane for their passage, but greeted them, nevertheless, with a Parthian volley of shots, stones, and frenzied shouts of 'Viva Tovar! Down with Melgarejo!' It was not without effect. One of the officers escorting Jack went down; a curse from his left-hand neighbour told him that the man had been struck; and, for his own part, the balls were whistling past too near his head for comfort. For him, indeed, it was a moment of peculiar peril. It was not only the chance of a stray bullet, but he had the fear that the slightest misadventure might give his captors the excuse to get rid of him without further trouble. In less than a minute, however, it was all over: the square was crossed, the last of the crowd left behind, the shouting was dying away in the rear, and they were riding at full speed along another narrow street, oblivious, apparently, of those who had fallen in the scrimmage.

Then, and not until then, did Jack Thorold draw a full breath of relief.

'They did not recognise you, señor,' said the trooper at his left hand. 'And lucky for you, too,' he added.

'Wounded?' asked Jack.

'*Gracias*: only a ball in my bridle-arm. But we'll pay 'em out for it going back, never fear.'

Jack had no doubt of it: if they got the opportunity. Meanwhile, the sun had set; darkness had come down with tropical suddenness; the passing landmarks—houses, churches, trees—had become blurred into uniformity; but on they dashed at the same breakneck speed for perhaps five minutes longer, through one street after another, then up a long and steep ascent, and finally drew rein before a huge, black mass of building which seemed to bar their further progress.

'Where are we?' inquired Jack of the friendly trooper.

'We have arrived, señor—the saints be thanked!'

'At the castle?'

'Sí.'

Apparently they were expected, for, after a moment's delay, the heavy gate was swung back, and they rode across a bridge into a large courtyard. A weary pause ensued. Then Jack was ordered to dismount, and, attended by a couple of troopers, was conducted into a hall of goodly proportions, where he was transferred at once to the custody of a file of the garrison. Ferreira was deep in talk with a white-haired old officer of benevolent aspect, doubtless the Governor of the fortress, upon whom he appeared to be impressing his views with much vigour. The officer listened attentively, nodding his head now and then, but said little. And at length Ferreira turned to the prisoner.

'*Buenas noches*, Señor Tovar!' said he. 'I can trust my gallant friend to make you very comfortable. For the rest, believe that I look forward to our next meeting with pleasure! Until then—*adiós*!'

He gave place to the white-haired officer, who bowed with the courtesy of his race. 'The señor will oblige me by stepping this way,' he said, after a minute's scrutiny.

So, accompanied by his guard, Jack followed at his heels through divers long, deserted corridors, in which the tread of their footsteps sounded hollow and unreal, and up a winding staircase to a passage dimly lit by a flickering oil-lamp. There they came to a halt before an iron-bound door, which one of the soldiers threw open.

'Enter, señor!' said the Governor.

Entering accordingly, Jack found himself in a good-sized chamber, and saw by the light from the passage that it was plainly but sufficiently furnished, and seemed not uncomfortable. It was better than a prisoner in his circumstances had any right to expect; better, indeed, than he *had* expected. He was proportionately thankful, and told the Governor so.

'I am at the señor's service,' was the reply. 'If he will permit me, I will send up a lamp and some books in a little. And if there is anything else'—

Jack thanked him again. Just at present, there was nothing else.

The Governor bowed himself out; the door was locked, and the measured tramp of a sentry in the corridor assured the captive that civility was not inconsistent with a proper precaution. Instinctively, in the dark, he betook himself to the window, to discover that it opened inward, but was heavily barred on the outside. He pulled it open. Nothing was visible save a few twinkling lights in the city; but he heard—or it was imagination—the distant and now familiar rattle of rifle-fire; and, just beneath, the tread of sentinels could not be mistaken. And, as he stood inhaling the cool evening breeze, another sound rose to his ears—that of Ferreira's squadron as it clattered away. For twenty minutes or so he kept his post, whistling rather dolefully. The excitement of the day was wearing off; and, as a natural result of the reaction, the realities of his position began to come home to his mind with the darker side uppermost. More than ever, he was inclined to wish himself well out of the affair.

His meditations were broken by the entrance of two soldiers with the promised lamp, several volumes of Spanish romances, a respectable supper of cold viands and wine, and the humble compliments of the Governor. Jack's spirits went up again: the old fellow had nobly redeemed his word.

'Come! this isn't so bad, after all,' he told himself, surveying the table with due satisfaction when the men had gone. 'They don't mean to starve me at least, and any other form of death I think I can risk!'

Fortified by these consoling thoughts, and leaving the question of supper for future discussion, he was quite ready to pass the evening in the company of the Spanish romancers. But the books were deadly dull, and ere long he fell fast asleep over the love-adventures of one Don Guzman in the city of Seville. He was awakened by the rattling of his door as the guard prepared to open it; and, glancing at his watch, he saw that it was now past nine o'clock. Half involuntarily, he placed himself beyond the circle of light cast by the lamp.

He started as the door was thrown open: he

could have sworn that he heard the rustle of skirts. In an instant the fact was put beyond question by the sentinel: '*Sí, señorita,*' said he: 'you have half-an-hour.'

The answer was merely a word of thanks, spoken in a low tone, but unmistakably the voice was that of a lady. Then the door closed; and the stranger, still in the shadow, addressed him: 'Juan!'

She advanced into the light as she spoke, both hands outstretched. For the moment Jack, not usually the most backward of men, was too much astounded either to speak or move. He could only stare at the visitor, and wonder if it were all a dream—if the girl standing there in an attitude of expectancy, her eyes trying to pierce the shadow in which he was hidden—if she were not a creature of his imagination. And this idea was not altogether dispelled when she threw back the *mantilla* which had partly concealed her face and form, and revealed to him—or was it a vision from one of Velasquez's portraits?—the tall, lithe figure, the perfect features of the Spanish type, the mass of black hair, and the glorious eyes of dark-gray, over which a shadow of hesitation, doubt, was now fleeting. He was not recalled to reality, and to a sense of his own remissness, until she spoke again.

'Well, Juan?' she repeated, in surely the most musical of voices: and, perhaps for the first time, Jack was truly sorry that he was not Juan Tovar.

And at length he came forward. 'Señorita'—

She retreated a step, a sudden terror in her eyes. 'There is a mistake, I fear—I thought—I was told— Oh! you are not Juan Tovar!' she cried, incoherently.

'I am deeply grieved, señorita,' he said, 'but it is not my blame—for twenty-four hours your countrymen have been insisting against my appeals and protestations that I am. And that is why I am a prisoner—and the señorita's good servant,' he added, with his best bow.

She seemed scarcely to heed him. 'And Juan? Then he is not here at all?'

'I am happy to say not.'

'But why— Oh! there is a mistake,' she said again. 'I am perplexed—I must go'—

Jack placed a chair for her. 'Will you not honour me by hearing my story first?' he pleaded. 'Your—your friend is safe, as I hope to convince you. But I, señorita?—And you have still twenty-five minutes.'

She looked straight at him for a moment; then, blushing a little, she sat down. 'It is due to you, señor,' she said.

He thanked her gravely, and, taking a seat at the other side of the table, plunged at once into a narrative of his experiences since leaving Salvatierra. Be sure he missed none of the details: he was too glad of the excuse to have her company, and to watch the interest grow in her countenance and expressive eyes. But she did not interrupt him until he had related the exciting incident of the wayside station.

'So he is safe!' she cried, clapping her hands in delight. 'Oh! I am sure of it, señor; he will reach the army to-night, to-morrow at the latest, and then'— Recollecting herself,

she pulled up. 'I am so sorry—I had forgotten that you were a prisoner in his place. You will pardon me, señor?' she entreated, holding out her hand.

Jack raised it to his lips.

'I was thinking only of Juan'—

'You will permit me to congratulate him, señorita?'

'He is dearer to me than anybody in the world,' she said, quietly. 'It is my excuse, señor.'

'One could not wish a better,' replied Jack. 'Don Juan is a very fortunate man.' And I am afraid he gave utterance to an audible sigh.

She glanced at him quickly, as if to gather his meaning, and then asked him to be kind enough to continue his story. This, however, with a peculiar glint in her eyes, which did not escape Jack's keen attention. Both smiled; and although no words passed, the history was resumed with the knowledge that quite a friendly feeling had been established between them.

When at length it had been told to the end: 'How am I to thank you, señor?' she asked. 'To go through all those dangers for a stranger—to run the risk of being shot—it is like the brave English nation! Thank you,' she repeated, but in English. 'Will you shake hands with me?'

'You speak English!' cried Jack. It was like a revelation to him.

'Only a little'—and certainly her accent was very marked. 'I was for some years in California, at school there. And now—you will tell me your name?'

He did so.

'Jack Thorold! It is very difficult to say it—as you do.'

'Call me Jack, then,' he suggested, with some audacity. 'Everybody does, you know.'

She reverted immediately to her Spanish. 'For me, I am known as Dolores Alvarado—and,' she said, smiling, 'I also expect to be shot some day as a dangerous rebel. But the time passes, Señor Thorold!'

'And you have not told me yet how you managed to get here, and about the rising of the people, and a hundred other things I am dying to hear.'

'That is easily done. We have informants everywhere—you know already how quickly the news of your capture spread, and how quickly our friends took arms. The city is with us—like the rest of the country, except the army and the officials, it has had enough of General Melgarejo's rule. It is shown by their readiness, by their bravery in holding the troops in check all evening! You were brought here: it was known all over the town within an hour. For me, señor, I need not tell you with what grief I heard it. What could I do? If I waited until the morning, I was afraid that I should be too late to see Juan; my only course was to come to the castle at once, in spite of everything.'

'And you did so? It was very brave of you,' said Jack; and meant it. 'But not alone, surely?'

'I have a servant with me; but there was no danger—for me. The rest was easy. The

Governor of this place is an old friend of my father's, although I had not seen him for many years. Besides, he is favourable to the cause, but too timid to declare himself. Juan had changed much, he told me—he knew him well as a boy—and if he could do anything to help him, he was glad to do it for his father's son.'

'Then he did not suspect the truth? He was kind enough certainly, but didn't strike me as particularly friendly.'

'He is afraid of Ferreira, who has no mercy—doubtless, that was the reason.'

'And this place—what is it?'

'It is the old castle of San Estevan, built three centuries ago by the founders of the city. I should know it well, Señor Thorold. Juan and I, as boy and girl, explored every inch of it, and so every passage and room is familiar to me, and very dear.—But about you, señor?' she cried, jumping up. 'We have only a minute or two, and we must have some plan: we must not permit you to be shot in mistake.'

'I can always appeal to my Consul,' suggested Jack.

'Oh! you do not understand Ferreira. He will shoot you first, and make inquiries afterwards. But let me think!' After a moment: 'He has written to Melgarejo, you say? In that case, you are safe for to-morrow at least. The camp is on the other side of the plain, fifty miles to the north-east; there can hardly be an answer until night, even if nothing happens in the meanwhile.'

There was a sound of fumbling at the lock: the time was up. Dolores hurriedly continued: 'Quick! we must allow them to suspect nothing—you must leave it to me.—I will consult my friends—they will think of some plan, even if we have to take the castle to release you! You will trust me in this, Señor Thorold?'

'If you promise to return,' said he, as the door opened.

'Can you doubt it?' she asked, lowering her voice. 'Till to-morrow—then it will be all right.' She gave him her hand. 'Buenas noches, Juan,' she said; and, with a bright nod, followed the sentry and passed from his view.

SOME POETS AND THEIR PASTIMES.

'ONE hates an author that's all author,' wrote Byron; and despite the sneer, it is true, more particularly with regard to those who have attained great literary distinction, that there is a general desire to know something of the man himself apart from his works. And in these days especially, when no detail of a great writer's life is deemed too minute or insignificant to contribute something towards the elucidation of his works, a glance at the leisure hours of some of our poets, and the very different ways in which they employed them, will not be devoid of interest.

With most persons, indeed, poetry is itself a pastime; but those favoured beings to whom poesy was the chief business of life have fre-

quently had secondary pursuits, in which they attained considerable excellence, and few have been without a certain liking for pastimes properly so styled. Recreation of a kind which does not call for too much exertion or fatigue has generally recommended itself to the contemplative mind of the poet, whether in town or country. Gray had little liking for active exercise, and to this his tinge of melancholy may perhaps be in part attributed. Low spirits, he tells us, were his true and faithful followers, and 'most commonly we sit together, and are the prettiest insipid company in the world.' When staying near Henley in 1760, he found the round of gaieties too much for him. His hosts were always 'what they called doing something—that is, racketing about from morning to night—occupations I find that wear out my spirits, especially in a situation where we might sit still and be alone with pleasure.' At another time we find him desiring 'to lie all day long on a sofa and read eternal new novels of Marivaux and Crebillon.' It is only fair, however, on the other hand, to mention the grand tour which he made in the company of Horace Walpole, than whom no more delightful cicerone could be found.

Cowper while at Olney confined his walks within the narrow compass of thirty yards of gravel, while dumb-bells gave him a little exercise in winter. His love of home-life—the bright fire, the closely-drawn curtains, the bubbling and loud-hissing urn—is apparent in what has been called his 'divine chit-chat.' Carpentering was one of his few recreations; and the care of his garden and three tame hares filled up the measure of his peaceful existence.

On reading the *Seasons*, a lady, we are told, discovered three things of its author—that he was a great lover, a great swimmer, and rigidly abstinent; on hearing which, Savage, with all the candour of a privileged friend, laughed heartily, saying he believed Thomson was never in cold water in his life, and that the other particulars were just as true! Quin tells us Thomson never saw the sun rise in his life; and on one occasion the poet gave as an excuse for not rising before noon, that 'he had no motive.' Allowing for exaggeration, Thomson doubtless lived in a Castle of Indolence all his own; but we must remember that he was wont to walk daily from town to his house at Richmond.

Southey was accustomed to read as he walked; but when quickening his pace to four miles or so an hour, he was obliged—fortunately for the enjoyment of his walk—reluctantly to close the book. He shared the love of the beautiful scenery around Keswick with the other Lake Poets. 'These lakes and mountains,' he writes, 'give me a deep joy, for which I suspect nothing else can compensate; and this is a feeling which time strengthens instead of weakening.'

Pope, as he tells us, was the unfortunate possessor of a 'crazy carcass;' and though, when leaving London, he bids farewell to 'luxurious lobster nights,' it is probable that

'sober studious days' were more to the taste of one who had to make a constant study of his health. When in town, however, he was 'as sure to be in a bustle as a porpoise in a storm.' In early life he was fond of riding, and in 1715 journeyed with his friends Arbuthnot and Disney from London to Bath on horseback, their luggage being on a very small scale, for Arbuthnot, the commander-in-chief of the party, allowed but a shirt and cravat to each traveller. The following year, he describes his pursuits in a letter to the sisters Blount: 'I write an hour or two every morning, then ride out a-hunting [at Cirencester], eat heartily, talk tender sentiments with Lord B., or draw plans for houses and gardens, open avenues, cut glades, plant firs, contrive water-works—all very fine and beautiful in our own imaginations. . . . At night we play at commerce, and play pretty high.'

In Pope's day, landscape-gardening was a rising art, and one much cultivated by the poet. Writing to Swift in 1736, he says: 'My house is enlarged, and the gardens extend and flourish. . . . I have more fruit-trees and kitchen gardens than you have any thought of; nay, I have melons and pine-apples of my own growth. I am as much a better gardener as I am a worse poet than when you saw me.' His rustic grotto was furnished with mirrors, and would reflect as in a camera-obscura the beautiful river scenery around Twickenham. Here it was that his friend St John was wont to mingle with the friendly bowl 'the feast of reason and the flow of soul.' Swift and Gray were among those who helped him to plant his quincunx, and to decorate the walls of the grotto with choice marbles or shining bits of spar.

Many poets have found an enduring source of pleasure in their gardens. Shenstone, the author of the *Schoolmistress*, was devoted to landscape-gardening, and loved to entangle his walks and wind his waters until his little domain became the envy of the great and the admiration of the skilful. But this passion for his garden, like any other form of extravagance, led him into debt, and, as Dr Johnson observes, his groves were soon haunted by beings very different from fauns and fairies. Far, too, from the busy haunts of men lived Abraham Cowley among his books and gardens.

The planting of trees was one of Sir Walter Scott's favourite diversions. Planting and pruning trees, he tells us, he could work at from morning to night. 'Your very acorn may send its ribs of oak to future victories like Trafalgar.' On the other hand, he had no taste for agriculture: 'to wrangle with farmers about prices, and to be constantly at the mercy of the seasons.'

Tree-planting was also a favourite pursuit of Walter Savage Landor while living at Llanthony, in Wales. At one time he bought two thousand pine-cones, that the side of the valley might one day be covered with cedars of Lebanon. He disliked to see flowers plucked. 'I love these beautiful and graceful tribes,' he says; 'they always meet one in the same place at the same season; and years have no more effect on their placid countenances than on so many of the most favoured gods.'

Science has not always proved so incompatible with poetry as is generally believed. Shelley while at Eton was interested in chemistry and electricity. Crabbe took great delight in botany and entomology. While in London, his favourite haunt was Hornsey Wood, where he sought for plants and insects; and at Belvoir his leisure moments were occupied with the same pursuits.

Among foreign poets, Goethe was conspicuous for his love of science in nearly all its branches. He studied anatomy, and was initiated into the mysteries of physiognomy by Lavater. He published his *Metamorphoses of Plants* in 1790, and his *Theory of Colours* in the early years of the present century.

We should, however, expect the arts of music and painting to appeal more strongly to the poetic temperament; and with the majority of poets this has been the case. Milton had a strong taste for music, and wrote his *Masque of Comus* for his friend Henry Lawes, the most distinguished composer of the day in England. Music and conversation, indeed, were his chief recreations. He sometimes sung, and could play the bass viol, but his favourite instrument was the organ. Gray had a liking for music, and would sing on occasion, though with some diffidence. While in Italy, he learned to play on the harpsichord from the younger Scarlatti, and was the means of introducing Pergolesi into England. Though Rogers kept nightingales to sing to him, his taste in music would hardly be admired at the present day, for he is said when dining alone to have had an Italian organ-grinder playing in the hall! Goldsmith was skilful with the flute, and could sing a song or dance a minuet with the best. Other and noisier amusements, however, did not come amiss to him, and games of blindman's-buff, or forfeits, were often a sore trial to the occupant of the room below the poet's in Brick Court, Temple—the learned Blackstone then engaged in writing his *Commentaries*.

The arts of poetry and painting have often been found united in the same person. Michael Angelo turned to poetry in the later part of his life. Goethe's room at Frankfort was covered with his own drawings. William Blake found relief in poetry from the monotony of engraving to order. In our own day, we can point to Rossetti and Mr Ruskin among many others. Cowper spent much of his leisure in drawing; and Pope, as we have seen, had a taste for architectural plans and designs.

Byron had a wide range of amusements—some rather brisk and boisterous, as became the fire and energy of his character. He was renowned as a swimmer, and in diving would pick up eggs, coins, and what not from a depth of fourteen feet. In Italy he was known as the English fish or sea-devil; and at Venice was considered a first-rate gondolier, spoilt by being a peer and a poet. He learned dancing from D'Égville, and was instructed in pugilism by Jackson, one of the 'pets' of the day. He was fond of animals from his Cambridge days, when he considered his tame bear 'the finest friend in the world,' and assured the scandalised college authorities that Bruin was going to 'sit for a fellowship.' On his arrival at Pisa in

1821, his numerous retinue, besides horses and dogs, included fowls and monkeys. His favourite dogs Lion and Boatswain are among the domestic pets of literature.

This love of animals was shared by Walter Scott, whose greyhounds Maida (immortalised as the 'Bevis' of *Woodstock*), Nimrod, and the rest, were for so many years his faithful friends. Besides the planting and pruning of trees, a favourite exercise with him was riding; and Sybil Grey or Douce Davie was the frequent companion of his leisure hours. We can picture him to ourselves mounted on Sybil Grey with a huge hunting-whip, prepared for courting on Newark Hill; Mackenzie, the author of the *Man of Feeling*, being of the party; and Sir Humphry Davy, bent on fishing, with his hat surrounded by line upon line and innumerable fly-hooks, with jack-boots worthy of a Dutch smuggler, and a fustian surtout dabbled with the blood of salmon.

Shelley's pastimes were many of them of a rather dangerous character, even from childhood, when his sister and he dressed themselves in strange costumes to personate spirits or fiends; 'and Bysshe would take a fire stove and fill it with some inflammable liquid, and carry it flaming into the kitchen and to the back door.' At Eton he is said on one occasion to have given his tutor a severe shock with a Leyden jar. He often carried pistols, and was a better shot than Byron, with whom he practised in Italy. While sailing, he was in the habit of steering and reading at the same time. His love of books was equal to that of Charles Lamb, and no volume which took his fancy was too large or too expensive for him. Unfortunately, however, in the course of his frequent removals, the more ponderous tomes had to be left behind!

Unlike Shelley—who drank only water, and would dine contentedly off a bun—many poets have found their chief relaxation in a certain amount of conviviality and pleasant social intercourse. Dryden, we are told, employed his mornings in writing, dined *en famille*, and then went to Wills's Coffee-house, which he caused to become the great resort of the wits of the day. Addison passed each day alike, and much in the manner Dryden did; but it is satisfactory to know that 'he came home earlier o' nights.' Goldsmith enjoyed what he styled a shoemaker's holiday—that is to say, when in company of his friends, to start at eleven for a walk by the City Road; and through the fields to Highbury Barn to dine; to drink tea afterwards at the White Conduit House; and to conclude the evening by supping at the Grecian or the Temple Exchange Coffee-house.

Charles Lamb was fond of 'cards and a cheerful glass.' Writing to Coleridge in 1796 on the production of the *Sigh*, he says: 'I think I hear you again. I imagine to myself the little smoky room at the *Salutation and Cat*, where we have sat together through the winter nights, beguiling the cares of life with Poesy.' His rooms in Inner Temple Lane saw many a brilliant gathering of wits and authors, when those who had a mind might play whist.

Another poet who loved to surround himself with all the celebrities of the day was Samuel

Rogers. When breakfast was still an institution, he was wont to welcome his acquaintances at that meal, 'by way of probation for dinner,' as it was said; and there were few persons of note in Europe who on a visit to London did not sooner or later appear as guests at his house in St James's Street.

CASSIE QUIN'S ATONEMENT.

By GUY BOOTHBY.

A stone upon her heart and head,
But no name written on that stone;
Sweet neighbours whisper low in kind;
This sinner was a loving one.

Mrs BROWNING.

'I SAY she's a liar—she kin say what she bloomin' well please. My man a' course kin take the sack ready and willin'; I ain't a denyin' that; but what I do say is that we ain't a-goin' to be put upon by the likes of 'er. —no, not if she was Missis Victoria upon her golden throne; we wouldn't! An' so I'll tell 'er to 'er face.'

Her name was Cassie Quin. And in case this assertion may not convey very much, I may also say that she was a strapping young woman of about twenty-two years of age, strong as a mountain heifer, brown as a berry, and boasting a fluency and picturesqueness of expression that almost took one's breath away. She was the wife of a boundary rider on the Queensland Station I was managing at that time, and there had been serious trouble out back.

The adjoining station, it must be understood, had a hut on the other side of the boundary fence, and between the two women there was constant feud. The opposition wife had taken the trouble to make certain serious charges against our boundary rider, and now *his* wife Cassie had come in herself to disprove them. She was about as rough a diamond as could be found between Capes York and Howe, and when she stood before me she completely filled the doorway.

Having had ten minutes of vigorous protestation and defiance, and with a view of arriving at a conclusion, I said quietly: 'Come, come, now; that's all very well, you know, but you must have given her some provocation!'

'I dunno what yer mean by "provocation,"' she answered; 'but if she says my 'usband don't do no work, well, she's a liar, a darned liar; and so I'll tell 'er to 'er face when I go 'ome—there now! Why, I'll tell yer what, if yer want to know, 'er man don't'—

'There, there; that'll do,' I said hastily; 'I don't want to know anything further. Go home, there's a good woman, and, for goodness' sake, don't let me hear any more about it. If you want any extra rations for Christmas Day, you can tell the storekeeper I sent you.'

She was evidently not satisfied, for she went away down the path mumbling something about falsehoods and vengeance that I did not catch.

It was terribly hot, and even in the shadow of the veranda the thermometer stood at one hundred and sixteen degrees.

When Cassie had interrupted me, I was busy writing to the old folk at home; and after she left, I narrated what had passed as an amusing incident characteristic of Bush Life. Then the storekeeper came in, sat on my table, and lit his pipe. When he acted in that fashion, it was always a sign that he had come to stay; so we sat talking of bygone days, mopping our faces, and wondering what was happening sixteen thousand miles away. I remember he had just said: 'Hold on, though; we're feeding them with goose and plum-duff when they're only just out of bed—we've forgotten the nine hours' difference in time.'

To which I replied: 'God bless them; and precious cold some of 'em are too, I'll be bound'—when from the yard rang the cry of 'Fire!'

We dashed out; and there, sure enough, was the smoke of a huge Bush fire, licking along the top of the thickly timbered Ranges that separated us from our back country. It appeared to be entering the gully in which stood the rival huts I have previously mentioned. And as soon as Cassie saw this, she left the store and rushed to the bough shade, where her horse was standing. I followed her, crying: 'Who are at the huts, girl?'

'Only that woman and 'er kid,' she answered, seizing her saddle.

'Then where are the men?' I asked. For I knew, as it was Christmas Day, there would be no work doing.

'Down at the Dingoe Creek grog shanty, and most like dead-drunk by this; and that woman's lame, and 'er kid ain't weaned. I must go!'

'Nonsense. Put that saddle down, and let one of the men go. You can do no possible good!'

'I can, I can. Don't stop me; there ain't no time to waste, I tell yer! What's the use of sendin' one of them? I can get there quicker nor any of 'em.'

She was in the saddle by this time; and I, seeing it was impossible to stop her, had let down the panels, and now shouted after her: 'Take care of yourself, for God's sake, girl!'

She had fourteen miles to go, and the fire scarcely six more. But she could only travel as fast as her horse could gallop: while the fire was moving like an express train.

Ten minutes later I was on the way with men and beaters. Even at the distance we were from it we could feel the hot glow upon our faces. And every moment it was closing in faster and faster on the devoted huts. Presently volumes of smoke began to roll over our heads; and we could distinctly hear the roar of the flames and the falling of trees far ahead of us. Within half an hour we had arrived at the point I was aiming for, and had commenced clearing a track, in order to direct

the course of the fire towards a dry creek bed. It was dreadful labour; but any one with half an eye could see that it was the only chance of saving the wool-sheds and the Home Station. Every moment the heat was growing more intense, and by the time our work was completed had become almost unbearable.

Cassie had been gone nearly three-quarters of an hour now. That she would gallop her horse to death to get there in time, we knew; but was the feat she had undertaken possible? It was the uncertainty that made the suspense so awful.

With the roaring fierceness of a million furnaces, the fire came closer, and already sparks were floating towards us. Then we heard a noise of horses galloping through the thick scrub timber; and presently, mad with terror, a mob came into view, tearing and racing for their lives. With them, in hopeless confusion, were sheep, kangaroos, wallabies, wild-dogs, and emus; while overhead, hawks, crows, cockatoos, magpies, eagles, and all manner of birds, flew screeching before the hot blast.

Our track by this time was broad and clear, and, if only the wind would drop or change, we might consider ourselves safe.

Seeing that nothing else could be done, we mounted our terrified animals and rode down into the creek bed. Then there went up a shout; and at the same instant, through the high grass, a maddened and terrified horse, with a woman and child swaying to and fro upon its back, thundered towards us. That it wasn't Cassie, we could tell, for this rider and child were tied on. Seeing the other horses in the creek, the poor beast leaped over the edge, and fell upon the soft sand at our feet. We rushed forward, secured it, and, as fast as we could, unbound the precious freight. Needless to say it was The Opposition and her child.

Cassie must have travelled as fast as her horse could gallop to the Blackfellow's Well in the Ten-mile Paddock; and then turned due east along the foot of the Ranges towards the gully where she lived. From the well to the huts she must have had the heat of the fire full in her face, for at the highest calculation the flames could not have been five miles in front of her. Then turning the hill-side, she saw the huts below her.

In three minutes she was beside them, calling and shrieking to her enemy to come forth and be saved. The terrified woman, according to her own account, had shut herself into the bark 'humpy,' for she knew it was worse than useless to trust to her lameness in the dried-up scrub. As the flames appeared on the hill-top, she saw through the window Cassie descending the track on the hill-side; then she lost sight of her until she heard her name called and rushed out.

'Save me, save me, Cassie Quin!' she cried—'save me and my little Em'ly. Take 'er, and I'll pray for ye and bless your name for ever!'

Cassie had by this time dismounted. 'Come on, then—git on 'ere,' she shouted. 'But wait: where's some green hide? I'll have to tie yer on, or yer'll let the kid drop—I know yer

will.—That's right now. Stick to 'er tight, and make for our 'ead station. Go on! Git!'

'But you, you,' screamed the frightened woman as the horse plunged and snorted at the on-rushing flames—'there's no room for you. You'll be killed!'

'D'ye think I'm a babby, and don't know how to take care of myself? I'm all right. You git!'

As she spoke, she struck the horse savagely, and he bounded away, and next moment had disappeared down the track, the mother and child rolling wildly in the saddle as they went. Then Cassie turned to the gully and saw the approaching flames. Her sacrifice was complete. Death was inevitable. She gave one glance round, found that her escape was cut off, and then rushed into her own hut and shut the door.

That night, as soon as it was possible, we organised a search party and went out to hunt for her. We had not far to look. We found her in her own hut, which, by some strange chance, was untouched, lying on the floor quite dead—suffocated. On the back of the door, evidently scratched with a nail, were these words: 'I sed she wer a liar; I'm sorie.'

LONG AGO.

WHEN opal tints and gray invade

The crimson of the west—

When daylight's lingering traces fade,

And song-birds seek the nest—

When shadows fall o'er hill and plain,

And stars in heaven glow,

We live in memory once again

The days of long ago.

And friends of days for ever o'er

Around us closely stand,

We feel the kindly grasp once more

Of many a 'vanished hand;'

And though fond, loyal, brave, and true

May be the friends we know,

No friends can match the friends we knew

And loved long, long ago.

Though smiling fortune on us shower

Her gifts with right good-will—

Though every passing day and hour

Be filled with sunshine still—

Though joys and pleasures deep abound

Upon the way we go,

We sigh and dream o'er joys we found

In days of long ago.

And though we form new friends, new ties,

New joys, new pleasures try,

And though new hopes like phantoms rise

As in the days gone by,

When comes the holy calm of eve,

Our tears unbidden flow;

We love, we hope, we plan and grieve

Again in Long Ago.

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THE YOUNGEST OF THE NATIONS.

It is a bright and interesting picture which Mr Edward Dicey, in *The Peasant State*, has drawn of a new nationality, which under our eyes has sprung into vigorous existence, and gives promise of filling an important place among European communities. The present generation has seen many phases of national progress and change in both hemispheres. On the farther side of the Atlantic the great American people has been welded into a closer unity in the fierce heat of the Secession struggle; in Asia, the vast space between Eastern and Western civilisation has been crossed by Japan in a few giant strides; while in Europe itself the changes wrought by strife and upheaval have equalled these in importance if not in dramatic effect. France has to all appearance finally chosen a Republican government; Germany is an Empire, instead of a heterogeneous multitude of States; Italy, lately a 'geographical expression,' is a compact kingdom; and Turkey, shedding province after province, has continued to shrivel, or, as Lord Beaconsfield put it, to 'consolidate' into complete decrepitude. In admirable contrast to the recent history of the decaying Ottoman Empire is the study presented to us in Bulgaria, a nation born but the other day, and already showing unmistakable signs of adolescence.

It has been manifest for generations past to all observant eyes that the process of decay was advancing rapidly in Turkey, a process which statesmen have striven rather to retard than hasten. There appeared to most of them only one probable solution—namely, that Russia should fall heir to Constantinople, a consummation so devoutly abhorred, that the 'Sick Man' has been most carefully propped up. Recent developments have made the entry of the great Muscovite power into possession not so certain a matter. 'If Turkey in Europe can only hold together for another generation,' says Mr Dicey, 'Bulgaria may possibly become so potent a factor

in the Oriental problem as to alter the conditions under which the Eastern Question will have ultimately to be solved. I do not say that Bulgaria is as yet an effective bulwark against Russian aggression; but I do say that she is in a fair way of becoming such a bulwark.'

The south-east of Europe, framed by the Danube, the Black Sea, the Adriatic, and the Mediterranean, has been a place of battles since the dawn of history. Waves of invasion have swept over it, one race of marauders succeeding and driving out another—Slavs, Bulgars, Turks. For some centuries past the territory which owes its name to the Bulgars has had the Turks for its masters, but nevertheless the Slav race has been the persistent element, wearing out or absorbing the other races, as the subject Anglo-Saxon absorbed the Norman. So that to-day we find there a perfectly homogeneous people, ready to think and act together; the oppression and cruelty of Turkish rule have left no permanent sores, and have affected only superficially the general well-being. It certainly bespeaks a robustness of constitution, a toughness of fibre in the race, that after centuries of a government which elsewhere has uniformly blighted all progress, this nation of peasant proprietors is found prospering—none wealthy, none sunk in poverty. This indeed is the most striking feature of Bulgarian life—the absence both of wealth and poverty, the maintenance of a level of moderate comfort above which few rise, and below which few sink. Out of a population of three and a half millions, about two and a half millions are engaged in agriculture, cultivating their own small holdings, of which the average is about six acres. Practically, they have fixity of tenure, paying a land-tax or tithe of one-tenth of the gross produce, the Government being theoretically the owner, and able to resume possession on the failure of the holder to pay his tithe. The system of payment in produce is undoubtedly burdensome and uneconomical. It renders the farmers reluctant to expend what

is needful on the improvement of their land, the result of any effort in this direction being to increase the amount paid to the State. But notwithstanding its cumbrousness, old custom has rooted the system firmly in the habits of the people. In many agricultural countries the people are victims of the money-lender; but he finds no room in Bulgaria, where small land-banks, called *Cuisses Agricoles*, have been established for the purpose of making needful advances to farmers. The capital of these institutions is provided by a compulsory contribution from the landowners in each district, and they have the great advantages of confining their operations to their several localities, and of being partly managed by elected representatives. They have been widely extended in recent years, and have met with the greatest success.

The extraordinary predominance of agriculture in Bulgaria may be accounted for in various ways, but one sufficient reason for it lies on the surface: commerce and manufactures have never flourished under the rule of the Turk. Wealthy industries offer plunder too tempting and too accessible to a rapacious Government: it is not so easy to rob a community of peasants who by thrift and incessant labour wring a scanty living from their few acres. Again, the climate and soil are very favourable both for tillage and for grazing. But whatever the causes, the fact determines the whole character of the social organisation. It appears that in this country of 3,500,000 inhabitants there are only 1647 factories, mills, or 'works' of any kind, and of these, 1206 are small rope-walks. In reality, for the carrying on of commerce or manufactures on any considerable scale, capital is required, which the resources of the people cannot provide. There are not in all Bulgaria five persons who possess over £40,000; there are not fifty whose fortunes exceed £20,000; there are not two hundred who have upwards of £5000.

A further hindrance to the extension of trade in Bulgaria arises from the comparatively low standard of comfort or refinement prevailing among the peasantry. In food, in clothing, and in housing, even the more well-to-do are content with a simplicity of provision which would hardly satisfy corresponding classes in any other country in Europe. In a Bulgarian peasant's cottage 'the floors are of mud; the kitchen fronting the street is also the living-room. Behind, there is a sleeping-room, with a bedstead in it for the head of the house, while the sons and daughters sleep upon mats stretched on the floor. The furniture consists of wooden tables, benches, and chests. The crockery and household utensils of every sort seem of the commonest and coarsest kind. I should doubt if there is a single house in the whole village in which any English labourer or artisan earning good wages would not deem it a hardship to be obliged to live in. At the same time there was no single dwelling which, given the habits and customs of the country, could be fairly described as unfit for human habitation.'

Evidently the lot of the Bulgarian peasant, though fairly comfortable according to his own notions of comfort, is not a particularly bright one. He has the kind of life he desires in

tilling his own fields, for his land-hunger is as keen as that of an Irish cottier. His pleasure he finds in his economies and petty savings, although it is only by a thrift amounting to penuriousness that he has anything over when the ordinary necessities of life, even on a sordid scale, have been provided for. The innocent amusements and enjoyments which give variety and zest to existence seem to be almost entirely absent from his colourless days. A peculiar quietness and stolidity characterise the whole people; even the children play 'quietly and silently.'

Throughout the wide territory of Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia, now practically a province of Bulgaria, there is a singular dearth of important towns; and Mr Dicey appears to have found even Philippopolis, the brightest and most cheerful of them all, 'as quiet as the grave or Peebles.' There are, he says, 'no places of entertainment; and by nine o'clock at night the city is quiet, the streets are well-nigh deserted, and the cafés are left empty. An English country town after nightfall is a scene of wild dissipation compared with the Roumeliote capital.' It is probable that the self-contained and stolid demeanour of the people is an effect of their long-continued subjection to an alien tyranny, and will gradually, under the new conditions, give place to manners more natural to freemen. One thing may be with confidence affirmed—the Bulgarian nation has taken very seriously the responsibilities of self-government, and has addressed itself to its new tasks in a manner reflecting the highest credit on its first rulers and counsellors.

This nation of untaught peasants had no sooner attained independence than they resolved to put education, free and compulsory, in the fore-front of their home policy. The grant for this purpose is £350,000 a year, a sum exceeding one-seventh of the entire expenditure of the State. In Great Britain, a proportionate amount would be something between thirteen and fourteen millions. What makes their zeal more remarkable is the fact that the Bulgarian peasantry in scarcely any instance employ hired labourers on their small farms, but till them by their own hands with the help of their families. To give up the children to the schools is therefore a most serious sacrifice, qualified by the arrangement that the holidays shall extend over the harvest-time.

Mr Dicey speaks in glowing terms both of teachers and pupils. He appears to have been particularly struck with the attention and intelligence of the scholars; and as to results, he declares that year after year 'lads are leaving these high-schools with a far better education than nineteen middle-class young Englishmen out of twenty.' The primary schools, which all children between the years of eight and twelve must attend, are supplemented by high-schools, which carry on until the age of eighteen the education of those who can afford to pay sixteen shillings per annum for the privilege. A Bulgarian university is contemplated. Such a state of things is in the highest degree creditable to the nation, although it is not all due to a disinterested love of learning. Mr Dicey thinks we must reckon along with

motives of this kind, first, the conviction that their country will by means of education attain her proper place in the world; and secondly, the desire they naturally entertain to widen the doors of success for their children, especially through admission to the public service.

The children of all ranks and conditions receive one common training in the public schools. Ranks and orders are as yet happily unknown in Bulgaria. It may be dangerous, as has been suggested, in a country where commerce affords so few openings, that so many well-educated youths should be thrown upon society, over-refined for the sordid life of their fathers, and ambitious of public employment. A large class of professional politicians and office-seekers is too probable a result.

Liberal, however, as has been the provision made for education, it is one of the most satisfactory features in the administration of the young State that the characteristic frugality of the inhabitants has been imported into its national finance. The temptation which most forcibly assails a new community in these days is the ease with which it can borrow money, and it needs but a trifling acquaintance with the circumstances of Spanish-American republics and of Australasian colonies to show how seldom the temptation is resisted. Bulgaria has hitherto acted as if she had kept in view these warning beacons, and has displayed even excessive caution. In a country which undoubtedly requires for its due development the expenditure of capital on some kinds of public improvements, it is possible to be too parsimonious. If the Sobranje, however, has erred in this direction, the failing is one that certainly leans to virtue's side. What country placed in analogous circumstances can show, as Bulgaria can, as a net result of her financial administration during the first eleven years of her independent existence, a balance of receipts over expenditure amounting to more than a million and a quarter sterling? The budget of 1894 shows, it is true, an excess of estimated expenditure over receipts of £48,000 in a total of four millions. But this is simply in accordance with the practice hitherto followed by the Ministry of over-estimating expenses and under-estimating income: there will be no deficit at the end of the year. It is, perhaps, desirable to point out that a less roseate view of the financial position in Bulgaria is taken by some of her critics. The Odessa correspondent of a London daily paper has recently stated his opinion that the yearly deficit in the Bulgarian budget is now fifteen million francs, and that a policy of retrenchment must at once be adopted and continued for some years if the young Balkan State is to be saved from disaster; but these conclusions appear to be inconsistent with the facts as stated by Mr Dicey, who sums up the financial position as follows:

(1) In almost all the ordinary budgets of the State, the estimated expenses have been greater, and the estimated receipts less than they proved to be in reality. (2) From the period when Eastern Roumelia became incorporated with the Principality, there has been a large balance to the good. (3) The £4,000,000 which have been spent on exceptional expendi-

ture, such as the war with Servia, the construction of railways, the supply of rolling-stock, the establishment of the National Bank, and the equipment of the army, have been provided to the extent of about £3,000,000 out of the surplus revenue. Lastly, while the normal revenue is about £3,500,000, the total liabilities of the State as yet accrued do not exceed £5,500,000, or little more than a year and a half's revenue.'

If this be so in fact as well as on paper, Bulgaria is financially in a position which many of the older States of Europe may well envy. Yet she has great necessities, which must be supplied if she is ever to attain that condition of prosperity which the natural resources of the country warrant her in expecting. Every facility, instead of a jealous opposition, should be offered by her statesmen to the establishment of new industries even by foreign capitalists. It will not long be possible to employ the rapidly increasing population in the cultivation of the soil. Perhaps the most clamant of her wants is a better system of railways. The two great railways in Bulgaria both cross the country from west to east, and all communication from north to south is most roundabout, troublesome, and expensive. Whether or not it is true, as is asserted, that there exists great mineral wealth which has never yet been touched, it is of vital moment even to the agriculturists to make the transit of their produce possible to more distant markets. The history of independent Bulgaria up to the present is a guarantee that whatever is done in these matters will be done cautiously. The prudence of her course hitherto, and the wonderful success which has attended the first steps of her career, must cause those which succeed to be watched with hopeful interest by all friends of freedom.

AN ELECTRIC SPARK.*

CHAPTER VIII.—THE SHADOW DARKENS.

'GOOD-MORNING, my dear. I came on at once.—Miss Bryne.'

The doctor shook hands warmly with *Rénée*, who looked pale and anxious, and then held out his hand to the elder lady, who gave hers nervously, and coloured slightly as she encountered the wistful, searching eyes directed at her, while their owner was about to press her hand, but, as if recollecting himself, slid his fingers up to the wrist and felt the pulse.

'Oh, Doctor Kilpatrick, I am not ill,' she exclaimed quickly.

'No; but you are nervous and excited. Our little friend here too— Tut—tut—I beg your pardon, *Rénée*, my dear; I quite forgot that you have grown into a woman.—Now, then, before I go up to see him. Your note said a touch of faintness after I had gone.'

'Yes; and he frightened us terribly,' said *Rénée*, in an agitated voice. 'Is he going to be very ill?'

'Not if I can help it, my dear. Look here: I am going to prescribe a magnificent medicine for him.'

'Instead of those drops?'

'No: to take with them. You must help me.'

'Yes, of course,' said Rénée. 'I begged him to stay in bed this morning.'

'I couldn't have treated him better, my dear. I shall order him off to Brighton or Weymouth at once. He must have rest, and you must keep him there.'

Rénée clapped her hands with childlike glee, and then accompanied the doctor to her father's chamber, leaving him at the door, and waiting until he called her in at the end of a few minutes.

'Come in, my dear: the visit's over.'

Rénée ran to the old man's side and caught his hand, looking from one to the other anxiously.

'You've done it now, Rén, my dear,' said her father with a grim smile. 'This fellow says I am to go down to the seaside at once, just when I am at my busiest time.'

'I tell him he's a bungler over business, Rénée, not to have people who can relieve him. He must leave the affairs to your cousin and that Mr Wynyan for a bit.'

'Yes, Papa; why not?' cried Rénée eagerly. 'I am sure that you can trust Mr Wynyan to do everything as if you were there.'

'Indeed!' said Dalton, looking at her so fixedly that she coloured faintly, and wished her words unsaid.

'Of course he will; and Brant too,' said the doctor; then slowly taking off his glasses and replacing them in their case—'Bless me, my dear child, how wonderfully like you do grow to your poor mother. But there; I must be off.—Now, Dalton, no nonsense. You know what is the matter as well as I can tell you, and it is your duty to follow out my advice. Come, it is sensible, is it not?'

'Oh yes; it's sensible enough,' said Dalton sadly.

'Then get up and go.'

'Yes; in a few days.'

'A few years!' cried the doctor angrily. 'You'll go to-day.—Rénée, my child, it is absolutely necessary that he should give up all business for some time. Take him down to Brighton for a few days, and make him idle in the fresh sea-breeze; have some drives, and at the end of a week go on to Dover and cross the Channel.'

'But my business affairs?' pleaded Dalton.

'Leave them to those whom you can trust, man, and rest yourself.—Got plenty of your drops?'

'Yes, plenty.'

'Then good-morning.—Mind, Rénée; I place you in command. He does not want a doctor, only a brave little captain to make him do what is right and take his rest.—You hear!'

'Yes; I'll make him,' said Rénée, and she bent down quickly to kiss her charge, while he retained her hand, as if it were the bond which held him to life.

'Write to me, and tell me where you are,' continued the doctor.—'Now, morning. Robert

Dalton, I've attended you and your family for twenty years, and you are the most unsatisfactory patient I ever had.'

The doctor left the room, and Rénée received her orders: to send to the offices at once for Brant and Wynyan. But the order was needless, for at that moment they were waiting in the drawing-room, where Brant's tongue was only kept silent by the presence of his aunt.

'I'm nobody, of course,' said Brant, a few minutes later, when, as soon as the sick man knew of his presence, Wynyan was summoned to the bedroom.

'Pray, don't be so pettish, Brant, my dear,' said Miss Bryne. 'I know what has upset you so, of course. It is your poor uncle's illness.'

'Then why didn't he send for me?'

'He will, of course, when Mr Wynyan has had his orders.'

'He won't,' cried Brant. 'I'm treated as if I were a schoolboy.'

Ten minutes later, though, his turn came, and he went up into the room, where Dalton received him pleasantly enough with Wynyan seated near the bed.

'Kilpatrick has ordered me away for a few weeks, Brant,' he said; 'and I shall have to depend upon you and Mr Wynyan here to see that things go right. Take my room, my boy, and make it your duty to receive any one who comes. Wynyan, here, will be within call, if it is any important matter beyond you.'

'I dare say I can manage, uncle,' said Brant coldly.

'Yes, my boy, of course. You'll write me a summary of how matters are progressing—daily.'

'Yes, uncle.'

'And when I come back, I will explain fully to you the drawings of our new invention. Of course I need not add that it is quite a private matter, and to be kept so. That is important.'

'Of course,' said Brant, who felt a peculiar tingling about the nerves in front of his ears, as if premonitory of a bad attack of neuralgia, while the palms of his hands grew moist, and, try how he would, he could not help stealing a glance at Wynyan, who happened to be looking at him.

'A guilty conscience needs no accuser,' says the old proverb; and Brant's face changed colour as he quickly averted his eyes, and felt as if he had never hated the young engineer so bitterly before.

'I don't think I need say any more,' continued Dalton. 'I am to rest, I suppose, and play at being idle, while you young fellows carry on the work.—Of course, Wynyan, nothing more will be done over the motor until I return.'

'Do you think there will be any communications from Government, sir?'

'No: they move slowly over these matters. If they do send, you will act as my representative.'

'Yes, sir.'

'I can't ask you, Brant,' said the invalid in an apologetic tone, 'for you know nothing about the matter. No one but Mr Wynyan or myself could deal with it.'

'Of course not!' said Brant to himself.

'I think that is all that I need trouble about.—Stop: Villar Endoza means something, I don't know what, but he dropped hints; and if there is anything important on the way, we may as well have it. They pay promptly. I'm afraid it is out of the British loans the Deconcaguan Government has raised. I hope they will redeem their bonds.—That is all, I think. There; do the best you can, both of you, and remember I trust you.'

Taking this as a hint, the young men wished their principal a quick return to health, and left the room, Brant drawing back, for his companion to go down first, and putting on a haughty, supercilious air.

'It is to be war, then,' thought Wynyan. 'Pish! War with an overgrown, disappointed, spiteful boy. I will not see it.'

'Your uncle looks brighter this morning,' he said aloud.

'Perhaps so,' said Brant, indifferently.

'I shall be very glad to see him back.'

There was no reply; and upon reaching the drawing-room landing, Brant made an angry gesture.

'You were going to speak?' said Wynyan quietly, as he laid his hand upon the door.

'No, sir, I was not going to speak,' said Brant in a low, angry voice. 'If I did, it would be something about assumption and impertinence. This is not the office, where Mr Wynyan dreams of reigning supreme.'

'No,' replied the young engineer with a grave smile; 'but your uncle's house, where a little courtesy surely is correct.'

He turned the handle of the door and entered, Brant following with his teeth compressed, as he saw that Rénée had joined her aunt, and both rose eagerly as the young men entered, Rénée to at once hold out her hand to Wynyan.

'How do you think Papa looks, Mr Wynyan?' she cried anxiously as her questioning eyes met his.

'I think certainly better. More restful,' he replied.

'And you will save him all the trouble you can, so that he shall have no anxiety?'

'Your cousin and I will spare him in every way possible,' said Wynyan, reluctantly letting go the soft white hand which had responded with such innocent frankness to the warm pressure he could not refrain from giving.

'Thank you. I know you will. Aunt and I will keep him down by the sea as long as we possibly can.'

'Well, don't worry Mr Wynyan about it,' cried Brant, who could contain himself no longer. 'He wants to get back to the office. This isn't an afternoon tea.'

Rénée flushed and gave him an angry look, which made him set his teeth harder; but Miss Bryne did not restrain her tongue. In her eyes, Brant was still very young; and telling herself that it was her duty still to form her nephew's character, she shook her head at him reprovingly.

'My dear Brant,' she said, 'I'm sure you must see that you are not behaving politely to Mr Wynyan;' and she shook her head at him again.

Fortunately for Miss Bryne's peace of mind, she could not read what passed in her nephew's mind. Like Shimei of old, he began to curse and call names, his mental shots being aimed at both Wynyan and his aunt.

'Mr Dalton is quite right,' said the former quietly; 'I do want to get on to the office.—Good-morning, Miss Bryne—good-morning, Miss Dalton; I hope you will have a pleasant stay at Brighton.'

'We shall have, I'm sure, if my father can feel at rest,' said Rénée, once more giving Wynyan her hand and making her cousin writhe.

'I shall see you in the course of the morning, Mr Dalton?' said Wynyan quietly.

'Possibly!' replied Brant haughtily; and Wynyan went out, leaving Rénée looking flushed and angry with her cousin.

But once more Miss Bryne took up the cudgels on Wynyan's behalf.

'Really, Brant, my dear, you are dreadfully rude to a gentleman who'—

'Gentleman!' burst out Brant, with a harsh laugh, as he fixed his eyes on Rénée and talked at her. 'I call him an insolent, overbearing prig, who is presuming on the good-nature of Uncle Robert. Gentleman! A mean, sneaking, contemptible cad. That's what he is, and I'll let him see that he is not going to do as he pleases at the offices. A miserable, scheming hound!'

Rénée turned to the window and stood looking out, so as to hide her mortification and disgust.

'He went the other way, Rén,' cried Brant with a sneer; and flushed and angry now, Rénée faced sharply round and darted an indignant glance at him; but it had no effect, save to make him more angry, and he was about to attack her, when her defender came again to the front.

'Really, Brant, my dear, you are indeed unkind; I must say, this is insufferable,' cried Miss Bryne. 'To accuse your cousin indirectly of turning to the window to stare after a gentleman! It is shocking. It is really; you really are discourteous. We cannot quarrel with all this trouble in the way, and I'm sure I detest scolding, even when the servants are tiresome; but you deserve a good scolding now; and really, Brant, if you were a few years younger, I believe I should do again what I did that time you were away from Marlborough: I should box your ears.'

'Bah!' ejaculated Brant. Then to himself: 'Weak-minded, silly old woman.—All right, aunt; but instead of correcting me, try if you can't correct that foolish girl. It's quite time she was brought to her senses. But I won't worry you both with my presence. I'll go down to the office and see that things don't go wrong.'

He gave Rénée a malicious look, and swaggered out of the drawing-room, leaving Miss Bryne fuming, and his cousin trying hard to master an emotion commingled of indignation and fear.

'I like,' she thought to herself—'I like Mr Wynyan, but— Oh no; it is not that. He is always kind and gentlemanly, and Papa

trusts him.—There!' she concluded; 'I will not be influenced by his spiteful words.'

Her musings were interrupted by her aunt. 'His temper is quite shocking, my dear, and I really am glad now that you did not take his pretensions seriously. I see now that you were quite right, and that you grasped Brant's nature better than I did.'

'Say no more, please, aunt, dear.'

'Only a few words, my dear. Of course there is some excuse for him, poor fellow. He is disappointed. Men are just like children: if they cannot have everything they want, they become cross. I've often said they are very selfish by nature. Then, too, they say spiteful and vindictive things. Surely he did not mean to suggest that you are a little impressed by Mr Wynyan?'

'Aunt, dear,' said Réncé caressingly, as she laid her cheek upon that lady's shoulder, 'do you want to make me unhappy, just when we are in such trouble about dear Papa?'

'Bless me! no, my darling,' cried Miss Bryne, kissing her niece affectionately.

'Then come along aunt, dear, and let's see to the packing. We must go by the earliest train we can.'

There was a peculiarity and excitement in Réncé's manner which did not escape Miss Bryne, who said to herself, with perfect truth: 'Really, I don't know though, after all.'

DEATH FROM SNAKE-BITE IN INDIA.

THE serpent is a creature which, for some reason or another, has never succeeded in achieving for himself an abiding popularity. Ever since his first effort in the Garden of old, his appearance among men has usually been the signal for their abrupt departure. His last bid for popularity was perhaps when, in association with Æsculapius, he posed as the healer of the ills that flesh is heir to. But he failed. For men could not so easily forget that among those ills was one that he had caused and that he could never heal. And so the bad name once given has adhered to him. He has pointed many a moral and adorned many a tale. He has supplied proverbs in the languages of all countries where he is known. He has been credited with powers such as the lord of creation himself is only just learning to use (was Eve hypnotised? we wonder); and very few have been found to say any good of him, though there is no more beautiful passage in Matthew Arnold's poems than that in which he describes how

In a warm bay
Among the green Illyrian hills,

in days of old,

Two bright and aged snakes,
Who once were Cadmus and Harmonia,
Bask in the glens or on the warm sea-shore,

spending the evening of their troubled life
'placid and dumb.'

In our cold northern climate, venomous snakes trouble us little; but as we move eastward and

approach the region where our race was cradled, the serpent (perhaps from unpleasant local recollections) begins to assert himself; and in India the curse is one the extent of which it is difficult to realise. There is literally no security from them: they will coil up in your cooking pans or under your pillow; they will stretch out on the top of your door, and drop on your head. In fact Indian snakes are guilty of all the evil deeds which a Rudyard Kipling or a Conan Doyle may ascribe to them, and the best that can be said in mitigation is that they rarely seem to bite Europeans. Of the poisonous kinds there are some twenty genera, admirable pictures of which may be found in Sir Joseph Fayrer's *Thanatophidia of India*. Of these the most infamous is of course the cobra (*Naja tripudians*), of which there are many varieties. 'Few objects,' says the authority just referred to, 'are more calculated to inspire awe than a large cobra, when with his hood erect, hissing loudly, and his eyes glaring, he prepares to strike. Nevertheless, they are not, I believe, aggressive, and unless interfered with or irritated, they crawl along the ground with the neck undilated, looking not unlike innocent snakes.' The reputation of being the most aggressive of all the Indian snakes is enjoyed by the *Ophiophagus elaps*; but more dangerous, perhaps, are the *Daboia Russellii*, or Russell's Viper, and the *Echis carinata* (the native *phursa*), whose bite causes death as certainly, if not quite as quickly, as that of the cobra. For the horror of the thing is that death—at all events to the native—is almost certain. It is a sad and remarkable fact that in dealing with a bite from one of these snakes civilisation appears to be nearly as powerless as barbarism. The district officers frequently complain that the natives, when bitten, content themselves with singing *mantras* or charms, instead of applying to the doctor. But what can the doctor do for them? He can excise the part bitten, he can amputate the limb; but if the poison has once got into the venous system, unless the bite was not deep or surgical aid was immediately at hand, no human power can save the victim.

The subject of the prevention of death from snake-bite is one which has for many years past engaged the attention of the Government of India. The annual Reports are interesting, but far from pleasant reading. In 1891 the mortality under this head was no fewer than 21,389; in 1892 it had fallen to 19,025; in 1893 it rose again to 21,213. In other words, in 1892, out of every 11,630 people in India, one died of snake-bite; in 1893, one out of 10,424. The fluctuations are probably accidental; but the state of affairs is real and deplorable enough. Of the total number of deaths, almost exactly one-half occurred in Bengal (10,797); next come the North-western Provinces and Oudh (4847), Madras (1498), and Bombay (1192)—all showing an increase on the preceding year's figures—while the one province absolutely free is the little province of Coorg, the smallest in India, but still with a population of 173,000.

Can nothing be done to prevent this fearful mortality? is the question which leaps into

one's mouth on reading such statistics. And the answer, unwilling as one naturally is to give it, appears to be in the negative. At least so much may be said, that years of effort have been attended with no success. One of the first attempted remedies was the offering of rewards for the destruction of snakes, coloured plates of the venomous kinds being circulated (at Sir J. Fayer's suggestion), in order to enable the natives to identify them; and rewards were actually paid in 1892 for 84,789, and in 1893 for 117,120; but this increase has, as we have seen, been accompanied by no decrease in the death-rate. And the system undoubtedly opened the door to many abuses. It is suspected, but not perhaps proved, that snakes were bred for the express purpose of being destroyed. And it is certain that many a dishonest penny was turned by killing them in June, July, and August, that is, soon after breeding-time, when they were immature, and therefore less dangerous. Moreover, there grew up a class of idle persons who made a living out of it, for the large reward offered made it a more paying business for them than ordinary labourers' work. Consequently, Government found it expedient to reduce the reward, and the destruction of snakes has not fallen off; for, as has been pertinently remarked, people still kill snakes when they come across them, only men do not now expressly go out into the jungle (and risk their lives) to find reptiles; and when they do kill a snake, they do not apply for a reward, because the amount is too small for it to be worth while to go and claim it.

Another remedy which is still being tried is the removal of all jungle and undergrowth (and especially prickly-pear) from the immediate neighbourhood of villages. If this has had no visible effect in diminishing mortality from snake-bite, it has at least not been without good sanitary results. But of course snakes do not live in jungle and prickly-pear alone. In Bombay it is generally believed that most cases of snake-bite occur in the fields; so, too, in Burma, where ploughmen and reapers in many districts now take the precaution of wearing leather boots. In Hyderabad, again, experience shows that it is during the irrigation of the fields at night most bites are received. On the other hand, in one district in the Central Provinces it was found that out of thirty-nine people who died of snake-bite twenty-eight were bitten in the house. Indeed, it has been asserted that the destruction of undergrowth tends to drive the snakes into the houses. This may very well be, and the house of the ordinary Indian peasant forms an admirable ambush for them. Of a district in Bengal it has been said that 'every house is tunnelled with underground passages leading to rat-holes, the vermin being attracted in the dry weather by the stores of grain left lying everywhere about in heaps or otherwise, and in the rains by the frogs which seek shelter indoors. The snakes enter the houses in search of the rats and frogs, and are able to elude observation by the untidiness and confusion in which all articles of furniture and cooking pots and pans are kept lying about. The people, again, do not sleep on platforms or bedsteads raised a foot or two

from the ground, but on the ground itself. Rats run over them while asleep; the snake pursues; the slightest movement on the part of the sleeper causes the reptile to strike. Rats and snakes are nocturnal in their habits, human beings are not; and therefore it is that there is scarcely an instance of snake-bite reported unless it is one that has been inflicted on a sleeping person at night.' Not a pleasant picture, but, unfortunately, only too true to life.

A kindred subject, treated by the Government of India in the same returns, is the destruction of life by wild animals. Here, too, the death-rate is formidable, and the efforts to reduce it have been nearly as fruitless. In 1891 the number of persons killed was 2861; in 1892, 2963; in 1893, 2804. Bengal again heads the list with a mortality in the last-mentioned year of 1660; Madras and the Central Provinces follow with only 274 and 256 respectively. The chief offender is of course the tiger, who was responsible for 422 of the deaths in Bengal, and for 124 out of the 178 that occurred in Burma. In the Punjab, thirteen out of thirty-seven deaths were caused by the bite of mad dogs. Among cattle, the destruction from wild beasts is enormous, amounting in 1891 to 70,822; 1892, 81,668; and in 1893, 85,131, of which 35,526 are returned as killed by tigers, and 34,404 by leopards. The increase is ascribed to the extermination by native *shikaris* of the deer which are the natural prey of these beasts. But the figures are hardly to be trusted: one Collector in the North-west observes the curious fact that more deaths of cattle by tigers were reported in his province in Christmas week than in all the rest of the year.

In dealing with wild beasts, the system of rewards is almost the only possible means of getting rid of them. But though the rewards are often as high as 300 rupees for a single transaction, and though a sum of 104,840 rupees was spent in this way in 1893, it is hardly a sufficient inducement to the natives, for the number of wild beasts returned as killed had fallen to 15,309 against 15,988 in 1892. Nor does the issue of free licenses under the Indian Arms Act appear to have had much effect, though the number issued had risen from 69,310 in 1892 to 69,931 next year. The fact is that the natives who take out these licenses are not sportsmen, and have no sporting instincts. Either they do not attempt to kill animals, but keep a gun merely to scare them away from the fields by firing it; or they want to make a living out of the sale of skins, horns, &c., in which case they kill everything they come across without regard to age or sex, but are careful not to molest dangerous animals if they can avoid it.

The whole matter is certainly one which deserves attention; but it is difficult to see what can be done at all events to reduce the most fertile cause of death. It is impossible to hope for the entire extermination of venomous snakes, and little short of that would be effective. But it is to be hoped that a more organised system, under officials specially appointed for the sole purpose, may be contrived in the future. For India is a country from whose

inhabitants self-help is not to be looked for; they depend entirely on the Government; and when the 'Protectors of the Poor' fail them, their plight is bad indeed.

AN UNAUTHORISED INTERVENTION.*

CHAPTER IV.

FOR his part, Jack Thorold paced the room in deep thought for a full half-hour after the lady had gone. But, strangely enough, his mind was not absorbed in himself and his present situation. If it had been, it might have struck him that his best chance of liberty would be to send a message through Dolores to his Consul; but it may be doubted if liberty, at least until the morrow, was his first wish. In the end, laughing at himself as a sentimental fool, he ate his supper and went to bed. Even there, the fantasies of his brain gave him no peace. All that night in his dreams, all next day in his waking thoughts, Dolores was before his eyes; the name ran in his head like music, the face haunted him, over whom no face had ever had more than a fleeting influence. And between them, all the while, there was always the shadow of Don Juan Tovar. So the day sped, and his only other recreation was an attempt to sound the soldier who brought him his meals. It was not highly successful. Asked how the rebellion in the streets had gone, the man gruffly replied that it had been suppressed—which might or might not be true—and (with an unholy glee) that thirty of the 'factious' had been shot that morning in the Plaza. 'It may be the señor's turn to-morrow, *¿quien sabe?*' he added, by way of consolation.

'Perhaps,' said Jack, indifferently.

As the afternoon crept on, he began to count the hours that would elapse ere he could hope for Dolores's visit. At last darkness fell; and when the humorous attendant came with the lamp and his supper, he was not too much preoccupied to remark that the fellow seemed reluctant to leave him.

'Well?' he asked.

'It is nothing,' said he; 'but I thought perhaps the señor would like to see a priest.'

'A priest! Why should I, in all the world?' The man grinned significantly. 'It is usual—unless the señor has turned heretic in his travels.'

Then Jack understood.

'So it is settled?' he said, pulling himself together.

'Sí. The order has just arrived from General Ferreira. To-morrow morning at eight, in the Plaza. And if the señor does not wish a priest?'

'Thanks, but I should prefer paper and ink. Will you give the Governor my regards, and ask if I may have them?'—and he slipped a coin into the man's hand.

'It is a matter of taste,' he answered, shrugging his shoulders. 'Still, your Excellency may depend upon me.'

And Jack, left to digest the unwelcome news,

was confronted with this new fear: what if Dolores should be unable to return?

Jack, it is needless to say, had no burning desire to sacrifice himself on the Plaza for the ultimate benefit of a beggarly republic. His course, then, was plain: to act as if no help were to be expected from the outside. So, when the materials for writing were sent up presently by the accommodating Governor, he busied himself in composing an urgent letter to Mr Chalmers and a full statement of his case, trusting to the power of bribery to get them conveyed to the Consul in good time. It was while he was still engaged in this laudable task that a familiar sound at the door brought him hastily to his feet. To him, in his state of excitement, it seemed an hour before it was opened, and finding his hopes realised, he advanced eagerly to greet Dolores Alvarado.

'You cannot imagine how welcome you are, señorita,' he said, when they were alone. 'The gloom of the prison-house has been over me all day, and now'—

'Hush! We must have no compliments,' she replied. 'We have no time for them, Señor Thorold. Your sentence has come from General Melgarejo, and if you do not wish to be shot to-morrow morning, you must attend to me.'

'I promise beforehand to obey.'

Laughing a little, she produced a piece of rope from beneath her cloak. 'Oh! you will find it very useful,' she said. 'Now, listen! All the arrangements for your escape are made. This is what you must do, señor; and she went on to sketch her plan for securing the guard and getting beyond the door.—'You are sure you understand me, Señor Thorold?' she asked, anxiously.

'Perfectly. I was only thinking that it was quite romantic—like a page from an old romance.'

'Pray, be serious. You will do it?'

'You have my promise. And afterwards?'

'That you must leave entirely to me. If you obey me loyally?'

'Can you doubt it?'

'In that case, I will undertake to conduct you safely beyond the castle and beyond the walls. Just outside the city we have horses in waiting, and friends of mine will guide you to our army.—No, señor—this as Jack showed some signs of demurring—it will not be safe to remain in the town. If Ferreira catches you again, whether he is convinced he has made a mistake or not, he will shoot you like a mad dog on the spot—nothing, believe me, will save you!'

'I am not so sure of that,' thought Jack, remembering that he was trusted (and eager) for another meeting with the General. Only, it must be of his own choosing. For the present, he was altogether at the señorita's disposal; and after all, as he told himself, it might not be uninteresting to see some fighting.

'There is only one thing against us,' Dolores resumed, quite cheerfully: 'it is bright moonlight, and we may be noticed too soon. That, however, cannot be helped.—Oh! I had almost forgotten this,' she said, handing him a revolver and packet of cartridges. 'It was not my idea,

but it may be necessary to use it. There may be some trouble in the streets.

'Is there any fighting there to-night?'

'Everything is quiet—as yet,' she answered.

For the remainder of the half-hour the talk ran on as between friends of old standing—and, in truth, they felt more like old friends than the casual acquaintances of a day—and every detail was discussed and settled to the satisfaction of both. Jack was quite content not to trouble his head concerning the result. As long as his companion was confident of success, he was prepared to do his part; and he would have done it none the less willingly had the plan been a thousand times more foolhardy and impossible than it was. Over and above, the girl's spirits and high courage—wonderful at such a moment—were catching. Exerted on his behalf, they were also very fascinating. Thus he was almost sorry when a look at his watch showed him that the minute for action was at hand.

They rose together.

'Ready?' she asked.

Picking up the linen cover from the bed, he took his stand by the door just as the key was inserted in the lock on the outside. He nodded assent. The door opened, the sentry holding it in his left hand. Dolores slowly passed out, and then paused, as if she had forgotten something.

'An instant, if you please'—

It was the signal. Quick as lightning, while the man's attention was diverted, Jack flung the sheet over his head, gripped him by the arms and dragged him into the room. He was a little fellow, and easily managed; his gun dropped from his hand, and was deftly caught by Dolores; and, taken thoroughly by surprise, he made not the slightest resistance. In a second, the girl having softly closed the door again, Jack had tied him up in a workmanlike manner, and deposited him comfortably on his back on the bed. So far, all was well.

'And now?' asked Jack.

'Wait!' Going to the door, she listened for a little. 'The way is clear for us,' she said. 'Come!'

'And our friend here?'

'It will only be for an hour or two. He will be discovered when the guard is changed. Come!'

Jack delayed merely to gather up his papers, which he had no fancy to leave behind for the detection of General Ferreira. Then, with his hand on the revolver in his pocket, he followed Dolores into the corridor, locked the door, and appropriated the keys. Everything was still as silent as the tomb: the beginning of their enterprise could not have been more propitious; and so it was with eager hope that, at the girl's heels, he traversed the lobby towards the staircase by which he had been brought to his prison on the previous evening. Here, instead of descending, she turned into an unlit passage on the same level.

'Give me your hand,' she whispered.

He did so; and for the next five minutes they groped their way through a labyrinth of narrow and tortuous corridors, twisting in this direction and that, now stumbling unexpectedly

down a flight of steps, now knocking their heads against an inconvenient corner, and all the time without a gleam of light to guide them. Jack went on in sheer bewilderment: he could scarcely conceive how anybody could keep his bearings in such a place, but nevertheless found confidence in his companion's evident capacity. For Dolores appeared to have not the smallest atom of hesitation, but pushed onwards as if it were light as day—more slowly and carefully, perhaps, but not less surely—and drew up at last with a little sigh of contentment.

'No more darkness, thank the saints!' she said. 'But the worst is to come, señor! Now, there are more stairs hereabouts, and then—No noise; the utmost care, on your life!'

'I understand,' said Jack.

They moved forward inch by inch until they reached the stairs, crept cautiously down, and then, as they rounded a corner, their eyes were dazzled by a sudden blaze of light—or what, for a moment, seemed so to them. It came really from a single oil-lamp, of perhaps two-candle power: proof that they were again in an inhabited part of the building. Nobody was about, however; and, holding their breath, they pressed boldly on—through one passage after another, stopping once or twice in trepidation as the echo of distant footfalls came to them, and in constant dread lest the noise of their own should bring the garrison about their ears. But their luck did not desert them, although they had a bad second in crossing an intersecting lobby, at one end of which they caught a glimpse through an open doorway of a number of soldiers. And presently, their corridor terminating apparently in a dead wall, Dolores went unhesitatingly to a door and tried it. It was unlocked; and, passing through, they were once more in darkness.

'Only for a minute, Señor Thorold,' she whispered.

He was about to blurt out that he preferred it so, but checked himself in time. 'I have been wondering how much your friend the Governor knows of this escapade,' he remarked, to hide his slip.

'It might be injudicious to inquire,' said she, laughing softly.

When they had covered some fifty yards in a straight line, she halted again. 'Have you the revolver ready?' she asked.

'Yes.'

'It may not be necessary; but— For this is the critical spot, señor. Do you stay here while I reconnoitre.'

She was off before he could object; and in a little he felt a welcome draught of fresh air on his face, and saw her head framed in a narrow opening against a patch of moonlit sky. He heard, too, the indubitable tramp of a military footstep. A weary minute elapsed—another, and the steps seemed to recede—then the opening widened, and she beckoned to him to advance. In a second he was beside her in the open air. He perceived at a glance that they stood in a kind of bastion at an angle of the battlements, and for the time being were out of sight of the patrolling sentinel—perceived also that the man's beat lay in the full moonlight, while they were in shadow. Then

Dolores pulled him into the farthest corner of the bastion, and crouched down by the low rampart that here rounded it off. They heard the sentry approach with slow precision, and doubtless their hearts went faster as he stepped into view, looked carelessly round, turned—and disappeared, unsuspecting. What next? Jack wondered. He was at a loss to guess.

'Over!' ordered Dolores, jumping to her feet. Jack hesitated: he was not sure if he had heard right.

'Over!' she repeated peremptorily, and dispelled all doubt by setting the example. Jack, still wondering, had perforce to climb the wall in her wake; and assuredly the wonder was not lessened when he found himself beside her on a narrow ledge, and saw below them a hundred feet or so of steep descent, that appeared all the blacker and more precarious by contrast with the moonlit expanse at the bottom. But Dolores gave him no leisure to weigh the risks. Whispering to him to follow her closely, she set off at once—not straight down-hill, but zig-zagging in a manner that bespoke some knowledge of the ground. To this day, Jack has a lively recollection of the experience. It was coarse grass under foot, with here and there a clump of shubbery; and progress was necessarily slow, for a false step meant a speedier journey than was quite desirable. To him, at least, it savoured of the miraculous that they reached the bottom without accident. Somehow or other, however, it was done. The descent became less and less precipitous, until at last it merged gradually into the level, and they paused to breathe themselves on the brink of the deep shade. As by a common impulse, they glanced behind at the great mass of the castle. On that side it was all dark, save where the moonlight struck on the corner bastion—and, as they looked, was reflected by something bright. Was it the bayonet of the sentry? The same idea was in their minds: that their perils were not yet over; for to gain the nearest cover, which was a line of wood two hundred yards in front of them, they must cross the patch of moonlit surface in full view of the battlements.

'If he sees us?' asked Jack.

'Doubtless he will fire—give the alarm. It is the last risk, and a small one.' She took his hand again, laughingly. 'Shall we run for it, Señor Thorold?'

It was the wiser course—short of waiting for an indefinite time, the only one—and they acted upon it on the instant. They could hardly hope for complete immunity; but they were more than half-way across, and were beginning to congratulate themselves on their good fortune, before the expected happened. Then a challenge broke the silence: 'Quien vive?'

They raced on, hastening their pace somewhat. Not more than seventy yards lay between them and the wood.

'Halt—or I fire!'

A minute: the trees began to take shape before their eyes: then, the threat having had no effect, the report of a shot rang out. Jack started as the ball whistled past his ear; Dolores, woman-like, uttered a little scream. Yet they rushed on, unheeding, and next moment reached

the border of the wood—only to run into the arms of a man who stood there, leaning motionless on a rifle. Jack, almost instinctively, threw up his revolver.

Dolores caught his arm. 'No, no!' she cried, breathlessly. 'It is Diego—my servant.'

'All is well, señorita?' asked the man. He was an under-sized, wiry Ladino, and doffed his hat in civil greeting to the stranger.

'Our Lady be thanked!' replied she. 'You are ready, Diego? Listen!—this as they heard the din of a sudden commotion in the castle behind. 'It is the alarm—quick! we must get Señor Thorold out of town at once!'

Diego shrugged his shoulders with proper contempt. 'Let the *falsos* catch us if they can!' he returned, but nevertheless led the way immediately into the heart of the grove by a narrow footpath, followed by his mistress and Jack.

A couple of minutes served to convince the latter that they were safe from pursuit. At first, their road lay through one plantation of fruit-trees after another, intersected by a bewildering multitude of little paths; and here, on Diego's lead, they hurried forward as fast as the nature of the ground would permit. Jack, one is sorry to say, paid no attention to the beauties of the scene—to the fine effects of light and shade, and the delicate fretwork patterns cast by the branches. For Dolores was before him; and it was of her that he was thinking with (for him) an unusual admiration, and of the resource and unflinching courage she had manifested all through the adventure. And if another and less admirable feeling struggled in his mind—a feeling of resentment against Fate, for other reasons than those concerned with that night—perhaps, on consideration, we should not blame him unduly for it.

Soon they had left the fruit-groves behind them; and when they emerged therefrom into a lane of low, poverty-stricken huts, and had perforce to slacken their speed, Jack was quick to notice that the girl—bravely as she strove to conceal the fact—kept pace with an obvious effort. She saw the concern in his face.

'It is the running, I think,' she said, smiling brightly. 'Please, don't trouble yourself, Señor Thorold: it will pass in a minute.'

'You must take my arm.—There! that is better,' he said, as she obeyed with a word of thanks. 'Now, don't be afraid to lean upon me as heavily as you can.'

Apparently they were now in the lowest quarter of the town, and for half a mile they had to traverse, under Diego's pilotage, a succession of dirty, malodorous alleys, careful always to walk in the shade, and so avoid the observation of the curious as much as possible. Not that they were pestered with attentions. The lanes were almost deserted; and except for an occasional knot of Indians of the gossiping sex, who scarcely glanced at them, they might have been in a city of the dead.

'The men are all in the streets,' explained Diego. 'There is life there, señor—and they have many scores to settle with the soldiers.'

'Then the fighting has broken out again?'

He nodded. 'Have we not tasted blood?' said he. 'And perhaps we are still thirsty, señor.'

Confirmation was not long wanting. A few

minutes later, quite suddenly, the guide stopped dead; and simultaneously, as they listened, the ominous sound of firing reached them once more—evidently, too, from no great distance. Muttering into his beard, Diego hurried them on through a side-lane, out behind a church, and finally brought them to a standstill at the corner of a broad and handsome street. There, in earshot of the din of a hotly contested fight, he signed to them to remain concealed in the shadow of the sacred building.

'What is it, Diego?' whispered Dolores.

There was no need to answer the question; for, even as she spoke, a body of soldiers dashed past at the double. A quick exclamation of dismay escaped from her.

'Let us discover the worst, señorita,' said the Ladino, presently.

They had merely to peep round the corner to see the whole scene of wild disorder. Some seven hundred yards down the street, which lay half in moonlight and half in shadow, it was completely blocked by a vast crowd of soldiers and people, all struggling and swaying together (as it seemed to them) in the deadliest grips. Dolores, on her part, had but a glance for it. She realised two facts: that the soldiers were the nearer, and that the mob, which must have numbered hundreds, were plainly holding their own.

She turned to Diego. 'It is impossible!' she asked, as if hoping against hope.

'Quite!'

'After all our trouble, too—oh! it is hard,' she cried.

Jack looked from one to the other, ignorant of their meaning. 'Can we not go on?' he inquired, rather helplessly.

'Through a battalion of soldiers and *that*, señor?' demanded the guide. 'For that is our direction'—

'But surely there is some other way?'

'There, for instance?' asked Diego, pointing up the street. 'It is the Calle Mayor, and ends in the Plaza and a brace of cannon! We might go back, and round about; but it is a long and tiresome road, and perhaps dangerous—and there is the señorita to consider. If there were only the house of a friend near'—

'Is there none?'

Dolores shook her head, somewhat wearily. 'I know of none hereabouts,' she replied.

A sudden ejaculation came from Diego: 'Santissima! The soldiers seem to be falling back, señor!' he cried. 'We must hide—on the instant—this is no place for the señorita!'

THE LONGEST TREK ON RECORD.

By H. A. BRYDEN.

THE Boers of South Africa began trekking at an early period of Cape history. In the first instance, it would seem, the Dutch settlers were driven to push inland, to pierce unknown mountain chains, to cross torrid and difficult deserts, and to brave the thousand-and-one dangers of a country teeming with wild beasts and savage men, by the unendurable harshness of the Batavian rule. As they moved inland, ever opening up fresh hunting-grounds and pastures, the Cape Governors, although at first

strongly opposed to this rambling spirit, finally gave way, and added to their revenues by granting revocable leases of the lands chosen by the pioneers. Year after year, these stout and patient settlers pushed steadily northward, allured by the abundance of game, and by the ever-growing desire to secure new pastures and shake off all evidences of civilisation. In course of time the nomadic life and its pleasures—and they are undoubtedly very keen—grew upon the Boers to such an extent as to become a passion; the *trek-geest*, or roaming spirit, is now deep in their blood, and has long been a recognised part of the South African character.

This thirst for travel still possesses large numbers of the frontier farmers, especially in the Transvaal, and impels them periodically to move before the advancing tide of civilisation, to quit their quiet homes, to seek new lands, and again to dare the manifold difficulties and dangers of the wilderness. To this day you will find the Boers, even of the long-settled districts of Cape Colony, crossing the Orange River, settling up the lower portions of great Namaqualand and the Kalahari Desert, and even casting their eyes on countries far beyond.

The 'Great Trek' of 1836, although little known to the outer world, furnishes one of the most stirring of all epics. The farmers of that great migration from Cape Colony, after suffering grievous losses and experiencing much treachery, finally broke the power of the Zulus under Dingaan, drove Moselikatse (father of Lobengula) and his Matabele beyond the Limpopo, and settled themselves in their present territories of the Transvaal and Orange Free State.

It was of course natural that the generations growing up within these Boer republics should remember and cherish the deeds of their fathers, the fore-trekkers. To this day, indeed, the names of Hendrik Potgieter, Andries Pretorius, Gert Maritz, Pieter Retief, Pieter Uys, and Louis Triefhard are sacred among the Dutch farmers. They survive in many parts of South Africa. Pietermaritzburg, Potchefstroom, Pretoria, and Piet Retief are places that are well known even to Europeans. Boer mothers, living their quiet lives in lone farm-houses in the far-off veldt, or roaming still in wagons through the wilderness, yet recount to their children the great deeds of their fore-fathers. There are still very old people alive who were grown men and women when the emigrant farmers left the Cape Colony and entered the unknown interior. And there are still many more who as young children took part in the Great Trek and its dangers. Among these latter, President Krüger, of the South African Republic (Transvaal), is well known.

About the year 1875, although the Dutch farmers had colonised and settled practically the whole of the Transvaal and Orange Free State, things were not going altogether well with them. In the Transvaal, especially, there were signs of deep dissatisfaction in many districts. There had been numerous small native wars, in which the settlers had been 'commandeered' and led against remote tribes while their farms lay neglected. The republic was well-nigh bankrupt. These frontier Boers

have always had the strongest objection to taxation in any form, and taxes were only wrung from them with the greatest difficulty. Those in far-off places often declined to pay at all. Then, too, the British, from whose rule they had once trekked, were steadily coming into the country. Gold-fields had been discovered in the Eastern Transvaal, and diggers and prospectors were over-running the soil. The Afrikaner Dutchman hates a crowd; he loves to surround himself with a vast solitude, where the smoke of his neighbour's chimney is not to be seen, and where, amid his flocks and herds and the members of his own family, he can live his ideal life. Again, as their families grew up and multiplied, many farmers found their old acres too small for them. The African pastoralist requires a vast expanse of country, and the bulk of the Boers are almost purely pastoralists. A six-thousand-acre farm is considered a very small run in South Africa. Again, numbers of a certain severe sect of Boers, known as 'Doppers,' had become much disaffected towards their Government. There was talk of railways and other mad innovations; and the Doppers, and indeed most of the Transvaal Dutch, hated the very hint of such things. The views and beliefs of these primitive people the Doppers ('dippers,' Anabaptists) were grimmer than those of the most extreme 17th-century Puritan sectaries. They looked (and still look) upon themselves as a chosen people, having the heathen, literally, for an inheritance. They govern their conduct mainly by the severest teachings of the Old Testament, and they regard all native races as fit only to be slaves, mere hewers of wood and drawers of water for the white man.

In 1875, then, for all these reasons, a large number of discontented farmers had gathered themselves, with their wagons, wives, and families, and their flocks and herds, upon the north-west border of the Transvaal, determined to trek for a new 'Promised Land.' The ideas of the more ignorant of them were wild in the extreme. The geographers of two hundred and fifty years ago seem to have held a fixed idea that the sources of the Nile lay somewhere far down towards Southern Africa. Many of these trekkers, whose forefathers had been cut off from civilisation for more than two centuries, still clung to this belief. They expected to find the 'Nyl,' as they spelt it, somewhere to the north or north-west, and they fully expected, too, to find great snow mountains beneath which lay fertile plains and valleys, rich in pasturage, and abounding in game.

While the trek Boers were thus collecting on the Limpopo River—the Crocodile, as it is universally called in South Africa—a pioneer party under one Alberts went up to Bamangwato to obtain leave from the chief there, Khama, to cross his country on their way towards Lake Ngami, their first objective point. This party left the main body in May. Obtaining leave from Khama, they crossed the almost waterless desert of the North Kalahari—the 'Doorstland' (thirstland) as it is always called by the Boers—and reached Lake Ngami on the 20th June. From the lake they trekked up the Okavango River to the town of Moremi,

chief of the Batauwana (a Bechuana tribe inhabiting the Lake country), where for a time they rested. From Moremi's they struck south-west to Ghansi and Riet Fontein, two waters in the Kalahari, where they remained till 1878, by which time the main body of the trekkers was past the lake.

In August 1875 there were gathered at Liclutsi, on the Crocodile River, 128 wagons, the travelling homes of 480 souls, 1958 trek oxen, and a quantity of sheep and goats. Kreling was made commandant of the expedition; Louw du Plessis, field-cornet. Owing to various causes, chiefly the uncertainty of the reports as to the country they had to traverse, this great assemblage stood for two years idle upon the river, losing a considerable portion of their cattle from disease and the attacks of lions, and losing also, unfortunately, some of their own lives from fever.

Meanwhile, a second deputation had interviewed Khama. That excellent chief strongly dissuaded them from attempting the passage of the desert; if, however, they insisted on crossing, he advised them to go in small batches at a time, else the scant desert waters would give out, and their lives would be in danger. But the suspicious Boers, who could believe no good of a native chief, imagined that Khama gave this advice solely for the reason that he might attack them in detail, and thus destroy them. In a spirit of the maddest obstinacy, they determined to cross the desert together, with results, as will be seen, of the most terrible disaster. There had been some dissensions among the leaders of the expedition during these two years; and in 1877, just before the trek began, Du Plessis was elected commandant, with Erasmus as field-cornet.

From Liclutsi the Boers sent forward 7536 oxen and cows, 483 horses, 1034 sheep, 32 donkeys, together with 486 fowls, ducks, and geese. Then the main body started upon its trek, a trek rivalled only in years and sufferings by that forty years' wandering of the Israelites in the Sinaitic wilderness. Having sent on the bulk of their flocks and herds, the Boers themselves followed in three parties, each containing a large number of wagons. The time was June, midwinter, and the driest season of the year in South Africa, when no drop of rain might be expected to fall for months. The trekkers made their first great objective point Inkouani, a water situated in the very middle of the thirstland, midway between Khama's old town of Shoshong and the Lake (or Botletli) River. Inkouani lies respectively some sixty and forty miles from the nearest waterpits, neither of which affords any but the scantiest supplies. At Inkouani itself there are two deepish wells in limestone formation, sufficient, perhaps, to water five or six spans of oxen at a pinch. Each Boer wagon, it is to be remembered, is drawn by a span of sixteen or eighteen oxen.

What Khama had predicted speedily came to pass. The first party of the trekkers arrived at Inkouani only to find that the loose cattle sent in advance had drunk up all the water, and yet not been a tenth part of them satisfied. These loose flocks and herds went wandering in search of water over an absolutely waterless

veldt; thousands of them perished, and only 926 oxen out of over 7000 head were ever recovered again.

But now, quickly following upon the heels of the first parties, impelled by some dreadful mistake, or panic fear of Khama's people, came the whole of the trek. There, stranded in the heart of the desert, were scores of wagons containing hundreds of farmers and their families. Already the first party in their brief halt had suffered inconceivably; the scenes that followed beggar description. The very Bushmen of the desert to this day speak of them with awe. The pits were already choked up with dead oxen, which had fallen in, in their struggles to obtain water. These were cut out piecemeal, and the remnants of blood, filth, and water scooped out. For three days and nights the trekkers drank the blood of slaughtered animals, and the little water in their bellies. Mothers moistened the lips of their tender infants with blood, with a mixture of brandy and vinegar, and other dreadful substitutes for water. The blood was served round in tablespoons. Here you might see a group which had caught a sheep and were struggling for its warm blood, while others fought madly for the paunch and its moisture. Men—the feebler of them—cast themselves despairingly upon the sand, and with their big Dutch Bibles in front of them, prepared for death. The bellowing of cattle, frantic and dying, the bleating of agonised sheep and goats, the cries of suffering children, all combined to add to the horrors of that dreadful time.

But there were indomitable men and women still at work. Some few trekkers and their wagons had with incredible toil managed to reach Tklakani, forty miles farther on. These sent back supplies of water. Others struggled forward on foot through the sandy waste. Mr Hepburn, the missionary stationed with Khama, happened to be on the road, and brought in two wagons filled with water-barrels for the relief of the sufferers.

Somehow or other the trek managed to battle on. Some died, some few turned back; but the majority kept their faces doggedly westward, and set their teeth, and suffered. Numbers of wagons were abandoned; quantities of farming implements, furniture, and cherished household goods were cast away. For years these impedimenta littered the desert. Nay, as the writer came by Inkoutani, some four years since, there still lay, in the sand, ploughshares, the tires of wagon wheels, and other pathetic mementoes of that disastrous time.

The journey across this terrible bit of thirst-land can as a rule be accomplished with stout oxen and constant trekking in about a week. But in the case of these poor people, sadly reduced and enfeebled as they were, the struggle lasted two and a half months. At last they struck the Botletli River, where, to their incredible joy, they found an abundant supply of water.

At Sebituane's Drift, some way up the river, a halt was called, and the expedition counted its losses. It was found that thirty-seven members of the trek, men, women, and children—principally the last—had perished from thirst and

hardships. Nearly all the flocks, herds, and trek-cattle had vanished. From Sebituane's Drift the party sent forward for aid from the trekkers who had pioneered the way two years before. These sent them back 183 head of cattle; other cattle and sheep were procured from the Transvaal and Bechuanaland; and, with the 950 stray cattle recaptured, the expedition, somewhat rested and recruited, pushed slowly on.

Moremi, the Lake chief, meanwhile had changed his mind. He was afraid of this strong body of Boers (ancient enemies of his race) coming through his country. He warned the expedition not to proceed. But the gaunt way-worn Dutchmen showed their teeth, dared Moremi to attack them, and so passed by Lake Ngami and Moremi's town without a battle.

Steadily pushing up the Okavango River, where they suffered much from fever, part of the Boers presently turned south, and were met, in February 1878, by the pioneer party who had gone through in 1875 at Debra, a feverish, unhealthy spot, in an almost unknown wilderness between the Okavango and Ovampoland. Here, again, were terrible scenes enacted. Numbers were stricken with fever and dysentery, and the miserable sufferers wandered in their delirium into the bush and forest and perished. The oxen had eaten of some poisonous herbage, and lay dead about the encampment in scores; yet the people were so reduced that they were found by the rescuing party eating the flesh of these festering carcasses. At Oliphant's Pan, where three hunters, Van Zyl, Botha, and Laurens, found 103 elephants embogged in a marsh, and shot them all within the day, forty-three of the trekkers died from fever; and at Witwater and other places their numbers were still further reduced. In this desolate and unhealthy region the main body of the trekkers seem to have remained for nearly two years, matters steadily getting worse with them. Messages were sent to the Transvaal and the Cape begging for relief; and in 1880, thanks to the exertions of the Cape Government, a quantity of supplies was with great difficulty forwarded to them *via* Walfisch Bay, on the south-west coast. Eighteen families, meanwhile, despairing of ever reaching the 'Promised Land,' to which they had so long and eagerly looked forward, turned their wagons, and made their way painfully back to the Transvaal.

In September 1880, the main body of the trek was again united at Debra, prepared once more to push north-westward. There were then surviving 57 families (in all, 270 souls), with 50 native servants, 61 wagons, 840 trek oxen, 2160 cattle, 120 horses, and 3000 sheep. Trekking slowly north, hunting as they went, they once more struck the Okavango River, thence, passing through the country of the Ovampo, they reached the west coast, near Cape Frio, a little below Mossamedes. From Mossamedes help reached them through the Portuguese.

Finally, the remnant of this disastrous expedition, after years of wandering and unheard-of sufferings bravely and stubbornly endured, settled themselves at Humpata, a place a little north-east of Mossamedes. Since 1882 they have been quietly thriving at this settlement, hunting, farming, and occasionally assisting the Portuguese as mercenaries in native wars. The Trek Boers

of Humpata are described as splendid specimens of manhood (as well they may be after surviving the terrors of such an exodus), and have already established for themselves a great reputation in Portuguese West Africa. This unparalleled wandering of the Boers may, without exaggeration, be designated the longest trek on record, enduring as it did from 1875 to 1882.

AN ANGLING IDYL.

THE Angler, like the Poet, rejoices in the return of spring, and 'the tender greening of April meadows' finds him by the river-side again. For the past few days 'the Old Un' has been undergoing a process of rejuvenation, preparing for his first angling holiday for the season among the hills. On such occasions he is always in great form, and though bordering on sixty-seven, is as active as any youth of two-and-twenty, and with far more 'go.' The fine morning air and the hill scenery of the Borderland, of which we are both so fond, puts him in the best of spirits. My old friend would, in fact, have cheered the heart of Izaak Walton himself: he is 'a good man and an angler,' fond of a walk, a talk, and a pretty face. Now we have a snatch of song, then some old Waltonian philosophy, and anon a bit of angling experience, an initiation into the mysteries and respective merits of march browns, hare-lugs, cornercrakes, blae and woodcock wings, and Greenwell's glories. To watch the veteran making up his casts on the day before a fishing excursion is a sight in itself, only to be matched by the business-like fashion in which, to save time, and if the railway compartment is empty, he dons his fishing boots and stockings just as we are approaching our destination.

Such walks are never dull. My friend is an enthusiastic lover of Robert Burns, and as we tramp along he delights in quoting appropriate 'bits' from his favourite poet. 'I never hear,' he will say—'I never hear the loud, solitary whistle of the curlew in a summer noon, or the wild mixing cadence of a troop of plovers in an autumnal morning, without feeling an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion or poetry.'

'A man,' adds he by way of comment, with an emphatic tap on his snuff-box, 'that can thus put himself in tone and tune with such surroundings—that can thus let Nature breathe through as well as around him, tastes one of the purest joys that earth can give.' And then adapting himself to the rhythmic step of our walk, he will start off into *Cu' the Yowes to the Knowes*, or it may be that the moorland which is beginning to unroll itself before us suggests *O'er the Muir among the Heather*. Thus it is that he beguiles the way during our three miles of a tramp up the glen before we reach our fishing-ground. A country lassie tripping to market will look provokingly solemn as we pass, and then my friend, with a roguish smile, will exclaim: 'Who can pay a more graceful compliment to womankind than Robbie Burns!

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes, O;
Her 'prentice han' she tried on man,
And then she made the lasses, O.

Ay,' he continues, 'almost as fine that as Robbie's "trouts bedropp'd wi' crimson hail."'

Such a comparison might have left the listener in delightful uncertainty as to whether a lovely woman or a lovely trout held the higher place in the order of things, or at least in our friend's estimation; but that characteristic had long ago manifested itself, and was often jokingly remembered against him by his more intimate friends. It seems that in the quiet pastoral vale where he first met his future partner for life, there flows a famous salmon river, and so it happened that, one bright June morning more than thirty years ago, when bride, friends, and minister were waiting to celebrate and to witness the joining together in holy matrimony of the well-matched couple, the bridegroom could not be found. At that precise moment he was joined by a delicate trout—line to a salmon, and was careering down the river in consequence. The salmon had been 'on' for some considerable time, and as a result the bridegroom was 'a little late,' as he put it, for his own wedding. Looking back down that long vista of years, who can dare to guess the weight of that famous hymeneal salmon? I think it is Mr Andrew Lang who relates a somewhat similar experience, and possibly my friend *may* have read the article; but here I must say once and for all that I believe implicitly all that is told me regarding his angling experiences, and the number and weight of the fish he has killed in days of yore. I am not one of those who would cavil at a fairy tale or insinuate that all anglers are liars. When an angler reaches the age of sixty-seven, he is to be excused if his incidents swell into legends and his legends into myths, until like a halo they envelop the whole man.

But to return to our walk up the glen. The road had hitherto led us through a wooded estate, and oh, how fresh, how delightfully green, everything seemed in these late spring days! Sometimes above the 'cushat's croon' we could hear far down in the bottom of the glen the river roaring over a linn. Sometimes, too, we could catch a glimpse of its cool umbrageous recesses, with its deep dark pools, concerning which my sage adviser could tell fabulous accounts of the water boiling with salmon, sea-trout, grayling, and herling.

At last we are on the open moorland, with the green hills rolling onwards like great rounded billows. The sight of the open country always rouses the old angler's enthusiasm. 'Now for the burn, my boy,' he exclaims, leaping the fence, 'and let's see what flies are on the water to-day. Man, look how they're loupin'! "like tumblers frae a spring-brod, head-ower-heels," as the Ettrick Shepherd used to say. These were the days; and oh the nights that succeeded the days, at "Tibbie Shiels's" and "The Crook!" But come, come; no reminiscences just now.'

I had so often been struck with the resemblance between my old friend and the genial Izaak, that it was something like a shock to see or hear the modern angler occasionally assert himself, instead of the 'piscator' of 'good king Charles's golden days.' I pointed out, for example, that in the *Complete Angler*, among

Walton's first instructions on coming to the river-side were the following: 'Go you to yonder sycamore tree, and hide your bottle of drink under the hollow root of it; for about that time [nine o'clock], and in that place, we will make a brave Breakfast with a piece of powdered Bief, and a Radish or two that I have in my Fish-bag.'

Now there, curiously enough, was a sycamore just at the edge of the wood. Why not follow Izaak's instructions? My friend pulled himself together to make sure that he was listening aright, and then remarked, solemnly and with Johnsonian deliberation, that times were greatly changed since Walton lived; that if you hid whisky in such a manner, you might be suspected of keeping an illicit still; that water-bailiffs and poachers had the scent of sleuth-hounds for anything in the spirit line, and would sooner ferret your bottle than net the biggest trout in the stream; and that, consequently, it was a hundred to one if you ever saw your flask again. Having thus delivered himself, he handed me a thimbleful of his favourite blend, poured out another for himself, carefully stowed away the flask in his inside breast-pocket, and with all due solemnity began 'a angling.'

The solemn hour of noon found me on a warm sunny slope facing southwards—warm, I should say, for April, for though Robert Browning, writing in Italy, exclaimed, 'Oh, to be in England now that April's there!' we in Scotland find that *our* April is oftener more akin to that of the Fatherland of Heinrich Heine. 'My dear woman,' said Heine, speaking to one of the sun-browned dames of Italy, 'in our land it is very frosty and foggy; our summer is only a green-washed winter; even the sun there is obliged to wear a flannel jacket to keep from catching cold.' Basking, therefore, in this 'flannel sunshine,' whilst the veteran was having the first of the water in a deep gully a little way up stream, I seemed all alone with the dear old hills of the Borderland, alone but for a white-walled herd's cottage in the middle distance. Here, surely, is solitude! Here, surely, is the place to shake off all city cares, and stretching one's self on the grass, find perfect peace, if but for one short day, one short hour!

Yes, perfect peace, perhaps, but not perfect solitude, for the door of yonder herd's cottage opens, and a trim maid comes down to the river-side bearing a basket in her arms. Ah! where is our friend, with his quiet smile and his quotation from Burns? 'Her 'prentice han';' but no—no one can quote that passage like 'the Old Un.' Rather let us call to mind Allan Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd*, for it is evident that this is 'washing-day' at the cot, and that the herd's young wife or bonny daughter is coming to illustrate from the life one of Allan's best pictures in that delightful Pentland pastoral—

A flowrie howm, between twa verdant braes,
Where lasses use to wash and spread their claes.

It may seem at first rather far-fetched, but such a scene as Ramsay describes, or as the maid is enacting yonder, always reminds me of some of Homer's old-world ladies, of the Princess, for

instance, whom the messengers of Ulysses met coming to the well for spring water; or, better still, of Nausicaa, 'ivory-arm'd Nausicaa,' whose name still lingers among the traditions of Corfu. Are not Nausicaa and her maidens the very counterparts of Allan's 'twa barefoot beauties'? Those Greeks washed their clothes in true Scotch fashion, steeping them in the crystal brook, and 'treading them clean with cleanly feet,' then spreading them on the wave-washed pebbles to dry in the sun. Ah! these high-born dames were happy as the day was long by their warm sunlit Mediterranean shores, 'the shores of old romance.' Contrast Homer's tale with our northern legends—with that, for instance, of the Princess Gudrun and Hildburg, compelled to wash in winter-time the clothes of the 'she-wolf' Queen Gerlind by the shores of the Northern Sea, whilst the bitter east winds were blowing through their beautiful hair and the scanty folds of their garments. The one picture is all warmth and sunshine, the other all snow-storm and east wind. This is local colour and climate influencing romance with a vengeance!

All this is not angling, however, and reminds one of Washington Irving's essay of 'The Angler,' in which he tells how he started enthusiastically with some friends to fish 'a mountain brook among the highlands of the Hudson,' and wound up with lying on the grass and building castles in a bright pile of clouds until he fell asleep.

My 'castles in Spain' were suddenly dispelled by a cheery voice ringing down the glen: 'Holloa, my boy! what sport? Gone to sleep again, like the fat boy in *Pickwick*?' I don't know how long he had been away, but here he was with at least six good-sized trout, the smallest weighing a quarter of a pound. I knew that the inevitable story was coming of how 'a big two-pounder fellow,' &c.; and so I proposed having lunch.

'Man, this is a grand spot! What did you get in that pool?' asked the ancient as he sat down and regaled himself with a preliminary pinch of his best taddy. 'We only need your Izaak's milkmaid now to sing us that song of Kit Marlowe's.'

'One of Tom Stoddart's would suit us better. But had you been here half-an-hour ago, you might have seen as pretty a shepherdess as ever stepped out of Watteau fan.'

I then gave a circumstantial account of the visit to the stream of this daughter of the glen; and I observed that afterwards, as we passed the cottage on our way up stream, something like a sigh escaped our friend because the coy maid gave no sign of her dainty presence. After so much day-dreaming, it was now my turn to be up and doing; and as we both trudged home 'late in the gloamin,' neither had cause to regret our day by the mountain burn.

Those homeward walks are equally characteristic of my friend. Even as he absorbs the joyfulness of morning, so in the evening he reflects Nature's calm; and thus there is a strange impressiveness in his manner at such times. He notes the stars as they peep out

one by one, and his talk is often of that mysterious borderland which at his age seems drawing very near. Even his silence is eloquent as, with the pallor of the rising moon upon his clean-cut face, and his eyes fixed on a certain star low on the horizon—Sirius is his favourite—the old man seems to pierce in thought the veil beyond.

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us passed the door of Darkness through,
No one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

THE CARSTAIRS ELECTRIC LIGHT-RAILWAY.

At the present moment, when public attention is being largely directed towards the whole topic of light lines, it may not be inopportune to lay before our readers some succinct account of an interesting little Light-railway already in existence, which enjoys the additional distinction of being also the only example of an electric railway in Scotland. The Carstairs Electric Light-railway is worked by electricity derived from the Falls at Cleghorn, on the river Mouse, and extends from a large mansion-house in the neighbourhood to the main-line railway station at Carstairs. The line is a single one throughout its entire length of one mile and a hundred and thirty yards, and was constructed in the years 1888 and 1889. The available 'head of water' at the Falls is a little over thirty feet; and the turbine, which is of the Lefel type, is capable of developing, with a 'full gate' of water, thirty-two horse-power. As the site selected for the new turbine or water-engine had previously been occupied by a small mill actuated by a wheel of primitive construction, but little difficulty arose in adapting it for the more modern appliances requisite for the new undertaking.

Into the minutiae and technicalities of the electrical apparatus it is foreign to our present purpose to enter; suffice it to point out that the turbine already mentioned actuates a Goolden dynamo, capable of giving thirty ampères on continuous load at four hundred volts, nine hundred revolutions. The wires conveying the electrical current to the cars are of copper, and weigh about five hundred and eighteen pounds to the mile. They are secured on white china insulators on larch poles, and have all the appearance of an ordinary system of telegraphic communication.

The line traverses the 'policies' or grounds attached to the mansion throughout its entire length, and though it passes through several woods, no difficulty has been experienced in keeping the conductors free from the branches. The line is entirely unfenced; and the current is such that no danger can arise to passers-by from contact with the wires. A feature of interest in connection with the electric installation is the provision for current sufficient for the two hundred lights which have been provided for the mansion-house.

Turning now to the miniature railway itself: the maximum gradient is one in seventy; and the gauge is thirty inches, the sleepers being of

larch and fir, and placed twenty-four inches apart. The rolling stock consists of a passenger car and two luggage ones. The former has an inside measurement of six feet one inch by three feet seven inches, and is provided with a platform at each end. Seating accommodation is provided for six persons; but, as in lines of larger dimensions, overcrowding sometimes occurs, and no fewer than seventeen people have travelled in the car. The car is well lit by electricity; and its total weight with gear when empty is two tons.

The passenger car acting as a locomotive can draw the two luggage cars, each carrying one ton of goods, at a speed of fifteen miles per hour. Whilst running alone, the passenger car has travelled at a speed exceeding thirty miles per hour, the owner having made the journey between Carstairs Station and his home in two minutes, such time including starting and stopping.

Without descending to the details of cost, or cataloguing the various heads of expenditure, it may be stated that the entire outlay on the undertaking, including the equipment, was a little in excess of eighteen hundred pounds, a price which works out at about fifteen hundred pounds per mile, or a figure which should certainly warrant the extension of light lines.

The experience gained, moreover, points to considerable economies that may be carried out in future undertakings, and there is every reason to believe that the little line we have described in brief outline is but the precursor of many similar routes throughout the length and breadth of Scotland. The engineers of the Carstairs Railway were Messrs Anderson & Munro, the undertaking being the special care of Mr John M. M. Munro, C.E.

SMOKED RIFT.

BRING me nor frankincense nor myrrh;
Nor cassia breathing of the East;
Nor roses such as filled the air
At some superb Pompeian feast;

Nor lead me to yon minster old,
What time the holy Mass is said,
And clouds of incense rare are rolled
In fragrant wreaths above my head.

But let me stand on this green hill,
Beneath the chancel of the skies,
And hear the thrushes' anthem-trill,
And see the pale-blue peat-smoke rise,

And fill my nostrils with the breath
Of fragrance that the west wind brings,
As, sweeping softly o'er the heath,
It fans my cheek with noiseless wings,

And summons from the forepast years
Of youth, fair visions manifold,
And summer scenes of smiles and tears
In that old homestead on the wold.

T. BRUCE DILKS.

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A 'MYSTERY PLAY' IN THE BLACK COUNTRY.

AMONG the thousands who saw and millions who read of the world-renowned 'Passion Play' of Ober Ammergau, there were probably but few who thought of the religious drama as a living institution in the very centre of England. It is nevertheless a fact that in the 'Black Country' of South Staffordshire the Mystery or Miracle Play is to be seen flourishing in rejuvenated vigour, conducted in a distinctly religious spirit, and enjoying no little popularity.

We had long been deeply interested in some of the byways of popular sacred literature, finding food for profitable reflection in the rude religious ballads of the peasantry, and revelling in the Coventry and Townley Mysteries; when we chanced upon an advertisement of 'The Sacred Drama of *Absalom*,' to be performed by teachers and scholars of a Sunday school about six miles from Birmingham. It was Gunpowder Day; and we journeyed to the scene of action through a region alarmingly suggestive of Dante's *Inferno*, amidst a drizzling rain that might have ensured the harmlessness of Guy Fawkes and all his magazine. Ascending an outside stairway, we found ourselves in an irregularly shaped room, lighted by half-a-dozen gas burners, and crowded to its utmost capacity with about two hundred and thirty persons, who had paid threepence or sixpence each for admission. There was a sprinkling of boys and girls, a large proportion of women, and a good number of men—colliers, iron-workers, and the like: a *bona-fide* working-class audience. At one end of the room was a permanent platform, about a foot high. This served for a stage. It was screened off with coarse ticking, the stripes running horizontally, of which the middle portion being drawn up revealed a set of side-wings of red glazed calico. There being no footlights, the stage was lighted by two gas burners from above. At the back were two

windows, shaded with lace curtains; between them hung a mirror, which was removed when the action was supposed to be out of doors. With one exception, there was no attempt at scenery.

On the rising of the curtain we see the entire company grouped upon the stage; they are young people, ranging in age from sixteen to twenty-five, fair samples of the rude, plain-spoken, but warm-hearted lads and lasses of the village. The superintendent is a respectable elderly man, well known as an effective though uncultured preacher. He announces a familiar hymn, which is heartily sung to an excruciating tune, well accompanied, however, by a working man on a fairly good harmonium. He next calls on one of the company to offer prayer, after which an extempore prologue invites attention to the moral teaching of what is to follow. The preliminaries conclude with a song of the conventional Sunday-school type, on the duty of obedience to parents: the curtain descends, and a musical interlude fills up the time while the stage is arranged for the first scene.

In a few minutes the play begins. *Absalom's* servant, in his shirt-sleeves and a white apron, admits a messenger in black coat and vest, who brings a private message for the Prince. Enter *Absalom*, in a robe of pink glazed calico: to him the messenger hints, in a manner sufficiently intelligible to those familiar with the Bible narrative, but scarcely to others, the wrong that *Amnon* has done to his sister *Tamar*. *Absalom*, sword in hand, swears the death of *Amnon*.

Scene 2—*Absalom* asleep on a couch; stage dark. Enter three angels in white, who sing, to the 'Spanish Chant,' a song about the danger of harbouring revengeful passions. They retire: *Absalom*, awaking, soliloquises; he has had a strange dream, but what of that? For two years *Tamar* has endured her wrongs in silence; dream or no dream, she shall be avenged. Lights up. Enter the messenger,

now regularly installed as Absalom's servant. With much unnecessary display of swords, he is instructed when and how to kill Amnon.

Scene 3—The two servants, in their shirt sleeves, but each with a sword at his side, are spreading a table with eatables, knives and forks, plates, glasses, and jugs. One remarks that Amnon's time is drawing near; the other proposes to warn him; the first, with an ominous grip of his sword, bids his fellow 'keep a still tongue in his head.' Enter Absalom as before, and warns the servant that if he fail in his task it will be at his peril. Sundry guests enter, in ordinary dress, with the addition of belts and swords; Amnon is conspicuous from wearing his hat, a hard felt. Absalom salutes them all, and Amnon in particular. They sit at table, eat and drink, and talk of sheep and crops—the talk being extemporised. Several toasts are drunk, and the scene is protracted to a wearisome length. Ultimately, Amnon, being well plied with wine, becomes unmistakably drunk; and at a signal from Absalom, the servants kill him. General scramble and much flashing of swords, and the guests retire in confusion. Absalom, standing sword in hand over the body of Amnon, exclaims, 'Now, my sister, thou art avenged.'

Scene 4—The wise woman of Tekoa, in a black straw hat with a wide brim, *tête-à-tête* with Joab, in a dark frock-coat buttoned up to the chin, a cap with a red band, and two medals on his breast. He instructs her as to the disguise in which she is to speak a parable to David.

Scene 5—David, in a red tunic with white facings, shawl-pattern dressing-gown, and gilt-paper crown, is sitting moodily at a table. Unseen voices sing, to the tune of *Happy Land*; the burden of their song is, 'David, forgive'; but David soliloquises, 'Absalom, beware.' Enter the woman of Tekoa, in widow's weeds. She, by a parable, pleads for the pardon of Absalom. Joab is summoned, to whom David gives permission to bring Absalom back to Jerusalem, but will not see his face. The whole dialogue in this scene was taken verbatim from the Bible, and was so well recited that at the close of the widow's speech we were conscious of an unusual moisture about the eyes; but what followed was exceedingly ludicrous.

Scene 6—To Absalom enters a servant, who narrates the burning of Joab's corn; he has come in all haste, after obeying his master in this business, and 'expects Joab and his servants are after him.' Presently, another servant announces the coming of Joab, who complains of wanton damage. Absalom appeases him, and gains his promise to endeavour to bring about a complete reconciliation with the king.

Scene 7 exhibits the reconciliation; it is little more than a tableau, the attitudes apparently studied from a picture of 'The Prodigal's Return.'

Scene 8 presents a grotesque specimen, the only one, of the scene-painter's art. Absalom, in his pink calico robe and a black felt hat, is seated, reading, on a cane-bottomed chair 'beside the way of the gate.' The gate, which is closed, is of practicable height, apparently about

eighteen inches wide, and located near the inner angle of two bright red brick walls; while in one of these, just over Absalom's chair, is a window of six small panes, resembling that of a larder or dairy. Enter a stranger in ordinary dress, who proves to be a suitor, weary of the law's delay. The conversation between him and Absalom is so slavishly copied from the elliptical narrative in the Bible, that nobody learns who the stranger is, whence he comes, or what is his business. Nevertheless, Absalom, who knows no more about him than the audience, assures him that 'his matters are good and right.' On the retirement of the stranger, enter several conspirators in buttoned coats, belts, and caps. They salute Absalom, and are instructed to extol him everywhere as a radical reformer. No sooner have the conspirators departed than a messenger enters, announcing that everywhere 'the hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.' Re-enter the conspirators; and after two or three sentences from them to the same effect, Absalom says: 'Let them sound the drums and proclaim me king.' There is a prodigious drumming behind the wings; the conspirators salute, and cry: 'God save King Absalom!' Almost before the rattle of the drums has ceased, another messenger appears, announcing the flight of David; to which Absalom replies: 'Tis better thus; now are we king indeed.'

Scene 9 suggests the encampment of David; at least there is a Lilliputian tent in the middle of the stage, formed of a white sheet thrown over a painter's easel. Joab and a number of David's followers come marching on, and Joab asks if there is any news from Jerusalem. Zadok the priest is announced; there is nothing distinctive in his costume. Then enters David, dressing-gown, gilt-paper crown, &c., as before. He dismisses Zadok, with instructions to employ his son Ahimaz as messenger. Hushai the Archite is also directed to offer his services to the usurper.

Scene 10—Absalom, in pink robe and felt hat, is surrounded by his friends, conspicuous among whom is Ahithophel (pronounced Ay-it-tóe-piel). Hushai the Archite (*ch* as in church) tenders his submission. A council of war is held, and the contradictory opinions of Ahithophel and Hushai are given, the latter having the preference. The entire dialogue is verbatim from the Bible. As the council breaks up, Hushai lags behind; and to Zadok, who enters at the same moment, he briefly reports what has passed, urging that a message should be sent to David, bidding him hasten over Jordan.

Scene 11 shows the tent, as before; Joab and soldiers marching around. Enter David, to him Ahimaz, who reports the result of the council. 'Ahithophel (he says) was a wise man; he went home, set his house in order, and hanged himself.' David produces his sword, declaring that he is now ready to lead his friends to battle. Joab remonstrates; David's life is worth ten thousand of theirs; he must not incur needless danger. David acquiesces, but begs Joab to 'deal gently with the young man,' and all march off. Re-enter Joab, without a moment's interval; to him a soldier,

announcing, 'I saw Absalom hanged in an oak.' The short Biblical dialogue in this place is somewhat abridged; and Joab rushes out, saying: 'I may not tarry thus with thee.'

'Last scene of all, which ends this strange eventful history.' David and an attendant are beside the tent. Enter, successively, Ahimaaz and Hushai, who narrate the battle and the death of Absalom. David cries out: 'My God! why hast Thou forsaken me?' The harmonium in the corner strikes up a few bars of the Dead March; and the body of Absalom is brought in, covered with a sheet, upon a bier that had evidently been designed for the obsequies of the swinish multitude. David delivers an oration in the approved style of the theatrical 'heavy father,' concluding with the well-remembered words—so touching in their proper place, so absurdly incongruous at the close of a long speech: 'Oh! my son Absalom, would God I had died for thee!' The whole company, not forgetting the angels, gather around the bier; and sing, to the tune *Pilgrims of the Night*, a dirge, of which the burden is, 'Too late, too late for grace.'

So ended 'the Sacred Drama of *Absalom*.' It was unmistakably regarded, both by actors and audience, as a great success; and the hearty singing of the Doxology seemed in nowise out of place, in view of the spirit in which the entire proceedings were conducted. There was no suspicion of anything ludicrous in the performance; the conduct of the actors was reverent throughout; and even in the tedious yet laughable dinner scene, the extemporised dialogue was designed to inculcate gratitude to God for the good things of this life. We will not venture an opinion as to the utility of such a performance, from either a moral or religious point of view; but at least the intention was unimpeachable. We trudged homeward through the rain, feeling that the evening had been well spent. We had been brought within a measurable distance of the religious life of the fifteenth century; and it seemed to us that between the simple piety that inspired the 'Cherry Tree Carol' and the 'Coventry Mysteries,' and that of the Primitive Methodists in the Black Country, the interval was much less than is generally supposed.

AN ELECTRIC SPARK.*

CHAPTER IX.—OPPOSITE POLES.

MATTERS were none too pleasant at the offices. Brant obeyed his uncle, and took possession of the private room, and the day following rang for Wynyan to be sent in to him.

'As if I were one of the junior clerks,' thought the young engineer, but he only smiled. 'It does not matter,' he said to himself; and he went in to find Brant reading the paper and indulging in a cigarette. He did not take his eyes off the paper, but made-believe to go on reading and sending a couple of jets of smoke from his nostrils at intervals.

'You wished to see me, Mr Dalton?' said Wynyan at last, after seeing plainly enough

that this was meant as a slight; but there was no reply.

Wynyan waited a few minutes, and then addressed Brant again. 'You wished to see me, Mr Dalton?'

'What?—Oh, it's you. Wait a minute.'

Wynyan coloured slightly and bit his lip, but the annoyance passed off. The matter was too petty to notice, and he waited, standing, but feeling all the while as if he would like to kick the insolent young dandy.

'Hum! Ha! Don't agree with you,' muttered Brant, affecting to finish the speech he had tried to read, but of whose import he knew nothing, his thoughts having been all the time upon Wynyan in his desire to humble him. 'Now, then: what is it?'

'You sent for me,' said Wynyan, with too much contempt now for the speaker to feel annoyed.

'I sent for you?' said Brant, staring.—'Oh yes; I remember now. I want you to go over those estimates, or whatever they are.'

'Will you allow me,' said Wynyan, reaching over, and Brant scowled as his colleague took the keys from one of the drawers in the table, went to the small inner room and brought out some freshly copied estimates. Then, for about an hour, Brant sat with a supercilious look, smoking cigarettes and asking questions about certain prices.

'That will do,' he said at last, as he sat back emitting short puffs of smoke; while Wynyan bore the papers into the further room, and brought back and replaced the keys in the drawer.

By this time Brant had taken up the paper again, and used it as a screen.

'Do you want me any more?' asked Wynyan.

There was no reply, and he left the room to go to his chair at the table opposite old Hamber, who, gold spectacles on nose, was working away with compasses and scale.

After a few minutes, he pushed up his glasses, and leaned across the table towards Wynyan.

'Feel satisfied with this morning's news, sir?' he whispered.

'No, Hamber; I am very uneasy.'

'So am I, sir—so am I. Pressure, Mr Wynyan, pressure. Over this new invention, I am afraid.'

'I fear so, Hamber,' said Wynyan, leaning his head upon his hand, and gazing thoughtfully at the clockwork-like old assistant.

'Going to be a very great thing, though, for the firm, I hope.—I'm not pumping, sir.'

'How did you know anything about it, Hamber?'

'I could not help seeing that you and Mr Dalton had something important on the way, sir; but Mr Dalton senior gave me a hint or two, sir. He explained nothing, only said that there was something new to come out from our firm.'

'Then you will excuse my being reticent, Hamber.'

'Excuse it, sir? Of course. Oh yes: I'm always trusted at the proper time, and no doubt shall be with this; but there are things that would be worth nothing if every one

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heard what they were. Yes; I hope it will be a grand thing for the firm, sir; and then that Mr Dalton will leave off worrying. What is missing, sir, without health and peace of mind! 'True, what indeed?' said Wynyan, with a sigh.

That afternoon, upon leaving the office, he walked slowly and thoughtfully away for a while, till, finally deciding upon something about which he was hesitating, he started off sharply north, and made his way to Harley Street, where he stopped at a door bearing a brass plate with the lettering, 'Andrew Kilpatrick, M.D.'

CHAPTER X.—TWO PULSES.

The man-servant who answered the door replied that the doctor was in, but it was past his hour for seeing patients.

'Take him my card. I have not come as a patient.'

A minute later he was joined by the doctor, who shook hands warmly.

'Nothing the matter, I hope, at the office?'

'No: I came on because I was uneasy about Mr Dalton.'

'Eh? No bad news. *Rénée* wrote last night that they were all at the *Majestic*, and her father seemed better.'

'I am glad to hear it. But I want you to tell me, doctor, the simple truth about Mr Dalton's health.'

'I have no business to do so to you, Wynyan. These matters are private and confidential.'

'I am deeply interested in Mr Dalton's health.'

'So we all are.—There! he's far from well.'

'I know that, sir,' said Wynyan, with a faint smile.

'Then be satisfied. I won't say that he is not in danger, because we all are, and no one knows that better than a doctor.—There; that's all I'm going to tell you now.'

'Then I must be satisfied,' said Wynyan, rising.

'Stop a bit, Wynyan. Dalton and I have been friends five-and-twenty years, and more than once he has told me that he liked you, so I like you too.'

'Thank you, doctor,' said Wynyan, smiling.

'He has told me, too, that he trusted you, and so I trust you, sir. He has said more than that to me; but in confidence: so I shan't tell you that.'

'I do not ask for such confidences, doctor: I came in sheer anxiety about my employer.'

'And I'm very glad to see you, Wynyan.—But look here, my lad: I've had a terribly hard day with a set of idiotic patients who will look upon a doctor as if they expected him to perform miracles. And we can't, you know—not a bit of it, my boy. But I was going to say, I'm utterly fagged and faint with hunger. I wouldn't have seen a crown prince when you came, but I saw you.'

'I am very grateful.'

'Not much to be grateful for, boy.—Now, look here; I can't talk till I've been fed. Come and have a chop and a glass of Burgundy with me: after that, we'll smoke a good cigar, and I'll answer your questions.'

'No: I'll come in this evening about nine.'

'And perhaps find that I have been called out to attend some silly old woman who is digging her grave with her teeth, or some man who is doing it with a brandy glass.—Now, no nonsense, Wynyan: we've known each other five years now, and it's time we were friends.'

'Thank you, doctor. You are very good; but—'

'But you're going to stay, boy. I do want to say something to you—something very particular to you; so, no nonsense: do you hear; I'll answer all the questions I can.'

'Then I'll stay, sir.'

'That's right, boy.—Not much to offer you, but it shall be good. Not too early for you, I hope, sir?'

'I eat at any time, sir.'

'Bad habit. Eat regularly and moderately. There, that's advice gratis; but it's worth a guinea—a good many to some people,' said the doctor, ringing the bell.—'By the way, got anything the matter with you?'

'Oh no.'

'Yes, you have. But look here: if you have at any time, come to me, and I'll set you up again if it's to be done.'

'You ring, sir?'

'Yes: dinner ready?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Then come along, Wynyan.'

They descended to the doctor's gloomy dining-room, but the table was bright: there was an excellent dinner; and afterwards the wine was carried into the library. Cigars were brought out, and the doctor sat back in his easy-chair smoking placidly, and after a short silence said suddenly:

'Poor Dalton's not very long for this world, Wynyan.'

The younger man started up in his chair, and dropped his cigar.

'So bad as that, sir?' he said hoarsely.

'Pick up your cigar: it's burning the carpet.—Yes; so bad as that, and he knows it, poor fellow. He may live a year or two, or three if he avoids all excitement; but a man can't go on having those fainting-fits and live. He has to depend now upon the strong medicine I give him as a sedative.'

'This is terrible!' said Wynyan.

'Yes: terrible. Hardened doctor as I am, I say so too. Dalton has always been a good friend to me, and I care for him more than for any man I ever knew.'

Wynyan dropped his head upon his hand.

'Can you do nothing more for him, sir?' he said at last huskily.

'No, boy; but you can.'

'I?'

'Yes: a good deal to make him at rest.'

'You say he knows how bad he is?'

'Yes; and yet, business-like fellow as he is over most matters, he will not look that in the face, and make proper arrangements about his property. It is a man's duty, sir; but he will go driving on about some great scheme he has on hand: you know what.'

'Yes, sir, I do; but that is substantially at an end now.'

'And a good thing, too. Then, now you must

help him to settle matters so that he can be quite at rest.'

'What am I to do?'

'That's simple enough, Wynyan,' said the doctor, watching him narrowly; 'you have done wonders for him: he has told me so. Tell him to make you his partner at once, and relieve him of his work.'

'Confidence for confidence, doctor: he told me he would take me into the firm.'

'Then bring him up to the scratch, my lad, for both your sakes. Don't haggle about money.'

'Doctor!'

'Well, what's the matter? I'm speaking as a business man. Leave that to his sense of honour.'

'Of course, sir.'

'Then that isn't all.'

'What do you mean?'

'To tell you that I'm a very clever and observant man in some things; my training has made me. But in others I'm a perfect idiot. Man can't be all strength, I suppose.—Well, sir, you told me a lie just now.'

'I?' cried Wynyan indignantly.

'Yes; you said there was nothing the matter with you, and all the time you've got it badly.'

'I don't understand you, sir,' said Wynyan warmly.

'Fib the second.—Bah! boy, own it like an honest man. There's nothing to be ashamed of. Think I'm blind? Why, if I hadn't seen it before, the other evening would have convinced me.'

Wynyan's cigar went out.

'There was that confounded young scamp Brant raging with jealousy, and thinking, the idiot, that he could make the wind blow in his direction by carrying on with that black-eyed little hussy, Isabel Endoza; and there were you looking like a fellow in a play.'

'Look here, doctor,' cried Wynyan, starting up indignantly; 'I cannot stand this.'

'Not from your medical man?—There! throw that cigar away, and light another while I talk to you for your good. I tell you, man, that there's nothing to be ashamed of. Why, I like you for it. Bless her! she's the best and dearest girl that ever existed: a jewel, sir. Look at her, a perfect beauty, with a skin like alabaster; eyes that beam comfort to every one she cares for; and hall-marked with my vaccination scar on both her pretty arms.'

(To be continued.)

CITRIC ACID.

EVERY one knows that unripe fruit has an acid taste, and that this taste is not entirely gone even in fruit that is perfectly mature. Added to the sweetness, due to sugar, this acidity gives to the ripe fruit a pleasant, refreshing quality, which is much appreciated during the heat of summer.

By a long series of laborious researches, which date back to the last century, it has been discovered that all fruits owe this peculiar taste to the presence, in the pulp of the fruits, of several acids, such as acetic acid (vinegar), citric acid, tartaric acid, malic acid, and some others

of less importance. Generally speaking, one of these acids predominates in any given kind of fruit: thus, the chief acid of the grape is tartaric acid; that of the orange and lemon is citric acid; whilst in the apple we find malic acid as well as citric acid. Acetic acid also exists in many fruits. Most of these fruit acids are solid substances which dissolve easily in water; they are white and crystalline, like sugar, only, instead of having a sweet taste like the latter, they are extremely acid when placed upon the tongue. The ingenuity of the experimental chemist has detected some hundreds of these acids in various plants, and they form an interesting branch of study; but of all these, citric acid and tartaric acid are not only the commonest, but by far the most important to mankind.

No chemical product represents a much larger capital than that which is at present invested in the manufacture of citric and tartaric acids, the produce of the lemon and the grape. The process by which they are obtained is so similar, that both these acids are generally manufactured by the same makers. They are both white, crystalline acids, and very similar in their uses and properties, though in many respects decidedly different. Citric acid is much the dearest, being at the present time about one shilling and sixpence a pound, whilst tartaric acid is one shilling and twopence. Of late, the price of the latter has risen, and that of both acids fluctuates, of course, according to the supply upon the market. As they are put to different uses in the arts, manufactures, and in medicine, it was necessary to discover some delicate tests by which they may be readily distinguished, and the adulteration of the dearer by the cheaper acid was formerly much more common than it is since these tests were brought to light.

Though the acidity of lemon juice was known to the ancients, it is only in comparatively modern times that some glimpses were obtained for the first time of the very remarkable substance to which this acidity is due. In 1774 a Swedish chemist named Georgi or Georgius (as it was the fashion in those days to Latinise the names of distinguished men) endeavoured to obtain the acid in a pure state. For this purpose he filled a bottle entirely with lemon juice, corked it, and placed it in a cellar for four years. At the end of that time the mucilage and other impurities contained in the juice were found deposited at the bottom of the bottle. The liquid poured off from this deposit was put in a cool place, the temperature at the time being twenty-eight degrees Fahrenheit, or four degrees of frost, which caused the water to freeze, but not the acid, and the liquid poured away from the ice was a strong solution of citric acid. It had never before been obtained so strong. But Georgi does not appear to have boiled down or evaporated this liquid to obtain the solid acid, just as solid sugar is got by

evaporating the juice of the sugar-cane; and had he done so, he would only have produced a very impure product, and have been puzzled and disappointed.

It was reserved for another Swedish chemist, the immortal Scheele—to whom the science of chemistry owes a greater number of discoveries than to any other man—to obtain citric acid in the solid form, and to show that it was quite different from tartaric acid, which he had formerly discovered. It was in 1784, or just ten years after Georgi's experiment, that Scheele made known his process for obtaining pure citric acid from the juice of the lemon, and it is that which is carried out at the present time.

This is not the place to discuss the technical details of this manufacture, which is fully described in all works on practical chemistry; we will simply state that twenty gallons of good lemon juice will afford fully ten pounds of white crystals of citric acid. It is interesting to note, however, that citric acid is contained in a very large number of plants besides oranges and lemons. Almost all our unripe fruits contain it in notable quantities, and so does the ripe fruit of the tomato. In currants and gooseberries it is present to so large an extent that it might probably be manufactured in England at a profit from the juice of these fruits gathered before they are quite ripe. The experiment has been made in France. The juice of the unripe gooseberries is first caused to ferment in a warm place, and the spirit thus produced is distilled; the remaining liquid yields nearly one pound of pure citric acid for every hundred pounds of gooseberries; and ten pints of spirit are obtained by the distillation of the fermented juice.

The Italian Government is at present very desirous of encouraging the manufacture of citric and tartaric acids in Sicily, especially the former; and prizes of five hundred, three hundred and fifty, and one hundred and seventy-five pounds, are offered, in addition to some bonus for the managers, to any persons, natives or foreigners, who shall open works in that island for this purpose not later than February 1896. An Englishman tried something of the kind in Sicily during the years 1809 and 1810, when he manufactured about three hundred tons of citrate of lime; but the affair was a failure. The workmen of the country, unused to this kind of labour, were very troublesome to manage, and there was a great difficulty in procuring the chalk and barrels necessary for the work. As there are now two works of this kind in Sicily, things may have improved since the beginning of the century. Still, progress is slow there, and the encouragement offered in the way of prizes by the Italian Minister of Agriculture is very small compared with the outlay required to erect works, to purchase or rent land, and to undergo the risk of the whole enterprise.

Enormous quantities of citric acid are used in calico-printing, in pharmacy, and in the preparation of artificial lemonade. About an ounce and a quarter (five hundred and seventy grains) of pure citric acid dissolved in a pint of water gives a solution which has the average acidity of good lemon juice. When diluted

with several times its bulk of water, sweetened with sugar, and scented with a single drop of essence of lemon, an artificial lemonade is cheaply produced, which is much used as a cooling drink in fever hospitals. It has also been used in the navy as a substitute for fresh lemon juice in the treatment or prevention of scurvy, but has been found much less efficient. In fact, this artificial lemonade is by no means equal to that made from pure lemon juice, whether used at table or for invalids. In rheumatism or rheumatic gout, the fresh juice of the lemon is preferred on account of the bicitrate of potash which it contains. Pure lemon juice is also a valuable remedy in sore throat and diphtheria; cases have been recorded in which children have apparently been cured of this terrible disease by constantly sucking oranges or lemons.

Pure citric acid possesses, like some other acids, the power of destroying the bad effects of polluted water used for drinking; but it is perhaps best to boil the water before adding a little citric acid to it.

Besides the production of artificial lemonade, immense quantities of citric acid are annually consumed in the manufacture or preparation of pharmaceutical products, such as the effervescent citrate of magnesia, citrate of quinine, and iron, and many other preparations which employ thousands of hands in all parts of the civilised world.

In the laboratory of the experimental chemist, citric acid, by being treated in various ways, has been decomposed, and made to yield a number of interesting products, including some peculiar acids found in plants very different from the lemon or the orange, the gooseberry, currant, strawberry, bilberry, &c., in which it abounds. Thus, the aconitic acid found in the root of the deadly aconite and in the curious *equisetum*, or horsetail, has among other products been obtained artificially in this manner. But all these products are yet without any practical importance; and, indeed, citric acid itself, although hundreds of tons of it are annually employed for the few purposes mentioned in this article, has really been very little studied from a practical point of view, and it is almost certain that a considerable number of new applications will be found for it before many years have elapsed.

AN UNAUTHORISED INTERVENTION.*

CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

It was then that a brilliant inspiration struck Jack. The name of the street had sounded familiar to him, and all at once he remembered why. 'The British Consulate!' he exclaimed. 'It is in the Calle Mayor, is it not?—Do you know it, Diego?'

Diego did: it was (he said) on the other side of the street, not far from the Plaza.

'Can we reach it in safety?'

He thought so.

'Let us go, then!' urged Jack. 'They will

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give us shelter there. The Consul is a good friend of mine, even if it weren't his duty.' He appealed eagerly to Dolores. 'You will come, señorita? You must be tired; and I am sure Mrs Chalmers will be only too glad to take care of you for the night.'

'It must be as you please, Señor Thorold,' said Dolores. 'It is very foolish of me, but I do feel a little faint.'

'Well, that settles it!—On you go, Diego!'

So they turned their backs on the combatants, and moved boldly along the Calle Mayor in the direction of the Plaza. Albeit they met not a soul, Jack did not breathe freely until he beheld the familiar escutcheon, with the royal arms of his country upon it, and was hammering with right good-will upon the iron gate of the Consulate. Like all Spanish-American houses of the better class, it was built round an interior courtyard; and it seemed an age before his clamour made an impression on the inmates, and he heard somebody moving behind the gate. Then a little grating was pulled back, and a voice demanded who was there.

Jack recognised it joyfully. 'Is that you, Chalmers?' he cried. 'Open the door—it is I, Jack Thorold!'

'Jack Thorold! What in the'—

'Never mind that! Quick, man—unless you want us to be shot in cold blood on your doorstep!'

'A second!' There was a clatter of bolts, and at last the gate was opened wide enough to admit them. Jack, with Dolores on his arm, was about to pass in, when he noticed that the other member of the party had disappeared.

'Hullo! where is Diego?' he asked.

'Gone to take his share in the fighting, I think,' said Dolores, in the most matter-of-fact tone.

Mr Chalmers was a middle-aged Scotsman, with the national gift of caution. He barred the gate behind them, and without a word led the way across the *patio* and along the veranda to his dining-room, where he glanced from one to the other with such a comical look that Jack could scarcely forbear to laugh. Instead, he made haste to introduce his companion.

'And if it had not been for this lady,' he said, 'I should have been shot to-morrow morning by General Ferreira, and you would have had an international complication to unravel. If Mrs Chalmers is anywhere about'—

'I will go for her,' said the Consul, after he had bidden them welcome with Scotch heartiness.

She returned with him in a few minutes; and when she saw how tired-out and weak the girl was—the men, of course, had hardly noticed it—insisted upon carrying her off at once. Then Jack, having had some supper, had his story to tell; and told it, now that all had ended well, with much humorous comment.

Mrs Chalmers came back just as he had finished.

'How is she?' he asked.

'Only exhausted with the fatigue and the excitement. And no wonder: she has been on her feet all day, in the service of a certain young gentleman. She is fast asleep already.'

'She is a girl of remarkably good sense,' remarked Jack, suppressing a yawn. 'And, with your permission, I shall go to bed also.'

He did so, and was not prevented by the continual rattle of rifle-fire from sleeping soundly. And when he came down to breakfast next morning, somewhat late, he looked round in vain for Dolores.

'Your friend went off very early,' explained Mrs Chalmers, observing his disappointment. 'Yes: she had quite recovered. We found her servant sleeping in the gateway this morning, and sent her off under his protection. Don't blame me, Mr Thorold; she *would* go. She is staying just beyond the city, and was anxious for news about young Tovar.'

Jack pulled a wry face. 'That beggar seems to have all the luck,' he lamented.

'Is it so bad?' laughed Mrs Chalmers. 'Well, here's consolation for you: she hoped you wouldn't leave San Estevan without seeing her again.'

'I don't mean to,' said Jack.

Breakfast over, the Consul asked him what he intended to do with himself. The streets were not exactly safe for a foreigner; during the night, the insurgents had driven the garrison back to the Plaza; and although they had melted away with daylight, things were naturally in a somewhat chaotic condition.

'I was thinking of paying Ferreira a morning call,' said Jack. 'I have that apology to get, you know.'

Chalmers stared at him. 'Honestly?' he said.

'Why not?'

'But is it wise?'

'That's your business, old man, grinned Jack. 'What's the use of a Consul, if he can't protect his countrymen from arrest and all sorts of insult? Tell me that!'

'Maybe you're right about going, though,' said Chalmers, on due consideration. 'If you're determined to stay in the city'—

'I've got to see this affair through.'

'In that case, better settle with Ferreira at once. But we'll do it in order. I'll write asking him for an official interview on important business, and in the meanwhile I have a telegram or two to send off—in case of trouble.'

Ferreira's reply, which gave Jack some wicked amusement, was that he would be delighted to receive Mr Chalmers in the afternoon. After lunch, accordingly, they walked along to the Plaza to make the visit. The usual number of soldiers was loitering about, and Jack imagined that some of them regarded him rather closely; but they were ushered without interference and without delay into the presence of the Governor. He was in the old room; and, as before, Señor Elias was with him.

'Good-day, gentlemen,' said Jack softly.

'You?' Ferreira leaped to his feet, red in

the face with many conflicting emotions, his hand seeking his sword; Elias simply stared at him in utter surprise.

'At your service. I have come for your apology.'

It was amusing to watch the changes on the General's countenance—doubt, perplexity, rage, showed themselves in rapid succession, until finally the last predominated, and his hand moved towards a bell which stood on the table.

'Pardon me,' interposed Chalmers, coming forward. 'I should advise you to do nothing rash, General. This gentleman, who has a complaint against you for unjustifiable arrest, is a guest and friend of mine, and a British subject—Mr John Thorold, Secretary to Her Majesty's Legation to these republics.'

Ferreira did not seem to understand. 'But Tovar? I do not doubt you, señor; but'—

'I have nothing whatever to do with Tovar,' said Jack. 'Probably, owing to your stupid mistake, he is already in command of the revolutionary army.'

'And you?' the Governor burst out, glaring at him. 'If you are not Tovar, you are an accomplice: you have friends amongst the rebels, who helped you to break out of prison: that you cannot deny, and as long as I have power in the city'—

Again Chalmers interposed. 'Permit me to remind you of my statement,' he said, with an assumption of dignity. 'For the rest, I telegraphed my facts this morning to Sir Ralph Petre, our Minister at Salvatierra, and asked him to take steps for the protection of British interests. I have just received the reply that Her Majesty's gunboat *Wasp*, at present lying at New Salvatierra, will arrive off Sampacho to-morrow evening. And in these circumstances,' he added, 'I hope that the unfortunate matter will end in this room.'

Elias plainly agreed with him; but Ferreira tramped to and fro for a little before realising that, whether he liked it or not, he must apologise to his late prisoner. Doubtless, it was a bitter pill to swallow, for he was a man of a quick and imperious temper. It is bare justice to say that he did it handsomely, and as if he meant every word; and that, besides promising to send Jack's belongings to the Consulate, he 'went one better' by volunteering to give him a self-conduct—to prevent, as he put it, any inconvenience from keen-eyed soldiers during his stay.

And so the incident closed, on Jack's part with satisfaction, and on the other with a capital pretence of courtesy and good-will.

As they were leaving, a dusty and travel-stained orderly brushed rudely past them on the stairs, making for the Governor's room. Outside, in the Plaza and the Calle Mayor, groups of soldiers had drawn together in significant confabulation; and from one of them Chalmers learned that an important despatch had arrived from the front, but of what nature the man would (or could) not say. There were, as we know, other channels of information in San Estevan than the official one. And, later in the afternoon, the rumour ran round the town—and was generally accepted—that in

a skirmish on the previous evening between the opposing forces the famous Gatling guns had been captured by the Tovarites.

'If it's true,' said the Consul, 'we may expect to see them in the capital within the week.'

Events moved fast during the next three days. First, the rebel citizens, having taught Ferreira a lesson, essayed a midnight attack upon the castle, and met with so little opposition from the complaisant Governor that they captured it. Then, waxing bolder with success, they practically confined the authorities to the centre of the town. Hour by hour the prospects of the revolution brightened. Good news came from the seat of war. Juan Tovar had taken command; all jealousies were allayed; the army was confident of victory. At length, on the third day, authentic intelligence was received of a decisive battle—so decisive that Melgarejo's force had practically ceased to exist, while he himself had fallen on the field. And, as the result, General Ferreira and a choice body of kindred spirits—all those who for divers reasons dared not await the sequel—betook themselves in some haste to Sampacho by rail, and there sought refuge on board H.M. gunboat *Wasp*! For by such strokes of irony does Destiny amuse herself.

Jack Thorold's sole regret in the meanwhile was that he had seen no more of his fair preserver. On the fourth morning, hearing that Juan Tovar had arrived during the night amid the acclamations of the multitude, and taken up his residence in the National Palace, he determined to make some inquiries. He was saved the necessity, however, by the receipt of a note from Tovar, inviting him, with many polite expressions, to lunch. He went, of course; and the first person he recognised when he entered the room, conspicuous in the midst of a dozen others, was Dolores in person. The faces of two men were also familiar. One, except for a lighter complexion, bore a remarkable likeness to the English-speaking Indian of Sampacho; and the other, the central figure of the group, was—as the intelligent reader has already guessed—one and the same with Señor Valdez, his fellow-passenger on the *Idaho*. Now he was resplendent in a general's uniform; and although there were points of resemblance between them in build and general feature, nobody, seeing them together, would have confused them for a moment. The mistake of Ferreira and his underlings was not unnatural, for of course they had never seen the real Tovar in manhood.

Evidently Jack's story was known, for nothing could exceed the warmth of welcome with which he was received by Juan and Dolores, and the others to whom he was introduced.

Then Tovar drew him aside. 'I really don't know how I am to thank you, Mr Thorold,' he said. 'If it hadn't been for you, I shouldn't have been here to-day—perhaps my fate would have been that of my poor father. Thinking of it, I wonder if it wasn't Providence which put it in your head to land at Sampacho.'

'Are you not placing it too high?' asked Jack. 'Besides, for myself, I was only a passive instrument.'

'But that does not absolve me from gratitude.'

First and last, you have been my good angel. You remember our talk on the *Idaho*? Well, I confided in the captain, and he landed me at a little creek about two miles below the port. I got to the rendezvous just as my friends, certain that I was a prisoner, had completed arrangements for a rescue. I had some trouble, too, in convincing them of my identity: none of them had met me for years. Of course your capture made our path smoother. To tell the truth, Mr Thorold, I didn't bother too much about you, for I thought you were sure to be liberated at San Estevan. You know already how we travelled with you as far as the plain disguised as Indians, and how the quick temper of our friend almost caused a conflict. We reached the army late that night; and the next day our spies discovered that Melgarejo's force was in a state of immense jubilation over your capture. We took advantage of the fact to surprise them—the capture of the coveted Gatlings was the result. Thanks to the spirit of my men, the rest was easy.—Now, please Heaven,' he concluded earnestly, 'we shall open a brighter page in the country's history, and you will believe me, Mr Thorold, that I at least will never forget your part in bringing it about.'

They shook hands upon it. 'Nor I,' said Jack—and that for more reasons than the obvious.'

'Your imprisonment, for one?' suggested Juan. 'My sister Dolores has told me the whole story. Well, we must try to make it up to you while you remain here.' He slipped his arm through Jack's. 'And now for lunch!' he cried gaily.

Jack did not hear: his brain was in a whirl over the strange revelation. 'Dolores—your sister!' he managed to gasp at last. 'But I thought'—

'Why, of course she is!' said Tovar, laughing heartily at his amazement. 'And for proof.—Dolores,' he called to her, 'come here and convince Mr Thorold that I am not an impostor.'

Dolores came forward, blushing very prettily. 'Will you forgive me?' she entreated. 'Dolores Alvarado is the name I have used since I returned to San Estevan, and you are partly to blame for the deception yourself. You were so ready, you know, to imagine—something. And perhaps there was another reason,' she said, reddening again.

'May I ask it?'

She looked up smilingly. 'What if I did not wish you to spoil your chances of escape by making love to me, Mr Thorold?' she answered.

'Then I will only forgive you on one condition.'

'Yes?'

'That the restriction is removed,' said Jack as they went into luncheon.

That it *was* removed seems to be proved by the fact that, some two months later, on the day on which Juan Tovar was chosen President of San Estevan by the unanimous vote of the National Convention, his sister was married in the cathedral of the capital to Mr John Thorold, of Her Majesty's Diplomatic Service.

And Sir Ralph Petre, who was present, said not a word about his subordinate's unauthorised but effective intervention in the affairs of a friendly State.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A MEMORIAL tablet to the late Professor Couch Adams has recently been placed in Westminster Abbey, and this event should not be allowed to pass without a few words with reference to one who has been described as the greatest mathematical astronomer England has produced since the time of Sir Isaac Newton. To John Couch Adams was due the discovery of the planet Neptune; and the history of that remarkable feat is one of those 'fairy' tales of science which it is somewhat difficult for an ordinary mind to believe. Here is the story in brief. The planet Uranus had been some years before discovered by Sir W. Herschel; its size and mass had been estimated, its orbit and period determined, its family of satellites recognised, and it had been formally admitted, so to speak, into the solar system. But there were certain irregularities in its movements which could not be accounted for, until the bold suggestion was made that these perturbations must be due to some unknown body, some orb which was travelling outside the path of Uranus, and disturbing the planet by its attraction. Both Adams and Leverrier, the French astronomer, set themselves to the seemingly impossible task of detecting the place of this hypothetical body. Adams was the first to succeed; and in September 1845 he indicated the place where the disturbing planet might be looked for, the form and position of its orbit, and its mass and mean distance. It is well that such a man should receive recognition as one of the greatest of the century.

The Structure and Functions of the Horse's Foot formed the subject of an interesting lecture at the Royal Institution by Veterinary Captain F. Smith, who pointed out the practical importance of the subject in connection with the shoeing of horses. After describing by means of models the anatomical structure of the foot, the lecturer pointed out the importance of considering the amount of moisture in the horn of the hoof, which varied from twenty per cent. in the front part to forty per cent. in the footpad or frog. Horn when moist was soft and elastic, but became quite brittle when dry. The function of the pad was to save the leg from concussion, and if a horse was so shod that the pad did not touch the ground, it would shrink up, and the hoof would become narrower, thus lessening the area of the foot. It was too much the custom among farriers to remove the pads; another evil practised being the paring away of the horn of the sole, which was designed by nature to protect the delicate parts above it.

At the spring meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute, some very interesting and valuable papers were read. Among these was one by Mr J. E. Stead, which detailed certain experiments which the author had made on the effects

of the presence of small quantities of arsenic in steel. It is generally known among engineers that arsenic in any quantity in steel is highly objectionable, and they have generally discarded such metal for structural purposes. But it has not hitherto been shown that a small proportion of arsenic may be disregarded. Mr Stead has investigated the matter with other metallurgists, and has carried out systematic trials on a large scale. It was found that steel having from 0.10 to 0.15 per cent. of arsenic associated with it gave normal results under careful mechanical tests. Oxidation was to some extent retarded by the presence of arsenic, welding was rendered more difficult, and the electrical conductivity of the metal was materially reduced. It would seem from these experiments, which were corroborated by Sir Henry Bessemer, that the presence of small quantities of arsenic in steel, precautions against which have hitherto given much trouble, may be disregarded.

There are very few articles of diet left to us to which some faddist or other will not point with a finger of horror, and tell us that it is a fruitful source of disorder or disease. Oysters have lately been found to be dire offenders in this way, and the dainty mollusc must not be eaten unless first cooked, to kill the disease germs which it gathers from the mud. Another delicacy in the shape of mushrooms has more recently come under the inquisitorial ban. Mushrooms from the fresh green pastures are all right, but those grown, or rather forced, for consumption in large cities and towns are all wrong. For they are mostly grown, we are told, on 'vile and rotting filth of every description, which is gathered together in large towns, and delivered to suburban and country mushroom growers.' The mushrooms not only assimilate some of this vile stuff, but the arrangement of its umbrella-like head is particularly adapted for catching vapours which are deadly to man and beast. If all this be true, it is certain that the old-fashioned poisons, both mineral and vegetable, have had their day. Any one wishing to emulate the feats of the Borgias could do so by regaling those whose 'removal' is desirable upon such luxuries as oysters and mushrooms, suitably raised.

The third Report of the Royal Commission on Electrical Communication with Lighthouses and Light-vessels has recently been published, and it gives some interesting particulars regarding this very important addition to our means of saving life at sea. The recommendations of former Reports have been carried out, and now an additional list of stations is named which it is suggested should be brought into circuit with the telegraphic system of the country. The system of communication which has been adopted with regard to light-ships is that known as the 'Sunk' system, a name derived from the first light-ship with which a cable was experimentally connected nine years ago. This is the best method yet devised, for the mechanical arrangements permit of the vessel swinging round with the tide without injury to the line of communication, and also allow the telephone to be employed, which last is a most valuable provision. But the Commissioners suggest that experiments should be made with the induc-

tion method, so that a cable may be dispensed with in the case of deep water and a rough bottom. The results already achieved have been most satisfactory, one light-vessel having made six communications with the shore relative to vessels in distress, and another nineteen such urgent messages. In every case the light-vessels in question also employed the ordinary methods of signalling by gun, rocket, or flag, using the electric current to transmit fuller information to the mainland.

It was at one time supposed that the rings of Saturn represented a solid structure, and this view was generally accepted until in 1857 Clerk-Maxwell demonstrated theoretically that these curious appendages to the distant planet consisted of myriads of small bodies revolving round it. Professor Keeler, Director of the Alleghany Observatory, has recently verified this conclusion experimentally by means of the spectroscope. Saturn's spectrum, as might be expected from a planet, is identical with that of the sun, and many of the dark Fraunhofer lines can be found in it. These lines are displaced by the motion of the opposite edges of Saturn's rings, and it is shown that the tiny bodies which comprise those rings travel at from ten to thirteen miles per second, the innermost moving at the higher speed. Thus it has been shown that the wonderful laws which regulate planetary revolutions generally hold good for those tiny grains of cosmic matter which revolve in dense streams round the stupendous orb of Saturn.

Some years ago, when Epping Forest was threatened with extinction owing to the greed of adjacent landowners, the Corporation of London came forward, took possession of the ground, and devoted it to the public use for ever. The forest consists of about thirty thousand acres, and is a rare playground for Londoners, very few of whom have any other means of knowing what a forest is like. Much correspondence has lately taken place with regard to the system of forestry which is being adopted by the authorities at Epping, it being alleged that good trees are being ruthlessly cut down, and the entire aspect of the natural wood being gradually transformed into that of a cultivated park. Others allege that the Conservators are managing the forest with discretion and good taste. Parks the people of London happily have in plenty, but they have only this one example near them of nature unadorned, and it would be a thousand pities if it were not gently treated.

Professor Liversidge has been experimenting upon Waterproofing Brick and Sandstone with oil, with a view to determine for what length of time those materials can be protected from moisture by such treatment. The general procedure was to allow the stone or brick to absorb as much oil as it would take up, and then to expose it to the weather for a long period. The cheapest oils were employed—namely, linseed, boiled linseed, and crude mineral oil. The last seemed to give little or no protection, for it quickly evaporated. The sandstone absorbed far less oil than the bricks, which were sound, machine-made articles. The bricks retained all the oil which they absorbed, and at

the end of four years had not lost weight, and were quite impervious to water. But the sandstone cubes experimented on, although they had returned to their original weight, and it might therefore be supposed that the oil had left them, still retained the property which the oil had conferred upon them of repelling moisture. They were practically impervious to water.

A correspondent of the *Scientific American*, writing from Denver, tells how one of his children blowing soap bubbles sent them adrift in the cold air—it was fourteen degrees below zero—when they instantly froze and fell to the snow as hollow spheres of ice. It will be remembered that frozen soap bubbles were produced at the Royal Institution not long ago by Professor Dewar by submitting the bubbles to the cold atmosphere lying upon the surface of liquid air. This curious and beautiful experiment was described in these columns at the time of its occurrence, and it is interesting to see that it has been repeated in cold air not produced by artificial means.

One has only to turn to the chemical textbooks of a few years back to see that there were three gases which were described as permanent, in that they had never been liquefied; these were nitrogen, oxygen, and hydrogen. The first two were liquefied some time ago, and hydrogen remained the one gas which could be described as obstinate. This element has now been liquefied by Professor Olszewski of Cracow. The temperature at which hydrogen passes from a liquid to a state of vapour—that is, its critical point, is -233 degrees C., its boiling-point being ten degrees higher. We may mention in connection with these liquefied gases that the 'cold burns' which they give are most painful, and difficult to heal. M. Raoul Pictet, who was one of the first to liquefy oxygen and nitrogen, says that a drop of liquid air upon the skin first turns the surface red, then blue, and that the spot extends to nearly double its original size. In serious cases, the skin becomes detached, and there is a long and stubborn suppuration. In one case, the wound from a drop of liquid air remained open for more than six months.

An Exhibition is to be held in Berlin during the spring and summer of next year in honour of that city's advance as an industrial and manufacturing centre. It was at first proposed to give this Exhibition an international character; but other coming Exhibitions—notably the one to be held at Paris in 1900—were regarded as possible rivals, and the idea was relinquished. The Exhibition is to be mainly confined to the products of Berlin factories, industries, and fine arts; but exhibits from other parts of Germany will be admitted under certain restrictions.

Although it is the fashion among a certain section of artists to speak disdainfully of the work of the camera, all must admit that it has been able to teach those who hold the pencil some lessons of great value. Before the era of what is called 'instantaneous' photography, it was customary for artists to depict a flash of forked lightning as a zigzag across the sky of a very angular and pronounced form. In some of the best pictures one can see this familiar

zigzag arrangement, but it is never seen in nature. A photograph of lightning exhibits it as it really is, a sinuous line of light with branches like those of a tree. Artists had also a stereotyped method of depicting explosions, and photography has been able in this instance, also, to point out their faults. We are reminded of these things by a photograph which has been published of the recent big blast at Penrhyn slate quarries. A pillar of rock estimated to weigh one hundred and twenty thousand tons was demolished by a charge of seven tons of gunpowder. The photograph shows a cloud of smoke caused by the powder, and the mighty mass of rock subsiding through it in a disintegrated condition.

The Report of the Royal Commission on tuberculosis does not seem to do more than confirm the conclusions which had already been arrived at by those who have made a study of this form of disease. It was known, for example, that tuberculosis could be conveyed to healthy animals by food derived from those which are infected. It was also known that milk from cows with tuberculous udders was a very active disseminator of disease, and that boiling deprived it of its dangerous character by killing the germs contained in it. Infected meat can also be rendered innocuous by very thorough cooking.

A simple form of experimental Lamp for burning acetylene has been devised by Dr T. Sloane, and apparently it has been modelled on the apparatus for producing hydrogen, which has long been known in the laboratory. It consists of an outer jar of water, floating within which is a lamp chimney, corked at the upper end, and furnished with a stopcock and gas jet. Depending from the cork inside the chimney is a wire ending in a basket containing a lump of calcium carbide, which it will be remembered gives off acetylene directly it comes into contact with water. Upon gas being evolved, the lamp chimney rises in the water, and the caged carbide is thus prevented from giving off more vapour until that consumed in the burner above causes it once more to dip. In this way a supply of gas is constantly evolved as long as may be required. Such a lamp can be easily home made; but the carbide, as far as we can ascertain, is not yet procurable in small quantities.

Among the recent interesting additions to the magnificent Natural History Museum at Kensington is a complete cast of the Iguanodon, which has been acquired by the trustees of the British Museum by Exchange with the Brussels Institution. The British Museum has possessed for some time teeth and detached bones of this primeval monster, which were unearthed at Tilgate Forest, Sussex; at Maidstone, Kent; and in other places. But no complete skeleton of the extinct land reptile has been found in this country. The Iguanodon was a vegetable feeder, with teeth adapted to crush the young shoots and leaves of plants. The skeleton at South Kensington has a height of fifteen feet, and is thirty feet in length.

Every year adds to our knowledge concerning that interesting period of British history covered by the Roman occupation, for Roman remains are constantly being brought to light. But the

historian will be mostly indebted to those who have interested themselves during recent years in the excavations which have taken place at Silchester, which has been called the English Pompeii. During the past year, six and a half acres of ground have been excavated, and the results have been highly satisfactory. Beyond the usual number of coins which came to light, there was discovered a hoard in an earthenware pot, which proved to consist of two hundred and fifty-three silver denarii of various dates, having a range of about two hundred and fifty years. But the most interesting discovery was that of a number of furnaces of an industrial character, which so far as this country is concerned are unique. These furnaces, with wells adjoining, are believed—from comparison with similar erections at Pompeii—to have been used for dyeing fabrics. There are also a series of flues which are supposed to have been used for drying purposes. Such flues do not exist at Pompeii, where the warmer climate would naturally render such devices unnecessary.

A curious result of the late intense frost in London was the occasional stoppage of the pneumatic tubes which are largely used to connect the Central Telegraph Office with its branches. Carriers containing messages were often stopped in the tubes, and were only released after considerable trouble. The most effective plan was to send after the imprisoned carrier another one filled with salt. The salt was scattered in the tube, and liquefied the ice.

SAFELY DEPOSITED.

SOME twenty years ago, when I was enabled to retire from the Indian Civil Service to the pleasant town of Torquay, I was yet a bachelor, and active. Pedestrianism was then my hobby, and there is little of South and Mid Devon that I have not tramped over.

I had left Bovey Tracey early one fine March morning, intending to make a long day of it. The weather was surprisingly warm for the time of year; so much so, that—my route being all up-hill for the first hour—I had to moderate my pace, and began to wish for a lighter overcoat. And this was the first link in a curious chain of circumstances, for if I had walked at my usual rate, I should probably not have noticed—two miles from Bovey—an object entangled in the roadside hedge about seven feet from the ground. It proved to be a small bag, the size and shape of a common tobacco-pouch, made of stiff leather, and sewed up with clumsy stitches, which seemed newly done. There was a broken thong of the same leather attached. I felt in my pocket for a knife to cut the stitches, but found that that implement, as usually happens, was at home. So I reserved it for examination on my return.

About mid-day I sat down to lunch hard by the Vawr Maen, or 'great stone,' degenerated in course of time to Bowerman's Nose. It is a rude pillar of granite blocks, some thirty feet high, the uppermost being worn, by wind and weather, into the likeness of a human face, with a disproportionate, Lord-Brougham kind of nose, and an unpleasant grin. This grim object

risers from the side of Hayne Down, surrounded by a mass of loose granite blocks of great size, the soil between which has been washed away by rain and burrowed by rabbits. One of these I selected for a seat, and pulled out a sandwich case. But alas! the pouch, which I had quite forgotten, came out with it, and tumbling into a yawning crack, disappeared. I was greatly annoyed, for all sorts of possibilities as to its contents came across me. Not far below was a broken bit of wire-fence, which had served to keep cattle out of a boggy spot. I secured a long piece of it, hammered the end with a stone into a hook, and fished for some time, but with no success, and went away at last, leaving the wire in the hole, and Bowerman, as I fancied, sardonically grinning at my failure.

Next morning, the following advertisement in the *Western Morning News* caught my eye: 'Lost, on the 8th instant, near Bovey Tracey, a small black leather pouch, containing mineral specimens. Any one bringing it to George Durgess, The Lodge, Blackaton Manor, Bovey, will receive Two Pounds Reward.'

So I sent off a note on the spot to inform the advertiser that I believed I could give him some news of his property. It was answered with astonishing promptitude, for the same afternoon, 'A gentleman, name of Durgess, about an advertisement,' was announced and ushered in. The gentleman in question was tall and wiry, about forty years of age, decidedly horsey in appearance, and reminding me forcibly of the portraits of the celebrated Mr Sponge.

'I'm Mr George Durgess, sir,' he exclaimed, before he was fairly in the room; 'and I shall be uncommon glad, sir, if you can lay me on to this thing of mine, for the loss is very serious to me.' Here he stopped abruptly, with his eye roving round the room, as if to discover his property, and, catching sight of a black tobacco-pouch on the table, he made a hasty step towards it before he saw his mistake.

'Take a seat, Mr Durgess,' I said. 'Would you mind describing the bag as exactly as possible?'

'Why,' he said, 'it was black leather like that—tapping his boot—about as big as my hand, sewed up all round, and had a leather strap to carry it by. It had in it nineteen bits of red stone, wrapped up in paper. My brother sent 'em 'ome to me from India, to take care of; and I, like a fool, must carry 'em 'ung round my neck, instead o' lockin' 'em up. Last Thursday, I was out, schoolin' a young horse; and when I got home I found the thing gone, through the rotten old strap breakin' and lettin' it drop off on the road.'

Now, this was straightforward and probable enough in all particulars but one—that was, that the article was not found on the road, but high up on the hedge. But against that was his evident knowledge of the contents, which would have left me no alternative but to hand it over, if I had possessed it. As I did not, all I could do was to relate to Mr Durgess the state of the case, which occasioned him to pull a very long face.

'Confound it all!' he exclaimed; 'what a pretty piece of luck!—Bowerman's Nose; yes, I know the place well, though I've never been

up to it.—Look here, sir; if you can come over to Bovey, I'll meet you at the station and drive you out—it's not more than a few hundred yards off the road—and you can show me exactly where it went down.'

'Very well. But mind you, Mr Durgess, unless the things are very valuable, it won't pay you to try and recover them. In the first place, you must have the leave of the Duchy before you can do anything; and in the next, it will most likely be a job for a large gang of quarrymen to shift those rocks; and it may run to hundreds of pounds.'

'Bother it all!' he exclaimed again. 'If only you'd put it in another pocket.—But I must see the place, any'ow.'

It was arranged that he was to write to me fixing a day and hour for us to drive out together to the Bowerman and inspect the crevice into which the bag had disappeared.

Next day a snow-storm had made the country from Exeter to Land's End a section of Siberia. Under these circumstances, I was not surprised at hearing no more for the present of Mr Durgess. But a thaw quickly set in, with a good deal of rain; the roads—except across Dartmoor—were all open again, and still no tidings from him, though the last vestiges of the 'blizzard' were melting away. At this time came a letter from a schoolfellow of mine, Dr Collins, a demonstrator of something at a London hospital, asking me if I would put him up for a week, as he had one of his rare holidays, and wanted to get as far from London as possible. The doctor's notion of a holiday was to exert himself as much as possible; and the morning after his arrival he proposed visiting Bovey, to collect what he called 'Miocene flora,' which, it appeared, could be obtained nowhere else. To Bovey, then, we repaired, where he spent a considerable time in the clay-pits belonging to the pottery works, and loaded his pockets and mine with the said Miocene flora, resembling to my eyes bits of decayed stick and brown paper embedded in lumps of clay. When we had as much of this as we could carry, it occurred to me that we might as well look in on Mr Durgess. As I did not know the exact situation of the Lodge, I inquired of Sam Hext, foreman of the clay-pits, with whom I was well acquainted. Sam was a stout, massively built man of sixty, who had once been a famous exponent of the art of 'wraxling,' or wrestling, now nearly extinct in Devon, and disappearing from Cornwall. He was a shrewd, intelligent man, and a perfect mine of information about the neighbourhood, in which he had spent all his life.

'The Lodge, zur,' he said; 'I'll be plazed to show it to 'ee, vor we'm jast knackin' off vor Saturday, an' I do live almost tichin' of it.'

As we tramped along the muddy lanes, overhung with thick-grown banks, from which the young fern was beginning to shoot, I inquired of Sam whether he knew anything of Mr Durgess.

'Durgess, iss fai,' he replied; 'but they goed awai, zur, yesterday marnin', vust train. I zeed'n to station.'

Further questions elicited that two men of that name had rented the Lodge six or seven

months before, one of whom was clearly my visitor. They hunted a good deal, and were very 'knowing' men about horses, especially hunters, of which they had always five or six standing at the inn stables in Bovey. They had no servants except a sort of groom; and a woman, described by Sam as a 'cranky-tempered ould to-ad.'

The Lodge, which was now shut up, with a 'To Let' notice, referring intending tenants to some one in Exeter, was a substantial building of granite, standing behind huge, rusty, iron gates of elaborate hammered work. It was, as its name indicated, the lodge of Blackaton Manor, once the seat of the Mann family. Sir Thomas Mann, the last male representative, had been dead many years; and the two old ladies who alone survived lived in Exeter; while the Park was let out for grazing, and the mansion stood deserted and falling to ruin.

'Let's look at the house,' said Collins; and accordingly we walked up what had once been a fine beech avenue, cut down by Sir Thomas's executors. The house itself was a plain, rectangular block of building, three-storeyed, of stone, covered with stucco which had fallen off in great patches; and, except a massive granite porch, there was no ornament. In front was an extensive lawn, relapsed into pasture; and the stone basin of a fountain, with a broken image of Neptune, apparently taking a footbath in the slimy green water. The lower windows were boarded up; but the upper ones had been breached by 'the devil's army,' as the Hindu unkindly terms sportive youth.

We walked round to the back, where was an extensive range of stabling and 'offices,' surrounded by a high stone wall. The wooden doors of the yard had been blown down in the late gale, which had also blown off a number of slates from the house-roof. A cow had found her way in, to luxuriate on the rank grass which grew in great tufts against the walls; and a family of stoats, disturbed by our entrance, darted under the coach-house door, which, like all the rest, was secured with rusty chains and staples. But, to our surprise, the back door of the hall was ajar.

'Zome trampin' rogues have a doed that,' said Sam. 'They'll be vor lightin' vires an' burnin' 'ouse down zome naight, I zim [think].—Coom inzaide, zur; 'tes twenty year an' more zince I zee thicky door open.'

We entered a long, narrow, lofty hall, where the only light came through the broken fanlight over the front door; and a flavour of damp and decay, between that of new-turned earth and a bad nut, pervaded the whole place. Sam tried a large double door on the right, which opened easily enough, and showed the dining-room, a huge apartment, running the whole depth of the house.

'But what's that in the corner, Sam?'

'Tes the wai to zellar, zur,' replied Sam.

'They wanted wine near by.'

This was a very steep and narrow flight of steps, descending from a railed-off corner. We looked down it, and perceived at the bottom a small door wide open, but revealing nothing but darkness. Out of curiosity, I twisted up a sheet of newspaper into a torch, lighted it, and

stepped inside. Nothing more than a good-sized cellar, opening into another, the door of which was shut; but just as the paper went out, I caught sight of a large heap of straw, with two horse-rugs in one corner, also a jug and a broken plate.

I called to the others, and lighted a fresh paper. Sam took the articles and carried them up to the dining-room. 'Tes just so as I telled 'ee,' said he. 'Zome o' they tramps a got in.'

'Surely,' said the Doctor, 'tramps don't carry rugs about with them, much less crockery.'

'No, zur,' said Sam; 'but they maight 'a staled'n here. Zo they have; vor they rugs be vrom the White Hart to Bovey.—Lookee zee, zur; ould Pearce's name on 'em. 'Twas strangers, vor sartin. No one round here wudn' sleep here, vor Zur Thomas walks by times.'

'Does he indeed!' said the Doctor. 'He can't be very well pleased with what he sees, I should think. Did you ever see him, Mr Hext, and what shape does he take?'

'No, zur; I never zeed'n; but plenty here has; though, if you was to ask'n, they'd zay No. Look'd zame as if he wur alaiive. They do zay, if zo be a man do show like himself, 'tes not zo bad; but if he do look like a black dog, zame as Lady Howard to Okehampton, it have gone hard weth'n; a black pig wust of all.'

'That is really worth knowing,' said the Doctor. 'I will make a note of it, for the benefit of my family.—But I think we ought to be getting on now, to see Mr Bowerman—eh, Jack!—and try to induce him to restore the lost property.'

Hext's cottage, though described by him as 'touchin' the Lodge, was really about a quarter of a mile farther along the road. As we approached it, we were aware of a small boy, Sam's grandson, sitting on the doorstep blubbering.

'What be it now weth'ee, Jarge?' inquired his grandfather.

'A wacked little to-ad, 'a be,' replied Mrs Hext senior, coming to the door. 'I zet'n to watch an' kape vovls off the pays, an' directly minnit I vinds'n down road, with they young 'osbirds o' Gidley's hainen' gruet [throwing clods] at a ould mazed furriner. Zo I basted'n, an' axed the ould man to come an' zet down; but I can't make out no word 'a zayed. Maybe the gentlemen can?'

We entered the little back room, clean and blindingly whitewashed, which served as kitchen and dining-room, and found the 'furriner' seated there. He was an elderly man, of about sixty, apparently, with face and hands nearly as brown as an Arab's, and thick gray beard and moustache. But he was evidently no tramp, for his clothes—a gray tweed suit and black billycock hat—were good, and almost new, though the former were dirty and rumpled, and the latter had its brim broken. Bits of straw and flue were sticking in his hair and beard; and altogether he was as grimy and dishevelled a spectacle as could be imagined; but still, no one would have taken him for a vagabond or 'masterless man.' 'Escaped lunatic' was the first impression of us all.

He looked up as we entered, with a curious, puzzled expression, like a man who tries hard to remember something. Then he addressed

us with much fluency, pointing to himself and the surroundings, and evidently asking questions; but not one word could we understand, though I thought some of the words sounded like Hindustani. At last he seemed to give it up in despair, and turning away from us, got up and walked to the other end of the room. As he did so, a broom lying on the floor came directly in his way. He stopped short, and then stepped over it by a tremendous effort, lifting his leg at least two feet high.

'Hullo!' exclaimed the Doctor; 'd'ye see that? The man's drugged with something, some strong narcotic poison. There's several kinds have that effect; they make everything seem unnaturally large.'

'Bain't'n mad then, zur?' inquired Sam, who was evidently prepared for a 'wraxling' bout, if the 'furriner' should become violent.

'Mad; why, yes,' replied the Doctor. 'The best thing you can do is to send for the police to take him in charge. He won't give any trouble.'

'I will, zur, to once,' said Mrs Hext.—'Jarge! layve off thee scraichin', an' hurm [run] to Bovey, an' tell constable to come an' take awai a mad man.'

We left the unfortunate man, seated in a corner, and the worthy couple regarding him with half alarm and half sympathy. On our way we discussed him, but came to no conclusion on the subject during the two hours of steep hills and winding lanes that brought us to Manaton, and then to Bowerman's Nose. Here Collins was glad of a rest; and while he enjoyed the brisk moor air and the strange prospect westward of tumbled hills, piled with fantastic gray 'clatters,' with the long black ridge of Hamilton behind, I searched for my place of involuntary deposit. I found the wire, and drew it out with a gasp of astonishment, for, firmly jammed on the hooked end was the mysterious pouch. I seized it, and hastily retreated to a place of safety. We had it open in a trice, and found, exactly as Mr Durgess had said, nineteen balls of paper, each enclosing a piece of dark-red crystal, about the size of a Windsor bean, excepting one, which was the size, and nearly the shape, of a Martini-Henry bullet.

'What are they, d' you think?' I asked.

'Well,' said the Doctor, 'my line's not mineralogy; but I had to cram it up at one time; and they look, from what I recollect, most decidedly like corundum—that's rubies, you know. There's the six sides in the big one, and that one, and that.'

'Anyhow, the "furriner" can have no connection with these, for you found them over a month ago.'

'I suppose not,' I said. 'At the same time, there's something very fishy about the way this man Durgess has disappeared, for he clearly possessed these things, if he didn't own them. Rather hard luck for him, if there's anything wrong, for if it hadn't been for that snow-storm, he'd have got 'em to a certainty. Now, if he turns up, he'll have to prove his title.'

Next morning, we submitted the stones to a fashionable jeweller on the Victoria Parade, who at once pronounced them Oriental rubies of

uncommon size. 'But,' he said, 'it's very difficult to give you any idea of their value, gentlemen, because rubies of any size are so very apt to have flaws, which only show in the cutting. Still, I think, any of the big firms, like Streeter's, would give a couple of thousand for them, as they might cut to ten times that.'

'Hullo; been choosing the ring?' interposed a voice at my ear; and turning round, I found Colonel Kelway, an old acquaintance of mine, also settled in the town. The Colonel was a little man, with large sandy whiskers, whom it was very difficult to associate with the setting of a squadron in the field, and, in fact, I believe his duties had been mostly confined to the Pay Department.

'Let me introduce my friend, Dr Collins, Colonel,' I said.—'No; it's not come to that yet; it was something rather more out of the common took me into Parson's.—Look here; and I was about to produce the stones.'

'Afraid I can't stop now,' said the Colonel. 'I've to attend a case at the town hall as witness.—But if you'll come to dinner this evening with your friend—it's a long time since you've been, you know—you can tell me then.'

But neither the dinner nor the story came off at that time, owing to a misunderstanding. I saw nothing more of the Colonel till some days later, when the Doctor had returned to town. Meanwhile, I had made some inquiries, and learned in the first place that the mysterious stranger had been removed to the infirmary at Newton Abbot Union; and secondly, that the Messrs Durgess were shrewdly suspected of being concerned in the disappearance of several valuable horses from the north of England, horse-stealing, by the way, being a much more flourishing industry in these days than is generally known. Their real names were, it was said, Dawson and Hearne; and a warrant had been issued for their arrest on the horse-stealing charge; but these very wary rooks, having their own sources of information, had flown in time, leaving a quarter's rent of the Lodge owing. This, however, gave no clew to the real owner of the rubies, except to make it certain that it was not Mr Durgess, *alias* Dawson; and nothing was known of any such articles having been stolen.

When I again met Colonel Kelway, on the Rock Walk, one afternoon, he renewed the invitation to dinner for that evening.—'Nobody but ourselves, y' know.'

I inquired after his numerous family.

'All well,' he said, 'but my wife. She's rather upset by something that's happened, or rather, I should say, by something that's not happened. About a month ago she had a letter from an uncle of hers, Tom Morehead by name. Just two or three lines, to say that he was in England, and she might expect to see him in a day or two. He was something or other in Portsmouth Dockyard, I think; but soon after, he went abroad to Hong-kong; and it is a good fifteen years since my wife heard from him. For my part, I believe he is the sort of fellow that generally comes back, like somebody in Dickens, to give you the alternative of half a sovereign or his brains on the premises; but anyhow, he has never turned

up, and my wife has made up her mind that he has been murdered.'

'Have you made any inquiries?' I asked.

'Well, I was worried into going to Plymouth, for the letter had a Devonport postmark; but there was positively nothing to go by. No address, nothing to say when he had arrived in England, or by what ship; and all the description I could give was that he should be a rather tall man of about fifty. So the only result was to make me waste half-an-hour of the police-inspector's time.'

'I do believe, Colonel,' I said, a sudden idea flashing upon me, 'that I can give you some sort of a clew. A man of fifty, or so, and a long time abroad, you say. Why, I was going to tell you that very minute when you met me coming out of the jeweller's.—But I'd better tell you this evening, so that Mrs Kelway may hear it at the same time.'

So, after dinner, we adjourned to the 'study,' and I related the particulars to the Colonel and his wife, exhibiting the pouch with the stones.

'It's my uncle Tom—I know it is!' exclaimed Mrs Kelway. 'Good gracious! and they are worth twenty thousand pounds.—We must go over and fetch them away, Edward, the first thing to-morrow morning.'

'But, my dear,' said the Colonel, 'if it is Tom Morehead, he must at all events know English; and I don't yet see the connection very clearly between these stones and the man of the unknown tongues.'

Mr Cattermole, of the Colonel's regiment, then staying at Tor Bay Hotel, a lean, Roman-nosed individual, far more military in appearance than the Colonel, threw an unexpected light on the matter. 'Morehead,' he said. 'Yes, there was a fellow of that name knocking about our part of the world for years. He came over to us once and wanted to take service; but I couldn't learn much good of his antecedents; he'd just been turned out of Java. So I advised the Rajah not to have him. The last I heard of him was that he had joined the Rajah of Kedah, turned Mohammedan, they said.—No; he didn't drink much, as we reckon it; but he was a beggar for opium and the native drugs.—Oh, certainly! I'll be happy to do the interpreting.'

On arrival at Newton Abbot, we interviewed the infirmary doctor. 'Oh!' he said, 'the man who was brought here from Bovey.—Well, you can see him; but he hasn't got his wits yet, and I almost fear he's a hopeless case. Fact is, the man's been dosing himself with Indian hemp extract—bhang, you know. We found a box of the stuff on him, nearly empty.'

In the infirmary we found the patient, dressed, and seated on the side of his bed, looking, except for being washed and tidied, very much as I had seen him first, and with the same perplexed expression.

'That's the man!' said Cattermole—'old Murad, as the natives used to call him.—Wake up, old man! How's the Rajah?' and he addressed the stranger in Malay, to which he at once replied, and they conversed together for some minutes.

'It's the man you want, Colonel, undoubtedly,' he said.—The Colonel's face by no means expressed this sentiment.—'But what's happened

to him I can't make out. He says he's died, and been buried; and now he's in, well, in the stoke-hole, and he's glad, he says, to see me there.—Complimentary, isn't it?"

'I wonder now,' I said, 'if this would have any effect;' and I exhibited to the late Mr Morehead the empty pouch. Without the least warning, he snatched it like an elderly monkey and thrust it into the breast of his shirt. 'Thieves! Police!' he shrieked, in most unmistakable English; and starting up, made a grab at the Colonel. Cattermole and myself could scarcely hold the indignant Morehead, who strewed on our heads the choicest flowers of speech of the Lower English tongue, till, assistance arriving, he was removed to the refractory ward, where we presently learned that he had fallen asleep, clutching his recovered treasure, as he imagined.

'Well, Colonel,' I said, 'I congratulate you on your wealthy relative.'

'By Jove!' exploded the Colonel, 'it may be a joke to you, but I don't see where my share of the fun comes in. If he gets right, I shall have this ruffian quartering himself on the family for life, on the pretext of leaving his money to Julia. And most likely, either he will muddle it all away, or the Rajah of Whatdyecallit may send over, and have him arrested for stealing the stones.'

The upshot was that 'Uncle Tom' began to recover his scattered ideas, and in about a fortnight was able to give a coherent account of himself. It seemed that on arrival at Plymouth he had put up at some second-class hotel, the name of which he could not remember. Here he forgathered with the man calling himself Durgess, who was in Plymouth at the time on some business connected with horse-dealing, or stealing. To him, Morehead confided his intentions, and displayed his wealth in gin-inspired confidence, of which Mr Durgess took instant advantage. He represented himself as a country gentleman, and the intimate friend of the Kelways; and telling the confiding Morehead, who was quite ignorant of the district, that the Colonel lived several miles from a station, offered to drive him over from Newton Junction. On arrival there, very late at night, they were met by Durgess's partner in iniquity, and driven over to Bovey by a roundabout route, through unfrequented lanes. Towards the end of the journey, some suspicion seemed to have dawned on the victim, who made a disturbance; and a scuffle ensued, which ended in his being overpowered and laid, bound and gagged, in the bottom of the vehicle. However, before this, he had torn off his neck the pouch, containing their expected loot, and flung it away; and as it had gone into the hedge, and the night was pitch-dark, they were unable to find it. To do them justice, they did not seem to have contemplated murder, but merely to have kept Morehead a prisoner in the cellar at Blackaton until they had got clear off. To this durance he was then consigned, whilst they endeavoured to recover the precious pouch. Unfortunately for him, he had a supply of the pernicious drug about him, and in the solitude of his dungeon, he reduced himself to the state in which he was

found, so that he could give no account of how it fared with him during the snow-storm, when he must have been left alone for some days.

At last Durgess & Co., despairing of getting the jewels from the custody of Bowerman, in which I had so luckily bestowed them, took the alarm, and went off leaving the unlucky Morehead to shift for himself. They had too long a start for capture, and are now doubtless exercising their talents in the United States.

The much-enduring Mr Morehead was eventually removed to Torquay, where, proving impossible as one of the Colonel's household, he was accommodated in lodgings. He never quite recovered from his latest experiences, but always remained a trifle 'mazed' in his intellect, and uncivilised in his habits, though not so much as the Colonel had apprehended. The rubies were disposed of for a handsome sum, though not anything like twenty thousand pounds; and at his death, which happened about three years after, he left the whole of the amount to his niece. As to how he had acquired them, he would never say a word during his life; but a full account was found in writing among his belongings—an autobiographical statement, which, I understand, caused the Kelways some searchings of heart as to whether they ought to accept the legacy.

S. PONDER.

LOVE AND FAME.

Two maids I wooed upon a day,
Both rich in favours all would share:
One, Love, a laughing, winsome fay;
The other, Fame, surpassing fair.

With fervour both I far pursued,
Nor ever thought I wooed amiss;
But, lo! they parted by a feud;
That way went Fame, while Love took this.

Alas! I could not cling to both;
But now was come the hour to choose;
To part from either I was loth,
With this to gain, and that to lose.

'Come, mortal, come with me,' said Fame,
With flattering voice that charmed my ear:
'The nation's tongue shall speak thy name,
And thou the victor's crown shalt wear.'

Love, like an angel, lingering, smiled:
'Ay, woo her, if thou wouldst,' she cried.
But Love had conquered; like a child
I followed, and was satisfied.

MORTIMER MANSELL.

** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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