



THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

GIFT OF

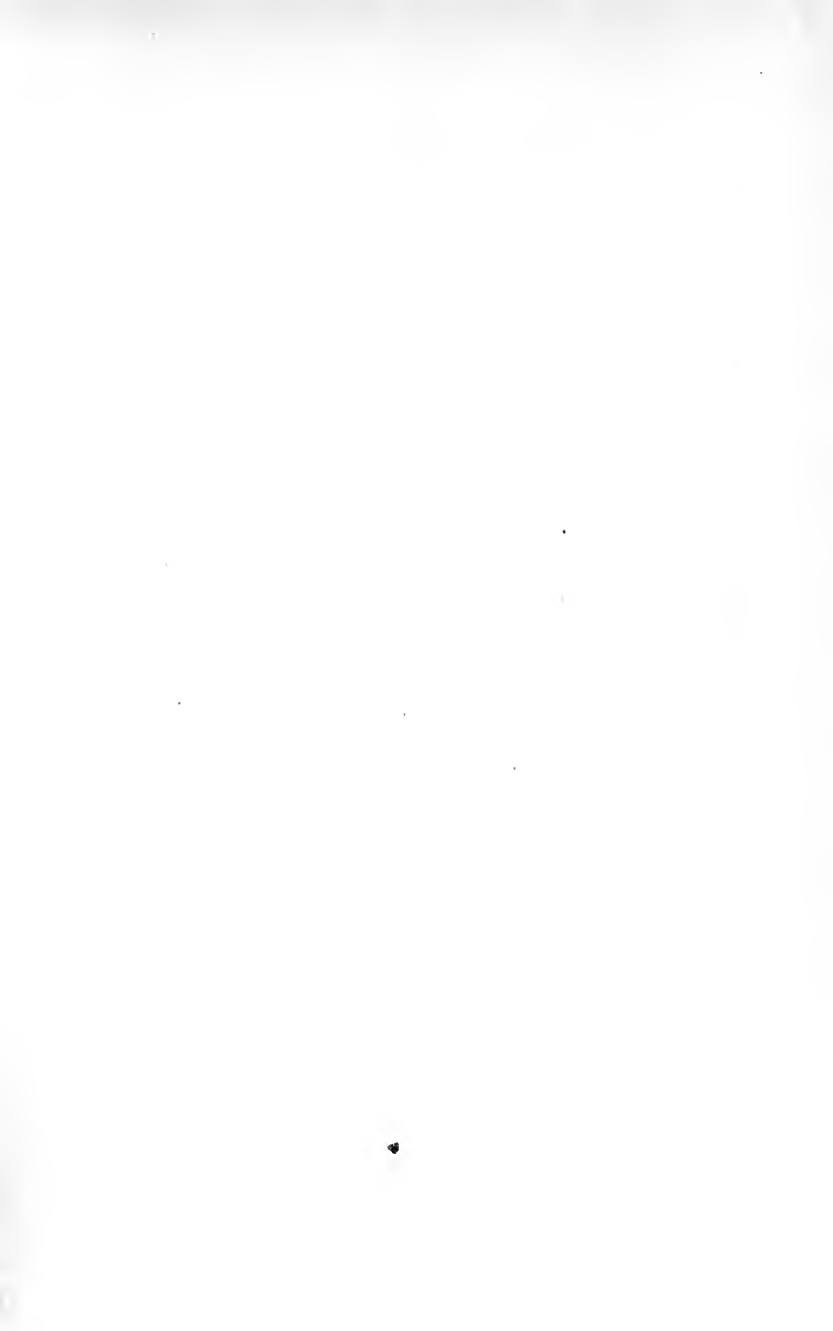
Ada Nisbet

ENGLISH READING ROOM

JUL 17 1986



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation





DEVEREUX.

DEVEREUX

A TALE

SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON, BART.

' He that knows most men's manners, must of necessity
Best know his own, and mend those by example.

. . . . Pure and strong spirits
Do, like the fire, still covet to fly upward."

The Queen of Corinth, Act 2, Scene 1.

NEW YORK
THE CASSELL PUBLISHING CO.
31 EAST 17TH ST. (UNION SQUARE)

DEVELOPER

1917

THE MERSHON COMPANY PRESS,
RAHWAY, N. J.

THE MERSHON COMPANY PRESS,
RAHWAY, N. J.

CONTENTS.

BOOK I.

	PAGE
CHAP. I.—Of the Hero's Birth and Parentage.—Nothing can differ more from the End of things than their beginning	11
CHAP. II.—A Family Consultation.—A Priest, and an Æra in Life	15
CHAP. III.—A Change in Conduct and in Character—our evil Passions will sometimes produce good Effects; and, on the contrary, an Alteration for the better in Manners will, not unfrequently, have amongst its Causes a little Corruption of Mind; for the Feelings are so blended, that in suppressing those disagreeable to others, we often suppress those which are amiable in themselves	19
CHAP. IV.—A Contest of Art, and a League of Friendship—Two Characters in mutual Ignorance of each other, and the reader no wiser than either of them	27
CHAP. V.—Royal Hospitality—an extraordinary Guest.—A Fine Gentleman is not necessarily a Fool	32
CHAP. VI.—A Dialogue, which might be dull if it were longer	36
CHAP. VII.—A change of Prospects—a new insight into the character of the Hero—a Conference between two Brothers	39
CHAP. VIII.—First Love	44
CHAP. IX.—A Discovery, and a Departure	54
CHAP. X.—A very short Chapter—containing a Valet	60
CHAP. XI.—The Hero acquits himself honorably as a Coxcomb—a Fine Lady of the Eighteenth Century, and a fashionable Dialogue—the Substance of fashionable Dialogue being in all Centuries the same	62
CHAP. XII.—The Abbé's return—a Sword, and a Soliloquy	67
CHAP. XIII.—A mysterious Letter—a Duel—the Departure of one of the Family	69
CHAP. XIV.—Being a Chapter of Trifles	78
CHAP. XV.—The Mother and Son—Virtue should be the Sovereign of the Feelings, not their Destroyer	80

BOOK II.

	PAGE
CHAP. I.—The Hero in London—Pleasure is often the shortest, as it is the earliest road to Wisdom, and we may say of the World what Zeal-of-the-Land-Busy says of the Pig-Booth, “We escape so much of the other vanities by our early entering” - - -	84
CHAP. II.—Gay Scenes and Conversations:—the New Exchange and the Puppet Show:—The Actor, the Sexton, and the Beauty -	88
CHAP. III.—More Lions - - - - -	93
CHAP. IV.—An Intellectual Adventure - - - - -	97
CHAP. V.—The Beau in his Den, and a Philosopher discovered -	99
CHAP. VI.—An Universal Genius—Pericles turned Barber—Names of Beauties in 171— —the Toasts of the Kit-Cat Club - - -	107
CHAP. VII.—A Dialogue of Sentiment succeeded by the Sketch of a Character, in whose eyes Sentiment was to Wise Men what Religion is to Fools, viz.—a subject of ridicule - - -	111
CHAP. VIII.—Lightly won—lightly lost.—A Dialogue of equal Instruction and Amusement.—A Visit to Sir Godfrey Kneller -	116
CHAP. IX.—A Development of Character, and a long Letter—a Chapter, on the whole, more important than it seems - - -	120
CHAP. X.—Being a short Chapter, containing a most important Event	129
CHAP. XI.—Containing more than any other Chapter in the Second Book of this History - - - - -	133

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.—Wherein the History makes great Progress and is marked by one important Event in Human Life - - - - -	149
CHAP. II.—Love—Parting—a Death Bed.—After all Human Nature is a beautiful Fabric; and even its Imperfections are not odious to him who has studied the Science of its Architecture, and formed a reverent Estimate of its Creator - - - - -	160
CHAP. III.—A great Change of Prospects - - - - -	168
CHAP. IV.—An Episode—The Son of the Greatest Man who (one only excepted) <i>ever rose to a Throne</i> , but by no means of the Greatest Man (save one) <i>who ever existed</i> - - - - -	173
CHAP. V.—In which the Hero shows decision on more points than one—More of Isora’s character is developed - - - - -	181
CHAP. VI.—An Unexpected Meeting—Conjecture and Anticipation	191
CHAP. VII.—The Events of a Single Night—Moments make the Hues in which Years are colored - - - - -	194

BOOK IV.

	PAGE
CHAP. I.—A Re-entrance into Life through the Ebon Gate—Affliction	205
CHAP. II.—Ambitious Projects	210
CHAP. III.—The real Actors Spectators of the false ones	218
CHAP. IV.—Paris—A Female Politician, and an Ecclesiastical one— Sundry other Matters	220
CHAP. V.—A Meeting of Wits—Conversation gone out to Supper in her Dress of Velvet and Jewels	226
CHAP. VI.—A Court, Courtiers, and a King	235
CHAP. VII.—Reflections—A Soirée—The appearance of one important in the History—A Conversation with Madame de Balzac highly satisfactory and cheering—A Rencontre with a curious old Soldier —The extinction of a once great Luminary	246
CHAP. VIII.—In which there is reason to fear that Princes are not in- variably free from Human Peccadillos	260
CHAP. IX.—A Prince—an Audience—and a Secret Embassy	264
CHAP. X.—Royal Exertions for the good of the People	271
CHAP. XI.—An Interview	276

BOOK V.

CHAP. I.—A Portrait	279
CHAP. II.—The entrance into Petersburg—a Rencontre with an inquisi- tive and mysterious Stranger—Nothing like Travel	284
CHAP. III.—The Czar—the Czarina—a Feast at a Russian Nobleman's	289
CHAP. IV.—Conversation with the Czar—if Cromwell was the greatest man (Cæsar excepted) who ever <i>rose</i> to the Supreme Power, Peter was the greatest man ever <i>born</i> to it	293
CHAP. V.—Return to Paris—Interview with B. lingbroke—A gallant . Adventure—Affair with Dubois—Public Life is a Drama, in which private Vices generally play the part of the scene-shifters	298
CHAP. VI.—A long Interval of Years—a Change of Mind and its Causes	308

BOOK VI.

	PAGE
CHAP. I.—The Retreat	318
CHAP. II.—The Victory	322
CHAP. III.—The Hermit of the Well	325
CHAP. IV.—The Solution of Many Mysteries—a dark View of the Life and Nature of Man	336
CHAP. V.—In which the History makes a great Stride towards the final Catastrophe—the Return to England, and the Visit to a Devotee	368
CHAP. VI.—The Retreat of a celebrated Man, and a Visit to a great Poet	375
CHAP. VII.—The Plot approaches its Dénouement	385
CHAP. VIII.—The Catastrophe	401

DEDICATORY EPISTLE TO JOHN AULDJO, Esq., &c.

AT NAPLES.

London.

MY DEAR AULDJO:

Permit me, as a memento of the pleasant hours we passed together, and the intimacy we formed, by the winding shores and the rosy seas of the old Parthenope, to dedicate to you this romance.—It was written in, perhaps, the happiest period of my literary life—when success began to brighten upon my labors, and it seemed to me a fine thing to make a name. Reputation, like all possessions, fairer in the hope than in the reality, shone before me, in the gloss of novelty—and I had neither felt the envy it excites, the weariness it occasions, nor (worse than all) that coarse and painful notoriety, that something between the gossip and the slander, which attends every man whose writings become known—sur-rendering the grateful privacies of life to

The gaudy, babbling, and remorseless day.

In short—yet almost a boy—(for, in years at least, I was little more, when “Pelham” and “The Disowned” were conceived and composed), and full of the sanguine arrogance of hope, I pictured to myself far greater triumphs than it will ever be mine to achieve: and never did architect of dreams build his pyramid upon (alas!) a narrower base, or a more crumbling soil! . . . Time cures us effectually of these self-conceits, and brings us, somewhat harshly, from the gay extravagance of confounding the much that we design with the little that we can accomplish.

“The Disowned” and “Devereux” were both completed in retirement—and in the midst of metaphysical studies and investigations, varied and miscellaneous enough, if not very deeply conned.—At that time I was indeed engaged in preparing for the press a Philosophical Work, which I had afterwards the good sense to postpone to a riper age and a more sobered mind. But the effect of these studies is somewhat prejudicially visible in both the romances I have referred to; and the external and dramatic colorings which belong to fiction are too often forsaken for the inward and subtle analysis of motives, characters, and actions.—The workman was not sufficiently master of his art to forbear the vanity of parading the wheels of the mechanism, and was too fond of calling attention to the minute and tedious operations by which the movements were to be performed, and the result obtained. I believe that an author is generally pleased with his work, less in proportion as it fulfils the idea with which he commenced it. He is rarely, perhaps, an accurate judge how far the execution is in itself faulty or meritorious—but he judges with tolerable success how far it accomplishes the end and objects of the conception.—He is pleased with his work, in short, according as he can say, “This has expressed what I meant to convey.”—But the reader, who is not in the secret of the author’s original design, usually views the work through a different medium—and is perhaps, in this, the wiser critic of the two; for the Book that wanders the most from the idea which originated it, may often be better than that which is rigidly limited to the unfolding and *dénouement* of a single conception. If we accept this solution, we may be enabled to understand why an author not unfrequently makes favorites of some of his productions most condemned by the public. For my own part, I remember that “Devereux” pleased me better than “Pelham” or “The Disowned,” because the execution more exactly corresponded with the design. It expressed with tolerable fidelity what I

meant it to express. That was a happy age, my dear Auldjo, when, on finishing a work, we could feel contented with our labor, and fancy we had done our best! Now, alas! I have learned enough of the wonders of the Art to recognize all the deficiencies of the Disciple; and to know that no author, worth the reading—can ever in one single work do half of which he is capable.

What man ever wrote anything really good, who did not feel that he had the ability to write something better?—Writing, after all, is a cold and a coarse interpreter of thought.—How much of the imagination—how much of the intellect, evaporates and is lost while we seek to embody it in words!—Man made language, and God the genius. Nothing short of an eternity could enable men who imagine, think, and feel, to express *all* they have imagined, thought, and felt. Immortality, the spiritual desire, is the intellectual *necessity*.

In "Devereux," I wished to portray a man flourishing in the last century, with the train of mind and sentiment peculiar to the present;—describing a life, and not its dramatic epitome, the historical characters introduced are not closely woven with the main plot, like those in the fictions of Sir Walter Scott—but are rather, like the narrative romances of an earlier school, designed to relieve the predominant interest, and give a greater air of truth and actuality to the supposed memoir. It is a fiction which deals less with the Picturesque than the Real.—Of the principal character thus introduced (the celebrated and graceful, but charlatanic, Bolingbroke) I still think that my sketch, upon the whole, is substantially just. We must not judge of the politicians of one age by the lights of another. Happily we now demand in a statesman a desire for other aims than his own advancement; but, at that period, ambition was almost universally selfish—the Statesman was yet a Courtier—a man whose very destiny it was to intrigue, to plot, to glitter, to deceive. It is in proportion as politics have ceased to be a secret science—in proportion as courts are less to be flattered, and tools to be managed, that politicians have become useful and honest men: and the statesman now directs a people, where once he outwitted an antechamber. Compare Bolingbroke—not with the men and by the rules of this day—but with the men and by the rules of the last. He will lose nothing in comparison with a Walpole, with a Marlborough on the one side—with an Oxford or a Swift upon the other.

And now, my dear Auldjo—you have had enough of my egotisms. As our works grow up—like old parents, we grow garrulous, and love to recur to the happier days of their childhood;—we talk over the pleasant pain they cost us in their rearing—and memory renews the season of dreams and hopes; we speak of their faults as of things past—of their merits as of things enduring:—we are proud to see them still living, and, after many a harsh ordeal and rude assault, keeping a certain station in the world;—we hoped perhaps something better for them in their cradle—but, as it is, we have good cause to be contented. You, a fellow-author, and one whose spirited and charming sketches embody so much of personal adventure, and therefore so much connect themselves with associations of real life as well as of the studious closet; *you* know, and must feel, with me, that these our books are a part of us, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh! They treasure up the thoughts which stirred us—the affections which warmed us, years ago—they are the mirrors of how much of what we were! To the world, they are but as a certain number of pages—good or bad—tedious or diverting; but to ourselves, the authors, they are as marks in the wild maze of life by which we can retrace our steps—and be with our youth again. What would I not give to feel as I felt—to hope as I hoped—to believe as I believed—when this work was first launched upon the world! But time gives, while it takes away—and, amongst its recompenses for many losses, are the memories I referred to in commencing this letter, and gratefully revert to at its close.—From the land of cloud and the life of toil, I turn to that golden clime and the happy indolence that so well accords with it—and hope once more, ere I die, with a companion whose knowledge can recall the past, and whose gayety can enliven the present, to visit the Disburied City of Pompeii—and see the moonlight sparkle over the waves of Naples. Adieu, my dear Auldjo,

And believe me

Your obliged and attached friend,

E. B. LYTTON.

DEVEREUX.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Hero's Birth and Parentage. Nothing can Differ more from the End of Things than their Beginning.

My grandfather, Sir Arthur Devereux (peace be with his ashes!) was a noble old knight and cavalier, possessed of a property sufficiently large to have maintained in full dignity half a dozen peers—such as peers have been since the days of the First James. Nevertheless, my grandfather loved the equestrian order better than the patrician, rejected all offers of advancement, and left his posterity no titles but those to his estate.

Sir Arthur had two children by wedlock—both sons: at his death, my father, the younger, bade adieu to the old hall and his only brother, prayed to the grim portraits of his ancestors to inspire him, and set out—to join as a volunteer the armies of that *Louis*, afterwards surnamed *le grand*. Of him I shall say but little; the life of a soldier has only two events worth recording, his first campaign and his last. My uncle did as his ancestors had done before him, and, cheap as the dignity had grown, went up to court to be knighted by Charles II. He was so delighted with what he saw of the metropolis that he forswore all intention of leaving it, took to Sedley and champagne, flirted with Nell Gwynne, lost double the value of his brother's portion at one sitting to the chivalrous Grammont, wrote a comedy corrected by Etherege, and took a wife recommended by Rochester. The wife brought him a child six months after marriage, and the infant was born on the same day the comedy was acted. Luckily for the honor of the house, my uncle shared the fate of Plimneus, king of Sicyon, and all the offspring he ever had (that is to say, the child and

the play), "died as soon as they were born." My uncle was now only at a loss what to do with his wife—that remaining treasure, whose readiness to oblige him had been so miraculously evinced. She saved him the trouble of long cogitation—an exercise of intellect to which he was never too ardently inclined. There was a gentleman of the court, celebrated for his sedateness and solemnity; my aunt was piqued into emulating Orpheus, and, six weeks after her confinement, she put this rock into motion—they eloped. Poor gentleman!—it must have been a severe trial of patience to a man never known before to transgress the very slowest of all possible walks—to have had two events of the most rapid nature happen to him in the same week: scarcely had he recovered the shock of being run away with by my aunt, before, terminating for ever his vagrancies, he was run through by my uncle. The wits made an epigram upon the event, and my uncle, who was as bold as a lion at the point of a sword, was, to speak frankly, terribly disconcerted by the point of a jest. He retired to the country in a fit of disgust and gout. Here his natural goodness soon recovered the effects of the artificial atmosphere to which it had been exposed, and he solaced himself by righteously governing domains worthy of a prince, for the mortifications he had experienced in the dishonorable career of a courtier.

Hitherto I have spoken somewhat slightly of my uncle, and in his dissipation he deserved it, for he was both too honest and too simple to shine in that galaxy of prostituted genius of which Charles II. was the centre. But in retirement he was no longer the same person; and I do not think that the elements of human nature could have furnished forth a more amiable character than Sir William Devereux presiding at Christmas over the merriment of his great hall.

Good old man! his very defects were what we loved best in him—vanity was so mingled with good nature that it became graceful, and we revered one the most, while we most smiled at the other.

One peculiarity had he, which the age he had lived in and his domestic history rendered natural enough, viz., an exceeding distaste to the matrimonial state: early marriages were misery, imprudent marriages idiotism, and marriage, at the best, he was wont to say, with a kindling eye and a heightened color, marriage at the best—was the devil! Yet it must not be supposed that Sir William Devereux was an ungallant man. On the contrary, never did the *beau sexe* have a humbler or more devoted servant. As nothing in his estimation was less

becoming to a wise man than matrimony, so nothing was more ornamental than flirtation.

He had the old man's weakness, garrulity; and he told the wittiest stories in the world, without omitting anything in them but the point. This omission did not arise from the want either of memory or humor; but solely from a deficiency in the malice natural to all jesters. He could not persuade his lips to repeat a sarcasm hurting even the dead or the ungrateful; and when he came to the drop of gall which should have given zest to the story, the milk of human kindness broke its barrier, despite of himself—and washed it away. He was a fine wreck, a little prematurely broken by dissipation, but not perhaps the less interesting on that account; tall, and somewhat of the jovial old English girth, with a face where good nature and good living mingled their smiles and glow. He wore the garb of twenty years back, and was curiously particular in the choice of his silk stockings. Between you and me, he was not a little vain of his leg, and a compliment on that score was always sure of a gracious reception.

The solitude of my uncle's household was broken by an invasion of three boys—none of the quietest; and their mother, who, the gentlest and saddest of womankind, seemed to follow them, the emblem of that primeval Silence from which all noise was born. These three boys were my two brothers and myself. My father, who had conceived a strong personal attachment for *Louis Quatorze*, never quitted his service, and the great King repaid him by orders and favors without number; he died of wounds received in battle—a Count and a Marshal, full of renown, and destitute of money. He had married twice: his first wife, who died without issue, was a daughter of the noble house of La Tremouille—his second, our mother, was of a younger branch of the English race of Howard. Brought up in her native country, and influenced by a primitive and retired education, she never loved that gay land which her husband had adopted as his own. Upon his death, she hastened her return to England, and refusing, with somewhat of honorable pride, the magnificent pension which Louis wished to settle upon the widow of his favorite, came to throw herself and her children upon those affections which she knew they were entitled to claim.

My uncle was unaffectedly rejoiced to receive us.—To say nothing of his love for my father, and his pride at the honors the latter had won to their ancient house—the good gentleman was very well pleased with the idea of obtaining four new lis-

teners, out of whom he might select an heir, and he soon grew as fond of us as we were of him. At the time of our new settlement, I had attained the age of twelve; my second brother (we were twins) was born an hour after me; my third was about fifteen months younger. I had never been the favorite of the three. In the first place, my brothers (the youngest especially) were uncommonly handsome, and, at most, I was but tolerably good-looking; in the second place, my mind was considered as much inferior to theirs as my body—I was idle and dull, sullen and haughty—the only wit I ever displayed was in sneering at my friends, and the only spirit, in quarrelling with my twin brother; so said or so thought all who saw us in our childhood; and it follows, therefore, that I was either very unamiable or very much misunderstood.

But, to the astonishment of myself and my relations, my fate was now to be reversed, and I was no sooner settled at Devereux Court, than I became evidently the object of Sir William's pre-eminent attachment. The fact was, that I really liked both the knight and his stories better than my brothers did; and the very first time I had seen my uncle, I had commented on the beauty of his stocking, and envied the constitution of his leg; from such trifles spring affection! In truth, our attachment to each other so increased that we grew to be constantly together; and while my childish anticipations of the world made me love to listen to stories of courts and courtiers, my uncle returned the compliment, by declaring of my wit, as the angler declared of the River Lea, that one would find enough in it, if one would but angle sufficiently long.

Nor was this all; my uncle and myself were exceedingly like the waters of Alpheus and Arethusa—nothing was thrown into the one without being seen very shortly afterwards floating upon the other. Every witticism or legend Sir William imparted to me (and some, to say truth, were a little tinged with the licentiousness of the times he had lived in), I took the first opportunity of retailing, whatever might be the audience; and few boys, at the age of thirteen, can boast of having so often as myself excited the laughter of the men and the blushes of the women. This circumstance, while it aggravated my own vanity, delighted my uncle's; and as I was always getting into scrapes on his account, so he was perpetually bound, by duty, to defend me from the charges of which he was the cause. No man defends another long without loving him the better for it; and perhaps Sir William Devereux and his eldest nephew were the only allies in the world who had no jealousy of each other.

CHAPTER II.

A Family Consultation.—A Priest, and an Era in Life.

"You are ruining the children, my dear Sir William," said my gentle mother, one day, when I had been particularly witty, "and the Abbé Montreuil declares it absolutely necessary that they should go to school."

"To school!" said my uncle, who was caressing his right leg, as it lay over his left knee—"to school, Madam! you are joking. What for, pray?"

"Instruction, my dear Sir William," replied my mother.

"Ah, ah; I forgot that; true, true!" said my uncle despondingly, and there was a pause. My mother counted her rosary; my uncle sank into a reverie; my twin brother pinched my leg under the table, to which I replied by a silent kick: and my youngest fixed his large, dark, speaking eyes upon a picture of the Holy Family, which hung opposite to him.

My uncle broke silence; he did it with a start.

"Od's fish, Madam,"—(my uncle dressed his oaths, like himself, a little after the example of Charles II.)—"od's fish, Madam. I have thought of a better plan than that; they shall have instruction without going to school for it."

"And how, Sir William?"

"I will instruct them myself, Madam," and Sir William slapped the calf of the leg he was caressing.

My mother smiled.

"Ay, Madam, you may smile; but I and my Lord Dorset were the best scholars of the age; you shall read my play."

"Do, mother," said I, "read the play. Shall I tell her some of the jests in it, uncle?"

My mother shook her head in anticipative horror, and raised her finger reprovingly. My uncle said nothing, but winked at me; I understood the signal, and was about to begin, when the door opened, and the Abbé Montreuil entered. My uncle released his right leg, and my jest was cut off. Nobody ever inspired a more dim, religious awe than the Abbé Montreuil. The priest entered with a smile. My mother hailed the entrance of an ally.

"Father," said she, rising, "I have just represented to my good brother the necessity of sending my sons to school; he has proposed an alternative which I will leave you to discuss with him."

“And what is it?” said Montreuil, sliding into a chair, and patting Gerald's head with a benignant air.

“To educate them himself,” answered my mother, with a sort of satirical gravity. My uncle moved uneasily in his seat, as if, for the first time, he saw something ridiculous in the proposal. The smile, immediately fading from the thin lips of the priest, gave way to an expression of respectful approbation. “An admirable plan,” said he slowly, “but liable to some little exceptions, which Sir William will allow me to point out.”

My mother called to us, and we left the room with her. The next time we saw my uncle, the priest's reasonings had prevailed. The following week we all three went to school. My father had been a Catholic, my mother was of the same creed, and consequently we were brought up in that unpopular faith. But my uncle, whose religion had been sadly undermined at court, was a terrible caviller at the holy mysteries of Catholicism; and while his friends termed him a Protestant, his enemies hinted, falsely enough, that he was a sceptic. When Montreuil first followed us to Devereux Court, many and bitter were the little jests my worthy uncle had provided for his reception; and he would shake his head with a notable archness whenever he heard our reverential description of the expected guest. But, somehow or other, no sooner had he seen the priest, than all his purposed railleries deserted him. Not a single witticism came to his assistance, and the calm, smooth face of the ecclesiastic seemed to operate upon the fierce resolves of the facetious knight in the same manner as the human eye is supposed to awe into impotence the malignant intentions of the ignobler animals. Yet nothing could be blander than the demeanor of the Abbé Montreuil—nothing more worldly, in their urbanity, than his manner and address. His garb was as little clerical as possible, his conversation rather familiar than formal, and he invariably listened to every syllable the good knight uttered, with a countenance and mien of the most attentive respect.

What then was the charm by which this singular man never failed to obtain an ascendancy, in some measure allied with fear, over all in whose company he was thrown? That was a secret my uncle never could solve, and which, only in later life, I myself was able to discover. It was partly by the magic of an extraordinary and powerful mind, partly by an expression of manner, if I may use such a phrase, that seemed to sneer most, when most it affected to respect; and partly by an air like that of a man never exactly at his ease; not that he was shy, or ungraceful, or even taciturn—no! it was an indescribable em-

barrassment, resembling that of one playing a part, familiar to him, indeed, but somewhat distasteful. This embarrassment, however, was sufficient to be contagious, and to confuse that dignity in others which, strangely enough, never forsook himself. He was of low origin, but his address and appearance did not betray his birth. Pride suited his mien better than familiarity—and his countenance, rigid, thoughtful, and cold, even through smiles, in expression was strikingly commanding. In person, he was slightly above the middle standard; and had not the texture of his frame been remarkably hard, wiry, and muscular, the total absence of all superfluous flesh would have given the lean gauntness of his figure an appearance of almost spectral emaciation. In reality, his age did not exceed twenty-eight years; but his high, broad forehead was already so marked with line and furrow, his hair was so staid and quiet, his figure so destitute of the roundness and elasticity of youth, that his appearance always impressed the beholder with the involuntary idea of a man more considerably advanced in life. Abstemious to habitual penance, and regular to mechanical exactness in his frequent and severe devotions, he was as little inwardly addicted to the pleasures and pursuits of youth, as he was externally possessed of its freshness and its bloom.

Nor was gravity with him that unmeaning veil to imbecility, which Rochefoucauld has so happily called "the mystery of the body." The variety and depth of his learning fully sustained the respect which his demeanor insensibly created. To say nothing of his lore in the dead tongues, he possessed a knowledge of the principal European languages besides his own, viz., English, Italian, German, and Spanish, not less accurate and little less fluent than that of a native; and he had not only gained the key to these various coffers of intellectual wealth, but he had also possessed himself of their treasures. He had been educated at St. Omer; and, young as he was, he had already acquired no inconsiderable reputation among his brethren of that illustrious and celebrated Order of Jesus which has produced some of the worst and some of the best men that the Christian world has ever known—which has, in its successful zeal for knowledge, and the circulation of mental light, bequeathed a vast depth of gratitude to posterity; but which, unhappily encouraging certain scholastic doctrines, that by a mind at once subtle and vicious can be easily perverted into the sanction of the most dangerous and systematized immorality, has already drawn upon its professors an almost universal odium.

So highly established was the good name of Montreuil that

when, three years prior to the time of which I now speak, he had been elected to the office he held in our family, it was scarcely deemed a less fortunate occurrence for us to gain so learned and so pious a preceptor, than it was for him to acquire a situation of such trust and confidence in the household of a Marshal of France, and the special favorite of Louis XIV.

It was pleasant enough to mark the gradual ascendancy he gained over my uncle; and the timorous dislike which the good knight entertained for him, yet struggled to conceal. Perhaps that was the only time in his life in which Sir William Devereux was a hypocrite.

Enough of the priest at present—I return to his charge. To school we went; our parting with our uncle was quite pathetic—mine in especial. “Harkye, Sir Count,” whispered he (I bore my father’s title), “harkye, don’t mind what the old priest tells you; your real man of wit never wants the musty lessons of schools in order to make a figure in the world. Don’t cramp your genius, my boy; read over my play, and honest George Etherege’s ‘Man of Mode’; they’ll keep your spirits alive, after dozing over these old pages which Homer (good soul!) dozed over before. God bless you, my child—write to me—no one, not even your mother, shall see your letters—and—and be sure, my fine fellow, that you don’t fag too hard. The glass of life is the best book—and one’s natural wit the only diamond that can write legibly on it.”

Such were my uncle’s parting admonitions; it must be confessed that, coupled with the dramatic gifts alluded to, they were likely to be of infinite service to the *débutant* for academical honors. In fact, Sir William Devereux was deeply impregnated with the notion of his time, that ability and inspiration were the same thing, and that, unless you were thoroughly idle, you could not be thoroughly a genius. I verily believe that he thought wisdom got its gems, as Abu Zeid al Hassan* declares some Chinese philosophers thought oysters got their pearls—viz., by *gaping!*

* In his Commentary on the account of China by two Travellers.

CHAPTER III.

A Change in Conduct and in Character—Our evil Passions will sometimes produce good Effects ; and, on the contrary, an Alteration for the better in Manners will, not unfrequently, have amongst its Causes a little Corruption of Mind ; for the Feelings are so blended, that in suppressing those disagreeable to others, we often suppress those which are amiable in themselves.

My twin brother, Gerald, was a tall, strong, handsome boy, blessed with a great love for the orthodox academical studies, and extraordinary quickness of ability. Nevertheless, he was indolent by nature, in things which were contrary to his taste—fond of pleasure—and, amidst all his personal courage, ran a certain vein of irresolution, which rendered it easy for a cool and determined mind to awe or to persuade him. I cannot help thinking, too, that, clever as he was, there was something commonplace in the cleverness ; and that his talent was of that mechanical, yet quick, nature, which makes wonderful boys, but *médiocre* men. In any other family he would have been considered the beauty—in ours he was thought the genius.

My youngest brother, Aubrey, was of a very different disposition of mind and frame of body ; thoughtful, gentle, susceptible, acute ; with an uncertain bravery, like a woman's, and a taste for reading, that varied with the caprice of every hour. He was the beauty of the three, and my mother's favorite. Never, indeed, have I seen the countenance of man so perfect, so glowingly, yet delicately handsome, as that of Aubrey Devereux. Locks soft, glossy, and twining into ringlets, fell in dark profusion over a brow whiter than marble ; his eyes were black and tender as a Georgian girl's ; his lips, his teeth, the contour of his face, were all cast in the same feminine and faultless mould ; his hands would have shamed those of Madame de la Tisseur, whose lover offered six thousand marks to any European who could wear her glove ; and his figure would have made Titania give up her Henchman, and the King of the Fairies be anything but pleased with the exchange.

Such were my two brothers ; or, rather (so far as the internal qualities are concerned), such they seemed to me ; for it is a singular fact that we never judge of our near kindred so well as we judge of others ; and I appeal to any one, whether, of all people by whom he has been mistaken, he has not been most often mistaken by those with whom he was brought up !

I had always loved Aubrey, but they had not suffered him to love *me* ; and we had been so little together that we had in common

none of those childish remembrances which serve, more powerfully than all else in later life, to cement and soften affection. In fact, I was the scapegoat of the family. What I must have been in early childhood, I cannot tell—but, before I was ten years old, I was the object of all the despondency and evil forebodings of my relations. My father said I laughed at *la gloire et le grand monarque*, the very first time he attempted to explain to me the value of the one and the greatness of the other. The countess said I had neither my father's eye, nor her own smile—that I was slow at my letters, and quick with my tongue; and, throughout the whole house, nothing was so favorite a topic as the extent of my rudeness, and the venom of my repartee. Montreuil, on his entrance into our family, not only fell in with, but favored and fostered, the reigning humor against me; whether from that *divide et impera* system, which was so grateful to his temper, or from the mere love of meddling and intrigue, which in him, as in Alberoni, attached itself equally to petty as to large circles, was not then clearly apparent; it was only certain that he fomented the dissensions and widened the breach between my brothers and myself.—Alas! after all, I believe my sole crime was my candor. I had a spirit of frankness, which no fear could tame, and my vengeance for any infantine punishment was in speaking veraciously of my punishers. Never tell me of the pang of falsehood to the slandered: nothing is so agonizing to the fine skin of vanity as the application of a rough truth!

As I grew older, I saw my power, and indulged it; and, being scolded for sarcasm, I was flattered into believing I had wit; so I punned and jested, lampooned and satirised, till I was as much a torment to others as I was tormented myself. The secret of all this was that I was unhappy. Nobody loved me—I felt it to my heart of hearts. I was conscious of injustice, and the sense of it made me bitter. Our feelings, especially in youth, resemble that leaf which, in some old traveller, is described as expanding itself to warmth, but when chilled, not only shrinking and closing, but presenting to the spectator thorns, which had lain concealed upon the opposite side of it before.

With my brother Gerald, I had a deadly and irreconcilable feud. He was much stouter, taller, and stronger than myself; and, far from conceding to me that respect which I imagined my priority of birth entitled me to claim, he took every opportunity to deride my pretensions, and to vindicate the cause of the superior strength and vigor which constituted his own. It

would have done your heart good to have seen us cuff one another, we did it with such zeal. There is nothing in human passion like a good brotherly hatred! my mother said, with the most feeling earnestness, that she used to feel us fighting even before our birth: we certainly lost no time directly after it. Both my parents were secretly vexed that I had come into the world an hour sooner than my brother; and Gerald himself looked upon it as a sort of juggle—a kind of jockeyship by which he had lost the prerogative of birthright. This very early rankled in his heart, and he was so much a greater favorite than myself that, instead of rooting out so unfortunate a feeling on his part, my good parents made no scruple of openly lamenting my seniority. I believe the real cause of our being taken from the domestic instructions of the Abbé (who was an admirable teacher) and sent to school, was solely to prevent my uncle deciding everything in my favor. Montreuil, however, accompanied us to our academy, and remained with us during the three years in which we were perfecting ourselves in the blessings of education.

At the end of the second year, a prize was instituted for the best proficient at a very severe examination; two months before it took place we went home for a few days. After dinner my uncle asked me to walk with him in the park. I did so: we strolled along the margin of a rivulet, which ornamented the grounds. There my uncle, for the first time, broke silence.

“Morton,” said he, looking down at his left leg, “Morton—let me see—thou art now of a reasonable age—fourteen at the least.”

“Fifteen, if it please you, sir,” said I, elevating my stature as much as I was able.

“Humph! my boy; and a pretty time of life it is, too. Your brother Gerald is taller than you by two inches.”

“But I can beat him, for all that, uncle,” said I, coloring, and clenching my fist.

My uncle pulled down his right ruffle. “’Gad so, Morton, you’re a brave fellow,” said he; “but I wish you were less of a hero and more of a scholar. I wish you could beat him in Greek, as well as in boxing. I will tell you what Old Rowley said,” and my uncle occupied the next quarter of an hour with a story. The story opened the good old gentleman’s heart—my laughter opened it still more. “Hark ye, sirrah!” said he, pausing abruptly, and grasping my hand with a vigorous effort of love and muscle, “hark ye, sirrah—I love you—Sdeath, I do. I love you better than both your brothers, and that crab

of a priest into the bargain ; but I am grieved to the heart to hear what I do of you. They tell me you are the idlest boy in the school—that you are always beating your brother Gerald, and making a scurrilous jest of your mother or myself.”

“Who says so ? who dares say so ?” said I, with an emphasis that would have startled a less hearty man than Sir William Devereux. “They lie, uncle, by my soul they do. Idle I am—quarrelsome with my brother I confess myself ; but jesting at you or my mother—never—never. No, no ; *you*, too, who have been so kind to me—the only one who ever was ! No, no ; do not think I could be such a wretch,” and as I said this the tears gushed from my eyes.

My good uncle was exceedingly affected. “Look ye, child,” said he, “I do not believe them. ’Sdeath, not a word—I would repeat to you a good jest now of Sedley’s ; ’Gad, I would, but I am really too much moved just at present. I tell you what, my boy, I tell you what you shall do : there is a trial coming on at school—eh ?—well, the Abbé tells me, Gerald is certain of being first, and you of being last. Now, Morton, you shall beat your brother, and shame the Jesuit. There—my mind’s spoken—dry your tears, my boy, and I’ll tell you the jest Sedley made : it was in the Mulberry Garden one day—” And the knight told his story.

I dried my tears—pressed my uncle’s hand—escaped from him as soon as I was able—hastened to my room, and surrendered myself to reflection.

When my uncle so good-naturedly proposed that I should conquer Gerald at the examination, nothing appeared to him more easy ; he was pleased to think I had more talent than my brother, and talent, according to his creed, was the only master-key to unlock every science. A problem in Euclid, or a phrase in Pindar, a secret in astronomy, or a knotty passage in the fathers, were all riddles, with the solution of which application had nothing to do. One’s mother-wit was a precious sort of necromancy, which could pierce every mystery at first sight ; and all the gifts of knowledge, in his opinion, like reading and writing in that of the sage Dogberry, “came by nature.” Alas ! I was not under the same pleasurable delusion ; I rather exaggerated than diminished the difficulty of my task, and thought, at the first glance, that nothing short of a miracle would enable me to excel my brother. Gerald, a boy of natural talent, and as I said before, of great assiduity in the orthodox studies—especially favored too by the instruction of Mon-

treuil—had long been esteemed the first scholar of our little world ; and though I knew that with some branches of learning I was more conversant than himself, yet, as my emulation had been hitherto solely directed to bodily contention, I had never thought of contesting with him a reputation for which I cared little, and on a point in which I had been early taught that I could never hope to enter into any advantageous comparison with the “genius” of the Devereuxs.

A new spirit now passed into me—I examined myself with a jealous and impartial scrutiny—I weighed my acquisitions against those of my brother—I called forth, from their secret recesses, the unexercised and almost unknown stores I had from time to time laid up in my mental armory to moulder and to rust. I surveyed them with a feeling that they might yet be polished into use : and, excited alike by the stimulus of affection on one side, and hatred on the other, my mind worked itself from despondency into doubt, and from doubt into the sanguineness of hope. I told none of my design,—I exacted from my uncle a promise not to betray it—I shut myself in my room—I gave out that I was ill—I saw no one, not even the Abbé—I rejected his instructions, for I looked upon him as an enemy ; and, for the two months before my trial, I spent night and day in an unrelaxing application, of which, till then, I had not imagined myself capable.

Though inattentive to the school exercises, I had never been wholly idle. I was a lover of abstruser researches than the hackneyed subjects of the school, and we had really received such extensive and judicious instructions from the Abbé during our early years that it would have been scarcely possible for any of us to have fallen into a thorough distaste for intellectual pursuits. In the examination, I foresaw that much which I had previously acquired might be profitably displayed—much secret and recondite knowledge of the customs and manners of the ancients, as well as their literature, which curiosity had led me to obtain, and which I knew had never entered into the heads of those who, contented with their reputation in the customary academical routine, had rarely dreamed of wandering into less beaten paths of learning. Fortunately too for me, Gerald was so certain of success that latterly he omitted all precaution to obtain it ; and as none of our schoolfellows had the vanity to think of contesting with him, even the Abbé seemed to imagine him justified in his supineness.

The day arrived. Sir William, my mother, the whole aristocracy of the neighborhood, were present at the trial. The

Abbé came to my room a few hours before it commenced ; he found the door locked.

“Ungracious boy,” said he, “admit me—I come at the earnest request of your brother, Aubrey, to give you some hints preparatory to the examination.”

“He has indeed come at my wish,” said the soft and silver voice of Aubrey, in a supplicating tone : “do admit him, dear Morton, for my sake !”

“Go,” said I, bitterly, from within, “go—ye are both my foes and slanderers—you come to insult my disgrace beforehand ; but perhaps you will be disappointed.”

“You will not open the door ?” said the priest.

“I will not—begone.”

“He will indeed disgrace his family,” said Montreuil, moving away.

“He will disgrace himself,” said Aubrey, dejectedly.

I laughed scornfully. If ever the consciousness of strength is pleasant, it is when we are thought most weak.

The greater part of our examination consisted in the answering of certain questions in writing, given to us in the three days immediately previous to the grand and final one ; for this last day was reserved the paper of composition (as it was termed) in verse and prose, and the personal examination in a few showy, but generally understood, subjects. When Gerald gave in his paper, and answered the verbal questions, a buzz of admiration and anxiety went round the room. His person was so handsome, his address so graceful, his voice so assured and clear, that a strong and universal sympathy was excited in his favor. The head-master publicly complimented him. He regretted only the deficiency of his pupil in certain minor but important matters.

I came next, for I stood next to Gerald in our class. As I walked up the hall, I raised my eyes to the gallery in which my uncle and his party sat. I saw that my mother was listening to the Abbé, whose eye, severe, cold, and contemptuous, was bent upon me. But my uncle leant over the railing of the gallery, with his plumed hat in his hand, which, when he caught my look, he waved gently—as if in token of encouragement, and with an air so kind and cheering, that I felt my step grow prouder as I approached the conclave of the masters.

“Morton Devereux,” said the president of the school in a calm, loud, austere voice, that filled the whole hall, “we have looked over your papers on the three previous days, and they have given

us no less surprise than pleasure. Take heed and time how you answer us now."

At this speech a loud murmur was heard in my uncle's party, which gradually spread round the hall. I again looked up—my mother's face was averted: that of the Abbé was impenetrable, but I saw my uncle wiping his eyes, and felt a strange emotion creeping into my own. I turned hastily away, and presented my paper—the head-master received it, and, putting it aside, proceeded to the verbal examination.

Conscious of the parts in which Gerald was likely to fail, I had paid especial attention to the minutiae of scholarship, and my forethought stood me in good stead at the present moment. My trial ceased—my last paper was read. I bowed, and retired to the other end of the hall. I was not so popular as Gerald—a crowd was assembled round him, but I stood alone. As I leant against a column, with folded arms, and a countenance which I felt betrayed little of my internal emotions, my eye caught Gerald's. He was very pale, and I could see that his hand trembled. Despite of our enmity, I felt for him. The worst passions are softened by triumph, and I foresaw that mine was at hand.

The whole examination was over. Every boy had passed it. The masters retired for a moment—they reappeared and re-seated themselves. The first sound I heard was that of my own name. I was the victor of the day—I was more—I was one hundred marks before my brother. My head swam round—my breath forsook me. Since then I have been placed in many trials of life, and had many triumphs; but never was I so overcome as at that moment. I left the hall—I scarcely listened to the applauses with which it rang. I hurried to my own chamber, and threw myself on the bed in a delirium of intoxicated feeling, which had in it more of rapture than anything but the gratification of first love or first vanity can bestow.

Ah! it would be worth stimulating our passions if it were only for the pleasure of remembering their effect; and all violent excitement should be indulged less for the present joy than for future retrospection.

My uncle's step was the first thing which intruded on my solitude.

"Od's fish, my boy!" said he, crying like a child, "this is fine work—'Gad, so it is. I almost wish I were a boy myself to have a match with you—faith I do—see what it is to learn a little of life. If you had never read my play, do you think you would have done half so well?—no, my boy, I sharpened your wits for

you. Honest George Etherege and I—we were the making of you; and when you come to be a great man, and are asked what made you so, you shall say—‘My uncle’s play’—‘Gad, you shall. Faith, boy—never smile!—Od’s fish—I’ll tell you a story as *à propos* to the present occasion as if it had been made on purpose. Rochester, and I, and Sedley, were walking one day,—and *entre nous*—awaiting certain appointments—hem!—for my part I was a little melancholy or so, thinking of my catastrophe—that is, of my play’s catastrophe; and so, said Sedley, winking at Rochester, ‘Our friend is sorrowful.’ ‘Truly,’ said I, seeing they were about to banter me—for you know they were arch fellows—‘truly, little Sid’ (we called Sedley Sid), ‘you are greatly mistaken,’—you see, Morton, I was thus sharp upon him, because, when you go to Court, you will discover that it does not do to take without giving. And then Rochester said, looking roguishly towards me, the wittiest thing against Sedley that I ever heard—it was the most celebrated *bon mot* at Court for three weeks—he said—No, boy, ‘od’s fish, it was so stinging I can’t tell it thee; faith, I can’t. Poor Sid; he was a good fellow, though malicious—and he’s dead now.—I’m sorry I said a word about it. Nay, never look so disappointed, boy. You have all the cream of the story as it is. And now put on your hat, and come with me. I’ve got leave for you to take a walk with your old uncle.”

That night, as I was undressing, I heard a gentle rap at the door, and Aubrey entered. He approached me timidly, and then, throwing his arms round my neck, kissed me in silence. I had not for years experienced such tenderness from him; and I sat now mute and surprised. At last I said, with the sneer which I must confess I usually assumed towards those persons whom I imagined I had a right to think ill of:

“Pardon me, my gentle brother, there is something portentous in this sudden change. Look well round the room, and tell me at your earliest leisure what treasure it is that you are desirous should pass from my possession into your own.”

“Your love, Morton,” said Aubrey, drawing back, but apparently in pride, not anger; “your love—I ask nothing more.”

“Of a surety, kind Aubrey,” said I, “the favor seems somewhat slight to have caused your modesty such delay in requesting it. I think you have been some years nerving your mind to the exertion.”

“Listen to me, Morton,” said Aubrey, suppressing his emotion; “you have always been my favorite brother. From our first childhood my heart yearned to you. Do you remember the

time when an enraged bull pursued me, and you, then only ten years old, placed yourself before it and defended me at the risk of your own life? Do you think I could ever forget that—child as I was?—never, Morton, never!”

Before I could answer, the door was thrown open, and the Abbé entered. “Children,” said he, and the single light of the room shone full upon his unmoved, rigid, commanding features—“children, be as Heaven intended you—friends and brothers. Morton, I have wronged you, I own it—here is my hand; Aubrey, let all but early love, and the present promise of excellence which your brother displays, be forgotten.”

With these words, the priest joined our hands. I looked on my brother, and my heart melted. I flung myself into his arms and wept.

That day was a new era in my boyish life. I grew henceforth both better and worse. Application and I, having once shaken hands, became very good acquaintance. I had hitherto valued myself upon supplying the frailties of a delicate frame by an uncommon agility in all bodily exercises. I now strove rather to improve the deficiencies of my mind, and became orderly, industrious, and devoted to study. So far so well—but as I grew wiser, I grew also more wary. Candor no longer seemed to me the finest of virtues. I thought before I spoke; and second thought sometimes quite changed the nature of the intended speech; in short, gentlemen of the next century, to tell you the exact truth, the little Count Devereux became somewhat of a hypocrite!

CHAPTER IV.

A Contest of Art, and a League of Friendship—Two Characters in mutual Ignorance of each other, and the reader no wiser than either of them.

THE Abbé was now particularly courteous to me. He made Gerald and myself breakfast with him, and told us nothing was so amiable as friendship among brothers. We agreed to the sentiment, and, like all philosophers, did not agree a bit the better for acknowledging the same first principles. Perhaps, notwithstanding his fine speeches, the Abbé was the real cause of our continued want of cordiality. However, we did not fight any more—we avoided each other, and at last became as civil and as distant as those mathematical lines, which appear to be taking all possible pains to approach one another,

and never get a jot the nearer for it. Oh, your civility is the prettiest invention possible for dislike! Aubrey and I were inseparable, and we both gained by the intercourse. I grew more gentle, and he more masculine; and, for my part, the kindness of his temper so softened the satire of mine that I learned at last to smile full as often as to sneer.

The Abbé had obtained a wonderful hold over Aubrey; he had made the poor boy think so much of the next world, that he had lost all relish for this. He lived in a perpetual fear of offence—he was like a chemist of conscience, and weighed minutiae by scruples. To play, to ride, to run, to laugh at a jest, or to banquet on a melon, were all sins to be atoned for; and I have found (as a penance for eating twenty-three cherries instead of eighteen), the penitent of fourteen standing, bare-footed, in the coldest nights of winter, upon the hearth-stones, almost naked, and shivering like a leaf, beneath the mingled effect of frost and devotion. At first I attempted to wrestle with this exceeding holiness, but finding my admonitions received with great distaste and some horror, I suffered my brother to be happy in his own way. I only looked with a very evil and jealous eye upon the good Abbé, and examined, while I encouraged them, the motives of his advances to myself. What doubled my suspicions of the purity of the priest was my perceiving that he appeared to hold out different inducements for trusting him, to each of us, according to his notions of our respective characters. My brother Gerald he alternately awed and persuaded, by the sole effect of superior intellect. With Aubrey he used the mechanism of superstition. To me, he, on the one hand, never spoke of religion, nor, on the other, ever used threats or persuasion, to induce me to follow any plan suggested to my adoption; everything seemed to be left to my reason and my ambition. He would converse with me for hours upon the world and its affairs, speak of courts and kings, in an easy and unpedantic strain; point out the advantage of intellect in acquiring power and controlling one's species; and, whenever I was disposed to be sarcastic upon the human nature I had read of, he supported my sarcasm by illustrations of the human nature he had seen. We were both, I think (for myself I can answer), endeavoring to pierce the real nature of the other; and perhaps the talent of diplomacy for which, years afterwards, I obtained some applause, was first learned in my skirmishing warfare with the Abbé Montreuil.

At last, the evening before we quitted school for good arrived.

Aubrey had just left me for solitary prayers, and I was sitting alone by my fire, when Montreuil entered gently. He sat himself down by me, and, after giving me the salutation of the evening, sunk into a silence which I was the first to break.

"Pray, Abbé," said I, "have one's years anything to do with one's age?"

The priest was accustomed to the peculiar tone of my sagacious remarks, and answered drily:

"Mankind in general imagine that they have."

"Faith then," said I, "mankind know very little about the matter. To-day I am at school and a boy, to-morrow I leave school—if I hasten to town I am presented at court—and lo! I am a man; and this change within half a dozen changes of the sun!—therefore, most reverend father, I humbly opine that age is measured by events—not years."

"And are you not happy at the idea of passing the age of thralldom, and seeing arrayed before you the numberless and dazzling pomps and pleasures of the great world?" said Montreuil abruptly, fixing his dark and keen eye upon me.

"I have not yet fully made up my mind whether to be happy or not," said I carelessly.

"It is a strange answer," said the priest; "but" (after a pause) "you are a strange youth—a character that resembles a riddle is at your age uncommon, and, pardon me, unamiable. Age, naturally repulsive, requires a mask; and in every wrinkle you may behold the ambush of a scheme; but the heart of youth should be open as its countenance! However, I will not weary you with homilies—let us change the topic. Tell me, Morton, do you repent having turned your attention of late to those graver and more systematic studies which can alone hereafter obtain you distinction?"

"No, father," said I, with a courtly bow, "for the change has gained me your good opinion."

A smile of peculiar and undefinable expression crossed the thin lips of the priest; he rose, walked to the door, and saw that it was carefully closed. I expected some important communication, but in vain; pacing the small room to and fro, as if in a musing mood, the Abbé remained silent, till, pausing opposite some fencing foils, which, among various matters (books, papers, quoits, etc.), were thrown idly in one corner of the room, he said:

"They tell me that you are the best fencer in the school—is it so?"

"I hope not, for fencing is an accomplishment in which Gerald is very nearly my equal," I replied.

"You run, ride, leap, too, better than any one else, according to the votes of your comrades?"

"It is a noble reputation," said I, "in which I believe I am only excelled by our huntsman's eldest son."

"You are a strange youth," repeated the priest; "no pursuit seems to give you pleasure, and no success to gratify your vanity. Can you not think of *any* triumph which would elate you?"

I was silent.

"Yes," cried Montreuil, approaching me—"yes," cried he, "I read your heart, and I respect it; these are petty competitions and worthless honors. You require a nobler goal, and a more glorious reward. He who feels in his soul that Fate has reserved for him a great and exalted part in this world's drama, may reasonably look with indifference on these paltry rehearsals of common characters."

I raised my eye, and as it met that of the priest, I was irresistibly struck with the proud and luminous expression which Montreuil's look had assumed. Perhaps something kindred to its nature was perceptible in my own; for, after surveying me with an air of more approbation than he had ever honored me with before, he grasped my arm firmly, and said: "Morton, you know me not—for many years I have not known you—that time is past. No sooner did your talents develop themselves than I was the first to do homage to their power—let us henceforth be more to each other than we have been—let us not be pupil and teacher—let us be friends. Do not think that I invite you to an unequal exchange of good offices—you may be the heir to wealth, and a distinguished name—I may seem to you but an unknown and undignified priest—but the authority of the Almighty can raise up, from the sheep-fold and the cottar's shed, a power which, as the organ of His own, can trample upon sceptres, and dictate to the supremacy of kings. And I—I,—" the priest abruptly paused, checked the warmth of his manner, as if he thought it about to encroach on indiscretion, and, sinking into a calmer tone, continued: "Yes, I, Morton, insignificant as I appear to you, can, in *every* path through this intricate labyrinth of life, be more useful to your desires than you can ever be to mine. I offer to you in my friendship, a fervor of zeal and energy of power, which in none of your equals, in age and station, you can hope to find. Do you accept my offer?"

"Can you doubt," said I, with eagerness, "that I would avail myself of the services of any man, however displeasing to me,

and worthless in himself? How, then, can I avoid embracing the friendship of one so extraordinary in knowledge and intellect as yourself? I do embrace it, and with rapture."

The priest pressed my hand. "But," continued he, fixing his eyes upon mine, "all alliances have their conditions—I require implicit confidence; and, for some years, till time gives you experience, regard for your interests induces me also to require obedience. Name any wish you may form for worldly advancement, opulence, honor, the smile of kings, the gifts of states, and—I—I will pledge myself to carry that wish into effect. Never had Eastern prince so faithful a servant among the Dives and Genii as Morton Devereux shall find in me; but question me not of the sources of my power—be satisfied when their channel wafts you the success you covet. And, more, when I in my turn (and this shall be but rarely) request a favor of you, ask me not for what end, nor hesitate to adopt the means I shall propose. You seem startled; are you content at this understanding between us, or will you retract the bond?"

"My father," said I, "there is enough to startle me in your proposal; it greatly resembles that made by the Old Man of the Mountains to his vassals, and it would not exactly suit my inclinations to be called upon some morning to act the part of a private executioner."

The priest smiled. "My young friend," said he, "those days have passed: neither religion nor friendship requires of her votaries sacrifices of blood. But make yourself easy; whenever I ask of you what offends your conscience, even in a punctilio, refuse my request. With this exception what say you?"

"That I think I will agree to the bond; but, father, I am an irresolute person—I must have time to consider."

"Be it so. To-morrow, having surrendered my charge to your uncle, I depart for France."

"For France!" said I; "and how?—Surely the war will prevent your passage."

The priest smiled. Nothing ever displeased me more than that priest's smile. "The ecclesiastics," said he, "are the ambassadors of Heaven, and have nothing to do with the wars of earth. I shall find no difficulty in crossing the Channel. I shall not return for several months, perhaps not till the expiration of a year: I leave you, till then, to decide upon the terms I have proposed to you. Meanwhile, gratify my vanity, by employing my power; name some commission in France which you wish me to execute."

"I can think of none—yet, stay,—" and I felt some curiosity

to try the power of which he boasted—"I have read that kings are blest with a most accommodating memory, and perfectly forget their favorites, when they can be no longer useful. You will see, perhaps, if my father's name has become a gothic and unknown sound at the court of the Great King. I confess myself curious to learn this, though I can have no personal interest in it."

"Enough, the commission shall be done. And now, my child, Heaven bless you! and send you many such friends as the humble priest, who, whatever be his failings, has at least the merit of wishing to serve those whom he loves."

So saying, the priest closed the door. Sinking into a revery, as his footsteps died upon my ear, I muttered to myself: "Well, well, my sage ecclesiastic, the game is not over yet; let us see if, at sixteen, we cannot shuffle cards, and play tricks with the gamester of thirty. Yet, he may be in earnest, and faith I believe he is; but I must look well before I leap, or consign my actions into such spiritual keeping. However, if the worst come to the worst, if I do make this compact, and am deceived—if, above all, I am ever seduced, or led blindfold into one of those snares which priestcraft sometimes lays to the cost of honor—why I shall have a sword, which I shall never be at a loss to use, and it can find its way through a priest's gown as well as a soldier's corslet."

Confess, that a youth, who could think so promptly of his sword, was well-fitted to wear one!

CHAPTER V.

Rural Hospitality—an extraordinary Guest. A fine Gentleman is not necessarily a Fool.

WE were all three (my brothers and myself) precocious geniuses. Our early instructions, under a man like the Abbé, at once learned and worldly, and the Society into which we had been initiated from our childhood, made us premature adepts in the manners of the world; and I, in especial, flattered myself that a quick habit of observation rendered me no despicable profiter by my experience. Our academy, too, had been more like a college than a school; and we had enjoyed a license that seemed, to the superficial, more likely to benefit our manners than to strengthen our morals. I do not think, however, that

the latter suffered by our freedom from restraint. On the contrary, we the earlier learnt that vice, but for the piquancy of its unlawfulness, would never be so captivating a goddess; and our errors and crimes, in after-life, had certainly not their origin in our wanderings out of academical bounds.

It is right that I should mention our prematurity of intellect, because, otherwise, much of my language and reflections, as detailed in the first book of this history, might seem ill suited to the tender age at which they occurred. However, they approach, as near as possible, to my state of mind at that period; and I have, indeed, often mortified my vanity, in later life, by thinking how little the march of time has ripened my abilities, and how petty would have been the intellectual acquisitions of manhood—if they had not brought me something like content!

My uncle had always, during his retirement, seen as many people as he could, assemble out of the “mob of Gentlemen who *live at ease*.” But, on our quitting school, and becoming men, he resolved to set no bounds to his hospitality. His doors were literally thrown open; and as he was by far the greatest person in the district—to say nothing of his wines, and his French cook—many of the good people of London did not think it too great an honor to confer upon the wealthy representative of the Devereuxs the distinction of their company and compliments. Heavens! what notable samples of court breeding and furbelows did the crane-neck coaches, which made our own family vehicle look like a gilt tortoise, pour forth by couples and leashes into the great hall—while my gallant uncle, in a new perriwig, and a pair of silver-clocked stockings (a present from a *ci-devant* fine lady), stood at the far end of the picture gallery, to receive his visitors, with all the graces of the last age.

My mother, who had preserved her beauty wonderfully, sat in a chair of green velvet, and astonished the courtiers by the fashion of a dress just imported. The worthy Countess (she had dropped in England the loftier distinction of *Madame la Maréchale*) was, however, quite innocent of any intentional affectation of the mode: for the new stomacher, so admired in London, had been the last alteration in female garniture at Paris, a month before my father died. Is not this “Fashion” a noble divinity to possess such zealous adherents!—a pitiful, lackey-like creature, which struts through one country with the cast-off finery of another!

As for Aubrey and Gerald, they produced quite an effect—and I should most certainly have been thrown irrevocably into

the background, had I not been born to the good fortune of an eldest son. This was far more than sufficient to atone for the comparative plainness of my person; and when it was discovered that I was also Sir William's favorite, it is quite astonishing what a beauty I became! Aubrey was declared too effeminate; Gerald too tall. And the Duchess of Lackland one day, when she had placed a lean, sallow ghost of a daughter on either side of me, whispered my uncle in a voice, like the *aside* of a player, intended for none but the whole audience, that the young Count had the most imposing air and the finest eyes she had ever seen. All this inspired me with courage, as well as contempt; and not liking to be beholden solely to my priority of birth for my priority of distinction, I resolved to become as agreeable as possible. If I had not in the vanity of my heart resolved also to be "myself alone," Fate would have furnished me at the happiest age for successful imitation with an admirable model.

Time rolled on—two years were flown since I had left school, and Montreuil was not yet returned. I had passed the age of eighteen, when the whole house, which, as it was summer, when none but cats and physicians were supposed gifted by Providence with the power to exist in town, was uncommonly full—the whole house, I say, was thrown into a positive fever of expectation. The visit of a guest, if not of greater consequence, at least of greater interest, than any who had hitherto honored my uncle, was announced. Even the young Count, with the most imposing air in the world, and the finest eyes, was forgotten by everybody but the Duchess of Lackland and her daughters, who had just returned to Devereux Court, to observe how amazingly the Count had grown! Oh, what a prodigy wisdom would be, if it were but blessed with a memory as keen and constant as that of interest!

Struck with the universal excitement, I went to my uncle to inquire the name of the expected guest. My uncle was occupied in fanning the Lady Hasselton, a daughter of one of King Charles's Beauties. He had only time to answer me literally, and without comment; the guest's name was Mr. St. John.

I had never conned the "Flying Post," and I knew nothing about politics. "Who is Mr. St. John?" said I; my uncle had renewed the office of a zephyr. The daughter of the Beauty heard and answered, "The most charming person in England." I bowed and turned away. "How vastly explanatory!" said I. I met a furious politician. "Who is Mr. St. John?" I asked.

"The cleverest man in England," answered the politician, hurrying off with a pamphlet in his hand.

"Nothing can be more satisfactory," thought I. Stopping a coxcomb of the first water, "Who is Mr. St. John?" I asked.

"The finest gentleman in England," answered the coxcomb, settling his cravat.

"Perfectly intelligible!" was my reflection on this reply; and I forthwith arrested a Whig parson—"Who is Mr. St. John?" said I.

"The greatest reprobate in England!" answered the Whig parson, and I was too stunned to inquire more.

Five minutes afterwards the sound of carriage wheels was heard in the courtyard, then a slight bustle in the hall; and the door of the anteroom being thrown open, Mr. St. John entered.

He was in the very prime of life, about the middle height, and of a mien and air so strikingly noble that it was some time before you recovered the general effect of his person sufficiently to examine its peculiar claims to admiration. However, he lost nothing by a farther survey: he possessed not only an eminently handsome, but a very extraordinary countenance. Through an air of nonchalance, and even something of lassitude, through an ease of manners sometimes sinking into effeminate softness, sometimes bordering upon licentious effrontery, his eye thoughtful, yet wandering, seemed to announce that the mind partook but little of the whim of the moment, or of those levities of ordinary life over which the grace of his manner threw so peculiar a charm. His brow was, perhaps, rather too large and prominent for the exactness of perfect symmetry; but it had an expression of great mental power and determination. His features were high, yet delicate, and his mouth, which, when closed, assumed a firm and rather severe expression, softened, when speaking, into a smile of almost magical enchantment. Richly but not extravagantly dressed, he appeared to cultivate, rather than disdain, the ornaments of outward appearance; and whatever can fascinate or attract was so inherent in this singular man that all which in others would have been most artificial was in him most natural: so that it is no exaggeration to add that to be well dressed seemed to the elegance of his person not so much the result of art as of a property innate and peculiar to himself.

Such was the outward appearance of Henry St. John; one well suited to the qualities of a mind at once more vigorous and more accomplished than that of any other other person with

whom the vicissitudes of my life have ever brought me into contact.

I kept my eye on the new guest throughout the whole day ; I observed the mingled liveliness and softness which pervaded his attentions to women, the intellectual yet unpedantic superiority he possessed in his conversations with men ; his respectful demeanor to age ; his careless, yet not over-familiar, ease with the young ; and, what interested me more than all, the occasional cloud which passed over his countenance at moments when he seemed sunk into a reverie that had for its objects nothing in common with those around him.

Just before dinner, St. John was talking to a little group, among whom curiosity seemed to have drawn the Whig parson whom I have before mentioned. He stood at a little distance, shy and uneasy ; one of the company took advantage of so favorable a butt for jests, and alluded to the bystander in a witticism which drew laughter from all but St. John, who, turning suddenly towards the parson, addressed an observation to him in the most respectful tone. Nor did he cease talking with him (fatiguing as the conference must have been, for never was there a duller ecclesiastic than the gentleman conversed with) until we descended to dinner. Then, for the first time, I learned that nothing can constitute good breeding that has not good nature for its foundation ; and then, too, as I was leading Lady Barbara Lackland to the great hall, by the tip of her forefinger, I made another observation. Passing the priest, I heard him say to a fellow-clerk :

“Certainly, he is the greatest man in England” ; and I mentally remarked, “There is no policy like politeness : and a good manner is the best thing in the world, either to get one a good name or to supply the want of it.”

CHAPTER VI.

A Dialogue, which might be dull if it were longer.

THREE days after the arrival of St. John, I escaped from the crowd of impertinents, seized a volume of Cowley, and, in a fit of mingled poetry and melancholy, strolled idly into the park. I came to the margin of the stream, and to the very spot on which I had stood with my uncle on the evening when he had first excited my emulation to scholastic rather than manual contention with my brother.—I seated myself by the water-side, and,

feeling indisposed to read, leant my cheek upon my hand, and surrendered my thoughts as prisoners to the reflections which I could not resist.

I continued, I know not how long, in my meditation, till I was roused by a gentle touch upon my shoulder ; I looked up, and saw St. John.

“Pardon me, Count,” said he, smiling, “I should not have disturbed your reflections had not your neglect of an old friend emboldened me to address you upon his behalf.”—And St. John pointed to the volume of Cowley which he had taken up without my perceiving it.

“Well,” added he, seating himself on the turf beside me, “in my younger days, poetry and I were better friends than we are now. And if I had had Cowley as a companion, I should not have parted with him as you have done, even for my own reflections.”

“You admire him, then?” said I.

“Why, that is too general a question. I admire what is fine in him, as in every one else, but I do not love him the better for his points and his conceits. He reminds me of what Cardinal Pallavicine said of Seneca, that he ‘perfumes his conceits with civet and ambergris.’ However, Count, I have opened upon a beautiful motto for you :

Here let me, careless and unthoughtful lying,
Hear the soft winds above me flying,
With all their wanton boughs dispute,
And the more tuneful birds to both replying ;
Nor be myself too mute.

What say you to that wish? If you have a germ of poetry in you, such verse ought to bring it into flower.”

“Ay,” answered I, though not exactly in accordance with the truth ; “but I have not the germ. I destroyed it four years ago. Reading the dedications of poets cured me of the love for poetry. What a pity that the Divine Inspiration should have for its oracles such mean souls !”

“Yes, and how industrious the good gentlemen are in debasing themselves. Their ingenuity is never half so much shown in a simile as in a compliment ; I know nothing in nature more melancholy than the discovery of any meanness in a great man. There is so little to redeem the dry mass of follies and errors from which the materials of this life are composed, that anything to love or to reverence becomes, as it were, the Sabbath for the mind. It is bitter to feel, as we grow older, how the respite is abridged, and how the few objects left to our admiration are

abased. What a foe not only to life, but to all that dignifies and ennobles it, is Time. Our affections and our pleasures resemble those fabulous trees described by St. Oderic—the fruits which they bring forth are no sooner ripened into maturity than they are transformed into birds, and fly away. But these reflections cannot yet be familiar to you. Let us return to Cowley. Do you feel any sympathy with his prose writings? For some minds they have a great attraction.”

“They have for mine,” answered I; “but then I am naturally a dreamer; and a contemplative egotist is always to me a mirror in which I behold myself.”

“The world,” answered St. John, with a melancholy smile, “will soon dissolve, or for ever confirm, your humor for dreaming; in either case, Cowley will not be less a favorite. But you must, like me, have long toiled in the heat and travail of business, or of pleasure, which is more wearisome still, in order fully to sympathize with those beautiful panegyrics upon solitude which make, perhaps, the finest passages in Cowley. I have often thought that he whom God hath gifted with a love of retirement possesses, as it were, an extra sense. And among what our poet so eloquently calls ‘the vast and noble scenes of nature,’ we find the balm for the wounds we have sustained among the ‘pitiful shifts of policy’; for the attachment to solitude is the surest preservative from the ills of life: and I know not if the Romans ever instilled, under allegory, a sublimer truth than when they inculcated the belief that those inspired by Feronia, the goddess of woods and forests, could walk barefoot and uninjured over burning coals.”

At this part of our conference, the bell swinging hoarsely through the long avenues, and over the silent water, summoned us to the grand occupation of civilized life; we rose and walked slowly towards the house.

“Does not,” said I, “the regular routine of petty occurrences—this periodical solemnity of trifles—weary and disgust you? For my part, I almost long for the old days of knight-errantry, and would rather be knocked on the head by a giant, or carried through the air by a flying griffin, than live in this circle of dull regularities—the brute at the mill.”

“You may live even in these days,” answered St. John, “without too tame a regularity. Women and politics furnish ample food for adventure, and you must not judge of all life by country life.”

“Nor of all conversation,” said I, with a look which implied a compliment, “by the insipid idlers who fill our saloons. Be-

hold them now, gathered by the oriel window, yonder ; precious distillers of talk—sentinels of society with certain set phrases as watchwords, which they never exceed ; sages, who follow Face's advice to Dapper—

—'Hum thrice, and buzz as often.'

CHAPTER VII.

A Change of Prospects—A new Insight into the Character of the Hero—A Conference between two Brothers.

A DAY or two after the conversation recorded in my last chapter, St. John, to my inexpressible regret, left us for London ; however, we had enjoyed several conferences together during his stay, and when we parted, it was with a pressing invitation on his side to visit him in London, and a most faithful promise on mine, to avail myself of the request.

No sooner was he fairly gone than I went to seek my uncle ; I found him reading one of Farquhar's comedies. Despite my sorrow at interrupting him in so venerable a study, I was too full of my new plot to heed breaking off that in the comedy. In very few words I made the good knight understand that his descriptions had infected me, and that *I* was dying to ascertain their truth ; in a word, that his hopeful nephew was fully bent on going to town. My uncle first stared, then swore, then paused, then looked at his leg, drew up his stocking, frowned, whistled, and told me at last to talk to him about it another time. Now, for my part, I think there are only two classes of people in the world authorized to put one off to "another time,"—prime ministers and creditors ; accordingly, I would not take my uncle's dismissal. I had not read plays, studied philosophy, and laid snares for the Abbé Montreuil, without deriving some little wisdom from my experience ; so I took to teasing, and a notable plan it is too ! Whoever has pursued it may guess the result ! My uncle yielded, and that day fortnight was fixed for my departure.

Oh, with what transport did I look forward to the completion of my wishes, the goal of my ambition ! I hastened forth—I hurried into the woods—I sang out in the gladness of my heart, like a bird released—I drank in the air with a rapturous sympathy in its freedom ; my step scarcely touched the earth, and my whole frame seemed ethereal—elated—exalted—by the vivifying inspiration of my hopes. I paused by a little streamlet, which,

brawling over stones and through unpenetrated thicknesses of wood, seemed, like confined ambition, not the less restless for its obscurity.

"Wild brooklet," I cried, as my thoughts rushed into words, "fret on, our lot is no longer the same; your wanderings and your murmurs are wasted in solitude and shade; your voice dies and re-awakes, but without an echo; your waves spread around their path neither fertility nor terror; their anger is idle, and their freshness is lavished on a sterile soil; the sun shines in vain for you, through these unvarying wastes of silence and gloom; Fortune freights not your channel with her hoarded stores, and Pleasure ventures not her silken sails upon your tide; not even the solitary idler roves beside you, to consecrate with human fellowship your melancholy course; no shape of beauty bends over your turbid waters, or mirrors in your breast the loveliness that hallows earth. Lonely and sullen, through storm or sunshine, you repine along your desolate way and only catch, through the matted boughs that darken over you, the beams of the wan stars, which, like human hopes, tremble upon your breast, and are broken, even before they fade, by the very turbulence of the surface on which they fall. Rove—repine—murmur on! Such was my fate, but the resemblance is no more. I shall no longer be a lonely and regretful being; my affections will no longer waste themselves upon barrenness and stone. I go among the living and warm world of mortal energies and desires: my existence shall glide alternately through crested cities, and bowers in which Poetry worships Love; and the clear depths of my heart shall reflect whatever its young dreams have shadowed forth—the visioned form—the gentle and fairy spirit—the Eye of my soul's imagined and foreboded paradise."

Venting, in this incoherent strain, the exultation which filled my thoughts, I wandered on, throughout the whole day, till my spirits had exhausted themselves by indulgence; and, wearied alike by mental excitement and bodily exertion, I turned, with slow steps, towards the house. As I ascended the gentle acclivity on which it stood, I saw a figure approaching towards me; the increasing shades of the evening did not allow me to recognize the shape until it was almost by my side—it was Aubrey.

Of late I had seen very little of him. His devotional studies and habits seemed to draw him from the idle pursuits of myself and my uncle's guests; and Aubrey was one peculiarly susceptible of neglect, and sore, to morbidity, at the semblance of

unkindness ; so that he required to be sought, and rarely troubled others with advances : that night, however, his greeting was unusually warm.

“ I was uneasy about you, Morton,” said he, drawing my arm in his ; “ you have not been seen since morning ; and, oh ! Morton, my uncle told me, with tears in his eyes, that you were going to leave us. Is it so ? ”

“ Had he tears in his eyes ? Kind old man ! And you, Aubrey, shall you, too, grieve for my departure ? ”

“ Can you ask it, Morton ? But why will you leave us ? Are we not all happy here, now ? *Now* that there is no longer any barrier or difference between us—*now* that I may look upon you, and listen to you, and love you, and *own* that I love you ? Why will you leave us now ? And—(continued Aubrey, as if fearful of giving me time to answer)—and every one praises you so here ; and my uncle and all of us are so proud of you. Why should you desert our affections merely because they are not new ? Why plunge into that hollow and cold world which all who have tried it picture in such fearful hues ? Can you find anything there to repay you for the love you leave behind ? ”

“ My brother,” said I, mournfully, and in a tone which startled him, it was so different from that which I usually assumed,—“ my brother, hear, before you reproach me. Let us sit down upon this bank, and I will suffer you to see more of my restless and secret heart than any hitherto have beheld.”

We sat down upon a little mound—how well I remember the spot ! I can see the tree which shadows it from my window at this moment. How many seasons have the sweet herb and the emerald grass been withered there and renewed ! Ah, what is this revival of all things fresh and youthful in external nature, but a mockery of the wintry spot which lies perished and *irrenewable* within !

We drew near to each other, and as my arm wound around him, I said, “ Aubrey, your love has been to me a more precious gift than any who have not, like me, thirsted and longed even for the love of a dog, can conceive. Never let me lose that affection ! And do not think of me hereafter as of one whose heart echoed all that his lip uttered. Do not believe that irony, and sarcasm, and bitterness of tongue, flowed from a malignant or evil source. That disposition which seems to you alternately so light and gloomy had, perhaps, its origin in a mind too intense in its affections, and too exacting in having them returned. Till you sought my friendship, three short years ago, none but my uncle, with whom I could have nothing in common but at-

tachment; seemed to care for my very existence. I blame them not; they were deceived in my nature; but blame *me* not too severely if my temper suffered from their mistake. Your friendship came to me, not too late to save me from a premature misanthropy, but too late to eradicate every morbidity of mind. Something of sternness on the one hand, and of satire on the other, has mingled so long with my better feelings that the taint and the stream have become inseparable. Do not sigh, Aubrey. To be unamiable is not to be ungrateful; and I shall not love you the less if I have but a few objects to love. You ask me my inducement to leave you. 'The World' will be sufficient answer. I cannot share your contempt of it, nor your fear. I am, and have been of late, consumed with a thirst—eager, and burning, and unquenchable—it is ambition!"

"Oh, Morton!" said Aubrey, with a second sigh, longer and deeper than the first—"that evil passion! the passion which lost an angel Heaven."

"Let us not now dispute, my brother, whether it be sinful in itself, or whether, if its object be virtuous, it is not a virtue. In baring my soul before you, I only speak of my motives; and seek not to excuse them. Perhaps on this earth there is no good without a little evil. When my mind was once turned to the acquisition of mental superiority, every petty acquisition I made increased my desire to attain more, and partial emulation soon widened into universal ambition. We three, Gerald and ourselves, are the keepers of a treasure more valuable than gold—the treasure of a not ignoble nor sullied name. For my part, I confess that I am impatient to increase the store of honor which our father bequeathed to us. Nor is this all: despite our birth, we are poor in the gifts of fortune. We are all dependents on my uncle's favor; and, however we may deserve it, there would be something better in earning an independence for ourselves."

"That," said Aubrey, "may be an argument for mine and Gerald's exertions; but not for yours. You are the eldest, and my uncle's favorite. Nature and affection both point to you as his heir."

"If so, Aubrey, may many years pass before that inheritance be mine. Why should those years, that might produce so much, lie fallow? But though I would not affect an unreal delicacy, and disown my chance of future fortune, yet you must remember that it is a matter possible, not certain. My birth-right gives me no claim over my uncle, whose estates are in his own gift; and favor, even in the good, is a wind which varies

without power on our side to calculate the season or the cause. However this be,—and I love the person on whom fortune depends so much that I cannot, without pain, speak of the mere chance of its passing from his possession into mine,—you will own at least that I shall not hereafter deserve wealth the less for the advantages of experience.”

“Alas !” said Aubrey, raising his eyes, “the worship of our Father in Heaven finds us ample cause for occupation, even in retirement ; and the more we mix with His creatures, the more, I fear, we may forget the Creator. But, if it must be so, I will pray for you, Morton ; and you will remember that the powerless and poor Aubrey can still lift up his voice in your behalf.”

As Aubrey thus spoke, I looked with mingled envy and admiration upon the countenance beside me, which the beauty of a spirit seemed at once to soften and to exalt.

Since our conference had begun, the dusk of twilight had melted away ; and the moon had called into lustre—living, indeed, but unlike the common and unhallowing life of day—the wood and herbage, and silent variations of hill and valley, which slept around us ; and, as the still and shadowy light fell over the upward face of my brother, it gave to his features an additional, and not wholly earth-born, solemnity of expression. There was indeed in his face and air that from which the painter of a seraph might not have disdained to copy ; something resembling the vision of an angel in the dark eyes that swam with tears, in which emotion had so little of mortal dross—in the youthful and soft cheeks ; which the earnestness of divine thought had refined by a pale but transparent hue—in the high and unclouded forehead, over which the hair, parted in the centre, fell in long and wavelike curls—and in the lips, silent, yet moving with internal prayer, which seemed the more fervent, because unheard.

I did not interrupt him in the prayer, which my soul felt, though my ear caught it not, was for me. But when he had ceased, and turned towards me, I clasped him to my breast. “My brother,” I said, “we shall part, it is true, but not till our hearts have annihilated the space that was between them ; not till we have felt that the love of brotherhood can pass the love of woman. Whatever await you, your devoted and holy mind will be, if not your shield from affliction, at least your balm for its wounds. Remain here. The quiet which breathes around you well becomes your tranquillity within ; and sometimes bless me in your devotions, as you have done now. For me, I shall not regret those harder and harsher qualities which you blame

in me, if hereafter their very sternness can afford me an opportunity of protecting your gentleness from evil, or redressing the wrongs from which your nature may be too innocent to preserve you. And now let us return home, in the conviction that we have in our friendship one treasure beyond the reach of fate."

Aubrey did not answer ; but he kissed my forehead, and I felt his tears upon my cheek. We rose, and with arms still embracing each other as we walked, bent our steps to the house.

Ah, earth ! what hast thou more beautiful than the love of those whose ties are knit by nature, and whose union seems ordained to begin from the very moment of their birth ?

CHAPTER VIII.

First Love.

WE are under very changeful influences in this world ! The night on which occurred the interview with Aubrey, that I have just narrated, I was burning to leave Devereux Court. Within one little week from that time my eagerness was wonderfully abated. The sagacious reader will readily discover the cause of this alteration. About eight miles from my uncle's house was a seaport town ; there were many and varied rides leading to it, and the town was a favorite place of visitation with all the family. Within a few hundred yards of the town was a small cottage, prettily situated in the midst of a garden, kept with singular neatness, and ornamented with several rare shrubs and exotics. I had more than once observed in the garden of this house a female in the very first blush of youth, and beautiful enough to excite within me a strong curiosity to learn the owner of the cottage. I inquired, and ascertained that its tenant was a Spaniard of high birth, and one who had acquired a melancholy celebrity by his conduct and misfortunes in the part he had taken in a certain feeble but gallant insurrection in his native country. He had only escaped with life and a very small sum of money, and now lived in the obscure seaport of —, a refugee and a recluse. He was a widower, and had only one child—a daughter ; and I was therefore at no loss to discover who was the beautiful female I had noted and admired.

On the day after my conversation with Aubrey, detailed in the last chapter, in riding past this cottage alone, I perceived a

crowd assembled round the entrance ; I paused to inquire the cause.

“Why, your honor,” quoth a senior of the village, “I believe the tipstaves be come to take the foreigner for not paying his rent ; and he does not understand our English liberty like, and has drawn his sword, and swears, in his outlandish lingo, he will not be made prisoner alive.”

I required no further inducement to make me enter the house. The crowd gave way when they saw me dismount, and suffered me to penetrate into the first apartment. There I found the gallant old Spaniard with his sword drawn, keeping at bay a couple of sturdy looking men, who appeared to be only prevented from using violence by respect for the person, or the safety, of a young woman, who clung to her father’s knees, and implored him not to resist, where resistance was so unavailing. Let me cut short this scene—I dismissed the bailiffs, and paid the debt. I then endeavored to explain to the Spaniard, in French, for he scarcely understood three words of our language, the cause of a rudeness towards him which he persisted in calling a great insult and inhospitality manifested to a stranger and an exile. I succeeded at length in pacifying him. I remained for more than an hour at the cottage, and I left it with a heart beating at the certain persuasion that I had established therein the claim of acquaintance and visitation.

Will the reader pardon me for having curtailed this scene? It is connected with a subject on which I shall better endure to dwell as my narrative proceeds. From that time I paid frequent visits to the cottage ; the Spaniard soon grew intimate with me, and I thought the daughter began to blush when I entered, and to sigh when I departed.

One evening I was conversing with Don Diego D’Alvarez (such was the Spaniard’s name), as he sat without his threshold, inhaling the gentle air that stole freshness from the rippling sea that spread before us, and fragrance from the earth, over which the summer now reigned in its most mellow glory. Isora (the daughter) sat at a little distance.

“How comes it,” said Don Diego, “that you have never met our friend Señor Bar—Bar—these English names are always escaping my memory. How is he called, Isora?”

“Mr.—Mr. Barnard,” said Isora (who, brought early to England, spoke its language like a native), but with evident confusion, and looking down as she spoke—“Mr. Barnard, I believe you mean.”

“Right, my love,” rejoined the Spaniard, who was smoking

a long pipe with great gravity, and did not notice his daughter's embarrassment—"a fine youth, but somewhat shy and over-modest in manner."

"Youth!" thought I, and I darted a piercing look towards Isora. "How comes it, indeed," I said aloud, "that I have not met him? Is he a friend of long standing?"

"Nay, not very—perhaps of some six weeks earlier date than you, Señor Don Devereux. I pressed him, when he called this morning, to tarry your coming; but, poor youth, he is diffident, and not yet accustomed to mix freely with strangers, especially those of rank; our own presence a little overawes him"—and from Don Diego's gray mustachios issued a yet fuller cloud than was ordinarily wont to emerge thence.

My eyes were still fixed on Isora; she looked up, met them, blushed deeply, rose, and disappeared within the house. I was already susceptible of jealousy. My lip trembled, as I resumed: "And will Don Diego pardon me for inquiring how commenced his knowledge of this ingenuous youth?"

The question was a little beyond the pale of good breeding; perhaps the Spaniard, who was tolerably punctilious in such matters, thought so, for he did not reply. I was sensible of my error, and apologizing for it, insinuated, nevertheless, the question in a more respectful and covert shape. Still Don Diego, inhaling the fragrant weed with renewed vehemence, only—like Pion's tomb, recorded by Pausanias—replied to the request of his petitioner *by smoke*. I did not venture to renew my interrogatories, and there was a long silence. My eyes fixed their gaze on the door by which Isora had disappeared. In vain; she returned not—and as the chill of the increasing evening began now to make itself felt by the frame of one accustomed to warmer skies, the Spaniard soon rose to re-enter his house, and I took my farewell for the night.

There were many ways (as I before said) by which I could return home, all nearly equal in picturesque beauty; for the county in which my uncle's estates were placed was one where stream roved and woodland flourished even to the very strand, or cliff of the sea. The shortest *route*, though one the least frequented by any except foot-passengers, was along the coast, and it was by this path that I rode slowly homeward. On winding a curve in the road about one mile from Devereux Court, the old building broke slowly, tower by tower, upon me. I have never yet described the house, and perhaps it will not be uninteresting to the reader if I do so now.

It had anciently belonged to Ralph de Bigod. From his

possession it had passed into that of the then noblest branch of the stem of Devereux, whence, without break or flaw in the direct line of heritage, it had ultimately descended to the present owner. It was a pile of vast extent, built around three quadrangular courts, the farthest of which spread to the very verge of the gray, tall cliffs that overhung the sea: in this court was a rude tower, which, according to tradition, had contained the apartments ordinarily inhabited by our ill-fated namesake and distant kinsman, Robert Devereux, the favorite and the victim of Elizabeth, whenever he had honored the mansion with a visit. There was nothing, it is true, in the old tower calculated to flatter the tradition, for it contained only two habitable rooms, communicating with each other, and by no means remarkable for size or splendor; and every one of our household, save myself, was wont to discredit the idle rumor which would assign to so distinguished a guest so unseemly a lodgment. But, as I looked from the narrow lattices of the chambers, over the wide expanse of ocean and of land which they commanded—as I noted, too, that the tower was utterly separated from the rest of the house, and that the convenience of its site enabled one, on quitting it, to escape at once, and privately, either to the solitary beach or to the glades and groves of the wide park which stretched behind—I could not help indulging the belief that the unceremonious, and not unromantic noble, had himself selected his place of retirement, and that, in so doing, the gallant of a stately court was not, perhaps, undesirous of securing at well-chosen moments a brief relaxation from the heavy honors of country homage—or that the patron and poetic admirer of the dreaming Spenser might have preferred, to all more gorgeous accommodation, the quiet and unseen egress to that sea and shore, which, if we may believe the accomplished Roman,* are so fertile in the powers of inspiration.

However this be, I had cheated myself into the belief that my conjecture was true, and I had petitioned my uncle, when, on leaving school, he assigned to each of us our several apartments, to grant me the exclusive right to this dilapidated tower. I gained my boon easily enough; and—so strangely is our future fate compounded from past trifles—I verily believe that the strong desire which thenceforth seized me to visit courts, and mix with statesmen—which afterwards hurried me into

* "O mare, O litus, verum secretumque *Mouzeion*, quam multa dictatis—quam multa invenitis!"—PLINIUS.

"O sea, O shore, true and secret sanctuary of the Muses, how many things ye dictate, how many things ye discover."

intrigue, war, the plots of London, the dissipations of Paris, the perilous schemes of Petersburg, nay, the very hardships of a Cossack tent—was first formed by the imaginary honor of inhabiting the same chamber as the glittering but ill-fated courtier of my own name. Thus youth imitates, where it should avoid; and thus that which should have been to me a warning became an example.

In the oaken floor to the outer chamber of this tower was situated a trap-door, the entrance into a lower room or rather cell, fitted up as a bath; and here a wooden door opened into a long subterranean passage that led out into a cavern by the sea-shore. This cave, partly by nature, partly by art, was hollowed into a beautiful Gothic form: and here, on moonlight evenings, when the sea crept gently over the yellow and smooth sands, and the summer tempered the air from too keen a freshness, my uncle had often in his younger days; ere gout and rheum had grown familiar images, assembled his guests. It was a place which the echoes peculiarly adapted for music; and the scene was certainly not calculated to diminish the effect of "sweet sounds." Even now, though my uncle rarely joined us, we were often wont to hold our evening revels in this spot; and the high cliffs, circling either side in the form of a bay, tolerably well concealed our meetings from the gaze of the vulgar. It is true (for these cliffs were perforated with numerous excavations), that some roving peasant, mariner, or perchance smuggler, would now and then, at low water, intrude upon us. But our London Nereids and courtly Tritons were always well pleased with the interest of what they graciously termed "an adventure": and our assemblies were too numerous to think an unbroken secrecy indispensable. Hence, therefore, the cavern was almost considered a part of the house itself; and though there was an iron door at the entrance which it gave to the passage leading to my apartments, yet so great was our confidence in our neighbors or ourselves that it was rarely secured, save as a defence against the high tides of winter.

The stars were shining quietly over the old gray castle (for castle it really was), as I now came within view of it. To the left, and in the rear of the house, the trees of the park, grouped by distance, seemed blent into one thick mass of wood; to the right, as I now (descending the cliff by a gradual path,) entered on the level sands, and at about the distance of a league from the main shore, a small islet, notorious as the resort and shelter of contraband adventurers, scarcely relieved the wide and glassy

azure of the waves. The tide was out; and passing through one of the arches worn in the bay, I came somewhat suddenly by the cavern. Seated there on a crag of stone I found Aubrey.

My acquaintance with Isora and her father had so immediately succeeded the friendly meeting with Aubrey which I last recorded, and had so utterly engrossed my time and thoughts, that I had not taken of that interview all the brotherly advantage which I might have done. My heart now smote me for my involuntary negligence. I dismounted, and fastening my horse to one of a long line of posts that ran into the sea, approached Aubrey and accosted him.

"Alone, Aubrey? and at an hour when my uncle always makes the old walls ring with revel! Hark, can you not hear the music even now? it comes from the ball-room, I think, does it not?"

"Yes!" said Aubrey, briefly, and looking down upon a devotional book, which (as was his wont) he had made his companion.

"And we are the only truants!—Well, Gerald will supply our places with a lighter step, and, perhaps, a merrier heart."

Aubrey sighed. I bent over him affectionately (I loved that boy with something of a father's as well as a brother's love), and as I did bend over him, I saw that his eyelids were red with weeping.

"My brother—my own dear brother," said I, "what grieves you?—are we not friends, and more than friends?—what can grieve you that grieves not me?"

Suddenly raising his head, Aubrey gazed at me with a long, searching intentness of eye; his lips moved, but he did not answer.

"Speak to me, Aubrey," said I, passing my arm over his shoulder; "has any one, any thing, hurt you? See, now, if I cannot remedy the evil."

"Morton," said Aubrey, speaking very slowly, "do you believe that Heaven pre-orders as well as foresees our destiny?"

"It is the schoolman's question," said I, smiling, "but I know how these idle subtleties vex the mind—and you, my brother, are ever too occupied with considerations of the future. If Heaven *does* pre-order our destiny, we know that Heaven is merciful, and we should be fearless, as we arm ourselves in that knowledge."

"Morton Devereux," said Aubrey, again repeating my name, and with an evident inward effort that left his lip colorless, and yet lit his dark dilating eye with a strange and unwonted fire—

"Morton Devereux, I feel that I am predestined to the power of the Evil One!"

I drew back, inexpressibly shocked. "Good Heavens!" I exclaimed, "what can induce you to cherish so terrible a phantasy? What can induce you to wrong so fearfully the goodness and mercy of our Creator?"

Aubrey shrunk from my arm, which had still been round him, and covered his face with his hands. I took up the book he had been reading: it was a Latin treatise on predestination, and seemed fraught with the most gloomy and bewildering subtleties. I sat down beside him, and pointed out the various incoherencies and contradictions of the work, and the doctrine it espoused—so long and so earnestly did I speak that at length Aubrey looked up, seemingly cheered and relieved.

"I wish," said he timidly, "I wish that you loved me, and that you loved *me only*:—but you love pleasure, and power, and show, and wit, and revelry; and you know not what it is to feel for me, as I feel at times for you—nay, perhaps you really dislike or despise me!"

Aubrey's voice grew bitter in its tone as he concluded these words, and I was instantly impressed with the belief that some one had insinuated distrust of my affection for him.

"Why should you think thus?" I said: "has any cause occurred of late to make you deem my affection for you weaker than it was? Has any one hinted a surmise that I do not repay your brotherly regard?"

Aubrey did not answer.

"Has Gerald," I continued, "jealous of our mutual attachment, uttered aught tending to diminish it? Yes, I see that he has!"

Aubrey remained motionless, sullenly gazing downward, and still silent.

"Speak," said I, "in justice to both of us—speak! You know, Aubrey, how I *have* loved and love you: put your arms round me, and say that thing on earth which you wish me to do, and it shall be done!"

Aubrey looked up; he met my eyes, and he threw himself upon my neck, and burst into a violent paroxysm of tears.

I was greatly affected. "I see my fault," said I, soothing him; "you are angry, and with justice, that I have neglected you of late; and, perhaps, while I ask your confidence, you suspect that there is some subject on which I should have granted you mine. You are right, and, at a fitter moment, I will. Now let us turn homeward; our uncle is never merry when we are

absent ; and when my mother misses your dark locks and fair cheek, I fancy that she sees little beauty in the ball. And yet, Aubrey," I added, as he now rose from my embrace, and dried his tears, " I will own to you that I love this scene better than any, however gay, within ;" and I turned to the sea, starlit as it was, and murmuring with a silver voice, and I became suddenly silent.

There was a long pause. I believe we both felt the influence of the scene around us, softening and tranquillizing our hearts ; for, at length, Aubrey put his hand in mine, and said, " You were always more generous and kind than I, Morton, though there are times when you seem different from what you are ; and I know you have already forgiven me."

I drew him affectionately towards me, and we went home.

But although I meant, from that night, to devote myself more to Aubrey than I had done of late, my hourly increasing love for Isora interfered greatly with my resolution. In order, however, to excuse any future neglect, I, the very next morning, bestowed upon him my confidence. Aubrey did not much encourage my passion : he represented to me Isora's situation—my own youth—my own worldly ambition—and, more than all (reminding me of my uncle's aversion even to the most prosperous and well-suited marriage), he insisted upon the certainty that Sir William would never yield consent to the lawful consummation of so unequal a love. I was not too well pleased with this reception of my tale, and I did not much trouble my adviser with any farther communication and confidence on the subject. Day after day I renewed my visits to the Spaniard's cottage ; and yet time passed on, and I had not told Isora a syllable of my love. I was inexpressibly jealous of this Barnard, whom her father often eulogized, and whom I never met. There appeared to be some mystery in his acquaintance with Don Diego, which that personage carefully concealed ; and once, when I was expressing my surprise to have so often missed seeing his friend, the Spaniard shook his head gravely, and said that he had now learnt the real reason for it: there were circumstances of state which made men fearful of new acquaintances, even in their own country. He drew back, as if he had said too much, and left me the conjecture that Barnard was connected with him in some intrigue, more delightful in itself than agreeable to the government. This belief was strengthened by my noting that Alvarez was frequently absent from home, and this, too, in the evening, when he was generally wont to shun the bleakness of the English air—an atmosphere, by the by, which I once

heard a Frenchman wittily compare to Augustus placed between Horace and Virgil; viz., in the *bon mot* of the emperor himself—*between sighs and tears.*

But Isora herself never heard the name of this Barnard mentioned without a visible confusion, which galled me to the heart; and at length, unable to endure any longer my suspense upon the subject, I resolved to seek from her own lips its termination. I long tarried my opportunity: it was one evening, that, coming rather unexpectedly to the cottage, I was informed by the single servant that Don Diego had gone to the neighboring town, but that Isora was in the garden. Small as it was, this garden had been cultivated with some care, and was not devoid of variety. A high and very thick fence of living boxwood, closely interlaced with the honeysuckle and the common rose, screened a few plots of rarer flowers, a small circular fountain, and a rustic arbor, both from the sea breezes and the eyes of any passer by, to which the open and sheltered portion of the garden was exposed. When I passed through the opening cut in the fence, I was somewhat surprised at not immediately seeing Isora. Perhaps she was in the arbor. I approached the arbor tremblingly. What was my astonishment and my terror when I beheld her stretched lifeless on the ground.

I uttered a loud cry, and sprang forwards. I raised her from the earth, and supported her in my arms; her complexion—through whose pure and transparent white the wandering blood was wont so gently, yet so glowingly, to blush, undulating while it blushed, as youngest rose-leaves which the air just stirs into trembling—was blanched into the hues of death. My kisses tinged it with a momentary color not its own; and yet as I pressed her to my heart, methought hers, which seemed still before, began, as if by an involuntary sympathy, palpably and suddenly to throb against my own. My alarm melted away as I held her thus—nay, I would not, if I could, have recalled her *yet* to life; I was forgetful—I was unheeding—I was unconscious of all things else—a few broken and passionate words escaped my lips, but even they ceased when I felt her breath just stirring and mingling with my own. It seemed to me as if all living kind but ourselves had, by a spell, departed from the earth, and we were left alone with the breathless and inaudible Nature from which spring the love and the life of all things.

Isora slowly recovered; her eyes, in opening, dwelt upon mine—her blood rushed at once to her cheek, and as suddenly left it hueless as before. She rose from my embrace, but I still extended my arms towards her; and words over which I had

no control, and of which now I have no remembrance, rushed from my lips. Still pale, and leaning against the side of the arbor, Isora heard me, as—confused, incoherent, impetuous, but still intelligible to her—my released heart poured itself forth. And when I had ceased, she turned her face towards me, and my blood seemed frozen in its channel. Anguish, deep, ineffable anguish, was depicted upon every feature; and when she strove at last to speak, her lips quivered so violently that, after a vain effort she ceased abruptly. I again approached—I seized her hand, which I covered with my kisses.

“Will you not answer me, Isora?” said I tremblingly. “Be silent then; but give me one look, one glance of hope, of pardon, from those dear eyes, and I ask no more.”

Isora’s whole frame seemed sinking beneath her emotions; she raised her head, and looked hurriedly and fearfully round; my eye followed hers, and I then saw upon the damp ground, the recent print of a man’s footsteps, not my own; and close to the spot where I had found Isora, lay a man’s glove. A pang shot through me—I felt my eyes flash fire, and my brow darken, as I turned to Isora, and said, “I see it—I see it all,—I have a rival, who has but just left you—you love me not—your affections are for him!”—Isora sobbed violently, but made no reply. “You love him,” said I, but in a milder and more mournful tone—“you love him—it is enough—I will persecute you no more; and yet—” I paused a moment, for the remembrance of many a sign, which my heart had interpreted flatteringly, flashed upon me, and my voice faltered. “Well, I have no right to murmur—only, Isora—only tell me with your lips that you love another, and I will depart in peace.”

Very slowly Isora turned her eyes to me, and even through her tears they dwelt upon me with a tender and a soft reproach. “You love another?” said I—and from her lips, which scarcely parted, came a single word which thrilled to my heart like fire,—“No!”

“No!” I repeated, “No?—say that again, and again; yet who then is this that has dared so to agitate and overpower you? Who is he whom you have met, and whom, even now while I speak, you tremble to hear me recur to? Answer me one word—is it this mysterious stranger whom your father honors with his friendship?—Is it Barnard?”

Alarm and fear again wholly engrossed the expression of Isora’s countenance.

“Barnard!” she said, “yes—yes—it is Barnard!”

“Who is he?” I cried vehemently—“who or what is he?—and

of what nature is his influence upon you? Confide in me"—and I poured forth a long tide of inquiry and solicitation.

By the time I had ended, Isora seemed to have recovered herself. With her softness, was mingled something of spirit and of self-control, which was rare alike in her country and her sex.

"Listen to me!" said she, and her voice, which faltered a little at first, grew calm and firm as she proceeded. "You profess to love me—I am not worthy your love; and if, Count Devereux, I do not reject nor disclaim it—for I am a woman and a weak and fond one—I will not at least wrong you by encouraging hopes which I may not and I dare not fulfil. I cannot—" here she spoke with a fearful distinctness,—“I cannot, I can never, be yours; and when you ask me to be so, you know not what you ask nor what perils you incur.—Enough—I am grateful to you. The poor exiled girl is grateful for your esteem—and—and your affection. She will never forget them,—never! But be this our last meeting—our very last—God bless you, Morton!" and as she read my heart, pierced and agonized as it was, in my countenance, Isora bent over me, for I knelt beside her, and I felt her tears upon my cheek,—“God bless you—and farewell.”

"You insult, you wound me," said I bitterly, "by this cold and taunting kindness; tell me, tell me only, who it is that you love better than me."

Isora had turned to leave me, for I was too proud to detain her; but when I said this, she came back, after a moment's pause, and laid her hand upon my arm.

"If it make you happy to know *my* unhappiness," she said, and the tone of her voice made me look full in her face, which was one deep blush, "know that I am not insensible—"

I heard no more—my lips pressed themselves involuntarily to hers—a long, long kiss,—burning—intense—concentrating emotion, heart, soul, all the rays of life's light into a single focus;—and she tore herself from me—and I was alone.

CHAPTER IX.

A Discovery, and a Departure.

I HASTENED home after my eventful interview with Isora, and gave myself up to tumultuous and wild conjecture. Aubrey sought me the next morning—I narrated to him all that had occurred—he said little, but that little enraged me, for it was contrary to the dictates of my own wishes. The character of

Morose in the "Silent Woman" is by no means an uncommon one. Many men—certainly many lovers—would say with equal truth, always provided they had equal candor—"All discourses but my own afflict me; they seem harsh, impertinent, and irksome." Certainly I felt that amiable sentiment most sincerely, with regard to Aubrey. I left him abruptly—a resolution possessed me—"I will see," said I, "this Barnard. I will lie in wait for him; I will demand and obtain, though it be by force, the secret which evidently subsists between him and this exiled family."

Full of this idea, I drew my cloak round me, and repaired on foot to the neighborhood of the Spaniard's cottage. There was no place near it very commodious for accommodation both of vigil and concealment. However, I made a little hill, in a field opposite the house, my warder's station, and, lying at full length on the ground, wrapt in my cloak, I trusted to escape notice. The day passed—no visitor appeared. The next morning I went from my own rooms, through the subterranean passage, into the Castle Cave, as the excavation I have before described was generally termed. On the shore I saw Gerald, by one of the small fishing-boats usually kept there. I passed him with a sneer at his amusements, which were always those of conflicts against fish or fowl. He answered me in the same strain, as he threw his nets into the boat, and pushed out to sea. "How is it, that you go alone?" said I; "is there so much glory in the capture of mackerel and dogfish that you will allow no one to share it?"

"There are other sports besides those for men," answered Gerald, coloring indignantly; "my taste is confined to amusements in which he is but a fool who seeks companionship; and if you could read character better, my wise brother, you would know that the bold rover is ever less idle and more fortunate than the speculative dreamer!"

As Gerald said this, which he did with a significant emphasis, he rowed vigorously across the water, and the little boat was soon half way to the opposite islet. My eyes followed it musingly as it glided over the waves, and my thoughts painfully revolved the words which Gerald had uttered. "What can he mean?" said I, half aloud; "yet what matters it?—perhaps some low amour, some village conquest, inspires him with that becoming fulness of pride and vain glory—joy be with so bold a rover!" and I strode away, along the beach, towards my place of watch; once only I turned to look at Gerald—he had then just touched the islet, which was celebrated as much for the fishing it afforded as the smuggling it protected.

I arrived, at last, at the hillock, and resumed my station. Time passed on, till, at the dusk of evening, the Spaniard came out. He walked slowly towards the town; I followed him at a distance. Just before he reached the town, he turned off by a path which led to the beach. As the evening was unusually fresh and chill, I felt convinced that some cause, not wholly trivial, drew the Spaniard forth to brave it. My pride a little revolted at the idea of following him; but I persuaded myself that Isora's happiness, and perhaps her father's safety, depended on my obtaining some knowledge of the character and designs of this Barnard, who appeared to possess so dangerous an influence over both daughter and sire—nor did I doubt but that the old man was now gone forth to meet him. The times were those of mystery and intrigue—the emissaries of the House of Stuart were restlessly at work, among all classes—many of them, obscure and mean individuals, made their way, the more dangerously from their apparent insignificance. My uncle, a moderate Tory, was opposed, though quietly, and without vehemence, to the claims of the banished House. Like Sedley, who became so staunch a revolutionist, he had seen the Court of Charles II., and the character of that King's brother, too closely to feel much respect for either; but he thought it indecorous to express opposition loudly, against a party among whom were many of his early friends; and the good old knight was too much attached to private ties to be very much alive to public feeling. However, at his well-filled board, conversation, generally, though displeasingly to himself, turned upon politics, and I had there often listened, of late, to dark hints of the danger to which we were exposed, and of the restless machinations of the Jacobites. I did not, therefore, scruple to suspect this Barnard of some plot against the existing state; and I did it the more from observing that the Spaniard often spoke bitterly of the English Court, which had rejected some claims he had imagined himself entitled to make upon it; and that he was naturally of a temper vehemently opposed to quiet, and alive to enterprise. With this impression, I deemed it fair to seize any opportunity of seeing, at least, even if I could not question, the man whom the Spaniard himself confessed to have state reasons for concealment; and my anxiety to behold one whose very name could agitate Isora, and whose presence could occasion the state in which I had found her, sharpened this desire into the keenness of a passion.

While Alvarez descended to the beach, I kept the upper path, which wound along the cliff. There was a spot where the

rocks were rude and broken into crags, and afforded me a place where, unseen, I could behold what passed below. The first thing I beheld was a boat, approaching rapidly towards the shore; one man was seated in it; he reached the shore, and I recognized Gerald. That was a dreadful moment. Alvarez now slowly joined him; they remained together for nearly an hour. I saw Gerald give the Spaniard a letter, which appeared to make the chief subject of their conversation. At length they parted, with the signs rather of respect than familiarity. Don Diego returned homeward, and Gerald re-entered the boat. I watched its progress over the waves with feelings of a dark and almost unutterable nature. "My enemy! my rival! ruiner of my hopes!—*my brother—my twin brother!*"—I muttered bitterly between my ground teeth.

The boat did not make to the open sea—it skulked along the shore, till distance and shadow scarcely allowed me to trace the outline of Gerald's figure. It then touched the beach, and I could just descry the dim shape of another man enter; and Gerald, instead of returning homewards, pushed out towards the islet. I spent the greater part of the night in the open air. Wearied and exhausted, by the furious indulgence of my passions, I gained my room, at length. There, however, as elsewhere, thought succeeded to thought, and scheme to scheme. Should I speak to Gerald? Should I confide in Alvarez? Should I renew my suit to Isora? If the first, what could I hope to learn from mine enemy? If the second, what could I gain from the father, while the daughter remained averse to me? If the third—there my heart pointed, and the third scheme I resolved to adopt.

But was I sure that Gerald was this Barnard? Might there not be some hope that he was not? No, I could perceive none. Alvarez had never spoken to me of acquaintance with any other Englishman than Barnard; I had no reason to believe that he ever held converse with any other. Would it not have been natural too, unless some powerful cause, such as love to Isora, induced silence—would it not have been natural that Gerald should have mentioned his acquaintance with the Spaniard?—Unless some dark scheme, such as that which Barnard appeared to have in common with Don Diego, commanded obscurity, would it have been likely that Gerald should have met Alvarez alone—at night—on an unfrequented spot? What that scheme *was*, I guessed not—I cared not. All my interest in the identity of Barnard with Gerald Devereux was that derived from the power he seemed to possess over Isora. Here, too, at once,

was explained the pretended Barnard's desire of concealment, and the vigilance with which it had been effected. It was so certain that Gerald, if my rival, would seek to avoid me—it was so easy for him, who could watch all my motions, to secure the power of doing so. Then I remembered Gerald's character through the country, as a gallant and a general lover—and I closed my eyes as if to shut out the vision when I recalled the beauty of his form, contrasting with the comparative plainness of my own.

"There is no hope," I repeated—and an insensibility, rather than sleep, crept over me. Dreadful and fierce dreams peopled my slumbers; and, when I started from them at a late hour the next day, I was unable to rise from my bed—my agitation and my wanderings had terminated in a burning fever. In four days, however, I recovered sufficiently to mount my horse—I rode to the Spaniard's house, I found there only the woman who had been Don Diego's solitary domestic. The morning before, Alvarez and his daughter had departed, none knew for certain whither; but it was supposed their destination was London. The woman gave me a note—it was from Isora—it contained only these lines:

"Forget me—we are now parted for ever. As you value my peace of mind—of happiness I do not speak—seek not to discover our next retreat. I implore you to think no more of what has been; you are young, very young. Life has a thousand paths for you; any one of them will lead you from the remembrance of me. Farewell, again and again!

"ISORA D'ALVAREZ."

With this note was another, in French, from Don Diego; it was colder and more formal than I could have expected—it thanked me for my attentions towards him—it regretted that he could not take leave of me in person, and it enclosed the sum by the loan of which our acquaintance had commenced.

"It is well!" said I, calmly, to myself, "it is well; I will forget her;" and I rode instantly home. "But," I resumed in my soliloquy, "I will yet strive to obtain confirmation to what perhaps needs it not. I will yet strive to see if Gerald can deny the depth of his injuries towards me—there will be at least some comfort in witnessing either his defiance or his confusion."

Agreeably to this thought, I hastened to seek Gerald. I found him in his apartment—I shut the door, and seating myself, with a smile, thus addressed him:

"Dear Gerald, I have a favor to ask of you."

"What is it?"

"How long have you known a certain Mr. Barnard?" Gerald changed color—his voice faltered as he repeated the name "Barnard!"

"Yes," said I, with affected composure, "Barnard, a great friend of Don Diego D'Alvarez."

"I perceive," said Gerald, collecting himself, "that you are in some measure acquainted with my secret—how far it is known to you I cannot guess; but I tell you, very fairly, that from me you will not increase the sum of your knowledge."

When one is in a good sound rage, it is astonishing how calm one can be! I was certainly somewhat amazed by Gerald's hardihood and assurance, but I continued, with a smile—

"And Donna Isora, how long, if not very intrusive on your confidence, have you known her?"

"I tell you," answered Gerald doggedly, "that I will answer no questions."

"You remember the old story," returned I, "of the two brothers, Eteocles and Polynices, whose very ashes refused to mingle—faith, Gerald, our love seems much of the same sort. I know not if our ashes will exhibit so laudable an antipathy; but I think our hearts and hands will do so while a spark of life animates them; yes, though our blood," (I added, in a voice quivering with furious emotion,) "prevents our contest by the sword, it prevents not the hatred and the curses of the heart."

Gerald turned pale. "I do not understand you," he faltered out—"I know you abhor me; but why, why this excess of malice?"

I cast on him a look of bitter scorn, and turned from the room.

It is not pleasing to place before the reader these dark passages of fraternal hatred; but in the record of all passions there is a moral; and it is wise to see to how vast a sum the units of childish animosity swell, when they are once brought into a heap, by some violent event, and told over by the nice accuracy of Revenge.

But I long to pass from these scenes, and my history is about to glide along others of more glittering and smiling aspect. Thank Heaven, I write a tale, not only of love, but of a life; and that which I cannot avoid I can at least condense.

CHAPTER X.

A very short Chapter—containing a Valet.

MY uncle for several weeks had flattered himself that I had quite forgotten or foregone the desire of leaving Devereux Court for London. Good, easy man! he was not a little distressed when I renewed the subject with redoubled firmness, and demanded an early period for that event. He managed, however, still to protract the evil day. At one time it was impossible to part with me, because the house was so full; at another time it was cruel to leave him, when the house was so empty. Meanwhile, a new change came over me. As the first shock of Isora's departure passed away, I began to suspect the purity of her feelings towards me. Might not Gerald, the beautiful, the stately, the glittering Gerald, have been a successful wooer under that disguised name of Barnard, and hence Isora's confusion when that name was mentioned, and hence the power which its possessor exercised over her?

This idea, once admitted, soon gained ground. It is true that Isora had testified something of favorable feelings towards me; but this might spring from coquetry or compassion. My love had been a boy's love, founded upon beauty and colored by romance. I had not investigated the character of the object; and I had judged of the mind solely by the face. I might easily have been deceived—I persuaded myself that I was! Perhaps Gerald had provided their present retreat for sire and daughter—perhaps they at this moment laughed over my rivalry and my folly. Methought Gerald's lip wore a contemptuous curve when we met. "It shall have no cause," I said, stung to the soul; "I will indeed forget this woman, and yet, though in other ways, eclipse this rival. Pleasure—ambition—the brilliancy of a Court—the resources of wealth invite me to a thousand joys. I will not be deaf to the call. Meanwhile I will not betray to Gerald—to any one—the scar of the wound I have received; and I will mortify Gerald, by showing him that, handsome as he is, he shall be forgotten in my presence!"

Agreeably to this exquisite resolution, I paid incessant court to the numerous dames by whom my uncle's mansion was thronged; and I resolved to prepare, among them, the reputation for gallantry and for wit which I proposed to establish in town.

"You are greatly altered since your love!" said Aubrey, one

day to me, "but not by your love. Own that I did right in dissuading you from its indulgence!"

"Tell me!" said I, sinking my voice to a whisper, "do you think Gerald was my rival?" and I recounted the causes of my suspicion.

Aubrey's countenance testified astonishment as he listened—"It is strange—very strange," said he; "and the evidence of the boat is almost conclusive; still I do not think it quite sufficient to leave no loophole of doubt. But what matters it?—you have conquered your love now."

"Ay," I said, with a laugh, "I have conquered it, and I am now about to find some other empress of the heart. What think you of the Lady Hasselton?—a fair dame and a sprightly. I want nothing but her love to be the most enviable of men, and a French *valet-de-chambre* to be the most irresistible."

"The former is easier to obtain than the latter, I fear," returned Aubrey; "all places produce light dames, but the war makes a scarcity of French valets."

"True," said I, "but I never thought of instituting a comparison between their relative value. The Lady Hasselton, no disparagement to her merits, is but one woman—but a French valet who knows his *métier* arms one for conquest over a thousand"—and I turned to the saloon.

Fate, which had destined to me the valuable affections of the Lady Hasselton, granted me also, at a yet earlier period, the greater boon of a French valet. About two or three weeks after this sapient communication with Aubrey, the most charming person in the world presented himself a candidate *pour le suprême bonheur de soigner Monsieur le Comte*. Intelligence beamed in his eye; a modest assurance reigned upon his brow; respect made his step vigilant as a zephyr's; and his ruffles were the envy of the world!

I took him at a glance; and I presented to the admiring inmates of the house a greater coxcomb than the Count Devereux in the ethereal person of Jean Desmarais.

CHAPTER XI.

The Hero acquits himself honorably as a Coxcomb—a Fine Lady of the Eighteenth Century, and a fashionable Dialogue—the Substance of fashionable Dialogue being in all Centuries the same.

"I AM thinking, Morton," said my uncle, "that if you are to go to town, you should go in a style suitable to your rank. What say you to flying along the road in my green and gold

chariot? 'Sdeath, I'll make you a present of it. Nay—no thanks—and you may have four of my black Flanders mares to draw you."

"Now, my dear Sir William," cried Lady Hasselton, who, it may be remembered, was the daughter of one of King Charles's beauties, and who alone shared the breakfast room with my uncle and myself—"now, my dear Sir William, I think it would be a better plan to suffer the Count to accompany us to town. We go next week. He shall have a seat in our coach—help Lovell to pay our post-horses—protect us at inns—scold at the drawers in the pretty oaths of the fashion, which are so innocent that I will teach them to his Countship myself, and unless I am much more frightful than my honored mother, whose beauties you so gallantly laud, I think you will own, Sir William, that this is better for your nephew than doing solitary penance in your chariot of green and gold, with a handkerchief tied over his head to keep away cold, and with no more fanciful occupation than composing sonnets to the four Flanders mares."

"'Sdeath, madam, you inherit your mother's wit as well as beauty," cried my uncle, with an impassioned air.

"And his Countship," said I, "will accept your invitation without asking his uncle's leave."

"Come, that is bold for a gentleman of—let me see, thirteen—are you not?"

"Really," answered I, "one learns to forget time so terribly in the presence of Lady Hasselton, that I do not remember even how long it has existed for me."

"Bravo," cried the knight, with a moistening eye: "you see, madam, the boy has not lived with his old uncle for nothing."

"I am lost in astonishment," said the lady, glancing toward the glass; "why, you will eclipse all our beaux at your first appearance—but—but—Sir William—how green those glasses have become! bless me, there is something so contagious in the effects of the country, that the very mirrors grow verdant. But—Count—Count—where are you, Count? (I was exactly opposite to the fair speaker.) Oh, there you are—pray—do you carry a little pocket-glass of the true quality about you? But, of course you do—lend it me."

"I have not the glass you want, but I carry with me a mirror that reflects your features much more faithfully."

"How! I protest I do not understand you!"

"The mirror is here!" said I, laying my hand to my heart.

"'Gad, I must kiss the boy!" cried my uncle, starting up.

"I have sworn," said I, fixing my eyes upon the lady—"I have sworn never to be kissed even by women. You must pardon me, uncle."

"I declare," cried the Lady Hasselton, flirting her fan, which was somewhat smaller than the screen that one puts into a great hall, in order to take off the discomfort of too large a room—"I declare, Count, there is a vast deal of originality about you. But tell me, Sir William, where did your nephew acquire, at so early an age—(eleven you say he is)—such a fund of agreeable assurance?"

"Nay, madam, let the boy answer for himself."

"*Imprimis*, then," said I, playing with the ribbon of my cane—" *imprimis*, early study of the best authors—Congreve and Farquhar, Etherege and Rochester. Secondly, the constant intercourse of company which gives one the spleen so over-poweringly that despair inspires one with boldness—to get rid of them. Thirdly, the personal example of Sir William Devereux; and, fourthly, the inspiration of hope."

"Hope, sir!" said the Lady Hasselton, covering her face with her fan, so as only to leave me a glimpse of the farthest patch upon her left cheek—"hope, sir?"

"Yes—the hope of being pleasing to you. Suffer me to add that the hope has now become certainty."

"Upon my word, Count—"

"Nay, you cannot deny it—if one can once succeed in impudence, one is irresistible."

"Sir William," cried Lady Hasselton, "you may give the Count your chariot of green and gold, and your four Flanders mares, and send his mother's maid with him. He shall not go with me."

"Cruel! and why?" said I.

"You are too"—the lady paused, and looked at me over her fan. She was really very handsome—"you are too *old*, Count. You *must* be more than nine."

"Pardon me," said I, "I *am* nine—a very mystical number nine is too, and represents the muses, who, you know, were always attendant upon Venus—or you, which is the same thing; so you can no more dispense with my company than you can with that of the Graces."

"Good-morning, Sir William!" cried the Lady Hasselton, rising.

I offered to hand her to the door—with great difficulty, for her hoop was of the very newest enormity of circumference, I effected this object. "Well, Count!" said she, "I am glad to

see you have brought so much learning from school ; make the best use of it, while it lasts, for your memory will not furnish you with a single simile out of the mythology by the end of next winter."

"That would be a pity!" said I, "for I intend having as many goddesses as the Heathens had, and I should like to worship them in a classical fashion."

"Oh! the young reprobate!" said the beauty, tapping me with her fan. "And pray what other deities besides Venus do I resemble?"

"All!" said I—"at least all the celestial ones!"

Though half way through the door, the beauty extricated her hoop, and drew back. "Bless me, the gods as well as the goddesses?"

"Certainly."

"You jest—tell me how."

"Nothing can be easier ; you resemble Mercury, because of your thefts."

"Thefts!"

"Ay ; stolen hearts, and" (added I, in a whisper) "glances—Jupiter, partly because of your lightning, which you lock up in the said glances—principally because all things are subservient to you—Neptune, because you are as changeable as the seas—Vulcan, because you live among the flames you excite—and Mars, because—"

"You are so destructive," cried my uncle.

"Exactly so ; and because," added I—as I shut the door upon the beauty—"because, thanks to your hoop, you cover nine acres of ground."

"Od'sfish, Morton," said my uncle, "you surprise me at times—one while you are so reserved, at another so assured ; to-day so brisk, to-morrow so gloomy. Why now, Lady Has-selton (she is very comely, eh ! faith, but not comparable to her mother) told me, a week ago, that she gave you up in despair, that you were dull, past hoping for ; and now, 'Gad, you had a life in you that Sid himself could not have surpassed. How comes it sir, eh?"

"Why, uncle, you have explained the reason ; it was exactly because she said I was dull that I was resolved to convict her in an untruth."

"Well, now, there is some sense in that, boy ; always contradict ill report, by personal merit. But what think you of her ladyship? 'Gad, you know what old Bellair said of Emilia. 'Make much of her—she's one of the best of your acquaint-

ance. I like her countenance and behavior. Well, she has a modesty not i' this age, a-dad she has.' Applicable enough—eh, boy !”

“I know her value, sir, and esteem her accordingly,” answered I, out of the same play, which, by dint of long study, I had got by heart. “But, to confess the truth,” added I, “I think you might have left out the passage about her modesty.”

“There, now—you young chaps are so censorious—why 'sdeath, sir, you don't think the worse of her virtue, because of her wit ?”

“Humph !”

“Ah, boy—when you are my age, you'll know that your demure cats are not the best ; and that reminds me of a little story—shall I tell it you, child ?”

“If it so please you, sir.”

“Zauns—where's my snuff-box ?—oh, here it is. Well, sir, you shall have the whole thing, from beginning to end. Sedley and I were one day conversing together about women. Sid was a very deep fellow in that game—no passion you know—no love on his own side—nothing of the sort—all done by rule and compass—knew women as well as dice, and calculated the exact moment when his snares would catch them, according to the principles of geometry. D—d clever fellow, faith—but a confounded rascal :—but let it go no farther—mum's the word !—must not slander the dead—and 'tis only my suspicion, you know, after all. Poor fellow—I don't think he was such a rascal ; he gave a beggar an angel once,—well, boy, have a pinch ?—Well, so I said to Sir Charles, ‘I think you will lose the widow, after all—'Gad I do.’ ‘Upon what principle of science, Sir William ?’ said he. ‘Why, faith, man, she is so modest, you see, and has such a pretty way of blushing.’ ‘Harkye, friend Devereux,’ said Sir Charles, smoothing his collar, and mincing his words musically, as he was wont to do—‘harkye, friend Devereux, I will give you the whole experience of my life in one maxim—I can answer for its being new, and I think it is profound—and that maxim is—’ No faith, Morton—no, I can't tell thee—it is villainous, and then it's so desperately against all the sex.”

“My dear uncle, don't tantalize me so—pray tell it me—it shall be a secret.”

“No, boy, no—it will corrupt thee—besides, it will do poor Sid's memory no good. But 'sdeath, it was a most wonderfully shrewd saying—i' faith, it was. But zounds—Morton—I forgot to tell you that I had a letter from the Abbé to-day.”

“Ha! and when does he return?”

“To-morrow, God willing!” said the knight with a sigh.

“So soon, or rather after so long an absence! Well, I am glad of it. I wish much to see him before I leave you.”

“Indeed!” quoth my uncle—“you have an advantage over me, then!—But, od’fish, Morton, how is it that you grew so friendly with the priest before his departure? He used to speak very suspiciously of thee formerly; and, when I last saw him, he lauded thee to the skies.”

“Why, the clergy of his faith have a habit of defending the strong, and crushing the weak, I believe—that’s all. He once thought I was dull enough to damn my fortune, and then he had some strange doubts for my soul—now he thinks me wise enough to become prosperous, and it is astonishing what a respect he has conceived for my principles.”

“Ha! ha! ha!—you have a spice of your uncle’s humor in you—and, ’Gad, you have no small knowledge of the world, considering you have seen so little of it.”

A hit at the Popish clergy was, in my good uncle’s eyes, the exact acme of wit and wisdom. We are always clever with those who imagine we think as they do. To be shallow you must differ with people—to be profound you must agree with them. “Why, sir,” answered the sage nephew, “you forget that I have seen more of the world than many of twice my age. Your house has been full of company ever since I have been in it, and you set me to making observations on what I saw before I was thirteen. And then, too, if one is reading books about real life, at the very time one is mixing in it, it is astonishing how naturally one remarks, and how well one remembers.”

“Especially if one has a genius for it,—eh, boy! And then, too, you have read my play—turned Horace’s Satires into a lampoon upon the boys at school—been regularly to assizes during the vacation—attended the county-balls, and been a most premature male coquette with the ladies. Od’fish, boy!—it is quite curious to see how the young sparks of the present day get on with their love-making.”

“Especially if one has a genius for it—eh, sir?” said I.

“Besides, too,” said my uncle ironically, “you have had the Abbé’s instructions.”

“Ay, and if the priests would communicate to their pupils their experience in frailty, as well as in virtue, how wise they would make us!”

“Od’fish! Morton, you are quite oracular. How got you that fancy of priests?—by observation in life already?”

“No, uncle—by observation in plays, which you tell me are the mirrors of life—you remember what Lee says—

“’Tis thought
That earth is more obliged to priests for bodies
Than Heaven for souls.”

And my uncle laughed, and called me a smart fellow.

CHAPTER XII.

The Abbé's return—a Sword, and a Soliloquy.

THE next evening when I was sitting alone in my room, the Abbé Montreuil suddenly entered. “Ah, is it you? welcome!”—cried I. The priest held out his arms, and embraced me in the most paternal manner.

“It is your friend,” said he, “returned at last to bless and congratulate you. Behold my success in your service,” and the Abbé produced a long leather case, richly inlaid with gold.

“Faith, Abbé,” said I, “am I to understand that this is a present for your eldest pupil?”

“You are,” said Montreuil, opening the case, and producing a sword; the light fell upon the hilt, and I drew back, dazzled with its lustre; it was covered with stones, apparently of the most costly value. Attached to the hilt was a label of purple velvet, on which, in letters of gold, was inscribed, “To the son of Marshal Devereux, the soldier of France, and the friend of Louis XIV.”

Before I recovered my surprise at this sight, the Abbé said—“It was from the King's own hand that I received this sword, and I have authority to inform you, that if ever you wield it in the service of France it will be accompanied by a post worthy of your name.”

“The service of France!” I repeated; “why at present, that is the service of an enemy.”

“An enemy only to a *part* of England!” said the Abbé emphatically; “perhaps I have overtures to you from other monarchs, and the friendship of the court of France may be synonymous with the friendship of the true sovereign of England.”

There was no mistaking the purport of this speech, and even in the midst of my gratified vanity, I drew back alarmed. The Abbé noted the changed expression of my countenance, and artfully turned the subject to comments on the sword, on which I still gazed with a lover's ardor. Thence he veered to a

description of the grace and greatness of the royal donor—he dwelt at length upon the flattering terms in which Louis had spoken of my father, and had inquired concerning myself; he enumerated all the hopes that the illustrious house, into which my father had first married, expressed for a speedy introduction to his son; he lingered with an eloquence more savoring of the court than of the cloister, on the dazzling circle which surrounded the French throne; and when my vanity, my curiosity, my love of pleasure, my ambition, all that are most susceptible, in young minds, were fully aroused, he suddenly ceased, and wished me a good-night.

“Stay,” said I; and looking at him more attentively than I had hitherto done, I perceived a change in his external appearance, which somewhat startled and surprised me. Montreuil had always hitherto been remarkably plain in his dress; but he was now richly attired, and by his side hung a rapier, which had never adorned it before. Something in his aspect seemed to suit the alteration in his garb: and whether it was that long absence had effaced enough of the familiarity of his features, to allow me to be more alive than formerly to the real impression they were calculated to produce, or whether a commune with kings and nobles had of late dignified their old expression, as power was said to have clothed the soldier-mien of Cromwell with a monarch’s bearing—I do not affect to decide; but I thought that, in his high brow and Roman features, the compression of his lip, and his calm but haughty air, there was a nobleness, which I acknowledged for the first time. “Stay, my father,” said I, surveying him, “and tell me, if there be no irreverence in the question, whether brocade and a sword are compatible with the laws of the Order of Jesus?”

“Policy, Morton,” answered Montreuil, “often dispenses with custom; and the declarations of the Institute provide, with their usual wisdom, for worldly and temporary occasions. Even while the constitution ordains us to discard habits repugnant to our professions of poverty, the following exception is made: ‘Si in occurrenti aliquâ occasione, vel necessitate, quis vestibis melioribus, honestis tamen, indueretur.’” *

“There is now, then, some occasion for a more glittering display than ordinary?” said I.

“There is, my pupil,” answered Montreuil; “and whenever you embrace the offer of my friendship made to you more than two years ago,—whenever, too, your ambition points to a lofty

* “But should there chance any occasion or necessity, one may wear better, though still decorous garments.”

and sublime career—whenever, to make and unmake kings,—and, in the noblest sphere to execute the will of God,—indemnifies you for a sacrifice of petty wishes and momentary passions, I will confide to you a scheme worthy of your ancestors and yourself.”

With this the priest departed. Left to myself, I revolved his hints, and marvelled at the power he seemed to possess. “Closeted with kings,” said I, soliloquizing,—“bearing their presents through armed men and military espionage,—speaking of empires and their overthrow as of ordinary objects of ambition—and he himself a low-born and undignified priest, of a poor though a wise order—well, there is more in this than I can fathom ; but I will hesitate before I embark in his dangerous and concealed intrigues—above all, I will look well ere I hazard my safe heritage of these broad lands in the service of that House which is reported to be ungrateful, and which is certainly exiled.”

After this prudent and notable resolution, I took up the sword—re-examined it—kissed the hilt once and the blade twice—put it under my pillow—sent for my valet—undrest—went to bed—fell asleep—and dreamt that I was teaching the Maréchal de Villars the thrust *en seconde*.

But Fate, that arch-gossip, who, like her prototypes on earth, settles all our affairs for us without our knowledge of the matter, had decreed that my friendship with the Abbé Montreuil should be of very short continuance, and that my adventures on earth should flow through a different channel than, in all probability, they would have done under his spiritual direction.

CHAPTER XIII.

A mysterious Letter—a Duel—The Departure of one of the Family.

THE next morning I communicated to the Abbé my intention of proceeding to London. He received it with favor. “I myself,” said he, “shall soon meet you there ; my office in your family has expired, and your mother, after so long an absence, will perhaps readily dispense with my spiritual advice to her. But time presses—since you depart so soon, give me an audience to-night in your apartment. Perhaps our conversation may be of moment.”

I agreed—the hour was fixed, and I left the Abbé to join my uncle and his guests. While I was employing, among them, my

time and genius with equal dignity and profit, one of the servants informed me that a man at the gate wished to see me—and alone.

Somewhat surprised, I followed the servant out of the room into the great hall, and desired him to bid the stranger attend me there. In a few minutes, a small, dark man, dressed between gentility and meanness, made his appearance. He greeted me with great respect, and presented a letter, which, he said, he was charged to deliver into my own hands, "with," he added in a low tone, "a special desire that none should, till I had carefully read it, be made acquainted with its contents." I was not a little startled by this request; and, withdrawing to one of the windows, broke the seal. A letter, inclosed in the envelope, in the Abbé's own handwriting, was the first thing that met my eyes. At that instant the Abbé himself rushed into the hall. He cast one hasty look at the messenger, whose countenance evinced something of surprise and consternation, at beholding him; and, hastening up to me, grasped my hand vehemently, and, while his eye dwelt upon the letter I held, cried, "Do not read it—not a word—not a word, there is poison in it!" And, so saying, he snatched desperately at the letter. I detained it from him with one hand, and pushing him aside with the other, said—

"Pardon me, Father—directly I have read it you shall have that pleasure—not till then;" and, as I said this, my eye falling upon the letter, discovered my own name written in two places—my suspicions were aroused. I raised my eyes to the spot where the messenger had stood, with the view of addressing some question to him respecting his employer, when, to my surprise, I perceived he was already gone; I had no time, however, to follow him.

"Boy," said the Abbé, gasping for breath, and still seizing me with his lean, bony hand,—“boy, give me that letter instantly. I charge you not to disobey me.”

"You forget yourself, sir," said I, endeavoring to shake him off, "you forget yourself: there is no longer between us the distinction of pupil and teacher; and if you have not yet learnt the respect due to my station, suffer me to tell you that it is time you should."

"Give me the letter, I beseech you," said Montreuil, changing his voice from anger to supplication; "I ask your pardon for my violence; the letter does not concern you but me; there is a secret in those lines which you see are in my handwriting, that implicates my personal safety. Give it me, my dear, dear

son—your own honor, if not your affection for me, demands that you should.”

I was staggered. His violence had confirmed my suspicions, but his gentleness weakened them. “Besides,” thought I, “the handwriting is *his*, and even if my life depended upon reading the letter of another, I do not think my honor would suffer me to do so against his consent.” A thought struck me—

“Will you swear,” said I, “that this letter does not concern me?”

“Solemnly,” answered the Abbé, raising his eyes.

“Will you swear that I am not mentioned in it?”

“Upon peril of my soul, I will.”

“Liar—traitor—perjured blasphemer!” cried I, in an inexpressible rage, “look here, and here!” and I pointed out to the priest various lines in which my name legibly and frequently occurred. A change came over Montreuil’s face; he released my arm and staggered back against the wainscot; but recovering his composure instantaneously, he said, “I forgot, my son, I forgot—your name is mentioned, it is true, but with honorable eulogy, that is all.”

“Bravo, honest Father!” cried I, losing my fury in admiring surprise at his address—“bravo! However, if that be all, you can have no objection to allow me to read the lines in which my name occurs; your benevolence cannot refuse me such a gratification as the sight of your written panegyric!”

“Count Devereux,” said the Abbé sternly, while his dark face worked with suppressed passion, “this is trifling with me, and I warn you not to push my patience too far. I *will* have that letter, or—” he ceased abruptly, and touched the hilt of his sword.

“Dare you threaten me?” I said, and the natural fierceness of my own disposition, deepened by vague and strong suspicions of some treachery designed against me, spoke in the tones of my voice.

“Dare I!” repeated Montreuil, sinking and sharpening his voice into a sort of inward screech. “Dare I!—ay, were your whole tribe arrayed against me. Give me the letter, or you will find me now and for ever your most deadly foe; deadly—ay—deadly, deadly!” and he shook his clenched hand at me, with an expression of countenance so malignant and menacing that I drew back involuntarily, and laid my hand on my sword.

The action seemed to give Montreuil a signal for which he had hitherto waited. “Draw then,” he said through his teeth, and unsheathed his rapier.

Though surprised at his determination, I was not backward in meeting it. Thrusting the letter in my bosom, I drew my sword in time to parry a rapid and fierce thrust. I had expected easily to master Montreuil, for I had some skill at my weapon;—I was deceived—I found him far more adroit than myself in the art of offence; and perhaps it would have fared ill for the hero of this narrative had Montreuil deemed it wise to direct against my life all the science he possessed. But the moment our swords crossed, the constitutional coolness of the man, which rage or fear had for a brief time banished, returned at once, and he probably saw that it would be as dangerous to him to take away the life of his pupil, as to forfeit the paper for which he fought. He, therefore, appeared to bend all his efforts towards disarming me. Whether or not he would have effected this it is hard to say, for my blood was up, and any neglect of my antagonist, in attaining an object very dangerous, when engaged with a skilful and quick swordsman, might have sent him to the place from which the prayers of his brethren have (we are bound to believe) released so many thousands of souls. But, meanwhile, the servants, who at first thought the clashing of swords was the wanton sport of some young gallants as yet new to the honor of wearing them, grew alarmed by the continuance of the sound, and flocked hurriedly to the place of contest. At their intrusion, we mutually drew back. Recovering my presence of mind, (it was a possession I very easily lost at that time,) I saw the unseemliness of fighting with my preceptor, and a priest. I therefore burst, though awkwardly enough, into a laugh, and, affecting to treat the affair as a friendly trial of skill between the Abbé and myself, resheathed my sword and dismissed the intruders, who, evidently disbelieving my version of the story, retreated slowly, and exchanging looks. Montreuil, who had scarcely seconded my attempt to gloss over our *rencontre*, now approached me.

“Count,” he said with a collected and cool voice, “suffer me to request you to exchange three words with me, in a spot less liable than this to interruption.”

“Follow me then!” said I—and I led the way to a part of the grounds which lay remote and sequestered from intrusion. I then turned round, and perceived that the Abbé had left his sword behind. “How is this?” I said, pointing to his unarmed side—“have you not come hither to renew our engagement?”

“No!” answered Montreuil, “I repent me of my sudden haste, and I have resolved to deny myself all further possibility

of unseemly warfare. That letter, young man, I still demand from you; I demand it from your own sense of honor and of right—it was written by me—it was not intended for your eye—it contains secrets implicating the lives of others beside myself; now—read it if you will.”

“You are right, sir,” said I, after a short pause; “there is the letter; never shall it be said of Morton Devereux that he hazarded his honor to secure his safety.—But the tie between us is broken now and for ever!”

So saying, I flung down the debated epistle, and strode away. I re-entered the great hall. I saw by one of the windows a sheet of paper—I picked it up, and perceived that it was the envelope in which the letter had been enclosed. It contained only these lines, addressed to me in French:

“A friend of the late Marshal Devereux encloses to his son a letter, the contents of which it is essential for his safety that he should know.

“C. D. B.”

“Umph!” said I—“a very satisfactory intimation, considering that the son of the late Marshal Devereux is so very well assured that he shall not know one line of the contents of the said letter. But let me see after this messenger!” and I immediately hastened to institute inquiry respecting him. I found that he was already gone; on leaving the hall he had remounted his horse, and taken his departure. One servant, however, had seen him, as he passed the front court, address a few words to my valet, Desmarais, who happened to be loitering there. I summoned Desmarais and questioned him.

“The dirty fellow,” said the Frenchman, pointing to his spattered stockings with a lachrymose air, “splashed me, by a prance of his horse, from head to foot, and while I was screaming for very anguish, he stopped and said, ‘Tell the Count Devereux that I was unable to tarry, but that the letter requires no answer.’”

I consoled Desmarais for his misfortune, and hastened to my uncle with a determination to reveal to him all that had occurred. Sir William was in his dressing-room, and his gentleman was very busy in adorning his wig. I entreated him to dismiss the *coiffeur*, and then, without much preliminary detail, acquainted him with all that had passed between the Abbé and myself.

The knight seemed startled when I came to the story of the sword. “Gad, Sir Count, what have you been doing?” said

he; "know you not that this may be a very ticklish matter? The king of France is a very great man, to be sure—a very great man—and a very fine gentleman; but you will please to remember that we are at war with his Majesty, and I cannot guess how far the accepting such presents may be held treasonable."

And Sir William shook his head with a mournful significance. "Ah," cried he, at last (when I had concluded my whole story), with a complacent look, "I have not lived at court, and studied human nature, for nothing: and I will wager my best full-bottom to a night-cap, that the crafty old fox is as much a Jacobite as he is a rogue! The letter would have proved it, sir—it would have proved it!"

"But what shall be done now?" said I; "will you suffer him to remain any longer in the house?"

"Why," replied the knight, suddenly recollecting his reverence to the fair sex, "he is your mother's guest, not mine; we must refer the matter to her. But zauns, sir, with all deference to her ladyship, we cannot suffer our house to be a conspiracy-hatch as well as a popish chapel; and to attempt your life too—the devil! Od'sfish, boy, I will go to the countess myself, if you will just let Nicholls finish my wig—never attend the ladies *en déshabille*—always, with them, take care of your person most, when you most want to display your mind;" and my uncle ringing a little silver bell on his dressing-table, the sound immediately brought Nicholls to his toilet.

Trusting the cause to the zeal of my uncle, whose hatred to the ecclesiastic would, I knew, be an efficacious adjunct to his diplomatic address, and not unwilling to avoid being myself the person to acquaint my mother with the suspected delinquency of her favorite, I hastened from the knight's apartment in search of Aubrey. He was not in the house. His attendants (for my uncle, with old-fashioned grandeur of respect, suitable to his great wealth and aristocratic temper, allotted to each of us a separate suite of servants as well as of apartments) believed he was in the park. Thither I repaired, and found him, at length, seated by an old tree, with a large book of a religious cast before him, on which his eyes were intently bent.

"I rejoice to have found thee, my gentle brother," said I, throwing myself on the green turf by his side: "in truth you have chosen a fitting and fair place for study."

"I have chosen," said Aubrey, "a place meet for the peculiar study I am engrossed in; for where can we better read of the power and benevolence of God than among the living testi-

monies of both? Beautiful!—how very beautiful—is this happy world; but I fear,” added Aubrey, and the glow of his countenance died away,—“I fear that we enjoy it too much.”

“We hold different interpretations of our creed then,” said I, “for I esteem enjoyment the best proof of gratitude; nor do I think we can pay a more acceptable duty to the Father of all Goodness than by showing ourselves sensible of the favors he bestows upon us.”

Aubrey shook his head gently, but replied not.

“Yes,” resumed I, after a pause—“yes, it is indeed a glorious and fair world which we have for our inheritance. Look, how the sunlight sleeps yonder upon fields covered with golden corn, and seems, like the divine benevolence of which you spoke, to smile upon the luxuriance which its power created. This carpet at our feet, covered with flowers that breathe, sweet as good deeds, to Heaven—the stream that breaks through that distant copse, laughing in the light of noon, and sending its voice through the hill and woodland, like a messenger of glad tidings—the green boughs over our head, vocal with a thousand songs, all inspirations of a joy too exquisite for silence—the very leaves, which seem to dance and quiver with delight—think you, Aubrey, that these are so sullen as not to return thanks for the happiness they imbibe with being;—what are those thanks but the incense of their joy? The flowers send it up to heaven in fragrance—the air and the wave in music. Shall the heart of man be the only part of His creation that shall dishonor His worship with lamentation and gloom? When the inspired writers call upon us to praise our Creator, do they not say to us—‘Be *joyful* in your God?’”

“How can we be joyful with the Judgment-day ever before us?” said Aubrey—“how can we be joyful,” (and here a dark shade crossed his countenance, and his lip trembled with emotion), while the deadly passions of this world plead and rankle at the heart? Oh, none but they who have known the full blessedness of a commune with heaven can dream of the whole anguish and agony of the conscience, when it feels itself sullied by the mire and crushed by the load of earth!” Aubrey paused, and his words—his tone—his look—made upon me a powerful impression. I was about to answer, when, interrupting me, he said, “Let us talk not of these matters—speak to me on more worldly topics.”

“I sought you,” said I, “that I might do so!” and I proceeded to detail to Aubrey as much of my private intercourse with the Abbé as I deemed necessary in order to warn him

from too close a confidence in the wily ecclesiastic. Aubrey listened to me with earnest attention : the affair of the letter—the gross falsehood of the priest in denying the mention of my name, in his epistle, evidently dismayed him. “But,” said he, after a long silence—“but it is not for us, Morton—weak, ignorant, inexperienced as we are—to judge prematurely of our spiritual pastors. To them also is given a far greater license of conduct than to us—and ways enveloped in what to our eyes are mystery and shade ; nay, I know not whether it be much less impious to question the paths of God’s chosen, than to scrutinize those of the Deity himself.”

“Aubrey, Aubrey, this is childish !” said I, somewhat moved to anger. “Mystery is always the trick of imposture : God’s chosen should be distinguished from their flock only by superior virtue, and not by a superior privilege in deceit.”

“But,” said Aubrey, pointing to a passage in the book before him, “see what a preacher of the word has said !”—and Aubrey recited one of the most dangerous maxims in priest-craft, as reverently as if he were quoting from the Scripture itself. “‘The nakedness of truth should never be too openly exposed to the eyes of the vulgar. It was wisely feigned, by the ancients, that Truth did lie concealed in a well !’”

“Yes,” said I, with enthusiasm, “but that well is like the holy stream at Dodona, which has the gift of enlightening those who seek it, and the power of illumining every torch which touches the surface of its water !”

Whatever answer Aubrey might have made was interrupted by my uncle, who appeared approaching towards us with unusual satisfaction depicted on his comely countenance.

“Well, boys, well,” said he, when he came within hearing—“a holyday for you ! Od’sfish—and a holier day than my old house has known since its former proprietor, Sir Hugo, of valorous memory, demolished the nunnery, of which some remains yet stand on yonder eminence. Morton, my man of might, the thing is done—the court is purified—the wicked one is departed. Look here, and be as happy as I am at our release ;” and he threw me a note in Montreuil’s writing :

“TO SIR WILLIAM DEVEREUX, KT.:

“My Honored Friend : In consequence of a dispute between your eldest nephew, Count Morton Devereux, and myself, in which he desired me to remember, not only that our former relationship of tutor and pupil was at an end, but that friendship for his person was incompatible with the respect due to his superior station, I can neither so far degrade the dignity of

letters, nor, above all, so meanly debase the sanctity of my divine profession, as any longer to remain beneath your hospitable roof,—a guest not only unwelcome to, but insulted by, your relation and apparent heir. Suffer me to offer you my gratitude for the favors you have hitherto bestowed on me, and to bid you farewell for ever.

“I have the honor to be,

With the most profound respect, etc.,

“JULIAN MONTREUIL.”

“Well, sir, what say you?” cried my uncle, stamping his cane firmly on the ground, when I had finished reading the letter, and had transmitted it to Aubrey.

“That the good Abbé has displayed his usual skill in composition. And my mother? Is she imbued with our opinion of his priestship?”

“Not exactly, I fear. However, Heaven bless her, she is too soft to say ‘nay.’ But those Jesuits are so smooth-tongued to women. ‘Gad, they threaten damnation with such an irresistible air, that they are as much like William the Conqueror as Edward the Confessor. Ha! Master Aubrey, have you become amorous of the old Jacobite, that you sigh over his crabbed writing, as if it were a *billet-doux*?”

“There seems a great deal of feeling in what he says, sir,” said Aubrey, returning the letter to my uncle.

“Feeling!” cried the knight; “ay, the reverend gentry always have a marvellously tender feeling for their own interest—eh, Morton?”

“Right, dear sir,” said I, wishing to change a subject which I knew might hurt Aubrey; “but should we not join yon party of dames and damsels? I see they are about to make a water excursion.”

“‘Sdeath, sir, with all my heart,” cried the good-natured knight: “I love to see the dear creatures amuse themselves; for, to tell you the truth, Morton,” said he, sinking his voice into a knowing whisper, “the best thing to keep them from playing the devil is to encourage them in playing the fool!” and, laughing heartily at the jest he had purloined from one of his favorite writers, Sir William led the way to the water-party.

CHAPTER XIV.

Being a Chapter of Trifles.

THE Abbé disappeared! It is astonishing how well everybody bore his departure. My mother scarcely spoke on the subject: but, along the irrefragable smoothness of her temperament, all things glided without resistance to their course, or trace where they had been. Gerald, who, occupied solely in rural sports or rustic loves, seldom mingled in the festivities of the house, was equally silent on the subject. Aubrey looked grieved for a day or two; but his countenance soon settled into its customary and grave softness; and, in less than a week, so little was the Abbé spoken of or missed that you would scarcely have imagined Julian Montreuil had ever passed the threshold of our gate. The oblivion of one buried is nothing to the oblivion of one disgraced.

Meanwhile, I pressed for my departure; and, at length, the day was finally fixed. Ever since that conversation with Lady Hasselton, which has been set before the reader, that lady had lingered and lingered—though the house was growing empty, and London, in all seasons, was, according to her, better than the country in any—until the Count Devereux, with that amiable modesty which so especially characterized him, began to suspect that the Lady Hasselton lingered on his account. This emboldened that bashful personage to press in earnest for the fourth seat in the beauty's carriage, which, we have seen in the conversation before mentioned, had been previously offered to him in jest. After a great affectation of horror at the proposal, the Lady Hasselton yielded. She had always, she said, been dotingly fond of children, and it was certainly very shocking to send such a chit as the little Count to London by himself.

My uncle was charmed with the arrangement. The beauty was a peculiar favorite of his, and, in fact, he was sometimes pleased to hint that he had private reasons for love towards her mother's daughter. Of the truth of this insinuation I am, however, more than somewhat suspicious, and believe it was only a little *ruse* of the good knight, in order to excuse the vent of those kindly affections with which (while the heartless tone of the company his youth had frequented made him ashamed to own it) his breast overflowed. There was in Lady Hasselton's familiarity—her ease of manner—a certain good-nature mingled with her affectation, and a gaiety of spirit, which never flagged

—something greatly calculated to win favor with a man of my uncle's temper.

An old gentleman who filled in her family the office of "the *chevalier*" in a French one; viz., who told stories, not too long, and did not challenge you for interrupting them—who had a good air, and unexceptionable pedigree—a turn for wit, literature, note-writing, and the management of lap-dogs—who could attend *Madame* to auctions, plays, court, and the puppet-show—who had a right to the best company, but would, on a signal, give up his seat to any one the pretty *capricieuse* whom he served might select from the worst—in short a very useful, charming personage, "vastly" liked by all, and "prodigiously" respected by none; this gentleman, I say, by name Mr. Lovell, had attended her ladyship in her excursion to Devereux Court. Besides him there came also a widow lady, a distant relation, with one eye and a sharp tongue—the Lady Needleham, whom the beauty carried about with her as a sort of *gouvernante* or duenna. These excellent persons made my *compagnons de voyage*, and filled the remaining complements of the coach. To say truth, and to say nothing of my *tendresse* for the Lady Hasselton, I was very anxious to escape the ridicule of crawling up to town, like a green beetle, in my uncle's verdant chariot, with the four Flanders mares trained not to exceed two miles an hour. And my Lady Hasselton's *private* railleries—for she was really well bred, and made no jest of my uncle's antiquities of taste, in his presence, at least—had considerably heightened my intuitive dislike to that mode of transporting myself to the metropolis. The day before my departure, Gerald, for the first time, spoke of it.

Glancing towards the mirror, which gave in full contrast the magnificent beauty of his person, and the smaller proportions and plainer features of my own; he said, with a sneer, "Your appearance must create a wonderful sensation in town."

"No doubt of it," said I, taking his words literally, and arraying my laced cravat with the air of a *petit-maitre*.

"What a wit the Count has!" whispered the Duchess of Lackland—who had not yet given up all hope of the elder brother.

"Wit," said the Lady Hasselton: "poor child, he is a perfect simpleton!"

CHAPTER XV.

The Mother and Son—Virtue Should be the Sovereign of the Feelings, not their Destroyer.

I TOOK the first opportunity to escape from the good company who were so divided in opinion as to my mental accomplishments, and repaired to my mother ; for whom, despite of her evenness of disposition, verging towards insensibility, I felt a powerful and ineffaceable affection. Indeed, if purity of life, rectitude of intentions, and fervor of piety, can win love, none ever deserved it more than she. It was a pity that, with such admirable qualities, she had not more diligently cultivated her affections. The seed was not wanting ; but it had been neglected. Originally intended for the veil, she had been taught, early in life, that much feeling was synonymous with much sin ; and she had so long and so carefully repressed in her heart every attempt of the forbidden fruit to put forth a single blossom, that the soil seemed at last to have become incapable of bearing it. If, in one corner of this barren, but sacred, spot, some green and tender verdure of affection did exist, it was, with a partial and petty reserve for my twin-brother, kept exclusive, and consecrated to Aubrey. His congenial habits of pious silence and rigid devotion—his softness of temper—his utter freedom from all boyish excesses, joined to his almost angelic beauty—a quality which, in no female heart, is ever without its value—were exactly calculated to attract her sympathy, and work themselves into her love. Gerald was also regular in his habits, attentive to devotion, and had, from an early period, been high in the favor of her spiritual director. Gerald, too, if he had not the delicate and dreamlike beauty of Aubrey, possessed attractions of more masculine and decided order ; and for Gerald, therefore, the Countess gave the little of love that she could spare from Aubrey. To me she manifested the most utter indifference. My difficult and fastidious temper—my sarcastic turn of mind—my violent and headstrong passions—my daring, reckless, and, when roused, almost ferocious nature—all, especially revolted the even and polished and quiescent character of my maternal parent. The little extravagances of my childhood seemed to her pure and inexperienced mind, the crimes of a heart naturally distorted and evil ; my jesting vein, which, though it never, even in the wantonness of youth, attacked the substances of good, seldom respected its semblances and its forms, she considered as the effusions of malignity ; and

even the bursts of love, kindness, and benevolence, which were by no means infrequent in my wild and motley character, were so foreign to her stillness of temperament that they only revolted her by their violence, instead of affecting her by their warmth.

Nor did she like me the better for the mutual understanding between my uncle and myself. On the contrary, shocked by the idle and gay turn of the knight's conversation, the frivolities of his mind, and his heretical disregard for the forms of the religious sect which she so zealously espoused, she was utterly insensible to the points which redeemed and ennobled his sterling and generous character—utterly obtuse to his warmth of heart—his overflowing kindness of disposition—his charity—his high honor—his justice of principle, that nothing save benevolence could warp—and the shrewd, penetrating sense, which, though often clouded by foibles and humorous eccentricity, still made the stratum of his intellectual composition. Nevertheless, despite her prepossessions against us both, there was in her temper something so gentle, meek, and un-upbraiding, that even the sense of injustice lost its sting, and one could not help loving the softness of her character, while one was most chilled by its frigidity. Anger, hope, fear, the faintest breath or sign of passion, never seemed to stir the breezeless languor of her feelings; and quiet was so inseparable from her image that I have almost thought, like that people described by Herodotus, her very sleep could never be disturbed by dreams.

Yes! how fondly, how tenderly I loved her! What tears—secret, but deep—bitter, but unrepublishing—have I retired to shed, when I caught her cold and unaffectionate glance. How (unnoticed and uncared for) have I watched, and prayed, and wept, without her door, when a transitory sickness or suffering detained her within; and how, when stretched myself upon the feverish bed, to which my early weakness of frame often condemned me, how have I counted the moments to her punctilious and brief visit, and started as I caught her footstep, and felt my heart leap within me as she approached; and then, as I heard her cold tone, and looked upon her unmoved face, how bitterly have I turned away with all that repressed and crushed affection which was construed into sullenness or disrespect. O mighty and enduring force of early associations, that almost seems, in its unconquerable strength, to partake of an innate prepossession, that binds the son to the mother, who concealed him in her womb, and purchased life for him with the travail of death!—fountain of filial love, which coldness

cannot freeze, nor injustice embitter, nor pride divert into fresh channels, nor time, and the hot suns of our toiling manhood, exhaust—even at this moment, how livingly do you gush upon my heart, and water with your divine waves the memories that yet flourish amidst the sterility of years !

I approached the apartments appropriated to my mother—I knocked at her door ; one of her women admitted me ; the Countess was sitting on a high-backed chair, curiously adorned with tapestry. Her feet, which were remarkable for their beauty, were upon a velvet cushion ; three handmaids stood round her, and she herself was busily employed in a piece of delicate embroidery, an art in which she eminently excelled.

“The Count—madam !” said the woman who had admitted me, placing a chair beside my mother, and then retiring to join her sister maidens.

“Good-day to you, my son,” said the Countess, lifting her eyes for a moment, and then dropping them again upon her work.

“I have come to seek you, dearest mother, as I know not, if, among the crowd of guests and amusements which surround us, I shall enjoy another opportunity of having a private conversation with you—will it please you to dismiss your women ?”

My mother again lifted up her eyes—“And why, my son?—surely there *can* be nothing between us which requires their absence ; what is your reason ?”

“I leave you to-morrow, madam ; is it strange that a son should wish to see his mother alone before his departure ?”

“By no means, Morton ; but your absence will not be very long, will it ?”

“Forgive my importunity, dear mother—but *will* you dismiss your attendants ?”

“If you wish it, certainly ; but I dislike feeling alone, especially in these large rooms ; nor do I think our being unattended quite consistent with our rank ; however, I never contradict you, my son,” and the Countess directed her women to wait in the anteroom.

“Well, Morton, what is your wish ?”

“Only to bid you farewell, and to ask if London contains nothing which you will commission me to obtain for you !”

The Countess again raised her eyes from her work.—“I am greatly obliged to you, my dear son ; this is a very delicate attention on your part. I am informed that stomachers are worn a thought less pointed than they were. I care not, you

well know, for such vanities ; but respect for the memory of your illustrious father renders me desirous to retain a seemly appearance to the world, and my women shall give you written instructions thereon to Madame Tourville—she lives in St. James's Street, and is the only person to be employed in these matters. She is a woman who has known misfortune, and appreciates the sorrowful and subdued tastes of those whom an exalted station has not preserved from like afflictions.—So, you go to-morrow—will you get me the scissors, they are on the ivory table, yonder?—When do you return?”

“Perhaps never!” said I abruptly.

“Never, Morton ; how singular—why?”

“I may join the army—and be killed.”

“I hope not.—Dear, how cold it is—will you shut the window?—pray forgive my troubling you, but you *would* send away the women.—Join the army, you say?—it is a very dangerous profession—your poor father might be alive now but for having embraced it ; nevertheless, in a righteous cause, under the Lord of Hosts, there is great glory to be obtained beneath its banners. Alas, however, for its private evils ! alas, for the orphan and the widow !—You will be sure, my dear son, to give the note to Madame Tourville herself ? her assistants have not her knowledge of my misfortunes, nor indeed of my exact proportions ; and at my age, and in my desolate state, I would fain be decorous in these things—and that reminds me of dinner. Have you aught else to say, Morton ?”

“Yes!” said I, suppressing my emotions—“yes, mother ! do bestow on me one warm wish, one kind word, before we part—see—I kneel for your blessing—will you not give it me ?”

“Bless you, my child—bless you ! look you now—I have dropt my needle !”

I rose hastily—bowed profoundly—(my mother returned the courtesy with the grace peculiar to herself)—and withdrew. I hurried into the great drawing-room—found Lady Needleham alone—rushed out in despair—encountered the Lady Hasselton, and coquetted with her the rest of the evening. Vain hope ! to forget one's real feelings by pretending those one never felt !

The next morning, then, after suitable adieux to all (Gerald excepted) whom I left behind—after some tears too from my uncle, which, had it not been for the presence of the Lady Hasselton, I could have returned with interest—and after a long caress to his dog Ponto, which now, in parting with that dear old man, seemed to me as dog never seemed before, I hurried into the Beauty's carriage, bade farewell forever to the Rubicon

of Life, and commenced my career of manhood and citizenship by learning, under the tuition of the prettiest coquette of her time, the dignified duties of a Court Gallant and a Town Beau.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

The Hero in London—Pleasure is often the Shortest, as it is the Earliest Road to Wisdom, and we may say of the World what Zeal-of-the-Land-Busy says of the Pig-Booth, "We Escape so much of the Other Vanities by our Early Entering."

It had, when I first went to town, just become the fashion for young men of fortune to keep house, and to give their bachelor establishments the importance hitherto reserved for the household of a Benedict.

Let the reader figure to himself a suite of apartments magnificently furnished, in the vicinity of the court. An anteroom is crowded with divers persons, all messengers in the various negotiations of pleasure. There, a French valet—that inestimable valet, Jean Desmarais—sitting over a small fire, was watching the operations of a coffee-pot, and conversing, in a mutilated attempt at the language of our nation, though with the enviable fluency of his own, with the various loiterers who were beguiling the hours they were obliged to wait for an audience of the master himself, by laughing at the master's Gallic representative. There stood a tailor with his books of patterns just imported from Paris—that modern Prometheus, who makes man what he is! Next to him a tall, gaunt fellow, in a coat covered with tarnished lace, a night-cap wig, and a large whip in his hands, comes to vouch for the pedigree and excellence of the three horses he intends to dispose of, out of pure love and amity for the buyer. By the window stood a thin, starveling poet, who, like the grammarian of Cos, might have put lead in his pockets to prevent being blown away, had he not, with a more paternal precaution, put so much in his works that he had left none to spare. Excellent trick of the times, when ten guineas can purchase every virtue under the sun, and when an author thinks to vindicate the sins of his book by proving the admirable qualities of the paragon to whom it is dedicated.* There, with an air of su-

* Thank Heaven, for the honor of literature, *nous avons changé tout cela!*—ED.

percilious contempt upon his smooth cheeks, a page, in purple and silver, sat upon the table, swinging his legs to and fro, and big with all the reflected importance of a *billet-doux*. There stood the pert haberdasher, with his box of silver-fringed gloves, and lace which Diana might have worn. At that time there was indeed no enemy to female chastity like the former article of man-millinery—the delicate whiteness of the glove, the starry splendor of the fringe, were irresistible, and the fair Adorna, in poor Lee's tragedy of Cæsar Borgia, is far from the only lady who has been killed by a pair of gloves.

Next to the haberdasher, dingy and dull of aspect, a book-hunter bent beneath the load of old works gathered from stall and shed, and about to be re-sold according to the price exacted from all literary gallants, who affect to unite the fine gentleman with the profound scholar. A little girl, whose brazen face and voluble tongue betrayed the growth of her intellectual faculties, leant against the wainscot, and repeated, in the anteroom, the tart repartees which her mistress (the most celebrated actress of the day) uttered on the stage; while a stout, sturdy, bull-headed gentleman, in a gray surtout and a black wig, mingled with the various voices of the motley group the gentle phrases of Hockley in the Hole, from which place of polite merriment he came charged with a message of invitation. While such were the inmates of the anteroom, what picture shall we draw of the *salon* and its occupant?

A table was covered with books, a couple of fencing foils, a woman's mask, and a profusion of letters; a scarlet cloak, richly laced, hung over, trailing on the ground. Upon a slab of marble lay a hat, looped with diamonds, a sword, and a lady's lute. Extended upon a sofa, loosely robed in a dressing gown of black velvet, his shirt collar unbuttoned, his stockings ungartered, his own hair (undressed and released for a brief interval from the false locks universally worn) waving from his forehead in short yet dishevelled curls, his whole appearance stamped with the morning negligence which usually follows midnight dissipation, lay a young man of about nineteen years. His features were neither handsome nor ill-favored, and his stature was small, slight, and somewhat insignificant, but not, perhaps, ill-formed either for active enterprise or for muscular effort. Such, reader, is the picture of the young prodigal who occupied the apartments I have described, and such (though somewhat flattered by partiality) is a portrait of Morton Devereux, six months after his arrival in town.

The door was suddenly thrown open with that unhesitating

rudeness by which our friends think it necessary to signify the extent of their familiarity; and a young man of about eight-and-twenty, richly dressed, and of a countenance in which a dissipated nonchalance and an aristocratic hauteur seemed to struggle for mastery, abruptly entered.

"What! ho, my noble royster," cried he, flinging himself upon a chair—"still suffering from St. John's Burgundy! Fie, fie upon your apprenticeship!—why, before I had served half your time, I could take my three bottles as easily as the sea took the good ship 'Revolution,'—swallow them down with a gulp, and never show the least sign of them the next morning!"

"I readily believe you, most magnanimous Tarleton. Providence gives to each of its creatures different favors—to one wit—to the other a capacity for drinking. A thousand pities that they are never united!"

"So bitter, Count!—ah, what will ever cure you of sarcasm?"

"A wise man by conversion, or fools by satiety."

"Well, I dare say that is witty enough, but I never admire fine things of a morning. I like letting my faculties live till night in a *déshabille*—let us talk easily and sillily of the affairs of the day. *Imprimis*, will you stroll to the New Exchange?—there is a black eye there that measures out ribbons, and my green ones long to flirt with it."

"With all my heart—and in return you shall accompany me to Master Powell's puppet-show."

"You speak as wisely as Solomon himself in the puppet-show. I own that I love that sight; 'tis a pleasure to the littleness of human nature to see great things abased by mimicry—kings moved by bobbins, and the poms of the earth personated by Punch."

"But how do you like sharing the mirth of the groundlings, the filthy plebeians, and letting them see how petty are those distinctions which you value so highly, by showing them how heartily you can laugh at such distinctions yourself? Allow, my superb Coriolanus, that one purchases pride by the loss of consistency."

"Ah, Devereux, you poison my enjoyment by the mere word 'plebeian!' Oh, what a beastly thing is a common person!—a shape of the trodden clay without any alloy—a compound of dirty clothes—bacon breaths, villainous smells, beggarly cowardice, and cattish ferocity.—Pah, Devereux! rub civet on the very thought!"

"Yet they will laugh to-day at the same things you will, and consequently there would be a most flattering congeniality be-

tween you. Emotion, whether of ridicule, anger, or sorrow—whether raised at a puppet-show, a funeral, or a battle—is your grandest of levellers. The man who would be always superior should be always apathetic.”

“Oracular, as usual, Count,—but, hark!—the clock gives tongue. One, by the Lord!—will you not dress?”

And I rose and dressed. We passed through the anteroom, my attendant assistants in the art of wasting money drew up in a row.

“Pardon me, gentlemen,” said I, (‘Gentlemen, indeed!’ cried Tarleton,) “for keeping you so long. Mr. Snivelship, your waistcoats are exquisite—favor me by conversing with my valet on the width of the lace for my liveries—he has my instructions. Mr. Jockleton, your horses shall be tried to-morrow at one. Ay, Mr. Rymer, I beg you a thousand pardons—I beseech you to forgive the ignorance of my rascals in suffering a gentleman of your merit to remain for a moment unattended to. I have read your ode—it is splendid—the ease of Horace, with the fire of Pindar—your Pegasus never touches the earth, and yet in his wildest excesses you curb him with equal grace and facility—I object, sir, only to your dedication—it is too flattering.”

“By no means, my Lord Count, it fits you to a hair.”

“Pardon me,” interrupted I, “and allow me to transfer the honor to Lord Halifax—he loves men of merit—he loves also their dedications. I will mention it to him to-morrow—everything you say of me will suit him exactly. You will oblige me with a copy of your poem directly it is printed, and suffer me to pay your bookseller for it now, and through your friendly mediation; adieu!”

“Oh, Count, this is too generous.”

“A letter for me, my pretty page? Ah! tell her ladyship I shall wait upon her commands at Powell’s—time will move with a tortoise speed till I kiss her hands. Mr. Fribbleden, your gloves would fit the giants at Guildhall—my valet will furnish you with my exact size—you will see to the legitimate breadth of the fringe. My little beauty, you are from Mrs. Bracegirdle—the play *shall* succeed—I have taken seven boxes—Mr. St. John promises his influence. Say, therefore, my Hebe, that the thing is certain, and let me kiss thee,—thou hast dew on thy lip already. Mr. Thumpem, you are a fine fellow, and deserve to be encouraged; I will see that the next time your head is broken it shall be broken fairly; but I will not patronize the bear—consider that peremptory. What, Mr. Bookworm again! I hope you

have succeeded better this time—the old songs had an autumn fit upon them, and had lost the best part of their *leaves*—and Plato had mortgaged one-half his republic, to pay, I suppose, the exorbitant sum you thought proper to set upon the other. As for Diogenes Laertius, and his philosophers—”

“Pish!” interrupted Tarleton; “are you going, by your theoretical treatises on philosophy, to make me learn the practical part of it, and prate upon learning while I am supporting myself with patience?”

“Pardon me! Mr. Bookworm—you will deposit your load, and visit me to-morrow at an earlier hour. And now, Tarleton, I am at your service.”

CHAPTER II.

Gay Scenes and Conversations—The New Exchange and the Puppet-show—The Actor, the Sexton, and the Beauty.

“WELL, Tarleton,” said I, looking round that mart of millinery and love-making, which, so celebrated in the reign of Charles II., still preserved the shadow of its old renown in that of Anne—“well, here we are upon the classical ground so often commemorated in the comedies which our chaste grandmothers thronged to see. Here we can make appointments, while we profess to buy gloves, and should our mistress tarry too long, beguile our impatience by a flirtation with her milliner. Is there not a breathing air of gaiety about the place?—does it not still smack of the *Ethereges* and *Sedleys*?”

“Right,” said Tarleton, leaning over a counter and amorously eyeing the pretty coquette to whom it belonged—while, with the coxcomby then in fashion, he sprinkled the long curls that touched his shoulders with a fragrant shower from a bottle of jessamine water upon the counter—“right; saw you ever such an eye? Have you snuff of the true scent, my beauty?—foh!—this is for the nostril of a Welsh parson—choleric and hot, my beauty—pulverized horseradish—why, it would make a nose of the coldest constitution imaginable sneeze like a washed school-boy on a Saturday night. Ah, this is better, my princess—there is some courtesy in this snuff—it flatters the brain like a poet’s dedication. Right, Devereux, right, there *is* something infectious in the atmosphere; one catches good-humor as easily as if it were cold. Shall we stroll on?—*my Clelia* is on the other side of the Exchange.—You were speaking of the playwrights—what a pity that our *Ethereges* and *Wycherleys* should be so frank in

their gallantry, that the prudish public already begins to look shy on them.—They have a world of wit!”

“Ay,” said I; “and, as my good uncle would say, a world of knowledge of human nature, viz., of the worst part of it. But they are worse than merely licentious—they are positively villainous—pregnant with the most redemptionless *scoundrelism*,—cheating, lying, thieving, and fraud; their humor debauches the whole moral system—they are like the Sardinian herb—they make you laugh, it is true—but they poison you in the act. But who comes here?”

“Oh, honest Coll!—Ah, Cibber, how goes it with you?”

The person thus addressed was a man of about the middle age—very grotesquely attired—and with a periwig preposterously long. His countenance (which, in its features, was rather comely) was stamped with an odd mixture of liveliness, impudence, and a coarse, yet not unjoyous spirit of reckless debauchery. He approached us with a saunter, and saluted Tarleton with an air servile enough, in spite of an affected familiarity.

“What think you,” resumed my companion, “we were conversing upon?”

“Why, indeed, Mr. Tarleton,” answered Cibber, bowing very low, “unless it were the exquisite fashion of your waistcoat or your success with my Lady Duchess, I know not what to guess.”

“Pooh, man,” said Tarleton haughtily, “none of your compliments;” and then added, in a milder tone, “No, Colley, we were abusing immoralities that existed on the stage, until thou, by the light of thy virtuous example, didst undertake to reform it.”

“Why,” rejoined Cibber, with an air of mock sanctity, “Heaven be praised, I have pulled out some of the weeds from our theatrical parterre—”

“Hear you that, Count? Does he not look a pretty fellow for a censor?”

“Surely,” said Cibber, “ever since Dicky Steele has set up for a saint, and assumed the methodistical twang, some hopes of conversion may be left even for such reprobates as myself. Where, may I ask, will Mr. Tarleton drink to-night?”

“Not with thee, Coll. The Saturnalia don’t happen every day. Rid us now of thy company; but stop, I will do thee a pleasure—know you this gentleman?”

“I have not that extreme honor.”

“Know a Count, then! Count Devereux, demean yourself by sometimes acknowledging Colley Cibber, a rare fellow at a song, a bottle, and a message to an actress; a lively rascal enough,

but without the goodness to be loved or the independence to be respected."

"Mr. Cibber," said I, rather hurt at Tarleton's speech, though the object of it seemed to hear this description with the most unruffled composure—"Mr. Cibber, I am happy, and proud of an introduction to the author of the 'Careless Husband.' Here is my address; oblige me with a visit at your leisure."

"How could you be so galling to the poor devil?" said I, when Cibber, with a profusion of bows and compliments, had left us to ourselves.

"Ah, hang him—a low fellow, who pins all his happiness to the skirts of the quality, is proud of being despised, and that which would excruciate the vanity of others only flatters *his*. And now for my Clelia."

After my companion had amused himself with a brief flirtation with a young lady who affected a most edifying demureness, we left the Exchange, and repaired to the Puppet-show.

On entering the Piazza, in which, as I am writing for the next century, it may be necessary to say that Punch held his court, we saw a tall, thin fellow loitering under the columns, and exhibiting a countenance of the most ludicrous discontent. There was an insolent arrogance about Tarleton's good-nature which always led him to consult the whim of the moment at the expense of every other consideration, especially if the whim referred to a member of the canaille; whom my aristocratic friend esteemed as a base part of the exclusive and despotic property of gentlemen.

"Egad, Devereux," said he, "do you see that fellow? he has the audacity to affect spleen. Faith, I thought melancholy was the distinguishing patent of nobility—we will smoke him." And, advancing towards the man of gloom, Tarleton touched him with the end of his cane. The man started and turned round. "Pray, sirrah," said Tarleton coldly, "pray who the devil are you, that you presume to look discontented?"

"Why, sir," said the man, good-humoredly enough, "I have some right to be angry."

"I doubt it, my friend," said Tarleton. "What is your complaint? a rise in the price of tripe, or a drinking wife? those, I take it, are the sole misfortunes incidental to your condition."

"If that be the case," said I, observing a cloud on our new friend's brow, "shall we heal thy sufferings? Tell us thy complaints, and we will prescribe thee a silver specific; there is a sample of our skill."

"Thank you humbly, gentlemen," said the man, pocketing the money, and clearing his countenance; "and, seriously, mine

is an uncommonly hard case. I was, till within the last few weeks, the under-sexton of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, and my duty was that of ringing the bells for daily prayers: but a man of Belial came hitherwards, set up a puppet-show, and, timing the hours of his exhibition with a wicked sagacity, made the bell I rang for church serve as a summons to Punch,—so, gentlemen, that whenever your humble servant began to pull for the Lord, his perverted congregation began to flock to the devil; and, instead of being an instrument for saving souls, I was made the innocent means of destroying them. Oh, gentlemen, it was a shocking thing to tug away at the rope till the sweat ran down one, for four shillings a week; and to see all the time that one was thinning one's own congregation, and emptying one's own pockets!

"It was indeed a lamentable dilemma; and what did you, Mr. Sexton?"

"Do, sir? why, I could not stifle my conscience, and I left my place. Ever since then, sir, I have stationed myself in the Piazza, to warn my poor, deluded fellow-creatures of their error, and to assure them that when the bell of St. Paul's rings, it rings for prayers, and not for puppet-shows—and, Lord help us, there it goes at this very moment; and look, look, gentlemen, how the wigs and hoods are crowding to the motion* instead of the minister."

"Ha! ha! ha!" cried Tarleton, "Mr. Powell is not the first man who has wrested things holy to serve a carnal purpose, and made use of church bells in order to ring money to the wide pouch of the church's enemies. Harkye, my friend, follow my advice, and turn preacher yourself; mount a cart opposite to the motion, and I'll wager a trifle that the crowd forsake the theatrical mountebank in favor of the religious one; for the more sacred the thing played upon, the more certain is the game."

"Body of me, gentlemen," cried the ex-sexton, "I'll follow your advice."

"Do so, man, and never presume to look doleful again; leave dulness to your superiors."†

And with this advice, and an additional compensation for his confidence, we left the innocent assistant of Mr. Powell, and marched into the puppet-show, by the sound of the very bells the perversion of which the good sexton had so pathetically lamented.

The first person I saw at the show, and indeed the express

* An antiquated word in use for puppet-shows.

† See Spectator, No. 14, for a letter from this unfortunate under-sexton.

person I came to see, was the Lady Hasselton. Tarleton and myself separated for the present, and I repaired to the coquette: "Angels of grace!" said I, approaching; "and, by-the-by, before I proceed another word, observe, Lady Hasselton, how appropriate the exclamation is to *you!* Angels of *grace!* why, you have moved all your patches!—one—two—three—six—eight—as I am a gentleman, from the left side of your cheek to the right! What is the reason of so sudden an emigration?"

"I have changed my politics,* Count, that is all, and have resolved to lose no time in proclaiming the change. But is it true that you are going to be married?"

"Married! Heaven forbid! which of my enemies spread so cruel a report?"

"Oh, the report is universal!" and the Lady Hasselton flirted her fan with a most flattering violence.

"It is false, nevertheless; I cannot afford to buy a wife at present, for, thanks to jointures, and pin-money, these things are all matter of commerce; and (see how closely civilized life resembles the savage!) the English, like the Tartar gentleman, obtains his wife only by purchase! But who is the bride?"

"The Duke of Newcastle's rich daughter, Lady Henrietta Pelham."

"What, Harley's object of ambition! † Faith, madam, the report is not so cruel as I thought for!"

"Oh, you fop!—but is it not true?"

"By my honor, I fear not; my rivals are too numerous and too powerful. Look now, yonder! how they already flock around the illustrious heiress,—note those smiles and simpers. Is it not pretty to see those very fine gentlemen imitating bumpkins at a fair, and grinning their best *for a gold ring!* But you need not fear me, Lady Hasselton, my love cannot wander, if it would. In the quaint thought of Sidney, ‡ love having once flown to my heart, burnt its wings there, and cannot fly away."

"La, you now!" said the beauty; "I do not comprehend you exactly—your master of the graces does not teach you your compliments properly."

"Yes, he does, but in your presence I forget them; and now," I added, lowering my voice into the lowest of whispers, "now that you are assured of my fidelity, will you not learn at last to discredit rumors and trust to me?"

* Whig ladies patched on one side of the cheek, Tories on the other.

† Lord Bolingbroke tells us that it was the main end of Harley's administration to marry his son to this lady. Thus is the fate of nations a bundle made up of a thousand little private schemes.

‡ In the Arcadia, that museum of oddities and beauties.

"I love you too well!" answered the Lady Hasselton, in the same tone, and that answer gives an admirable idea of the affection of every coquette!—love and confidence with them are qualities that have a natural antipathy, and can never be united! Our *tête-à-tête* was at an end, the people round us became social, and conversation general.

"Betterton acts to-morrow night," cried the Lady Patterly, "we must go!"

"We must go," cried the Lady Hasselton.

"We must go!" cried all.

And so passed the time till the puppet-show was over, and my attendance dispensed with.

It is a charming thing to be the lover of a lady of the mode! One so honored does with his hours as a miser with his guineas,—viz., nothing but count them!

CHAPTER III.

More Lions.

THE next night, after the theatre, Tarleton and I strolled into Wills's. Half a dozen wits were assembled. Heavens! how they talked! actors, actresses, poets, statesmen, philosophers, critics, divines, were all pulled to pieces with the most gratifying malice imaginable. We sat ourselves down, and while Tarleton amused himself with a dish of coffee and the "Flying Post," I listened very attentively to the conversation. Certainly if we would take every opportunity of getting a grain or two of knowledge, we should soon have a chest-full; a man earned an excellent subsistence by asking every one who came out of a tobacconist's shop for a pinch of snuff, and retailing the mixture as soon as he had filled his box.*

While I was listening to a tall, lusty gentleman, who was abusing Dogget, the actor, a well-dressed man entered, and immediately attracted the general observation. He was of a very flat, ill-favored countenance, but of a quick eye, and a genteel air; there was, however, something constrained and artificial in his address, and he appeared to be endeavoring to clothe a natural good-humor with a certain primness which could never be made to fit it.

"Ha, Steele!" cried a gentleman in an orange-colored coat, who seemed, by a fashionable swagger of importance, desirous

* Tatler.

of giving the tone to the company—"Ha, Steele! whence come you? from the chapel or the tavern?" and the speaker winked round the room as if he wished us to participate in the pleasure of a good thing.

Mr. Steele drew up, seemingly a little affronted; but his good-nature conquered the affectation of personal sanctity, which, at the time I refer to, that excellent writer was pleased to assume; he contented himself with nodding to the speaker, and saying:

"All the world knows, Colonel Cleland, that you are a wit, and therefore we take your fine sayings, as we take change from an honest tradesman,—rest perfectly satisfied with the coin we get, without paying any attention to it."

"Zounds, Cleland, you got the worst of it there," cried a gentleman in a flaxen wig. And Steele slid into a seat near my own.

Tarleton, who was sufficiently well educated to pretend to the character of a man of letters, hereupon thought it necessary to lay aside the "Flying Post," and to introduce me to my literary neighbor.

"Pray," said Colonel Cleland, taking snuff and swinging himself to and fro with an air of fashionable grace, "has any one seen the new paper?"

"What!" cried the gentleman in the flaxen wig, "what! the Tatler's successor,—the 'Spectator?'"

"The same," quoth the colonel.

"To be sure—who has not?" returned he of the flaxen ornament. "People say Congreve writes it."

"They are very much mistaken, then," cried a little square man with spectacles; "to my certain knowledge Swift is the author."

"Pooh!" said Cleland imperiously—"pooh! it is neither one nor the other; I, gentlemen, am in the secret—but—you take me, eh? One must not speak well of oneself—mum is the word."

"Then," asked Steele quietly, "we are to suppose that you, Colonel, are the writer?"

"I never said so, Dicky; but the women will have it that I am," and the colonel smoothed down his cravat.

"Pray, Mr. Addison, what say you?" cried the gentleman in the flaxen wig, "are you for Congreve, Swift, or Colonel Cleland?" This was addressed to a gentleman of a grave, but rather prepossessing mien; who, with eyes fixed upon the ground, was very quietly, and to all appearance very inatten-

tively, solacing himself with a pipe; without lifting his eyes, this personage, then eminent, afterwards rendered immortal, replied—

“Colonel Cleland must produce other witnesses to prove his claim to the authorship of the ‘Spectator’; the women, we well know, are prejudiced in his favor.”

“That’s true enough, old friend,” cried the colonel, looking askant at his orange-colored coat, “but faith, Addison, I wish you would set up a paper of the same sort, d’ye see; you’re a nice judge of merit, and your sketches of character would do justice to your friends.”

“If ever I do, Colonel, I or my coadjutors will study at least to do justice to you.”*

“Prithee, Steele,” cried the stranger in spectacles, “prithee tell us thy thoughts on the subject: dost thou know the author of this droll periodical?”

“I saw him this morning,” replied Steele carelessly.

“Aha! and what said you to him?”

“I asked him his name!”

“And what did he answer?” cried he of the flaxen wig, while all of us crowded round the speaker, with the curiosity every one felt in the authorship of a work then exciting the most universal and eager interest.”

“He answered me solemnly,” said Steele “in the following words,

‘Græci carent ablativo—Itali dativo—Ego nominativo.’”†

“Famous—capital!” cried the gentleman in spectacles; and then, touching Colonel Cleland, added, “what does it exactly mean?”

“Ignoramus!” said Cleland disdainfully, “every *school-boy* knows *Virgil!*”

“Devereux,” said Tarleton, yawning, “what a d—d delightful thing it is to hear so much wit—pity that the atmosphere is so fine that no lungs unaccustomed to it can endure it long. Let us recover ourselves by a walk.”

“Willingly,” said I; and we sauntered forth into the streets.

“Will’s is not what it was,” said Tarleton; “’tis a pitiful ghost of its former self, and if they had not introduced cards, one would die of the vapors there.”

“I know nothing so insipid,” said I, “as that mock literary air which it is so much the fashion to assume. ’Tis but a

* This seems to corroborate the suspicion entertained of the identity of Colonel Cleland with the Will Honeycomb of the Spectator.

† “The Greeks want an ablativo—the Italians a dativo—I a nominative.”

wearisome relief to conversation to have interludes of songs about Strepson and Sylvia recited with a lisp by a gentleman with fringed gloves and a languishing look."

"Fie on it!" cried Tarleton, "let us seek for a fresher topic. Are you asked to Abigail Masham's to-night, or will you come to Dame de la Riviere Manley's?"

"Dame de la what?—in the name of long words who is she?"

"Oh! Learning made libidinous: one who reads Catullus and profits by it."

"Bah, no, we will not leave the gentle Abigail for her. I have promised to meet St. John, too, at the Mashams."

"As you like. We shall get some wine at Abigail's, which we should never do at the house of her cousin of Marlborough."

And, comforting himself with this belief, Tarleton peaceably accompanied me to that celebrated woman, who did the Tories such notable service, at the expense of being termed by the Whigs one great want divided into two parts, viz.: a great want of every shilling belonging to other people, and a great want of every virtue that should have belonged to herself. As we mounted the staircase, a door to the left (a private apartment) was opened, and I saw the favorite dismiss, with the most flattering air of respect, my old preceptor, the Abbé Montreuil. He received her attentions as his due, and, descending the stairs, came full upon me. He drew back—changed neither hue nor muscle—bowed civilly enough, and disappeared. I had not much opportunity to muse over this circumstance, for St. John and Mr. Domville—excellent companions both—joined us; and the party being small, we had the unwonted felicity of talking, as well as bowing, to each other. It was impossible to think of any one else when St. John chose to exert himself; and so even the Abbé Montreuil glided out of my brain as St. John's wit glided into it. We were all of the same way of thinking on politics, and therefore were witty without being quarrelsome—a rare thing. The trusty Abigail told us stories of the good Queen, and we added *bons-mots* by way of corollary. Wine, too, wine that even Tarleton approved, lit up our intellects, and we spent altogether an evening such as gentlemen and Tories very seldom have the sense to enjoy.

O Apollo! I wonder whether Tories of the next century will be such clever, charming, well-informed fellows as we were!

CHAPTER IV.

An Intellectual Adventure.

A LITTLE affected by the vinous potations which had been so much an object of anticipation with my companion, Tarleton and I were strolling homeward when we perceived a remarkably tall man engaged in a contest with a couple of watchmen. Watchmen were in all cases the especial and natural enemies of the gallants in my young days; and no sooner did we see the unequal contest than, drawing our swords with that true English valor which makes all the quarrels of other people its own, we hastened to the relief of the weaker party.

"Gentlemen," said the elder watchman, drawing back, "this is no common brawl; we have been shamefully beaten by this here madman, and for no earthly cause."

"Who ever did beat a watchman for any earthly cause, you rascal?" cried the accused party, swinging his walking-cane over the complainant's head with a menacing air.

"Very true," cried Tarleton coolly. "Seigneurs of the watch, you are both made and paid to be beaten; ergo—you have no right to complain. Release this worthy cavalier, and depart elsewhere to make night hideous with your voices."

"Come, come," quoth the younger Dogberry, who perceived a reinforcement approaching, "move on, good people, and let us do our duty."

"Which," interrupted the elder watchman, "consists in taking this hulking swaggerer to the watchhouse."

"Thou speakest wisely, man of peace," said Tarleton; "defend thyself;" and without adding another word, he ran the watchman through—not the body, but the coat, avoiding, with great dexterity, the corporeal substance of the attacked party, and yet approaching it so closely as to give the guardian of the streets very reasonable ground for apprehension. No sooner did the watchman find the hilt strike against his breast, than he uttered a dismal cry, and fell upon the pavement like a shot.

"Now for thee, varlet," cried Tarleton, brandishing his rapier before the eyes of the other watchman, "tremble at the sword of Gideon."

"O Lord, O Lord!" ejaculated the terrified comrade of the fallen man, dropping on his knees, "for Heaven's sake, sir, have a care."

“What argument canst thou allege, thou screech-owl of the metropolis, that thou shouldst not share the same fate as thy brother owl?”

“Oh, sir!” cried the craven night-bird (a bit of a humorist in its way), “because I have a nest and seven little owlets at home, and t’other owl is only a bachelor.”

“Thou art an impudent thing to jest at us,” said Tarleton; “but thy wit has saved thee; rise.”

At this moment two other watchmen came up.

“Gentlemen,” said the tall stranger whom we had rescued, “we had better fly.”

Tarleton cast at him a contemptuous look, and placed himself in a posture of offence.

“Hark ye,” said I, “let us effect an honorable peace. Messieurs the watch, be it lawful for you to carry off the slain, and for us to claim the prisoners.”

But our new foes understood not a jest, and advanced upon us with a ferocity which might really have terminated in a serious engagement, had not the tall stranger thrust his bulky form in front of the approaching battalion, and cried out, with a loud voice, “Zounds, my good fellows, what’s all this for? If you take us up, you will get broken heads to-night, and a few shillings perhaps to-morrow. If you leave us alone, you will have whole heads, and a guinea between you. Now, what say you?”

Well spoke Phædra against the dangers of eloquence (*καλῶς λάν λόγῳ*). The watchmen looked at each other. “Why really, sir,” said one, “what you say alters the case very much; and if Dick here is not much hurt, I don’t know what we may say to the offer.”

So saying, they raised the fallen watchman, who, after three or four grunts, began slowly to recover himself.

“Are you dead, Dick?” said the owl with seven owlets.

“I think I am,” answered the other, groaning.

“Are you able to drink a pot of ale, Dick?” cried the tall stranger.

“I think I am,” reiterated the dead man, very lackadaisically. And this answer satisfying his comrades, the articles of peace were subscribed to.

Now, then, the tall stranger began searching his pockets with a most consequential air.

“Gad, so!” said he at last; “not in my breeches pocket!—well, it must be in my waistcoat. No. Well, ’tis a strange thing—d—mme it is! Gentlemen, I have had the misfortune

to leave my purse behind me; add to your other favors by lending me wherewithal to satisfy these honest men."

And Tarleton lent him the guinea. The watchmen now retired, and we were left alone with our portly ally.

Placing his hand to his heart, he made us half a dozen profound bows, returned us thanks for our assistance in some very courtly phrases, and requested us to allow him to make our acquaintance. We exchanged cards, and departed on our several ways.

"I have met that gentleman before," said Tarleton. "Let us see what name he pretends to. 'Fielding—Fielding'; ah, by the Lord, it is no less a person! it is the great Fielding himself."

"Is Mr. Fielding, then, as elevated in fame as in stature?"

"What, is it possible that you have not yet heard of Beau Fielding, who bared his bosom at the theatre in order to attract the admiring compassion of the female part of the audience?"

"What!" I cried, "the Duchess of Cleveland's Fielding?"

"The same; the best-looking fellow of his day! A sketch of his history is in the 'Tatler,' under the name of 'Orlando the Fair.' He is terribly fallen as to fortune since the day when he drove about in a car like a sea-shell, with a dozen tall fellows, in the Austrian livery, black and yellow, running before and behind him. You know he claims relationship to the house of Hapsburg. As for the present, he writes poems, makes love, is still good-natured, humorous, and odd; is rather unhappily addicted to wine and borrowing, and rigidly keeps that oath of the Carthusians which never suffers them to carry any money about them."

"An acquaintance more likely to yield amusement than profit."

"Exactly so. He will favor you with a visit—to-morrow, perhaps, and you will remember his propensities."

"Ah! who ever forgets a warning that relates to his purse!"

"True!" said Tarleton, sighing. "Alas! my guinea, thou and I have parted company for ever! *vale, vale, inquit Iolas!*"

CHAPTER V.

The Beau in his Den, and a Philosopher Discovered.

MR. FIELDING having twice favored me with visits, which found me from home, I thought it right to pay my respects to him; accordingly one morning I repaired to his abode. It was

situated in a street which had been excessively the mode some thirty years back; and the house still exhibited a stately and somewhat ostentatious exterior. I observed a considerable cluster of infantine raggamuffins collected round the door, and no sooner did the portal open to my summons than they pressed forward in a manner infinitely more zealous than respectful. A servant in the Austrian livery, with a broad belt round his middle, officiated as porter. "Look, look!" cried one of the youthful gazers, "look at the Beau's keeper!" This imputation on his own respectability, and that of his master, the domestic seemed by no means to relish, for, muttering some maledictory menace, which I at first took to be German, but which I afterwards found to be Irish, he banged the door in the faces of the intrusive impertinents, and said, in an accent which suited very ill with his continental attire,

"And is it my master you're wanting, sir?"

"It is."

"And you would be after seeing him immadiately?"

"Rightly conjectured, my sagacious friend."

"Fait then, your honor, my master's in bed with a terrible fit of the megrims."

"Then you will favor me by giving this card to your master, and expressing my sorrow at his indisposition."

Upon this the orange-colored lacquey, very quietly reading the address on the card, and spelling letter by letter in an audible mutter, rejoined:

"C—o—u—(cou)n—t (unt) Count, D—e—v. Och, by my shoul, and it's Count Devereux after all, I'm thinking?"

"You think with equal profundity and truth."

"You may well say that, your honor. Stip in a bit—I'll till my master—it is himself that will see you in a twinkling!"

"But you forget that your master is ill?" said I.

"Sorrow a bit for the matter o' that—my master is never ill to a jontleman."

And with this assurance "the Beau's keeper" ushered me up a splendid staircase into a large, dreary, faded apartment, and left me to amuse myself with the curiosities within, while he went to perform a cure upon his master's "megrims." The chamber, suiting with the house and the owner, looked like a place in the other world, set apart for the reception of the ghosts of departed furniture. The hangings were wan and colorless, the chairs and sofas were most spiritually unsubstantial,—the mirrors reflected all things in a sepulchral sea-green; even a huge picture of Mr. Fielding himself, placed over the chimney-

piece, seemed like the apparition of a portrait, so dim, watery, and indistinct had it been rendered by neglect and damp. On a huge, tomb-like table, in the middle of the room, lay two pencilled profiles of Mr. Fielding, a pawnbroker's ticket, a pair of ruffles, a very little muff, an immense broadsword, a Wycherley comb, a jackboot, and an old plumed hat; to these were added a cracked pomatum-pot, containing ink, and a scrap of paper, ornamented with sundry paintings of hearts and torches, on which were scrawled several lines in a hand so large and round that I could not avoid seeing the first verse, though I turned away my eyes as quickly as possible—that verse, to the best of my memory, ran thus: "Say, lovely Lesbia, when thy swain." Upon the ground lay a box of patches, a periwig, and two or three well-thumbed books of songs. Such was the reception-room of Beau Fielding, one indifferently well calculated to exhibit the propensities of a man, half bully, half fribble; a poet, a fop, a fighter, a beauty, a walking museum of all odd humors, and a living shadow of a past renown. "There are changes in wit as in fashion," said Sir William Temple, and he proceeds to instance a nobleman, who was the greatest wit of the court of Charles I., and the greatest dullard in that of Charles II.* But Heavens! how awful are the revolutions of coxcombray! what a change from Beau Fielding the Beauty to Beau Fielding the Oddity!

After I had remained in this apartment about ten minutes, the great man made his appearance. He was attired in a dressing-gown of the most gorgeous material and color, but so old that it was difficult to conceive any period of past time which it might not have been supposed to have witnessed; a little velvet cap, with a tarnished gold tassel, surmounted his head, and his nether limbs were sheathed in a pair of military boots. In person, he still retained the trace of that extraordinary symmetry he had once possessed, and his features were yet handsome, though the complexion had grown coarse and florid, and the expression had settled into a broad, hard, farcical mixture of effrontery, humor, and conceit.

But how different his costume from that of old! Where was the long wig with its myriad curls? the coat stiff with golden lace? the diamond buttons—"the pomp, pride, and circumstance of glorious war?" the glorious war Beau Fielding had carried on throughout the female world—finding in every saloon a Blenheim—in every play-house a Ramilies? Alas! to what abyss of fate will not the love of notoriety bring men!

* The Earl of Norwich.

To what but the lust of show do we owe the misanthropy of Timon, or the ruin of Beau Fielding!

"By the Lord!" cried Mr. Fielding, approaching, and shaking me familiarly by the hand, "by the Lord, I am delighted to see thee! As I am a soldier, I thought thou wert a spirit, invisible and incorporeal—and as long as I was in that belief I trembled for thy salvation, for I knew at least that thou wert not a spirit of Heaven; since thy door is the very reverse of the doors above, which we are assured shall be opened unto our knocking. But thou art early, Count; like the ghost, in Hamlet, thou snuffest the morning air. Wilt thou not keep out the rank atmosphere by a pint of wine and a toast?"

"Many thanks to you, Mr. Fielding; but I have at least one property of a ghost, and don't drink after daybreak."

"Nay, now, 'tis a bad rule! a villainous bad rule, *only for* ghosts and graybeards. We youngsters, Count, should have a more generous policy. Come now, where didst thou drink last night? has the bottle bequeathed thee a qualm or a headache, which preaches repentance and abstinence this morning?"

"No, but I visit my mistress this morning; would you have me smell of strong potations, and seem a worshipper of the '*Glass of Fashion*', rather than of '*the Mould of Form*'? Confess, Mr. Fielding, that the women love not an early tippler, and that they expect sober and sweet kisses from a pair of '*youngsters*' like us."

"By the Lord," cried Mr. Fielding, stroking down his comely stomach, "there is a great show of reason in thy excuses, but only the show, not substance, my noble Count. You know me, you know *my* experience with the women—I would not boast, as I'm a soldier—but 'tis something! nine hundred and fifty locks of hair have I got in my strong-box, under padlock and key; fifty within the last week—true—on my soul—so that I may pretend to know a little of the dear creatures; well, I give thee my honor, Count, that they like a royster; they love a fellow who can carry his six bottles under a silken doublet; there's vigor and manhood in it—and, then, too, what a power of toasts can a six-bottle man drink to his mistress! Oh, 'tis your only chivalry now—your modern substitute for tilt and tournament; true, Count, as I'm a soldier!"

"I fear my Dulcinea differs from the herd, then; for she quarrelled with me for supping with St. John three nights ago, and—"

"St. John," interrupted Fielding, cutting me off in the be-

ginning of a witticism, "St. John, famous fellow, is he not? By the Lord, we will drink to his administration, you in chocolate, I in Madeira. O'Carroll, you dog—O'Carroll—rogue—rascal—ass—dolt!"

"The same, your honor," said the orange-colored lacquey, thrusting in his lean visage.

"Ay, the same indeed—thou anatomized son of St. Patrick; why dost thou not get fat? thou shamest my good living, and thy belly is a rascally minister to thee, devouring all things for itself, without fattening a single member of the body corporate. Look at *me*, you dog, am *I* thin? Go and get fat, or I will discharge thee—by the Lord I will! the sun shines through thee like an empty wineglass."

"And is it upon your honor's lavings you would have me get fat?" rejoined Mr. O'Carroll, with an air of deferential inquiry.

"Now, as I live, thou art the impudentest varlet!" cried Mr. Fielding, stamping his foot on the floor, with an angry frown.

"And is it for talking of your honor's lavings? an' sure that's *nothing* at all, at all," said the valet, twirling his thumbs with expostulating innocence.

"Begone, rascal!" said Mr. Fielding, "begone; go to the Salop and bring us a pint of Madeira, a toast, and a dish of chocolate."

"Yes, your honor, in a twinkling," said the valet, disappearing.

"A sorry fellow," said Mr. Fielding, "but honest and faithful, and loves me as well as a saint loves gold; 'tis his love makes him familiar."

Here the door was again opened, and the sharp face of Mr. O'Carroll again intruded.

"How now, sirrah!" exclaimed his master.

Mr. O'Carroll, without answering by voice, gave a grotesque sort of signal between a wink and a beckon. Mr. Fielding rose, muttering an oath, and underwent a whisper. "By the Lord," cried he, seemingly in a furious passion, "and thou hast not got the bill cashed yet, though I told thee twice to have it done last evening! Have I not my debts of honor to discharge, and did I not give the last guinea I had about me for a walking-cane yesterday? Go down to the city immediately, sirrah, and bring me the change."

The valet again whispered.

"Ah," resumed Mr. Fielding, "ah—so far, you say, 'tis true;

'tis a great way, and perhaps the Count can't wait till you return. Prithee (turning to me), prithee now, is it not vexatious—no change about me, and my fool has not cashed a trifling bill I have for a thousand or so on Messrs. Child! and the cursed Salop puts not its *trust* even in princes—'tis its way—'Gad now—you have not a guinea about you?"

What could I say? my guinea joined Tarleton's in a visit to that bourne whence no *such* traveller e'er returned.

Mr. O'Carroll now vanished in earnest, the wine and the chocolate soon appeared. Mr. Fielding brightened up, recited his poetry, blessed his good fortune, promised to call on me in a day or two; and assured me, with a round oath, that the next time he had the honor of seeing me, he would treat me with another pint of Madeira, exactly of the same sort.

I remember well that it was the evening of the same day, in which I had paid this visit to the redoubted Mr. Fielding, that, on returning from a drum at Lady Hasselton's, I entered my anteroom with so silent a step that I did not arouse even the keen senses of Monsieur Desmarais. He was seated by the fire, with his head supported by his hands, and intently poring over a huge folio. I had often observed that he possessed a literary turn, and all the hours in which he was unemployed by me, he was wont to occupy with books. I felt now, as I stood still and contemplated his absorbed attention in the contents of the book before him, a strong curiosity to know the nature of his studies; and so little did my taste second the routine of trifles in which I had been lately engaged, that in looking upon the earnest features of the man, on which the solitary light streamed calm and full; and impressed with the deep quiet and solitude of the chamber, together with the undisturbed sanctity of comfort presiding over the small, bright hearth, and contrasting what I saw with the brilliant scene—brilliant with gaudy, wearing, wearisome frivolities—which I had just quitted, a sensation of envy at the enjoyments of my dependant entered my breast, accompanied with a sentiment resembling humiliation at the nature of my own pursuits. I am generally thought a proud man, but I am never proud to my inferiors; nor can I imagine pride where there is not competition. I approached Desmarais, and said, in French:

"How is this? why did you not, like your fellows, take advantage of my absence, to pursue your own amusements? They must be dull, indeed, if they do not hold out to you more tempting inducements than that colossal offspring of the press."

"Pardon me, sir," said Desmarais, very respectfully and clos-

ing the book, "pardon me, I was not aware of your return. Will Monsieur doff his cloak?"

"No; shut the door—wheel round that chair, and favor me with a sight of your book."

"Monsieur will be angry, I fear," said the valet (obeying the first two orders, but hesitating about the third), "with my course of reading; I confess it is not very compatible with my station."

"Ah, some long romance,—the *Clelia* I suppose—nay, bring it hither—that is to say, if it be movable by the strength of a single man."

Thus urged, Desmarais modestly brought me the book. Judge of my surprise when I found it was a volume of Leibnitz—a philosopher then very much the rage—because one might talk of him very safely, without having read him.* Despite of my surprise, I could not help smiling when my eye turned from the book to the student. It is impossible to conceive an appearance less like a philosopher's than that of Jean Desmarais. His wig was of a nicety that would not have brooked the irregularity of a single hair; his dress was not preposterous, for I do not remember, among gentles or valets, a more really exquisite taste than that of Desmarais; but it evinced, in every particular, the arts of the toilet. A perpetual smile sat upon his lips—sometimes it deepened into a sneer—but that was the only change it ever experienced; an irresistible air of self-conceit gave piquancy to his long, marked features, small, glittering eye, and withered cheeks, on which a delicate and soft bloom excited suspicion of artificial embellishment. A very fit frame of body this for a valet; but, I humbly opine, a very unseemly one for a student of Leibnitz.

"And what," said I, after a short pause, "is your opinion of this philosopher? I understand that he has just written a work,† above all praise and all comprehension."

"It is true, Monsieur, that it is above his own understanding. He knows not what sly conclusions may be drawn from his premises—but I beg Monsieur's pardon, I shall be tedious and intrusive."

"Not a whit; speak out, and at length. So you conceive that Leibnitz makes ropes which *others* will make into ladders?"

"Exactly so," said Desmarais; "all his arguments go to swell the sails of the great philosophical truth—'Necessity!' We are the things and toys of Fate, and its everlasting chain compels even the Power that creates, as well as the things created."

* Which is possibly the reason why there are so many disciples of Kant at the present moment.—ED.

† The Theodicea.

“Ha!” said I, who, though little versed at that time in these metaphysical subtleties, had heard St John often speak of the strange doctrine to which Desmarais referred, “you are, then, a believer in the fatalism of Spinoza?”

“No, Monsieur,” said Desmarais, with a complacent smile, “my system is my own—it is composed of the thoughts of others—but my thoughts are the cords which bind the various sticks into a faggot.”

“Well,” said I, smiling at the man’s conceited air, “and what is your main dogma?”

“Our utter impotence.”

“Pleasing! Mean you that we have no free will?”

“None.”

“Why, then, you take away the very existence of vice and virtue; and, according to you, we sin or act well, not from our own accord, but because we are compelled and pre-ordained to it.”

Desmarais’s smile withered into the grim sneer with which, as I have said, it was sometimes varied.

“Monsieur’s penetration is extreme—but shall I not prepare his nightly draught?”

“No; answer me at length; and tell me the difference between good and ill, if we are compelled by Necessity to either.”

Desmarais hemmed, and began. Despite of his caution, the coxcomb loved to hear himself talk, and he talked, therefore, to the following purpose:

“Liberty is a thing impossible! Can you *will* a single action, however simple, independent of your organization—independent of the organization of others—independent of an order of things past—independent of the order of things to come? You cannot. But if not independent, you are dependent; if dependent, where is your liberty? where your freedom of will? Education disposes our characters—can you control your own education, begun at the hour of birth? You cannot. Our character, joined to the conduct of others, disposes of our happiness, our sorrow, our crime, our virtue. Can you control your character? We have already seen that you cannot. Can you control the conduct of others—others perhaps whom you have never seen, but who may ruin you at a word—a despot, for instance, or a warrior? You cannot. What remains? that if we cannot choose our characters, nor our fates, we cannot be accountable for either. If you are a good man, you are a lucky man; but you are not to be praised for what you could not help. If you are a bad man, you are an unfortunate one;

but you are not to be execrated for what you could not prevent."*

"Then, most wise Desmarais, if you steal this diamond loop from my hat, you are only an unlucky man, not a guilty one, and worthy of my sympathy, not anger?"

"Exactly so—but you must hang me for it. You cannot control events, but you can modify man. Education, law, adversity, prosperity, correction, praise, modify him—without his choice, and sometimes without his perception. But once acknowledge Necessity, and evil passions cease; you may punish, you may destroy others, if for the safety and good of the commonwealth; but motives for doing so cease to be private: you can have no personal hatred to men for committing actions which they were irresistibly compelled to commit."

I felt that, however I might listen to and dislike these sentiments, it would not do for the master to argue with the domestic, especially when there was a chance that he might have the worst of it. And so I was suddenly seized with a fit of sleepiness, which broke off our conversation. Meanwhile I inly resolved, in my own mind, to take the first opportunity of discharging a valet who saw no difference between good and evil, but that of luck; and who, by the irresistible compulsion of Necessity, might some day or other have the involuntary misfortune to cut the throat of his master!

I did not, however, carry this unphilosophical resolution into effect. Indeed the rogue, doubting, perhaps, the nature of the impression he had made on me, redoubled so zealously his efforts to please me in the science of his profession, that I could not determine upon relinquishing such a treasure for a speculative opinion, and I was too much accustomed to laugh at my Sosia, to believe there could be any reason to fear him.

CHAPTER VI.

An Universal Genius—Pericles turned Barber—Names of Beauties in 1711—the Toasts of the Kit-Cat Club

As I was riding with Tarleton towards Chelsea one day, he asked me if I had ever seen the celebrated Mr. Salter. "No," said I, "but I heard Steele talk of him the other night at Wills's. He is an antiquarian and a barber, is he not?"

"Yes, a shaving virtuoso; really a comical and strange charac-

* Whatever pretensions Monsieur Desmarais may have had to originality, this tissue of opinions is as old as philosophy itself.—ED.

ter, and has oddities enough to compensate one for the debasement of talking with a man in his rank."

"Let us go to him forthwith," said I, spurring my horse into a canter.

"*Quod petis hic est,*" cried Tarleton, "there is his house." And my companion pointed to a coffee-house.

"What," said I, "does he draw wine as well as teeth?"

"To be sure: Don Saltero is an universal genius. Let us dismount."

Consigning our horses to the care of our grooms, we marched into the strangest-looking place I ever had the good fortune to behold. A long, narrow coffee-room was furnished with all manner of things that, belonging neither to heaven, earth, nor the water under the earth, the redoubted Saltero might well worship without incurring the crime of idolatry. The first thing that greeted my eyes was a bull's head, with a most ferocious pair of vulture's wings on its neck. While I was surveying this, I felt something touch my hat. I looked up and discovered an immense alligator swinging from the ceiling, and fixing a monstrous pair of glass eyes upon me. A thing which seemed to me like an immense shoe, upon a nearer approach, expanded itself into an Indian canoe, and a most hideous spectre with mummy skin, and glittering teeth, that made my blood run cold, was labelled, "Beautiful Specimen of a Calmuc Tartar."

While, lost in wonder, I stood in the middle of the apartment, up walks a little man, as lean as a miser, and says to me, rubbing his hands:

"Wonderful, sir, is it not?"

"Wonderful, indeed, Don!" said Tarleton; "you look like a Chinese Adam, surrounded by a Japanese creation."

"He, he, he! sir, you have so pleasant a vein," said the little Don, in a sharp, shrill voice. "But it has been all done, sir, by one man; all of it collected by me, simple as I stand."

"Simple, indeed," quoth Tarleton; "and how gets on the fiddle?"

"Bravely, sir, bravely; shall I play you a tune?"

"No, no, my good Don; another time."

"Nay, sir, nay," cried the antiquarian, "suffer me to welcome your arrival properly."

And, forthwith disappearing, he returned in an instant with a marvellously ill-favored old fiddle. Throwing a pensive air into his thin cheeks, our Don then began a few preliminary thrummings, which set my teeth on edge, and made Tarleton put both hands to his ears. Three sober-looking citizens, who

had just sat themselves down to pipes and the journal, started to their feet like so many pieces of clockwork; but no sooner had Don Saltero, with a *dégagé* air of graceful melancholy, actually launched into what he was pleased to term a tune, than an universal irritation of nerves seized the whole company. At the first overture, the three citizens swore and cursed, at the second division of the tune they seized their hats, at the third they vanished. As for me, I found all my limbs twitching as if they were dancing to St. Vitus's music; the very drawers disappeared; the alligator itself twirled round, as if revived by so harsh an experiment on the nervous system; and I verily believe the whole museum, bull, wings, Indian canoe, and Calmuc Tartar, would have been set into motion by this new Orpheus, had not Tarleton, in a paroxysm of rage, seized him by the tail of the coat, and whirled him round, fiddle and all, with such velocity that the poor musician lost his equilibrium, and falling against a row of Chinese monsters, brought the whole set to the ground, where he lay covered by the wrecks that accompanied his overthrow, screaming and struggling, and grasping his fiddle, which every now and then, touched involuntarily by his fingers, uttered a dismal squeak, as if sympathizing in the disaster it had caused, until the drawer ran in, and raising the unhappy antiquarian, placed him on a great chair.

"O Lord!" groaned Don Saltero, "O Lord—my monsters—my monsters—the pagoda—the Mandarin, and the idol—where are they?—broken—ruined—annihilated!"

"No, sir—all safe, sir," said the drawer, a smart, small, smug, pert man; "put 'em down in the bill, nevertheless, sir. Is it Alderman Atkins, sir, or Mr. Higgins?"

"Pooh," said Tarleton, "bring me some lemonade—send the pagoda to the bricklayer—the mandarin to the surgeon—and the idol to the Papist over the way! There's a guinea to pay for their carriage. How are you, Don?"

"Oh, Mr. Tarleton, Mr. Tarleton; how could you be so cruel?"

"The nature of things demanded it, my good Don. Did I not call you a Chinese Adam? and how could you bear that name without undergoing the fall?"

"Oh, sir, this is no jesting matter—broke the railing of my pagoda—bruised my arm—cracked my fiddle—and cut me off in the middle of that beautiful air!—no jesting matter."

"Come, Mr. Salter," said I, "'tis very true! but cheer up. 'The gods,' says Seneca, 'look with pleasure on a great man falling with the statesmen, temples, and the divinities of his

country'; all of which, Mandarin, pagoda, and idol, accompanied *your* fall. Let us have a bottle of your best wine, and the honor of your company to drink it."

"No, Count, no," said Tarleton haughtily; "we can drink not with the Don; but we'll have the wine, and *he* shall drink it. Meanwhile, Don, tell us what possible combination of circumstances made thee fiddler, barber, anatomist and virtuoso!"

Don Saltero loved fiddling better than anything in the world, but next to fiddling he loved talking. So being satisfied that he should be reimbursed for his pagoda, and fortifying himself with a glass or two of his own wine, he yielded to Tarleton's desire, and told us his history. I believe it was very entertaining to the good barber, but Tarleton and I saw nothing extraordinary in it; and long before it was over, we wished him an excellent good day, and a new race of Chinese monsters.

That evening we were engaged at the Kit-Cat Club, for though I was opposed to the politics of its members, they admitted me on account of my literary pretensions. Halifax was there, and I commended the poet to his protection. We were very gay, and Halifax favored us with three new toasts by himself. O Venus, what beauties we made, and what characters we murdered! Never was there so important a synod to the female world, as the gods of the Kit-Cat Club. Alas! I am writing for the children of an after-age, to whom the very names of those who made the blood of their ancestors leap within their veins will be unknown. What cheek will color at the name of Carlisle? What hand will tremble as it touches the paper inscribed by that of Brudenel! The graceful Godolphin, the sparkling enchantment of Harper, the divine voice of Claverine, the gentle and bashful Bridgewater, the damask cheek and ruby lips of the Hebe Manchester—what will these be to the race for whom alone these pages are penned! This history is a union of strange contrasts! Like the tree of the Sun, described by Marco Polo, which was green when approached on one side, but white when perceived on the other—to me it is clothed in the verdure and spring of the existing time; to the reader it comes covered with the hoariness and wanness of the Past!

CHAPTER VII.

A Dialogue of Sentiment succeeded by the Sketch of a Character, in whose eyes Sentiment was to Wise Men what Religion is to Fools, viz.—a subject of ridicule.

ST. JOHN was now in power, and in the full flush of his many ambitious and restless schemes. I saw as much of him as the high rank he held in the state, and the consequent business with which he was oppressed, would suffer me—me who was prevented by religion from actively embracing any political party, and who therefore, though inclined to Toryism, associated pretty equally with all. St. John and myself formed a great friendship for each other, a friendship which no after change or chance could efface, but which exists, strengthened and mellowed by time, at the very hour in which I now write.

One evening he sent to tell me he should be alone, if I would sup with him; accordingly I repaired to his house. He was walking up and down the room with uneven and rapid steps, and his countenance was flushed with an expression of joy and triumph, very rare to the thoughtful and earnest calm which it usually wore. "Congratulate me, Devereux," said he, seizing me eagerly by the hand, "congratulate me!"

"For what?"

"Ay, true—you are not yet a politician—you cannot yet tell how dear—how inexpressibly dear, to a politician is a momentary and petty victory—but—if I were Prime Minister of this country, what would you say?"

"That you could bear the duty better than any man living—but remember, Harley is in the way."

"Ah, there's the rub," said St. John slowly, and the expression of his face again changed from triumph to thoughtfulness; "but this is a subject not to your taste—let us choose another." And flinging himself into a chair, this singular man, who prided himself on suiting his conversation to every one, began conversing with me upon the lighter topics of the day; these we soon exhausted, and at last we settled upon that of love and women.

"I own," said I, "that in this respect pleasure has disappointed as well as wearied me. I have longed for some better object of worship than the trifler of fashion, or the yet more ignoble minion of the senses. I ask a vent for enthusiasm—for devotion—for romance—for a thousand subtle and secret streams of unuttered and unutterable feeling. I often think that I bear within me the desire and the sentiment of poetry, though I enjoy not its faculty of expression; and that that desire and that senti-

ment, denied legitimate egress, centre and shrink into one absorbing passion—which is the want of love. Where am I to satisfy this want? I look round these great circles of gayety which we term the world—I send forth my heart as a wanderer over their regions and recesses, and it returns sated, and palled, and languid, to myself again.”

“You express a common want in every less worldly or more morbid nature,” said St. John, “a want which I myself have experienced, and if I had never felt it, I should never, perhaps, have turned to ambition to console or to engross me. But do not flatter yourself that the want will ever be fulfilled. Nature places us alone in this inhospitable world, and no heart is cast in a similar mould to that which we bear within us. We pine for sympathy; we make to ourselves a creation of ideal beauties, in which we expect to find it—but the creation has no reality—it is the mind’s phantasma which the mind adores—and it is because the phantasma can have no actual being that the mind despairs. Throughout life, from the cradle to the grave it is no real or living thing which we demand; it is the realization of the ideal we have formed within us, and which, as we are not gods we can never call into existence. We are enamoured of the statue ourselves have graven; but, unlike the statue of the Cyprian, it kindles not to our homage, nor melts to our embraces.”

“I believe you,” said I; “but it is hard to undeceive ourselves. The heart is the most credulous of all fanatics, and its ruling passion the most enduring of all superstitions. Oh! what can tear from us, to the last, the hope, the desire the yearning for some bosom which, while it mirrors our own, parts not with the reflection. I have read that, in the very hour and instant of our birth, one exactly similar to ourselves, in spirit and form, is born also, and that a secret and unintelligible sympathy preserves that likeness, even through the vicissitudes of fortune and circumstance, until, in the same point of time, the two beings are resolved once more into the elements of earth—confess that there is something welcome, though unfounded in the fancy, and that there are few of the substances of worldly honor which one would not renounce, to possess in the closest and fondest of all relations this shadow of ourselves!”

“Alas!” said St. John, “the possession, like all earthly blessings, carries within it its own principle of corruption. The deadliest foe to love is not change, nor misfortune, nor jealousy, nor wrath, nor anything that flows from passion, or emanates from fortune; the deadliest foe to it is *custom*! With custom die away the delusions and the mysteries which encircle it; leaf

after leaf, in the green poetry on which its beauty depends, droops and withers, till nothing but the bare and rude trunk is left. With all passion the soul demands something unexpressed, some vague recess to explore or to marvel upon—some veil upon the mental as well as the corporeal deity. Custom leaves nothing to romance, and often but little to respect. The whole character is bared before us like a plain, and the heart's eye grows wearied with the sameness of the survey. And to weariness succeeds distaste, and to distaste one of the myriad shapes of the Proteus Aversion—so that the passion we would make the rarest of treasures fritters down to a very instance of the commonest of proverbs—and out of familiarity cometh indeed contempt !”

“And are we, then,” said I, “forever to forego the most delicious of our dreams? Are we to consider love as an entire delusion, and to reconcile ourselves to an eternal solitude of heart? What then shall fill the crying and unappeasable void of our souls? What shall become of those mighty sources of tenderness which, refused all channel in the rocky soil of the world, must have an outlet elsewhere, or stagnate into torpor?”

“Our passions,” said St. John, “are restless, and will make each experiment in their power, though vanity be the result of all. Disappointed in love, they yearn towards ambition; *and the object of ambition, unlike that of love, never being wholly possessed, ambition is the more durable passion of the two.* But sooner or later even that, and all passions, are sated at last; and when wearied of too wide a flight, we limit our excursions, and looking round us, discover the narrow bounds of our proper end, we grow satisfied with the loss of rapture, if we can partake of enjoyment: and the experience which seemed at first so bitterly to betray us becomes our most real benefactor, and ultimately leads us to content. For it is the excess and not the nature of our passions which is perishable. Like the trees which grew by the tomb of Protesilaus, the passions flourish till they reach a certain height, but no sooner is that height attained than they wither away.”

Before I could reply, our conversation received an abrupt and complete interruption for the night. The door was thrown open, and a man, pushing aside the servant with a rude and yet a dignified air, entered the room unannounced, and with the most perfect disregard to ceremony—

“How d’ye do, Mr. St. John,” said he—“how d’ye do?—Pretty sort of a day we’ve had.—Lucky to find you at home—

that is to say, if you will give me some broiled oysters and champagne for supper."

"With all my heart, Doctor," said St. John, changing his manner at once from the pensive to an easy and somewhat brusque familiarity—"with all my heart; but I am glad to hear you are a convert to champagne: you spent a whole evening last week in endeavoring to dissuade me from the sparkling sin."

"Pish! I had suffered the day before from it, so, like a true Old Bailey penitent, I preached up conversion to others, not from a desire of their welfare, but a plaguy sore feeling for my own misfortune. Where did you dine to-day? At home! Oh! the devil! I starved on three courses at the Duke of Ormond's."

"Aha! Honest Matt was there?"

"Yes, to my cost. He borrowed a shilling of me for a chair. Hang this weather, it costs me seven shillings a day for coach-fare, besides my paying the fares of all my poor brother parsons, who come over from Ireland to solicit my patronage for a bishopric, and end by borrowing half-a-crown in the mean while. But Matt Prior will pay me again, I suppose, out of the public money?"

"To be sure, if Chloe does not ruin him first."

"Hang the slut: don't talk of her. How Prior rails against his place.* He says the exercise spoils his wit, and that the only rhymes he ever dreams of nowadays are 'docket and cocket.'"

"Ha, ha! we must do something better for Matt—make him a bishop or an ambassador. But, pardon me, Count, I have not yet made known to you the most courted, authoritative, impertinent, clever, independent, haughty, delightful, troublesome parson of the age: do homage to Dr. Swift. Doctor, be merciful to my particular friend, Count Devereux."

Drawing himself up, with a manner which contrasted his previous one strongly enough, Dr. Swift saluted me with a dignity which might even be called polished, and which certainly showed that however he might prefer, as his usual demeanor, an air of negligence, and semi-rudeness, he had profited sufficiently by his acquaintance with the great to equal them in the external graces, supposed to be peculiar to their order, whenever it suited his inclination. In person, Swift is much above the middle height, strongly built and with a remarkably fine outline of throat and chest; his front face is certainly displeasing, though far from uncomely; but the clear chiselling of the nose, the curved upper lip, the full, round Roman chin, the

* In the Customs.

hanging brow, and the resolute decision stamped upon the whole expression of the large forehead, and the clear blue eye, make his profile one of the most striking I ever saw. He honored me, to my great surprise, with a fine speech and a compliment; and then, with a look, which menaced to St. John the retort that ensued, he added: "And I shall always be glad to think that I owe your acquaintance to Mr. Secretary St. John, who, if he talked less about operas and singers—thought less about Alcibiades and Pericles—if he never complained of the load of business not being suited to his temper, at the very moment he had been working, like Gumdragon, to get the said load upon his shoulders; and if he persuaded one of his sincerity being as great as his genius,—would appear to all time as adorned with the choicest gifts that Heaven has yet thought fit to bestow on the children of men. Prithee now, Mr. Sec. when shall we have the oysters! Will you be merry to-night, Count?"

"Certainly; if one may find absolution for the champagne."

"I'll absolve you, with a vengeance, on condition that you'll walk home with me, and protect the poor parson from the Mohawks. Faith, they ran young Davenant's chair through with a sword, t'other night. I hear they have sworn to make daylight through my Tory cassock—all Whigs you know, Count Devereux, nasty, dangerous animals, how I hate them; they cost me five-and-sixpence a week in chairs to avoid them."

"Never mind, Doctor, I'll send my servants home with you," said St. John.

"Ay, a nice way of mending the matter—that's curing the itch by scratching the skin off. I could not give your tall fellows less than a crown a-piece, and I could buy off the bloodiest Mohawk in the kingdom, if he's a Whig, for half that sum. But, thank Heaven, the supper is ready."

And to supper we went. The oysters and champagne seemed to exhilarate, if they did not refine, the Doctor's wit. St. John was unusually brilliant. I myself caught the infection of their humor, and contributed my quota to the common stock of jest and repartee; and that evening, spent with the two most extraordinary men of the age, had in it more of broad and familiar mirth than I have ever wasted in the company of the youngest and noisiest disciples of the bowl and its concomitants. Even amidst all the coarse ore of Swift's conversation, the diamond perpetually broke out; his vulgarity was never that of a vulgar mind. Pity that, while he condemned St. John's over-affectation of the grace of life, he never perceived that his affectation of coarseness and brutality was to the full as unworthy of the

simplicity of intellect;* and that the aversion to cant, which was the strongest characteristic of his mind, led him into the very faults he despised, only through a more displeasing and offensive road. That same aversion to cant is, by the way, the greatest and most prevalent enemy to the reputation of high and of strong minds; and in judging Swift's character in especial, we should always bear it in recollection. This aversion—the very antipodes to hypocrisy—leads men not only to disclaim the virtues they have, but pretend to the vices they have not. Foolish trick of disguised vanity!—the world, alas, readily believes them! Like Justice Overdo—in the garb of poor Arthur of Bradley, they may deem it a virtue to have assumed the disguise; but they must not wonder if the sham Arthur is taken for the real, beaten as a vagabond, and set in the stocks as a rogue!

CHAPTER VIII.

Lightly won—lightly lost.—A Dialogue of equal Instruction and Amusement.
—A Visit to Sir Godfrey Kneller.

ONE morning Tarleton breakfasted with me. "I don't see the little page," said he, "who was always in attendance in your anteroom, what the deuce has become of him?"

"You must ask his mistress; she has quarrelled with me, and withdrawn both her favor and her messenger."

"What, the Lady Hasselton quarrelled with you! *Diable!* Wherefore?"

"Because I am not enough of the 'pretty fellow'; am tired of carrying hood and scarf, and sitting behind her chair through five long acts of a dull play; because I disappointed her in not searching for her at every drum and quadrille party;

* It has been said that Swift was only coarse in his later years, and, with a curious ignorance both of fact and of character, that Pope was the cause of the Dean's grossness of taste. There is no doubt that he grew coarser with age; but there is also no doubt that, graceful and dignified as that great genius could be when he pleased, he affected at a period earlier than the one in which he is now introduced, to be coarse in both spirit and manner. I seize upon this opportunity, *mal a propos* as it is, to observe that Swift's preference of Harley to St. John is by no means so certain as writers have been pleased generally to assert. Warton has already noted a passage in one of Swift's letters to Bolingbroke, to which I will beg to call the reader's attention:

"It is *you were* my hero, but the other (Lord Oxford) *never was*; yet if he were, it was your own fault, who taught me to love him, and often vindicated him, in the beginning of your ministry, from my accusations. But I granted he had the greatest inequalities of any man alive; and his whole scene was fifty times more a what-d'ye-call-it than yours; for I declare yours was *unie*, and I wish you would so order it that the world may be as wise as I upon that article."

I have to apologize for introducing this quotation, which I have done because (and I entreat the reader to remember this) I observe that Count Devereux always speaks of Lord Bolingbroke as he was spoken of by the eminent men of that day—not as he is now rated by the judgment of posterity.—Ed.

because I admired not her monkey ; and because I broke a teapot with a toad for a cover."

"And is not that enough?" cried Tarleton. "Heavens! what a black bead-roll of offences; Mrs. Merton would have discarded me for one of them. However, thy account has removed my surprise; and I heard her praise thee the other day; now, as long as she loved thee, she always abused thee like a pickpocket."

"Ha! ha! ha!—and what said she in my favor?"

"Why, that you were certainly very handsome, though you were small; that you were certainly a great genius, though every one would not discover it; and that you certainly had quite the air of high birth, though you were not nearly so well dressed as Beau Tippetly. But *entre nous*, Devereux, I think she hates you, and would play you a trick of spite—revenge is too strong a word—if she could find an opportunity."

"Likely enough, Tarleton; but a coquette's lover is always on his guard; so she will not take me unawares."

"So be it. But tell me, Devereux, who is to be your next mistress, Mrs. Denton or Lady Clancathcart? the world gives them both to you."

"The world is always as generous with what is worthless as the bishop in the fable was with his blessing. However, I promise thee, Tarleton, that I will not interfere with thy claims, either upon Mrs. Denton or Lady Clancathcart."

"Nay," said Tarleton, "I will own that you are a very Scipio; but it must be confessed, even by you, satirist as you are, that Lady Clancathcart has a beautiful set of features."

"A handsome face, but so vilely made. She would make a splendid picture if, like the goddess Laverna, she could be painted as a head without a body."

"Ha! ha! ha!—you have a bitter tongue, Count; but Mrs. Denton, what have you to say against her?"

"Nothing; she has no pretensions for me to contradict. She has a green eye and a sharp voice; a mincing gait and a broad foot. What friend of Mrs. Denton's would not, therefore, counsel her to a prudent obscurity?"

"She never had but one lover in the world," said Tarleton, "who was old, blind, lame and poor; she accepted him, and became Mrs. Denton."

"Yes," said I, "she was like the magnet, and received her name from the very first person * sensible of her attraction."

"Well, you have a shrewd way of saying sweet things," said

* Magnes.

Tarleton; "but I must own that you rarely or never direct it towards women individually. What makes you break through your ordinary custom?"

"Because I am angry with women collectively; and must pour my spleen through whatever channel presents itself."

"Astónishing," said Tarleton; "I despise women myself. I always did: but you were their most enthusiastic and chivalrous defender a month or two ago. What makes thee change, my Sir Amadis?"

"Disappointment! they weary, vex, disgust me; selfish, frivolous, mean, heartless—out on them—'tis a disgrace to have their love!"

"*O ciel!* What a sensation the news of thy misogyny will cause; the young, gay, rich Count Devereux, whose wit, vivacity, splendor of appearance, in equipage and dress, in the course of one season have thrown all the most established beaux and pretty fellows into the shade; to whom dedications, and odes, and billet-doux, are so much waste paper; who has carried off the most general envy and dislike that any man ever was blessed with, since St. John turned politician; what! thou all of a sudden to become a railer against the divine sex that made thee what thou art! Fly—fly—unhappy apostate, or expect the fate of Orpheus, at least!"

"None of your railleries, Tarleton, or I shall speak to thee of plebeians, and the canaille!"

"*Sacre!* my teeth are on edge already! Oh, the base—base canaille, how I loathe them! Nay, Devereux, joking apart, I love you twice as well for your humor. I despise the sex heartily. Indeed, *sub rosa* be it spoken, there are few things that breathe which I do not despise. Human nature seems to me a most pitiful bundle of rags and scraps, which the gods threw out of Heaven, as the dust and rubbish there."

"A pleasant view of thy species," said I.

"By my soul it is. Contempt is to me a luxury. I would not lose the privilege of loathing for all the objects which fools ever admired. What does old Persius say on the subject?"

'Hoc ridere meum tam nil, nulla tibi vendo Iliade.' *

"And yet, Tarleton," said I, "the littlest feeling of all is a delight in contemplating the littleness of other people. Nothing is more contemptible than habitual contempt."

"Prithee, now," answered the haughty aristocrat, "let us not talk of these matters so subtly—leave me my enjoyment with—"

* "This privilege of mine, to laugh,—such a nothing as it seems,—I would not barter to thee for an Iliad."

out refining upon it. What is your first pursuit for the morning?"

"Why, I have promised my uncle a picture of that invaluable countenance which Lady Hasselton finds so handsome; and I am going to give Kneller my last sitting."

"So, so, I will accompany you; I like the vain old dog; 'tis a pleasure to hear him admire himself so wittily."

"Come, then," said I, taking up my hat and sword; and entering Tarleton's carriage, we drove to the painter's abode.

We found him employed in finishing a portrait of Lady Godolphin.

"He, he!" cried he when he beheld me approach. "By Got, I am glad to see you, Count Tevereux; dis painting is tanned poor work by oneself, widout any one to make *des grands yeux*, and cry, 'O, Sir Godfrey Kneller, how fine dis is!'"

"Very true, indeed," said I, "no great man can be expected to waste his talents without his proper reward of praise. But, Heavens, Tarleton, did you ever see anything so wonderful?—that hand—that arm—how exquisite! If Apollo turned painter, and borrowed colors from the rainbow, and models from the goddesses, he would not be fit to hold the pallet to Sir Godfrey Kneller."

"By Got, Count Tevereux, you are von grand judge of painting," cried the artist, with sparkling eyes, "and I vill paint you as von tanned handsome man!"

"Nay, my Apelles, you might as well preserve some likeness."

"Likeness, by Got! I vill make you like and handsome both. By my shoul, you make me von Apelles, I will make you von Alexander!"

"People in general," said Tarleton, gravely, "believe that Alexander had a wry neck, and was a very plain fellow; but no one can know about Alexander like Sir Godfrey Kneller, who has studied military tactics so accurately, and who, if he had taken up the sword instead of the pencil, would have been at least an Alexander himself."

"By Got, Meester Tarleton, you are as goot a judge of de talents for de war as Count Tevereux of de *genie* for de painting! Meester Tarleton, I vill paint your picture, and I vill make your eyes von goot inch bigger than dey are!"

"Large or small," said I (for Tarleton, who had a haughty custom of contracting his orbs till they were scarce perceptible, was so much offended, that I thought it prudent to cut off his reply), "large or small, Sir Godfrey, Mr. Tarleton's eyes are

capable of admiring your genius ; why, your painting is like lightning, and one flash of your brush would be sufficient to restore even a blind man to sight."

"It is tanned true," said Sir Godfrey earnestly ; "and it did restore von man to sight once ! By my shoul, it did ! but sit yourself town, Count Tevereux, and look over your left shoulder—ah, dat is it—and now praise on, Count Tevereux ; de thought of my genius gives you—vat you call it—von animation—von fire,— look you—by my shoul, it does !"

And by dint of such moderate panegyric, the worthy Sir Godfrey completed my picture, with equal satisfaction to himself and the original. See what a beautifier is flattery—a few sweet words will send the Count Devereux down to posterity, with at least three times as much beauty as he could justly lay claim to.*

CHAPTER IX.

A Development of Character, and a long Letter—a Chapter, on the whole, more important than it seems.

THE scenes through which, of late, I have conducted my reader, are by no means episodal ; they illustrate far more than mere narration the career to which I was so honorably devoted. Dissipation—women—wine—Tarleton for a friend, Lady Has-selton for a mistress. Let me now throw aside the mask.

To people who have naturally very intense and very acute feelings, nothing is so fretting, so wearing to the heart, as the commonplace affections, which are the properties and offspring of the world. We have seen the birds which, with wings un-clipt, children fasten to a stake. The birds seek to fly, and are

* This picture represents the Count in an undress. The face is decidedly, though by no means remarkably, handsome ; the nose is aquiline—the upper lip is short and chiselled—the eyes grey, and the forehead, which is by far the finest feature in the countenance, is peculiarly high, broad, and massive. The mouth has but little beauty ; it is severe, caustic, and rather displeasing, from the extreme compression of the lips. The great and prevalent expression of the face is energy. The eye—the brow—the turn of the head—the erect, penetrating aspect—are all strikingly bold, animated, and even daring. And this expression makes a singular contrast to that in another likeness of the Count, which was taken at a much later period of life. The latter portrait represents him in a foreign uniform, decorated with orders. The peculiar sarcasm of the mouth is hidden beneath a very long and thick mustachio, of a much darker color than the hair (for in both portraits, as in Jervas's picture of Lord Bolingbroke the hair is left undisguised by the odious fashion of the day) Across one cheek there is a slight scar, as of a sabre cut. The whole character of this portrait is widely different from that in the earlier one. Not a trace of the fire—the animation—which were so striking in the physiognomy of the youth of twenty,—is discoverable in the calm, sedate, stately, yet somewhat stern expression, which seems immovably spread over the paler hue and the more prominent features of the man of about four or five and thirty. Yet, upon the whole, the face in the latter portrait is handsomer ; and, from its air of dignity and reflection, even more impressive than that in the one I have first described.—Ep.

pulled back before their wings are well spread ; till, at last, they either perpetually strain at the end of their short tether, exciting only ridicule by their anguish and their impotent impatience ; or, sullen and despondent, they remain on the ground, without an attempt to fly, nor creep, even to the full limit which their fetters would allow. Thus is it with feelings of the keen, wild nature I speak of ; they are either striving forever to pass the little circle of slavery to which they are condemned, and so move laughter by an excess of action, and a want of adequate power ; or they rest motionless and moody, disdaining the petty indulgence they *might* enjoy, till sullenness is construed into resignation, and despair seems the apathy of content. Time, however, cures what it does not kill : and both bird and beast, if they pine not to the death at first, grow tame and acquiescent at last.

What to me was the companionship of Tarleton, or the attachment of Lady Hasselton ? I had yielded to the one, and I had half eagerly, half scornfully, sought the other. These, and the avocations they brought with them, consumed my time, and of Time murdered, there is a ghost, which we term *Ennui*. The hauntings of this spectre are the especial curse of the higher orders ; and hence springs a certain consequence to the passions. Persons in those ranks of society, so exposed to *Ennui*, are either rendered totally incapable of real love, or they love far more intensely than those in a lower station ; for the affections in them are either utterly frittered away on a thousand petty objects (poor shifts to escape the persecuting spectre), or else, early disgusted with the worthlessness of these objects, the heart turns within and languishes for something not found in the daily routine of life. When this is the case, and when the pining of the heart is once satisfied, and the object of love is found, there are two mighty reasons why the love should be most passionately cherished. The first is, the utter indolence in which aristocratic life oozes away, and which allows full food for that meditation which can nurse by sure degrees the weakest desire into the strongest passion ; and the second reason is, that the insipidity and hollowness of all patrician pursuits and pleasures render the excitement of love more delicious and more necessary to the "*ignavi terrarum domini*," than it is to those orders of society more usefully, more constantly, and more engrossingly engaged.

Wearied and sated with the pursuit of what was worthless, my heart at last exhausted itself in pining for what was pure. I recurred with a tenderness which I struggled with at first, and

which, in yielding to, I blushed to acknowledge, to the memory of Isora. And in the world, surrounded by all which might be supposed to cause me to forget her, my heart clung to her far more endearingly than it had done in the rural solitudes in which she had first allured it. The truth was this : at the time I first loved her, other passions—passions almost equally powerful—shared her empire. Ambition and pleasure—vast whirlpools of thought—had just opened themselves a channel in my mind, and thither the tides of my desires were hurried and lost. Now those whirlpools had lost their power, and the channels, being dammed up, flowed back upon my breast. Pleasure had disgusted me, and the only ambition I had yet courted and pursued had palled upon me still more. I say, the only ambition—for as yet that which is of the loftier and more lasting kind had not afforded me a temptation ; and the hope which had borne the name and rank of ambition had been the hope rather to glitter than to rise.

These passions, not yet experienced when I lost Isora, had afforded me at that period a ready comfort and a sure engrossment. And in satisfying the hasty jealousies of my temper, in deeming Isora unworthy, and Gerald my rival, I naturally aroused in my pride a dexterous orator as well as a firm ally. Pride not only strengthened my passions, it also persuaded them by its voice ; and it was not till the languid, yet deep, stillness of sated wishes and palled desires fell upon me, that the low accent of a love still surviving at my heart made itself heard in answer.

I now began to take a different view of Isora's conduct. I now began to doubt where I had formerly believed ; and the doubt, first allied to fear, gradually brightened into hope. Of Gerald's rivalry, at least of his identity with Barnard, and, consequently, of his power over Isora, there was, and there could be, no feeling short of certainty. But of what nature was that power? Had not Isora assured me that it was not love? Why should I disbelieve her? Nay, did she not love myself? had not her cheek blushed and her hand trembled when I addressed her? Were these signs the counterfeits of love? Were they not rather of that heart's dye which no skill *can* counterfeit? She had declared that she could not, that she could never, be mine : she had declared so with a fearful earnestness which seemed to annihilate hope ; but had she not also, in the same meeting, confessed that I was dear to her? Had not her lip given me a sweeter and a more eloquent assurance of that confession than words?—and could hope perish

while love existed? She had left me—she had bid me farewell for ever; but that was no proof of a want of love, or of her unworthiness. Gerald, or Barnard, evidently possessed an influence over father as well as child. Their departure from — might have been occasioned by him, and she might have deplored, while she could not resist it: or she might *not* even have deplored: nay, she might have desired, she might have advised it, for my sake as well as hers, were she thoroughly convinced that the union of our loves was impossible.

But, then, of what nature could be this mysterious authority which Gerald possessed over her? That which he possessed over the sire, political schemes might account for; but these, surely, could not have much weight for the daughter. This, indeed, must still remain doubtful and unaccounted for. One presumption, that Gerald was either no favored lover, or that he was unacquainted with her retreat, might be drawn from his continued residence at Devereux Court. If he loved Isora, and knew her present abode, would he not have sought her? Could he, I thought, live away from that bright face, if once allowed to behold it? unless, indeed (terrible thought!), there hung over it the dimness of guilty familiarity, and indifference had been the offspring of possession. But was that delicate and virgin face, where changes, with every moment, coursed each other, harmonious to the changes of the mind, as shadows in a valley reflect the clouds of heaven!—was that face, so ingenuous, so girlishly revelant of all,—even of the slightest, the most transitory—emotion, the face of one hardened in deceit and inured to shame? The countenance is, it is true, but a faithless mirror: but what man that has studied woman will not own that there is, at least while the down of first youth is not brushed away, in the eye and cheek of a zoned and untainted Innocence, that which survives not even the fruition of a lawful love, and has no (nay, not even a shadowed and imperfect) likeness in the face of Guilt? Then, too, had any worldlier or mercenary sentiment entered her breast respecting me, would Isora have flown from the suit of the eldest scion of the rich house of Devereux?—and would she, poor and destitute, the daughter of an alien and an exile, would she have spontaneously relinquished any hope of obtaining that alliance that maidens of the loftiest houses of England had not disdained to desire? Thus confused and incoherent, but thus yearning fondly towards her image and its imagined purity, did my thoughts daily and hourly array themselves; and, in proportion as I suffered common ties to drop from me

one by one, those thoughts clung the more tenderly to that which, though severed from the rich argosy of former love, was still indissolubly attached to the anchor of its hope.

It was during this period of revived affection that I received the following letter from my uncle :

“I thank thee for thy long letter, my dear boy ; I read it over three times with great delight. Od’sfish, Morton, you are a sad Pickle, I fear, and seem to know all the ways of the town as well as your old uncle did some thirty years ago ! ’Tis a very pretty acquaintance with human nature that your letters display. You put me in mind of little Sid, who was just about your height, and who had just such a pretty, shrewd way of expressing himself in simile and point. Ah, it is easy to see that you have profited by your old uncle’s conversation, and that Farquhar and Etherege were not studied for nothing.

“But I have sad news for thee, my child, or rather it is sad for me to tell thee my tidings. It is sad for the old birds to linger in their nest when the young ones take wing and leave them ; but it is merry for the young birds to get away from the dull old tree, and frisk it in the sunshine—merry for them to get mates, and have young themselves. Now, do not think, Morton, that by speaking of mates and young, I am going to tell thee thy brothers are already married ; nay, there is time enough for those things, and I am not friendly to early weddings, nor, to speak truly, a marvellous great admirer of that holy ceremony at any age ; for the which there may be private reasons, too long to relate to thee now. Moreover, I fear my young day was a wicked time—a heinous wicked time, and we were wont to laugh at the wedded state, until, body of me, some of us found it no laughing matter.

“But to return, Morton—to return to thy brothers—they have both left me ; and the house seems to me not the good old house it did when ye were all about me ; and, somehow or other, I look now oftener at the church-yard than I was wont to do. You are all gone now—all shot up, and become men ; and when your old uncle sees you no more, and recollects that all his own contemporaries are out of the world, he cannot help saying, as William Temple, poor fellow, once prettily enough said, ‘Methinks it seems an impertinence in me to be still alive.’ You went first, Morton ; and I missed you more than I cared to say ; but you were always a kind boy to those you loved, and you wrote the old knight merry letters, that made him laugh, and think he was grown young again—(faith, boy, that was a jolly story of the three Squires at Button’s !)—

and once a week comes your packet, well filled, as if you did not think it a task to make me happy, which your handwriting always does ; nor a shame to my grey hairs that I take pleasure in the same things that please thee ! So, thou seest, my child, that I have got through thy absence pretty well, save that I have had no one to read thy letters to ; for Gerald and thou are still jealous of each other—a great sin in thee, Morton, which I prithee to reform. And Aubrey, poor lad, is a little too rigid, considering his years, and it looks not well in the dear boy to shake his head at the follies of his uncle. And as to thy mother, Morton, I read her one of thy letters, and she said thou wert a graceless reprobate to think so much of this wicked world, and to write so familiarly to thine aged relative. Now, I am not a young man, Morton, but the word aged has a sharp sound with it when it comes from a lady's mouth.

“ Well, after thou hadst been gone a month, Aubrey and Gerald, as I wrote thee word long since, in the last letter I wrote thee with my own hand, made a tour together for a little while, and that was a hard stroke on me. But after a week or two Gerald returned ; and I went out in my chair to see the dear boy shoot—'sdeath, Morton, he handles the gun well. And then Aubrey returned alone ; but he looked pined, and moping, and shut himself up, and as thou dost love him so, I did not like to tell thee, till now, when he is quite well, that he alarmed me much for him ; he is too much addicted to his devotions, poor child, and seems to forget that the hope of the next world ought to make us happy in this. Well, Morton, at last, two months ago, Aubrey left us again, and Gerald last week set off on a tour through the sister kingdom, as it is called ; Faith, boy, if Scotland and England are sister kingdoms, 'tis a thousand pities for Scotland that they are not co-heiresses !

“ I should have told thee of this news before, but I have had, as thou knowest, the gout so villainously in my hand, that, till t'other day, I have not held a pen, and old Nicholls, my amanuensis, is but a poor scribe ; and I did not love to let the dog write to thee on all our family affairs—especially as I have a secret to tell thee which makes me plaguy uneasy. Thou must know, Morton, that after thy departure Gerald asked me for thy rooms ; and though I did not like that any one else should have what belonged to thee, yet I have always had a foolish antipathy to say 'No !' so thy brother had them, on condition to leave them exactly as they were, and to yield them to thee whenever thou shouldst return to claim them. Well,

Morton, when Gerald went on his tour with thy youngest brother, old Nicholls—you know 'tis a garrulous fellow—told me one night that his son Hugh—you remember Hugh, a thin youth, and a tall—lingering by the beach one evening, saw a man, wrapped in a cloak, come out of the castle cave, unmoor one of the boats, and push off to the little island opposite. Hugh swears by more than yea and nay, that the man was Father Montreuil. Now, Morton, this made me very uneasy, and I saw why thy brother Gerald wanted thy rooms, which communicate so snugly with the sea. So I told Nicholls, slyly, to have the great iron gate at the mouth of the passage carefully locked; and when it was locked, I had an iron plate put over the whole lock, that the lean Jesuit might not creep even through the keyhole. Thy brother returned, and I told him a tale of the smugglers, who have really been too daring of late, and insisted on the door being left as I had ordered; and I told him, moreover, though not as if I had suspected his communication with the priest, that I interdicted all further converse with that limb of the church. Thy brother heard me with an indifferently bad grace; but I was peremptory, and the thing was agreed on.

“Well, child, the day before Gerald last left us, I went to take leave of him in his own room—to tell thee the truth, I had forgotten his travelling expenses—when I was on the stairs of the tower, I heard—by the Lord I did—Montreuil's voice in the outer-room, as plainly as ever I heard it at prayers. Od'sfish, Morton, I was an angered, and I made so much haste to the door, that my foot slipped by the way; thy brother heard me fall, and came out; but I looked at him as I never looked at thee, Morton, and entered the room. Lo, the priest was not there; I searched both chambers in vain; so I made thy brother lift up the trap-door, and kindle a lamp, and I searched the room below and the passage. The priest was invisible. Thou knowest, Morton, that there is only one egress in the passage, and that was locked, as I said before, so where the devil—the devil indeed—could thy tutor have escaped? He could not have passed me on the stairs without my seeing him; he could not have leaped the window without breaking his neck; he could not have got out of the passage without making himself a current of air.—Od'sfish, Morton, this thing might puzzle a wiser man than thine uncle. Gerald affected to be mighty indignant at my suspicions; but, God forgive him, I saw he was playing a part. A man does not write plays, my child, without being keen-sighted in these little intrigues; and,

moreover, it is impossible I could have mistaken thy tutor's voice, which, to do it justice, is musical enough, and is the most singular voice I ever heard—unless little Sid's be excepted.

“*Apropos* of little Sid. I remember that in the Mall, when I was walking there alone, three weeks after my marriage, De Grammont and Sid joined me. I was in a melancholic mood—'sdeath, Morton, marriage tames a man as water tames mice!—'Aha, Sir William,' cried Sedley, 'thou hast a cloud on thee—prithee now brighten it away: see, thy wife shines on thee from the other end of the Mall.' 'Ah, talk not to a dying man of his physic!' said Grammont (that Grammont was a shocking rogue, Morton!)—'Prithee, Sir William, what is the chief characteristic of wedlock? is it a state of war or of peace?' 'Oh, peace to be sure!' cried Sedley, 'and Sir William and his lady carry with them the emblem.' 'How!' cried I; for I do assure thee, Morton, I was of a different turn of mind. 'How!' said Sid, gravely, 'why, the emblem of peace is the *cornucopia*, which your lady and you equitably divide—she carries the *copia*, and you the *cor*—' Nay, Morton, nay, I cannot finish the jest; for, after all, it was a sorry thing in little Sid, whom I had befriended like a brother, with heart and purse, to wound me so cuttingly; but 'tis the way with your jesters.

“Od'sfish, now how I have got out of my story! Well, I did not go back to my room, Morton, till I had looked to the outside of the iron door, and seen that the plate was as firm as ever: so now you have the whole of the matter. Gerald went the next day, and I fear me much lest he should already be caught in some Jacobite trap. Write me thy advice on the subject. Meanwhile, I have taken the precaution to have the trapdoor removed, and the aperture strongly boarded over.

“But 'tis time for me to give over. I have been four days on this letter, for the gout comes now to me oftener than it did, and I do not know when I may again write to thee with my own hand; so I resolved I would e'en empty my whole budget at once. Thy mother is well and blooming; she is, at the present, abstractedly employed in a prodigious piece of tapestry, which old Nicholls informs me is the wonder of all the women.

“Heaven bless thee, my child! Take care of thyself, and drink moderately. It is hurtful at thy age to drink above a gallon or so at a sitting. Heaven bless thee again, and when the weather gets warmer, thou must come with thy kind looks,

to make me feel at home again. At present the country wears a cheerless face, and everything about us is harsh and frosty, except the blunt, good-for-nothing heart of thine uncle, and that, winter or summer, is always warm to thee.

“WILLIAM DEVEREUX.”

“P.S.—I thank thee heartily for the little spaniel of the new breed thou gottest me from the Duchess of Marlborough. It has the prettiest red and white, and the blackest eyes possible. But poor Ponto is as jealous as a wife three years married, and I cannot bear the old hound to be vexed, so I shall transfer the little creature, its rival, to thy mother.”

This letter, tolerably characteristic of the blended simplicity, penetration, and overflowing kindness of the writer, occasioned me much anxious thought. There was no doubt in my mind but that Gerald and Montreuil were engaged in some intrigue for the exiled family. The disguised name which the former assumed; the state reasons which D'Alvarez confessed that Barnard, or rather Gerald, had for concealment, and which proved, at least, that some state plot in which Gerald was engaged was known to the Spaniard, joined to those expressions of Montreuil, which did all but own a design for the restoration of the deposed Line, and the power which I knew he possessed over Gerald, whose mind, at once bold and facile, would love the adventure of the intrigue, and yield to Montreuil's suggestions on its nature,—these combined circumstances left me in no doubt upon a subject deeply interesting to the honor of our house, and the very life of one of its members. Nothing, however, for me to do, calculated to prevent or impede the designs of Montreuil and the danger of Gerald, occurred to me. Eager alike in my hatred and my love, I said, inly, “What matters it whether one whom the ties of blood never softened towards me, with whom, from my childhood upwards, I have wrestled as with an enemy, what matters it whether he win fame or death in the perilous game he has engaged in?” And turning from this most generous and most brotherly view of the subject, I began only to think whether the search or the society of Isora also influenced Gerald in his absence from home. After a fruitless and inconclusive meditation on that head, my thoughts took a less selfish turn, and dwelt with all the softness of pity, and the anxiety of love, upon the morbid temperament and ascetic devotions of Aubrey. What, for one so already abstracted from the enjoyments of earth, so darkened by superstitious misconceptions of the

true nature of God, and the true objects of his creatures—what could be anticipated but wasted powers and a perverted life? Alas! when will men perceive the difference between religion and priestcraft! When will they perceive that reason, so far from extinguishing religion by a more gaudy light, sheds on it all its lustre? It is fabled that the first legislator of the Peruvians received from the Deity a golden rod, with which in his wanderings he was to strike the earth until in some destined spot the earth entirely absorbed it, and there—and there alone—was he to erect a temple to the Divinity. What is this fable but the cloak of an inestimable moral? Our reason is the rod of gold; the vast world of truth gives the soil, which it is perpetually to sound; and only where without resistance the soil receives the rod which guided and supported us, will our Altar be sacred and our worship be accepted.

CHAPTER X.

Being a short Chapter, containing a most Important Event.

SIR WILLIAM'S letter was still fresh in my mind, when, for want of some less noble quarter wherein to bestow my tediousness, I repaired to St. John. As I crossed the hall to his apartment, two men, just dismissed from his presence, passed me rapidly; one was unknown to me, but there was no mistaking the other—it was Montreuil. I was greatly startled; the priest not appearing to notice me, and conversing in a whispered, yet seemingly vehement tone, with his companion, hurried on, and vanished through the street door. I entered St. John's room: he was alone, and received me with his usual gayety.

"Pardon me, Mr. Secretary," said I; "but if not a question of state, do inform me what you know respecting the taller one of those two gentlemen who have just quitted you?"

"It is a question of state, my dear Devereux, so my answer must be brief; very little."

"You know who he is?"

"Yes, a Jesuit, and a marvellously shrewd one: the Abbé Montreuil."

"He was my tutor."

"Ah, so I have heard."

"And your acquaintance with him is positively and *bond fide* of a state nature?"

"Positively and *bondâ fide*."

"I could tell you something of him; he is certainly in the service of the Court at St. Germain's, and a terrible plotter on this side the channel."

"Possibly; but I wish to receive no information respecting him."

One great virtue of business did St. John possess, and I have never known any statesman who possessed it so eminently: it was the discreet distinction between friends of the statesman and friends of the man. Much and intimately as I knew St. John, I could never glean from him a single secret of a state nature, until, indeed, at a later period, I leagued myself to a portion of his public schemes. Accordingly I found him, at the present moment, perfectly impregnable to my inquiries; and it was not till I knew Montreuil's companion was the celebrated intrigant, the Abbé Gaultier, that I ascertained the exact nature of the priest's business with St. John, and the exact motives of the civilities he had received from Abigail Masham.* Being at last forced, despairingly, to give over the attempt on his discretion, I suffered St. John to turn the conversation upon other topics, and as these were not much to the existent humor of my mind, I soon rose to depart.

"Stay, Count," said St. John; "shall you ride to-day?"

"If you will bear me company."

"*Volontiers*—to say the truth, I was about to ask you to canter your bay horse with me first to Spring Gardens,† where I have a promise to make to the director; and secondly, on a mission of charity to a poor foreigner of rank and birth, who, in his profound ignorance of this country, thought it right to enter into a plot with some wise heads, and to reveal it to some foolish tongues, who brought it to us with as much clatter as if it were a second gunpowder project. I easily brought him off that scrape, and I am now going to give him a caution for the future. Poor gentleman, I hear that he is grievously distressed in pecuniary matters, and I always had a kindness for exiles. Who knows but that a state of exile may be our own fate! and this alien is sprung from a race as haughty as that of St. John, or of Devereux. The *res angusta domi* must gall him sorely!"

"True," said I slowly. "What may be the name of the foreigner?"

*Viz.—That Count Devereux ascertained the priest's communications and overtures from the Chevalier. The precise extent of Bolingbroke's secret negotiations with the exiled Prince is still one of the darkest portions of the history of that time. That negotiations were carried on, both by Harley and St. John, very largely, and very closely, I need not say that there is no doubt.—ED.

† Vauxhall.

"Why—complain not hereafter that I do not trust you in state matters—I will divulge—D'Alvarez—Don Diego—an hidalgo of the best blood of Andalusia; and not unworthy of it, I fancy, in the virtues of fighting, though he may be in those of counsel. But—Heavens! Devereux—you seem ill!"

"No, no! Have you ever seen this man?"

"Never."

At this word a thrill of joy shot across me, for I knew St. John's fame for gallantry, and I was suspicious of the motives of his visit.

"St. John, I know this Spaniard—I know him well, and intimately. Could you not commission me to do your errand, and deliver your caution? Relief from me he might accept; from you, as a stranger, pride might forbid it; and you would really confer on me a personal and an essential kindness, if you would give me so fair an opportunity to confer kindness upon him."

"Very well, I am delighted to oblige you in any way. Take his direction; you see his abode is in a very pitiful suburb. Tell him from me that he is quite safe at present; but tell him also to avoid, henceforward, all imprudence, all connection with priests, plotters, *et tous ces gens-la*, as he values his personal safety, or at least his continuance in this most hospitable country. It is not from every wood that we make a Mercury, nor from every brain that we can carve a Mercury's genius of intrigue."

"Nobody ought to be better skilled in the materials requisite for such productions than Mr. Secretary St. John!" said I; "and now, adieu."

"Adieu, if you will not ride with me. We meet at Sir William Wyndham's to-morrow."

Masking my agitation till I was alone, I rejoiced when I found myself in the open streets. I summoned a hackney coach, and drove as rapidly as the vehicle would permit, to the petty and obscure suburb to which St. John had directed me. The coach stopped at the door of a very humble, but not absolutely wretched, abode. I knocked at the door. A woman opened it, and, in answer to my inquiries, told me that the poor foreign gentleman was very ill—very ill indeed—had suffered a paralytic stroke—not expected to live. His daughter was with him now—would see no one—even Mr. Barnard had been denied admission.

At that name my feelings, shocked and stunned at first by the unexpected intelligence of the poor Spaniard's danger, felt a sudden and fierce revulsion—I combated it. This is no time, I thought, for any jealous, for any selfish, emotion. If I can

serve her, if I can relieve her father, let me be contented. "She will see me," I said aloud, and I slipped some money in the woman's hand. "I am an old friend of the family, and I shall not be an unwelcome intruder on the sick-room of the sufferer."

"Intruder, sir—bless you, the poor gentleman is quite speechless and insensible."

At hearing this, I could refrain no longer. Isora's disconsolate, solitary, destitute condition, broke irresistibly upon me, and all scruple of more delicate and formal nature vanished at once. I ascended the stairs, followed by the old woman—she stopped me by the threshold of a room on the second floor, and whispered "*There!*" I paused an instant—collected breath and courage, and entered. The room was partially darkened. The curtains were drawn closely around the bed. By a table, on which stood two or three phials of medicine, I beheld Isora, listening with an eager, a *most* eager and intent face, to a man whose garb betrayed his healing profession, and who, laying a finger on the outstretched palm of his other hand, appeared giving his precise instructions, and uttering that oracular breath which—mere human words to him—was a message of fate itself—a fiat on which hung all that makes life, life, to his trembling and devout listener. Monarchs of earth, ye have not so supreme a power over woe and happiness, as one village leech! As he turned to leave her, she drew from a most slender purse a few petty coins, and I saw that she muttered some words indicative of the shame of poverty, as she tremblingly tendered them to the outstretched palm. Twice did that palm close and open on the paltry sum; and the third time the native instinct of the heart overcame the later impulse of the profession. The limb of Galen drew back, and shaking with a gentle oscillation his capitalian honors, he laid the money softly on the table, and buttoning up the pouch of his nether garment, as if to resist temptation, he pressed the poor hand still extended towards him, and bowing over it with a kind respect for which I did long to approach and kiss his most withered and undainty cheek, he turned quickly round, and almost fell against me in the abstracted hurry of his exit.

"Hush!" said I softly. "What hope of your patient?"

The leech glanced at me meaningly, and I whispered to him to wait for me below. Isora had not yet seen me. It is a notable distinction in the feelings, that all but the solitary one of grief sharpen into exquisite edge the keenness of the senses, but grief blunts them to a most dull obtuseness. I hesitated

now to come forward ; and so I stood, hat in hand, by the door, and not knowing that the tears streamed down my cheeks as I fixed my gaze upon Isora. She too stood still, just where the leech had left her, with her eyes fixed upon the ground, and her head drooping. The right hand which the man had pressed, had sunk slowly and heavily by her side, with the small snowy fingers half closed over the palm. There is no describing the despondency which the listless position of that hand spoke, and the left hand lay with a like indolence of sorrow on the table, with one finger outstretched and pointing towards the phials, just as it had, some moments before, seconded the injunctions of the prim physician. Well, for my part, if I were a painter I would come now and then to a sick chamber for a study !

At last Isora, with a very quiet gesture of self-recovery, moved towards the bed, and the next moment I was by her side. If my life depended on it, I could not write one, no, not *one* syllable more of this scene.

CHAPTER XI.

Containing more than any other Chapter in the Second Book of this History.

My first proposal was to remove the patient, with all due care and gentleness, to a better lodging, and a district more convenient for the visits of the most eminent physicians. When I expressed this wish to Isora, she looked at me long and wistfully, and then burst into tears. “*You will not deceive us,*” said she, “and I accept your kindness at once—from *him* I rejected the same offer.”

“*Him?*—of whom speak you?—this Barnard, or rather—but I know him !” A startling expression passed over Isora’s speaking face.

“*Know him !*” she cried, interrupting me, “*You do not—you cannot !*”

“*Take courage, dearest Isora—if I may so dare to call you—take courage ; it is fearful to have a rival in that quarter—but I am prepared for it.—This Barnard, tell me again, do you love him ?*”

“*Love—Oh, God, no !*”

“*What then: do you still fear him?—fear him, too, protected by the unsleeping eye and the vigilant hand of a love like mine?*”

“*Yes !*” she said falteringly, “*I fear for you !*”

“*Me !*” I cried, laughing scornfully, “*me ! nay, dearest, there*

breathes not that man whom you need fear on *my* account.—But, answer me—is not—”

“For Heaven’s sake—for mercy’s sake!” cried Isora eagerly, “do not question me—I am bound, by a most solemn oath, never to divulge that secret.”

“I care not,” said I, calmly, “I want no confirmation of my knowledge—this masked rival is my own brother!”

I fixed my eyes full on Isora while I said this, and she quailed, beneath my gaze: her cheek—her lips—were utterly without color, and an expression of sickening and keen anguish was graven upon her face.—She made no answer.

“Yes!” resumed I, bitterly, “it is my brother—be it so—I am prepared—but if you can, Isora, say one word to deny it?”

Isora’s tongue seemed literally to cleave to her mouth; at last, with a violent effort, she muttered, “I have told you, Morton, that I am bound by oath not to divulge this secret; nor may I breathe a single syllable calculated to do so—if I deny one name, you may question me on more—and, therefore, to deny one is a breach of my oath. But beware!” she added, vehemently, “oh! beware how your suspicions—mere vague, baseless suspicions—criminate a brother: and, above all, whomsoever you believe to be the real being under this disguised name, as you value your life, and therefore mine—breathe not to him a syllable of your belief.”

I was so struck with the energy with which this was said, that, after a short pause, I rejoined in an altered tone:

“I cannot believe that I have aught against life to fear from a brother’s hand—but I will promise you to guard against latent danger. But is your oath so peremptory that you cannot deny even one name?—if not, and you *can* deny this, I swear to you that I will never question you upon another.”

Again a fierce convulsion wrung the lip and distorted the perfect features of Isora. She remained silent for some moments, and then murmured, “My oath forbids me even that single answer—tempt me no more—now and forever, I am mute upon this subject.”

Perhaps some slight and momentary anger, or doubt, or suspicion, betrayed itself upon my countenance, for Isora, after looking upon me long and mournfully, said in a quiet but melancholy tone: “I see your thoughts, and I do not reproach you for them—it is natural that you should think ill of one whom this mystery surrounds—one too placed under such circumstances of humiliation and distrust. I have lived long in your country—I have seen, for the last few months, much of its inhabi-

tants; I have studied too the works which profess to unfold its national and peculiar character; I know that you have a distrust of the people of other climates; I know that you are cautious and full of suspicious vigilance, even in your commerce with each other; I know, too (and Isora's heart swelled visibly as she spoke), that poverty itself, in the eyes of your commercial countrymen, is a crime, and that they rarely feel confidence or place faith in those who are unhappy; why, Count Devereux, why should I require more of you than of the rest of your nation? Why should you think better of the penniless and friendless girl—the degraded exile—the victim of doubt, which is so often the disguise of guilt, than any other—any one even among my own people—would think of one so mercilessly deprived of all the decent and appropriate barriers by which a maiden should be surrounded? No—no—leave me as you found me—leave my poor father where you see him—any place will do for us to die in."

"Isora!" I said, clasping her in my arms, "you do not know me yet; had I found you in prosperity, and in the world's honor—had I wooed you in your father's halls, and girt around with the friends and kinsmen of your race—I might have pressed for more than you will now tell me—I might have indulged suspicion where I perceived mystery, and I might not have loved as I love you now! *Now*, Isora, in misfortune, in destitution, I place without reserve my whole heart—its trust, its zeal its devotion—in your keeping; come evil or good, storm or sunshine, I am yours, wholly, and forever. Reject me if you will, I will return to you again; and never—never—save from my own eyes or your own lips—will I receive a single evidence detracting from your purity, or, Isora—mine own, own Isora—may I not add also—from your love?"

"Too, too generous!" murmured Isora, struggling passionately with her tears, "may Heaven forsake me if ever I am ungrateful to thee; and believe—believe that if love, more fond, more true, more devoted than woman ever felt before, can repay you, you shall be repaid!"

Why, at that moment, did my heart leap so joyously within me?—why did I say inly—"The treasure I have so long yearned for, is found at last: we have met, and through the waste of years, we will walk together, and never part again"? Why, at that moment of bliss, did I not rather feel a foretaste of the coming woe! Oh, blind and capricious Fate, that gives us a presentiment at one while, and withholds it at another! Knowledge, and Prudence, and calculating Foresight, what are ye?—

warnings unto others, not ourselves. Reason is a lamp which sheddeth afar a glorious and general light, but leaveth all that is around it in darkness and in gloom. We foresee and foretell the destiny of others—we march credulous and benighted to our own ; and, like Laocoön, from the very altars by which we stand as the soothsayer and the priest, creep forth, unsuspected and undreamt of, the serpents which are fated to destroy us !

That very day then, Alvarez was removed to a lodging more worthy of his birth, and more calculated to afford hope of his recovery. He bore the removal without any evident sign of fatigue ; but his dreadful malady had taken away both speech and sense, and he was already more than half the property of the grave. I sent, however, for the best medical advice which London could afford. They met—prescribed—and left the patient just as they found him. I know not, in the progress of science, what physicians may be to posterity, but in my time they are false witnesses subpœnaed against Death, whose testimony always tells less in favor of the plaintiff than the defendant.

Before we left the poor Spaniard's former lodging, and when I was on the point of giving some instructions to the landlady respecting the place to which the few articles of property belonging to Don Diego and Isora were to be moved, Isora made me a sign to be silent, which I obeyed. "Pardon me," said she afterwards, "but I confess that I am anxious our next residence should not be known—should not be subject to the intrusion of—of this—"

"Barnard, as you call him. I understand you; be it so !" and accordingly I enjoined the goods to be sent to my own house, whence they were removed to Don Diego's new abode ; and I took especial care to leave with the good lady no clue to discover Alvarez and his daughter, otherwise than *through me*. The pleasure afforded me of directing Gerald's attention to myself, I could not resist. "Tell Mr. Barnard, when he call," said I, "that only through Count Morton Devereux, will he hear of Don Diego D'Alvarez, and the lady his daughter."

"I will, your honor," said the landlady ; and then, looking at me more attentively, she added : "Bless me ! now when you speak, there is a very strong likeness between yourself and Mr. Barnard."

I recoiled as if an adder had stung me, and hurried into the coach to support the patient, who was already placed there.

Now then my daily post was by the bed of disease and suffering ; in the chamber of death was my vow of love ratified ; and in sadness and in sorrow was it returned. But it is in such

scenes that the deepest, the most endearing, and the most holy, species of the passion is engendered. As I heard Isora's low voice tremble with the suspense of one who watches over the hourly severing of the affection of Nature and of early years: as I saw her light step flit by the pillow which she smoothed, and her cheek alternately flush and fade, in watching the wants which she relieved; as I marked her mute, her unwearying, tenderness, breaking into a thousand nameless but mighty, cares and pervading like an angel's vigilance every—yea, the minutest—course into which it flowed—did I not behold her in that sphere in which woman is most lovely, and in which love itself consecrates its admiration, and purifies its most ardent desires? That was not a time for our hearts to speak audibly to each other; but we felt that they grew closer and closer, and we asked not for the poor eloquence of words. But over this scene let me not linger.

One morning, as I was proceeding on foot to Isora's, I perceived on the opposite side of the way Montreuil and Gerald; they were conversing eagerly: they both saw me. Montreuil made a slight, quiet, and dignified inclination of the head: Gerald colored, and hesitated. I thought he was about to leave his companion and address me; but, with a haughty and severe air, I passed on, and Gerald, as if stung by my demeanor, bit his lip vehemently, and followed my example. A few minutes afterwards I felt an inclination to regret that I had not afforded him him an opportunity of addressing me. "I might," thought I, "have then taunted him with his persecution of Isora, and defied him to execute those threats against me, in which it is evident, from her apprehensions for my safety, that he indulged."

I had not, however, much leisure for these thoughts. When I arrived at the lodgings of Alvarez, I found that a great change had taken place in his condition; he had recovered speech, though imperfectly, and testified a return to sense. I flew up stairs with a light step to congratulate Isora; she met me at the door. "Hush!" she whispered: "my father sleeps!" But she did not speak with the animation I had anticipated.

"What is the matter, dearest?" said I, following her into another apartment: "you seem sad, and your eyes are red with tears, which are not, methinks, entirely the tears of joy at this happy change in your father?"

"I am marked out for suffering," returned Isora, more keenly than she was wont to speak. I pressed her to explain her meaning; she hesitated at first, but at length confessed that her father had always been anxious for her marriage with this *soi-disant*

Barnard, and that his first words on his recovery had been to press her to consent to his wishes.

"My poor father," said she weepingly, "speaks and thinks only for my fancied good : but his senses as yet are only recovered in part, and he cannot even understand me when I speak of you. 'I shall die,' he said, 'I shall die, and you will be left on the wide world !' I in vain endeavored to explain to him that I should have a protector—he fell asleep muttering those words, and with tears in his eyes."

"Does he know as much of this Barnard as you do?" said I.

"Heavens, no !—or he would never have pressed me to marry one so wicked."

"Does he know even who he is?"

"Yes!" said Isora, after a pause, "but he has not known it long."

Here the physician joined us, and taking me aside, informed me that, as he had foreboded, sleep had been the harbinger of death, and that Don Diego was no more. I broke the news as gently as I could to Isora : but her grief was far more violent than I could have anticipated ; and nothing seemed to cut her so deeply to the heart as the thought that his last wish had been one with which she had not complied, and could never comply.

I pass over the first days of mourning—I come to the one after Don Diego's funeral. I had been with Isora in the morning ; I left her for a few hours, and returned at the first dusk of evening with some books and music, which I vainly hoped she might recur to for a momentary abstraction from her grief. I dismissed my carriage, with the intention of walking home, and addressing the woman-servant who admitted me, inquired, as was my wont, after Isora. "She has been very ill," replied the woman, "ever since the strange gentleman left her."

"The strange gentleman?"

Yes, he had forced his way upstairs, despite the denial the servant had been ordered to give to all strangers. He had entered Isora's room ; and the woman, in answer to my urgent inquiries, added that she had heard his voice raised to a loud and harsh key in the apartment ; he had stayed there about a quarter of an hour, and had then hurried out, seemingly in great disorder and agitation.

"What description of man was he?" I asked.

The woman answered that he was mantled from head to foot in his cloak, which was richly laced, and his hat was looped with diamonds, but slouched over that part of his face which the collar of his cloak did not hide, so that she could not further

describe him than as one of a haughty and abrupt bearing, and evidently belonging to the higher ranks.

Convinced that Gerald had been the intruder, I hastened up the stairs to Isora. She received me with a sickly and faint smile, and endeavored to conceal the traces of her tears.

“So !” said I, “this insolent persecutor of yours has discovered your abode, and again insulted or intimidated you. He shall do so no more !—I will seek him to-morrow—and no affinity of blood shall prevent—”

“Morton, dear Morton !” cried Isora, in great alarm, and yet with a certain determination stamped upon her features, “hear me !—it is true this man has been here—it is true that, fearful and terrible as he is, he has agitated and alarmed me ; but it was only for you, Morton—by the Holy Virgin, it was only for you ! ‘The moment,’ said he, and his voice ran shivering through my heart like a dagger, ‘the moment Morton Devereux discovers who is his rival, that moment his death warrant is irrevocably sealed !”

“Arrogant boaster !” I cried, and my blood burnt with the intense rage which a much slighter cause would have kindled from the natural fierceness of my temper. “Does he think my life is at his bidding, to allow or to withhold ?—Unhand me, Isora, unhand me ! I tell you I will seek him this moment, and dare him to do his worst !”

“Do so,” said Isora, calmly, and releasing her hold ; “do so ; but hear me first : the moment you breathe to him your suspicions you place an eternal barrier betwixt yourself and me ! Pledge me your faith that you will never, while I live at least, reveal to him—to any one—whom you suspect—your reproach, your defiance, your knowledge—nay, not even your lightest suspicion of his identity with my persecutor—promise me this, Morton Devereux, or I, in my turn, before that crucifix whose sanctity we both acknowledge and adore—that crucifix which has descended to my race for three unbroken centuries—which, for my departed Father, in the solemn vow, and in the death agony, has still been a witness, a consolation, and a pledge, between the soul and its Creator—by that crucifix which my dying mother clasped to her bosom, when she committed me, an infant, to the care of that Heaven which hears and records forever our lightest word—I swear that I will never be yours !”

“Isora !” said I, awed and startled, yet struggling against the impression her energy made upon me, “you know not to what you pledge yourself, nor what you require of me. If I do not

seek out this man—if I do not expose to him my knowledge of his pursuit and unhallowed persecution of you—if I do not effectually prohibit and prevent their continuance—think well, what security have I for your future peace of mind—nay, even for the safety of your honor or your life? A man thus bold, daring, and unbaffled in his pursuit, thus vigilant and skilful in his selection of time and occasion—so that, despite my constant and anxious endeavor to meet him in your presence, I have never been able to do so—from a man, I say, thus pertinacious in resolution, thus crafty in disguise, what may you not dread when you leave him utterly fearless by the license of impunity? Think too, again, Isora, that the mystery dishonors as much as the danger menaces. Is it meet that my betrothed and my future bride should be subjected to these secret and terrible visitations—visitations of a man professing himself her lover, and evincing the vehemence of his passion by that of his pursuit? Isora—Isora—you have weighed not these things—you know not what you demand of me.”

“I do!” answered Isora, “I do know all that I demand of you—I demand of you only to preserve your life.”

“How,” said I, impatiently, “cannot my hand preserve my life? and is it for you, the daughter of a line of warriors, to ask your lover and your husband to shrink from a single foe?”

“No, Morton,” answered Isora. “Were you going to battle, I would gird on your sword myself—were, too, this man other than he is, and you were about to meet him in open contest, I would not wrong you, nor degrade your betrothed, by a fear. But I know my persecutor well—fierce, unrelenting—dreadful in his dark and ungovernable passions as he is, he has not the courage to confront you: I fear not the open foe, but the lurking and sure assassin. His very earnestness to avoid you; the precautions he has taken—are alone sufficient to convince you that he dreads personally to oppose your claim, or to vindicate himself.”

“Then what have I to fear?”

“Everything! Do you not know that from men, at once fierce, crafty, and shrinking from bold violence, the stuff for assassins is always made? And if I wanted surer proof of his designs than inference, his oath—it rings in my ears now—is sufficient: ‘The moment Morton Devereux discovers who is his rival, that moment his death-warrant is irrevocably sealed.’ Morton, I demand your promise; or, though my heart break, I will record my own vow.”

“Stay stay,” I said, in anger, and in sorrow; “were I to

promise this, and for my own safety hazard yours, what could you deem me?"

"Fear not for me, Morton," answered Isora; "you have no cause. I tell you that this man, villain as he is, ever leaves me humbled and abased. Do not think that in all times, and all scenes, I am the foolish and weak creature you behold me now. Remember, that you said rightly I was the daughter of a line of warriors; and I have that within me which will not shame my descent."

"But, dearest, your resolution may avail you for a time; but it cannot forever baffle the hardened nature of a man. I know my own sex, and I know my own ferocity, were it once aroused."

"But, Morton, you do not know *me*," said Isora proudly, and her face, as she spoke, was set, and even stern, "I am only the coward when I think of you; a word—a look of mine—can abash this man; or, if it could not, I am never without a weapon to defend myself, or—or—" Isora's voice, before firm and collected, now faltered, and a deep blush flowed over the marble paleness of her face.

"Or what?" said I anxiously.

"Or thee, Morton?" murmured Isora tenderly, and withdrawing her eyes from mine.

The tone, the look that accompanied these words, melted me at once. I rose—I clasped Isora to my heart.

"You are a strange compound, my own fairy queen; but these lips—this cheek—those eyes—are not fit features for a heroine."

"Morton, if I had less determination in my heart, I could not love you so well."

"But tell me," I whispered, with a smile, "where is this weapon on which you rely so strongly?"

"Here!" answered Isora, blushing; and, extricating herself from me, she showed me a small two-edged dagger, which she wore carefully concealed within the folds of her dress. I looked over the bright, keen blade, with surprise, and yet with pleasure, at the latent resolution of a character seemingly so soft. I say, with pleasure, for it suited well with my own fierce and wild temper. I returned the weapon to her, with a smile and a jest.

"Ah!" said Isora, shrinking from my kiss, "I should not have been so bold, if I only feared danger for myself."

But if for a moment we forgot, in the gushings of our affection, the object of our converse and dispute, we soon returned to it again. Isora was the first to recur to it. She reminded me of the promise she required; and she spoke with a serious-

ness and a solemnity which I found myself scarcely able to resist.

“But,” I said, “if he ever molest you hereafter: if again I find that bright cheek blanched, and those dear eyes dimmed with tears, and I know that, in my own house, some one has dared thus to insult its queen, am I to be still torpid and inactive, lest a dastard and craven hand should avenge my assertion of your honor and mine?”

“No, Morton; after our marriage, whenever that be, you will have nothing to apprehend from him on the same ground as before; my fear for you, too, will not be what it is now; your honor will be bound in mine, and nothing shall induce me to hazard it—no, not even your safety. I have every reason to believe that, after that event, he will subject me no longer to his insults—how, indeed, can he, under your perpetual protection? or for what cause should he attempt it, if he could? I shall be then yours—only and ever yours—what hope could, therefore, then nerve his hardihood or instigate his intrusions? Trust to me at that time, and suffer me to—nay, I repeat, promise me that I may—trust in you now!”

What could I do? I still combated her wish and her request; but her steadiness and rigidity of purpose made me, though reluctantly, yield to them at last. So sincere, and so stern, indeed, appeared her resolution, that I feared, by refusal, that she would take the rash oath that would separate us for ever. Added to this, I felt, in her that confidence which, I am apt to believe, is far more akin to the latter stages of real love, than jealousy and mistrust; and I could not believe that either now, or, still less after our nuptials, she would risk aught of honor, or the seemings of honor, from a visionary and superstitious fear. In spite, therefore, of my keen and deep interest in the thorough discovery of this mysterious persecutor; and, still more, in the prevention of all future designs from his audacity, I constrained myself to promise her that I would on no account seek out the person I suspected, or wilfully betray to him, by word or deed, my belief of his identity with Barnard.

Though greatly dissatisfied with my self-compulsion, I strove to reconcile myself to its idea. Indeed, there was much in the peculiar circumstances of Isora—much in the freshness of her present affliction—much in the unfriended and utter destitution of her situation—that while, on the one hand, it called forth her pride, and made stubborn that temper which was naturally so gentle and so soft, on the other hand made me yield even to wishes that I thought unreasonable, and consider rather the

délicacy and deference due to her condition, than insist upon the sacrifices which, in more fortunate circumstances, I might have imagined due to myself. Still more indisposed to resist her wish and expose myself to its penalty was I, when I considered her desire was the mere excess and caution of her love, and when I felt that she spoke sincerely when she declared that it was only for me that she was the coward. Nevertheless, and despite all these considerations, it was with a secret discontent that I took my leave of her, and departed homeward.

I had just reached the end of the street where the house was situated, when I saw there, very imperfectly, for the night was extremely dark, the figure of a man entirely enveloped in a long cloak, such as was commonly worn by gallants, in affairs of secrecy or intrigue; and, in the pale light of a single lamp near which he stood, something like the brilliance of gems glittered on the large Spanish hat which overhung his brow. I immediately recalled the description the woman had given me of Barnard's dress, and the thought flashed across me that it was he whom I beheld. "At all events," thought I, "I may confirm my doubts, if I may not communicate them, and I may watch over her safety if I may not avenge her injuries?" I therefore took advantage of my knowledge of the neighborhood, passed the stranger with a quick step, and then, running rapidly, returned by a circuitous route to the mouth of a narrow and dark street, which was exactly opposite to Isora's house. Here I concealed myself by a projecting porch, and I had not waited long before I saw the dim form of the stranger walk slowly by the house. He passed it three or four times, and each time I thought—though the darkness might well deceive me—that he looked up to the windows. He made, however, no attempt at admission, and appeared as if he had no other object than that of watching by the house. Wearied and impatient at last, I came from my concealment. "I may *confirm* my suspicions," I repeated, recurring to my oath, and I walked straight towards the stranger.

"Sir!" I said, very calmly, "I am the last person in the world to interfere with the amusements of any other gentleman; but I humbly opine that no man can parade by this house upon so very cold a night, without giving just ground for suspicion to the friends of its inhabitants. I happen to be among that happy number; and I therefore, with all due humility and respect, venture to request you to seek some other spot for your nocturnal perambulations."

I made this speech purposely prolix, in order to have time

fully to reconnoitre the person of the one I addressed. The dusk of the night, and the loose garb of the stranger, certainly forbade any decided success to this scrutiny; but methought the figure seemed, despite of my prepossessions, to want the stately height and grand proportions of Gerald Devereux. I must own, however, that the necessary inexactitude of my survey rendered this idea without just foundation, and did not by any means diminish my firm impression that it was Gerald whom I beheld. While I spoke, he retreated with a quick step, but made no answer; I pressed upon him—he backed with a still quicker step; and when I had ended, he fairly turned round, and made at full speed along the dark street in which I had fixed my previous post of watch. I fled after him, with a step as fleet as his own—his cloak encumbered his flight—I gained upon him sensibly—he turned a sharp corner—threw me out, and entered into a broad thoroughfare. As I sped after him, Bacchanalian voices burst upon my ear, and presently a large band of those young men who, under the name of Mohawks, were wont to scour the town nightly, and, sword in hand, to exercise their love of riot under the disguise of party zeal, became visible in the middle of the street. Through them my fugitive dashed headlong, and, profiting by their surprise, escaped unmolested. I attempted to follow with equal speed, but was less successful. “Hallo!” cried the foremost of the group, placing himself in my way.

“No such haste! Art Whig or Tory? Under which king—Bezonian, speak or die?”

“Have a care, sir,” said I fiercely, drawing my sword.

“Treason, treason!” cried the speaker, confronting me with equal readiness. “Have a care, indeed—have *at thee*.”

“Ha!” cried another, “’tis a Tory: ’tis the Secretary’s popish friend, Devereux—pike him, pike him.”

I had already run my opponent through the sword arm, and was in hopes that this act would intimidate the rest, and allow my escape; but at the sound of my name and political bias, coupled with the drawn blood of their confederate, the patriots rushed upon me with that amiable fury generally characteristic of all true lovers of their country. Two swords passed through my body simultaneously, and I fell bleeding and insensible to the ground. When I recovered I was in my own apartments, whither two of the gentler Mohawks had conveyed me; the surgeons were by my bedside; I groaned audibly when I saw them. If there is a thing in the world I hate, it is in any shape the disciples of Hermes; they always remind me of that Indian

people (the Padæi, I think) mentioned by Herodotus, who sustained themselves by devouring the sick. "All is well," said one, when my groan was heard. "He will not die," said another. "At least not till we have had more fees," said a third, more candid than the rest. And thereupon they seized me and began torturing my wounds anew, till I fainted away with the pain. However, the next day I was declared out of immediate danger; and the first proof I gave of my convalescence was to make Desmarais discharge four surgeons out of five: the remaining one I thought my youth and constitution might enable me to endure.

That very evening, as I was turning restlessly in my bed, and muttering, with parched lips, the name of "Isora," I saw by my side a figure covered from head to foot in a long veil, and a voice, low, soft, but thrilling through my heart like a new existence, murmured, "She is here!"

I forgot my wounds, I forgot my pain and my debility—I sprung upwards—the stranger drew aside the veil from her countenance, and I beheld Isora!

"Yes!" said she, in her own liquid and honied accents, which fell like balm upon my wound, and my spirit, "yes, she whom *you* have hitherto tended is come, in her turn, to render some slight, but woman's services to you. She has come to nurse, and to soothe, and to pray for you, and to be, till you yourself discard her, your handmaid and your slave!"

I would have answered, but raising her finger to her lips, she arose and vanished; but from that hour my wound healed, my fever slaked, and whenever I beheld her flitting round my bed, or watching over me, or felt her cool fingers wiping the dew from my brow, or took from her hand my medicine or my food, in those moments the blood seemed to make a new struggle through my veins, and I felt palpably within me a fresh and delicious life—a life full of youth, and passion, and hope, replace the vaguer and duller being which I had hitherto borne.

There are some extraordinary incongruities in that very mysterious thing *sympathy*. One would imagine that, in a description of things most generally interesting to all men, the most general interest would be found; nevertheless, I believe few persons would hang breathless over the progressive history of a sick-bed. Yet those gradual stages from danger to recovery, how delightfully interesting they are to all who have crawled from one to the other! and who, at some time or other in his journey through that land of diseases—civilized life—has not taken that gentle excursion? "I would be ill any day for the

pleasure of getting well," said Fontenelle to me one morning with his usual *naïveté*; but who would not be ill for the mere pleasure of being ill, if he could be tended by her whom he most loves?

I shall not therefore dwell upon that most delicious period of my life—my sick-bed, and my recovery from it. I pass on to a certain evening in which I heard from Isora's lips the whole of her history, save what related to her knowledge of the real name of one whose persecution constituted the little of romance which had yet mingled with her innocent and pure life. That evening—how well I remember it! we were alone—still weak and reduced, I lay upon the sofa beside the window, which was partially open, and the still air of an evening in the first infancy of spring came fresh, and fraught, as it were, with a prediction of the glowing woods, and the reviving verdure, to my cheek. The stars, one by one, kindled, as if born of Heaven and Twilight, into their nightly being; and, through the vapor and thick ether of the dense city, streamed their most silent light, holy and pure, and resembling that which the Divine Mercy sheds upon the gross nature of mankind. But, shadowy and calm, their rays fell full upon the face of Isora, as she lay on the ground beside my couch, and with one hand surrendered to my clasp, looked upward till, as she felt my gaze, she turned her cheek blushing away. There was quiet around and above us; but beneath the window we heard at times the sounds of the common earth, and then insensibly our hands knit into a closer clasp, and we felt them thrill more palpably to our hearts; for those sounds reminded us both of our existence and of our separation from the great herd of our race!

What is love but a division from the world, and a blending of two souls, two immortalities divested of clay and ashes, into one? it is a severing of a thousand ties from whatever is harsh and selfish, in order to knit them into a single and sacred bond! Who loves, hath attained the anchorite's secret; and the hermitage has become dearer than the world. O respite from the toil and the curse of our social and banded state, a little interval art thou, suspended between two eternities—the Past and the Future—a star that hovers between the morning and the night, sending through the vast abyss one solitary ray from heaven, but too far and faint to illumine, while it hallows the earth!

There was nothing in Isora's tale which the reader has not already learnt, or conjectured. She had left her Andalusian home in her early childhood, but she remembered it well, and lingeringly dwelt over it in description. It was evident that

little in our colder and less genial isle had attracted her sympathy, or wound itself into her affection. Nevertheless, I conceive that her naturally dreamy and abstracted character had received from her residence and her trials here much of the vigor and the heroism which it now possessed. Brought up alone, music, and books—few, though not ill-chosen, for Shakspeare was one, and the one which had made upon her the most permanent impression, and perhaps had colored her temperament with its latent, but rich hues of poetry—constituted her amusement and her studies.

But who knows not that a woman's heart finds its fullest occupation within itself? There lies its real study, and within that narrow orbit the mirror of enchanted thought reflects the whole range of earth. Loneliness and meditation nursed the mood, which afterward, with Isora, became love itself. But I do not wish now so much to describe her character, as to abridge her brief history. The first English stranger, of the male sex, whom her father admitted to her acquaintance, was Barnard. This man was, as I had surmised, connected with him in certain political intrigues, the exact nature of which she did not know. I continue to call him by a name which Isora acknowledged was fictitious. He had not, at first, by actual declaration, betrayed to her his affections; though, accompanied by a sort of fierceness which early revolted her, they soon became visible. On the evening in which I found her stretched insensible in the garden, and had myself made my first confession of love, I learned that he had divulged to her his passion and real name: that her rejection had thrown him into a fierce despair—that he had accompanied his disclosure with the most terrible threats against me, for whom he supposed himself rejected, and against the safety of her father, whom he said a word of his could betray; that her knowledge of his power to injure us! *us*—yes, Isora then loved me, and then trembled for my safety!—had terrified and overcome her—and that in the very moment in which my horse's hoofs were heard, and as the alternative of her non-compliance, the rude suitor swore deadly and sore vengeance against Alvarez and myself, she yielded to the oath he prescribed to her—an oath that she would never revealed the secret he had betrayed to her, or suffer me to know who was my real rival.

This was all that I could gather from her guarded confidence! he heard the oath, and vanished, and she felt no more till she was in my arms; then it was that she saw in the love and vengeance of my rival a barrier against our union; and

then it was that her generous fear for me conquered her attachment, and she renounced me. Their departure from the cottage, so shortly afterwards, was at her father's choice and at the instigation of Barnard, for the furtherance of their political projects ; and it was from Barnard that the money came which repaid my loan to Alvarez. The same person, no doubt, poisoned her father against me, for henceforth Alvarez never spoke of me with that partiality he had previously felt. They repaired to London ; her father was often absent, and often engaged with men whom she had never seen before ! he was absorbed and uncommunicative, and she was still ignorant of the nature of his schemings and designs.

At length, after an absence of several weeks, Barnard reappeared, and his visits became constant ; he renewed his suit to her father as well as herself. Then commenced that domestic persecution, so common in this very tyrannical world, which makes us sicken to bear, and which, had Isora been wholly a Spanish girl, she, in all probability, would never have resisted : so much of custom is there in the very air of a climate. But she did resist it, partly because she loved me—and loved me more and more for our separation—and partly because she dreaded and abhorred the ferocious and malignant passions of my rival, far beyond any other misery with which fortune could threaten her. “Your father then shall hang or starve !” said Barnard, one day in uncontrollable frenzy, and left her. He did not appear again at the house. The Spaniard's resources, fed, probably, alone by Barnard, failed. From house to house they removed, till they were reduced to that humble one in which I had found them. There, Barnard again sought them ; there, backed by the powerful advocate of want, he again pressed his suit, and at that exact moment her father was struck with the numbing curse of his disease. “There and then,” said Isora candidly, “I might have yielded at last, for my poor father's sake, if you had not saved me.”

Once only (I have before recorded the time), did Barnard visit her in the new abode I had provided for her, and the day after our conversation on that event Isora watched and watched for me, and I did not come. From the woman of the house she at last learned the cause. “I forgot,” she said timidly—and in conclusion, “I forgot womanhood, and modesty, and reserve ; I forgot the customs of your country, the decencies of my own ; I forgot everything in this world, but you—you suffering and in danger ; my very sense of existence seemed to pass from me, and to be supplied by a breathless, confused, and

overwhelming sense of impatient agony, which ceased not till I was in your chamber, and by your side! And—and now, Morton, do not despise me for not having considered more, and loved you less."

"Despise you!" I murmured, and I threw my arms around her, and drew her to my breast. I felt her heart beat against my own; those hearts spoke, though our lips were silent, and in their language seemed to say: "We are united now, and we will not part."

The starlight, shining with a mellow and deep stillness, was the only light by which we beheld each other—it shone, the witness and the sanction of that internal voice, which we owned, but heard not. Our lips drew closer and closer together, till they met! and in that kiss was the type and promise of the after ritual which knit two spirits into one. Silence fell around us like a curtain, and the eternal Night, with her fresh dews and unclouded stars, looked alone upon the compact of our hearts—an emblem of the eternity, the freshness, and the unearthly, though awful brightness of the love which it hallowed and beheld!

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

Wherein the History makes great Progress, and is marked by one important Event in Human Life.

SPINOSA is said to have loved, above all other amusements, to put flies into a spider's web; and the struggles of the imprisoned insects were wont to bear, in the eyes of this grave philosopher, so facetious and hilarious an appearance, that he would stand and laugh thereat until the tears "coursed one another down his innocent nose." Now it so happeneth that Spinoza, despite the general (and, in my most meek opinion, the just) condemnation of his theoretical tenets,* was, in character and in nature, according to the voices of all who knew

* One ought, however, to be very cautious before one condemns a philosopher. The master's opinions are generally pure—it is the conclusions and corollaries of his disciples that "draw the honey forth that drives men mad." Schlegel seems to have studied Spinoza *de fonte*, and vindicates him very earnestly from the charges brought against him—atheism, etc.—ED.

him, an exceedingly kind, humane, and benevolent biped ; and it doth, therefore, seem a little strange unto us grave, sober members of the unphilosophical Many, that the struggles and terrors of these little, winged creatures should strike the good subtleist in a point of view so irresistibly ludicrous and delightful. But, for my part, I believe that the most imaginative and wild speculator beheld in the entangled flies nothing more than a living simile—an animated illustration—of his own beloved vision of Necessity ; and that he is no more to be considered cruel for the complacency with which he gazed upon those agonized types of his system than is Lucan for dwelling, with a poet's pleasure, upon the many ingenious ways with which that Grand Inquisitor of Verse has contrived to vary the simple operation of dying. To the bard, the butchered soldier was only an epic ornament ; to the philosopher, the murdered fly was only a metaphysical illustration. For, without being a Fatalist, or a disciple of Baruch de Spinoza, I must confess that I cannot conceive a greater resemblance to our human and earthly state than the penal predicament of the devoted flies. Suddenly do we find ourselves plunged into that Vast Web—the World ; and even as the insect, when he first undergoeth a similar accident of necessity, standeth amazed and still, and only, by little and little, awakeneth to a full sense of his situation ; so also at the first abashed and confounded, we remain on the mesh we are urged upon, ignorant, as yet, of the toils around us, and the sly, dark, immitigable foe, that lieth in yonder nook, already feasting her imagination upon our destruction. Presently we revive—we stir—we flutter—and Fate, that foe,—the old arch-spider, that hath no moderation in her maw—now fixeth one of her many eyes upon us, and giveth us a partial glimpse of her laidly and grim aspect. We pause in mute terror—we gaze upon the ugly spectre, so imperfectly beheld—the net ceases to tremble, and the wily enemy draws gently back into her nook. Now we begin to breathe again—we sound the strange footing on which we tread—we move tenderly along it, and again the grisly monster advances on us ; again we pause—the foe retires not, but remains still, and surveyeth us,—we see every step is accompanied with danger—we look round and above in despair—suddenly we feel within us a new impulse and a new power !—we feel a vague sympathy with *that* unknown region which spreads *beyond* this great net ;—*that limitless beyond* hath a mystic affinity with a part of our own frame—we unconsciously extend our wings (for the soul to us is as the wings to the fly !)—we attempt to rise—to soar above this perilous snare,

from which we are unable to crawl. The old spider watcheth us in self-hugging quiet, and, looking up to our native air, we think—now shall we escape thee.—Out on it ! We rise not a hair's breadth—we have the *wings*, it is true, but the *feet* are fettered. We strive desperately again—the whole web vibrates with the effort—it will break beneath our strength. Not a jot of it !—we cease—we are more entangled than ever ! wings—feet—frame—the foul slime is over all !—where shall we turn ? every line of the web leads to the one den,—we know not—we care not—we grow blind—confused—lost. The eyes of our hideous foe gloat upon us—she whetteth her insatiate maw—she leapeth towards us—she fixeth her fangs upon us—and so endeth my parallel !

But what has this to do with my tale ? Ay, Reader, that is thy question, and I will answer it by one of mine. When thou hearest a man moralize and preach of Fate, art thou not sure that he is going to tell thee of some one of his peculiar misfortunes ? Sorrow loves a parable as much as mirth loves a jest. And thus already, and from afar, I prepare thee, at the commencement of this, the third of these portions into which the history of my various and wild life will be divided, for that event with which I purpose that the said portion shall be concluded.

It is now three months after my entire recovery from my wounds, and I am married to Isora !—married—yes, but *privately* married, and the ceremony is as yet closely concealed. I will explain.

The moment Isora's anxiety for me led her across the threshold of my house it became necessary for her honor that our wedding should take place immediately on my recovery—so far I was decided on the measure—now for the method. During my illness, I received a long and most affectionate letter from Aubrey, who was then at Devereux Court,—so affectionate was the heart-breathing spirit of that letter—so steeped in all our old household remembrances and boyish feelings, that, coupled as it was with a certain gloom when he spoke of himself and of worldly sins and trials, it brought tears to my eyes whenever I recurred to it ; and many and many a time afterwards, when I thought his affections seemed estranged from me, I did recur to it to convince myself that I was mistaken. Shortly afterwards I received also a brief epistle from my uncle ; it was as kind as usual, and it mentioned Aubrey's return to Devereux Court : "That unhappy boy," said Sir William, "is more than ever devoted to his religious duties ; nor

do I believe that any priest-ridden poor devil, in the dark ages, ever made such use of the scourge and the penance."

Now, I have before stated that my uncle would, I knew, be averse to my intended marriage; and on hearing that Aubrey was then with him, I resolved, in replying to his letter, to entreat the former to sound Sir William on the subject I had most at heart, and ascertain the exact nature and extent of the opposition I should have to encounter in the step I was resolved to take. By the same post I wrote to the good old knight in as artful a strain as I was able, dwelling at some length upon my passion, upon the high birth, as well as the numerous good qualities of the object, but mentioning not her name; and I added everything that I thought likely to enlist my uncle's kind and warm feelings on my behalf. These letters produced the following ones:

FROM SIR WILLIAM DEVEREUX.

"'Sdeath! nephew Morton—but I won't scold thee, though thou deservest it. Let me see, thou art now scarce twenty, and thou talkest of marriage, which is the exclusive business of middle age, as familiarly as 'girls of thirteen do of puppy dogs.' Marry!—go hang thyself rather. Marriage, my dear boy, is at the best a treacherous proceeding: and a friend—a true friend will never counsel another to adopt it rashly. Look you—I have had experience in these matters: and, I think, the moment a woman is wedded some terrible revolution happens in her system; all her former good qualities vanish *hey presto*, like eggs out of a conjuror's box,—'tis true they appear on t'other side of the box, the side turned to other people, but for the poor husband they are gone for ever. Od'sfish, Morton, go to! I tell thee again that I have had experience in these matters, which thou never hast had, clever as thou thinkest thyself. If now it were a good marriage thou wert about to make—if thou wert going to wed power, and money, and place at Court, why, something might be said for thee. As it is, there is no excuse—none. And I am astonished how a boy of thy sense could think of such nonsense. Birth, Morton, what the devil does that signify, so long as it is birth in another country? A foreign damsel and a Spanish girl, too, above all others! 'Sdeath, man, as if there was not quicksilver enough in the English women for you, you must make a mercurial exportation from Spain, must you! Why, Morton—Morton, the ladies in that country are proverbial. I tremble at the very thought of it. But as for my consent, I never will give it—never; and though I threaten thee not

with disinheritance and such like, yet I do ask something in return for the great affection I have always borne thee; and I make no doubt that thou wilt readily oblige me in such a trifle as giving up a mere Spanish donna. So think of her no more. If thou wantest to make love, there are ladies in plenty whom thou needest not to marry. And for my part, I thought that thou wert all in all with the Lady Hasselton—Heaven bless her pretty face! Now don't think I want to scold thee—and don't think thine old uncle harsh—God knows he is not; but my dear, dear boy, this is quite out of the question, and thou must let me hear no more about it. The gout cripples me so that I must leave off. Even thine own old uncle,

“WILLIAM DEVEREUX.”

“P. S. Upon consideration, I think, my dear boy, that thou must want money, and thou art ever too sparing. Messrs. Child, or my goldsmiths in Aldersgate, have my orders to pay to thy hand's-writing whatever thou mayest desire; and I do hope that thou wilt now want nothing to make thee merry withal. Why dost thou not write a comedy? is it not the mode still?”

LETTER FROM AUBREY DEVEREUX.

“I have sounded my uncle, dearest Morton, according to your wishes; and I grieve to say that I have found him inexorable. He was very much hurt by your letter to him, and declared he should write to you forthwith upon the subject. I represented to him all that you have said upon the virtues of your intended bride; and I also insisted upon your clear judgment and strong sense upon most points, being a sufficient surety for your prudence upon this. But you know the libertine opinions, and the depreciating judgment of women, entertained by my poor uncle; and he would, I believe, have been less displeased with the heinous crime of an illicit connexion, than the amiable weakness of an imprudent marriage—I might say of any marriage, until it was time to provide heirs to the estate.”

Here Aubrey, in the most affectionate and earnest manner, broke off to point out to me the extreme danger to my interests that it would be to disoblige my uncle; who, despite his general kindness, would, upon a disagreement on so tender a matter as his sore point, and his most cherished hobby, consider my disobedience as a personal affront. He also recalled to me all that my uncle had felt and done for me; and insisted, at all events, upon the absolute duty of my delaying, even though I should not break off, the intended measure. Upon these points he enlarged much and eloquently; and this part of his letter cer-

tainly left no cheering or comfortable impression upon my mind.

Now my good uncle knew as much of love as L. Mummius did of the fine arts,* and it was impossible to persuade him that if one wanted to indulge the tender passion, one woman would not do exactly as well as another, provided she were equally pretty. I knew therefore that he was incapable, on the one hand, of understanding my love for Isora, or, on the other, of acknowledging her claims upon me. I had not, of course, mentioned to him the generous imprudence which, on the news of my wound, had brought Isora to my house: for if I had done so, my uncle, with the eye of a courtier of Charles II., would only have seen the advantage to be derived from the impropriety, not the gratitude due to the devotion; neither had I mentioned this circumstance to Aubrey,—it seemed to me too delicate for any written communication; and therefore, in his advice to delay my marriage, he was unaware of the necessity which rendered the advice unavailing. Now then was I in this dilemma, either to marry, and that *instantly*, and so, seemingly, with the most hasty and the most insolent indecorum, incense, wound, and in his interpretation of the act, contemn one whom I loved as I loved my uncle,—or, to delay the marriage, to separate from Isora, and to leave my future wife to the malignant consequences that would necessarily be drawn from a sojourn of weeks in my house. This fact there was no chance of concealing; servants have more tongues than Argus had eyes, and my youthful extravagance had filled my whole house with those pests of society. The latter measure was impossible, the former was most painful. Was there no third way?—there was that of a private marriage. This obviated not every evil; but it removed many; it satisfied my impatient love, it placed Isora under a sure protection, it secured and established her honor the moment the ceremony should be declared, and it avoided the seeming ingratitude and indelicacy of disobeying my uncle, without an effort of patience to appease him. I should have time and occasion then, I thought, for soothing and persuading him, and ultimately winning that consent which I firmly trusted I should sooner or later extract from his kindness of heart.

That some objections existed to this mediatory plan was true enough: those objections related to Isora rather than to myself, and she was the first, on my hinting at the proposal, to overcome its difficulties. The leading feature in Isora's char-

* A Roman consul, who, removing the most celebrated remains of Grecian antiquity to Rome, assured the persons charged with conveying them that if they injured any, they should make others to replace them.

acter was generosity ; and, in truth, I know not a quality more dangerous, either to man or woman. Herself was invariably the last human being whom she seemed to consider ; and no sooner did she ascertain what measure was the most prudent for me to adopt, than it immediately became that upon which she insisted. Would it have been possible for me—man of pleasure and of the world as I was thought to be—no, my good uncle, though it went to my heart to wound thee so secretly—it would *not* have been possible for me, even if I had not coined my whole nature into love : even if Isora had not been to me, what one smile of Isora's really was—it would not have been possible to have sacrificed so noble and so divine a heart, and made myself, in that sacrifice, a wretch for ever. No, my good uncle I could not have made that surrender to thy reason, much less to thy prejudices. But if I have not done great injustice to the knight's-character, I doubt whether even the youngest reader will not forgive him for a want of sympathy with one feeling, when they consider how susceptible that charming old man was to all others.

And herewith I could discourse most excellent wisdom upon that most mysterious passion of love. I could show, by tracing its causes, and its inseparable connection with the imagination, that it is only in certain states of society, as well as in certain periods of life, that love—real, pure, high love can be born. Yea, I could prove, to the nicety of a very problem, that in the court of Charles II. it would have been as impossible for such a feeling to find root, as it would be for myrtle trees to effloresce from a Duvillier periwig. And we are not to expect a man, however tender and affectionate he may be, to sympathize with that sentiment in another, which, from the accidents of birth and position, nothing short of a miracle could ever have produced in himself.

We were married then in private by a Catholic priest. St. John, and one old lady who had been my father's godmother—for I wished for a female assistant in the ceremony, and this old lady could tell no secrets, for, being excessively deaf, nobody ever talked to her, and indeed she scarcely ever went abroad—were the sole witnesses. I took a small house in the immediate neighborhood of London ; it was surrounded on all sides with a high wall which defied alike curiosity and attack. This was, indeed, the sole reason which had induced me to prefer it to many more gaudy or more graceful dwellings. But within I had furnished it with every luxury that wealth, the most lavish and unsparring, could procure. Thither, under an

assumed name, I brought my bride, and there was the greater part of my time spent. The people I had placed in the house believed I was a rich merchant, and this accounted for my frequent absences—(absences which Prudence rendered necessary) for the wealth which I lavished, and for the precautions of bolt, bar, and wall, which they imagined the result of commercial caution.

Oh the intoxication of that sweet Elysium, that Tadmor in life's desert—the possession of the one whom we have first loved! It is as if poetry, and music, and light, and the fresh breath of flowers, were all blent into one being, and from that being rose our existence! It is content made rapture—nothing to wish for, yet everything to feel! Was that air—the air which I had breathed hitherto? that earth—the earth which I had hitherto beheld? No, my heart dwelt in a new world, and all these motley and restless senses were melted into one sense—deep, silent, fathomless delight!

Well, too much of this species of love is not fit for a worldly tale, and I will turn, for the reader's relief, to worldly affections. From my first reunion with Isora, I had avoided all the former objects and acquaintances in which my time had been so charmingly employed. Tarleton was the first to suffer by my new pursuit; "What has altered you?" said he; "you drink not, neither do you play. The women say you are grown duller than a Norfolk parson, and neither the Puppet-Show, nor the Water-Theatre, the Spring Gardens, nor the Ring, Wills's, nor the Kit-Cat, the Mulberry Garden, nor the New Exchange, witness any longer your homage and devotion.—What has come over you?—speak!"

"Apathy!"

"Ah!—I understand—you are tired of these things; pish, man!—go down into the country, the green fields will revive thee, and send thee back to London a new man! One would indeed find the town intolerably dull, if the country were not, happily, a thousand times duller,—go to the country, Count, or I shall drop your friendship."

"Drop it!" said I, yawning, and Tarleton took pet, and did as I desired him. Now had I got rid of my friend as easily as I had found him,—a matter that would not have been so readily accomplished had not Mr. Tarleton owed me certain moneys, concerning which, from the moment he had "dropped my friendship," good-breeding effectually prevented his saying a single syllable to me ever after. There is no knowing the blessings of money until one has learnt to manage it properly.

So much, then, for the friend ; now for the mistress. Lady Hasselton had, as Tarleton hinted before, resolved to play me a trick of spite ; the reasons of our rupture really were, as I had stated to Tarleton the, mighty effects of little things. She lived in a sea of trifles, and she was desperately angry if her lover was not always sailing a pleasure-boat in the same ocean. Now this was expecting too much from me, and, after twisting our silken strings of attachment into all manner of fantastic forms, we fell fairly out one evening and broke the little ligatures in two. No sooner had I quarrelled with Tarleton, than Lady Hasselton received him in my place, and a week afterwards I was favored with an anonymous letter, informing me of the violent passion which a certain *dame de la cour* had conceived for me, and requesting me to meet her at an appointed place. I looked twice over the letter, and discovered in one corner of it, two g's' peculiar to the calligraphy of Lady Hasselton, though the rest of the letter (bad spelling excepted) was pretty decently disguised. Mr. Fielding was with me at the time ; "What disturbs you ?" said he, adjusting his knee-buckles.

"Read it!" said I, handing him the letter.

"Body of me, you are a lucky dog!" cried the beau. "You will hasten thither on the wings of love."

"Not a whit of it," said I ; "I suspect that it comes from a rich old widow, whom I hate mortally."

"A rich old widow!" repeated Mr. Fielding, to whose eyes there was something very piquant in a jointure, and who thought consequently that there were few virginal flowers equal to a widow's weeds. "A rich old widow—you are right, Count, you are right. Don't go, don't think of it. I cannot abide those depraved creatures. Widow, indeed—quite an affront to your gallantry!"

"Very true," said I. "Suppose you supply my place?"

"I'd sooner be shot first," said Mr. Fielding, taking his departure, and begging me for the letter to wrap some sugar plums in.

Need I add, that Mr. Fielding repaired to the place of assignation, where he received, in the shape of a hearty drubbing, the kind favors intended for me? The story was now left for me to tell, not for the Lady Hasselton—and that makes all the difference in the manner a story is told—*me narrante*, it is *de te fabula narratur*—*te narrante*, and it is *de me fabula*, etc. Poor Lady Hasselton! to be laughed at, and have Tarleton for a lover!

I have gone back somewhat in the progress of my history, in

order to make the above honorable mention of my friend and my mistress, thinking it due to their own merits, and thinking it may also be instructive to young gentlemen, who have not yet seen the world, to testify the exact nature and the probable duration of all the loves and friendships they are likely to find in that Great Monmouth Street of glittering and of damaged affections! I now resume the order of narration.

I wrote to Aubrey, thanking him for his intercession, but concealing, till we met, the measure I had adopted. I wrote also to my uncle, assuring him that I would take an early opportunity of hastening to Devereux Court, and conversing with him on the subject of his letter. And after an interval of some weeks, I received the two following answers from my correspondents: the latter arrived several days after the former.

FROM AUBREY DEVEREUX.

"I am glad to understand from your letter, unexplanatory as it is, that you have followed my advice. I will shortly write to you more at large; at present I am on the eve of my departure for the North of England, and have merely time to assure you of my affection.

"AUBREY DEVEREUX."

"P. S. Gerald is in London—have you seen him? Oh, this world! this world! how it clings to us, despite our education—our wishes, our conscience, our knowledge of the Dread Hereafter!"

LETTER FROM SIR WILLIAM DEVEREUX.

"My Dear Nephew:

"Thank thee for thy letter, and the new plays thou sentest me down, and that droll new paper, the Spectator: it is a pretty shallow thing enough,—though it is not so racy as Rochester or little Sid would have made it; but I thank thee for it, because it shows thou wast not angry with thine old uncle for opposing thee on thy love whimsies (in which most young men are dreadfully obstinate), since thou didst provide so kindly for his amusement. Well, but, Morton, I hope thou hast got that crotchet clear out of thy mind, and prithee now *don't* talk of it when thou comest down to see me. I hate conversations on marriage more than a boy does flogging—od'sfish, I do. So you must humor me on that point!

"Aubrey has left me again, and I am quite alone—not that I was much better off when he was here, for he was wont, of late, to shun my poor room like a 'lazar house,' and when I spoke to his mother about it, she muttered something about 'example,'

and 'corrupting.' 'Sdeath, Morton, is your old uncle, who loves all living things, down to poor Ponto the dog, the sort of man whose example corrupts youth? As for thy mother, she grows more solitary every day; and I don't know how it is, but I am not so fond of strange faces as I used to be. 'Tis a new thing for me to be avoided and alone. Why, I remember even little Sid, who had as much venom as most men, once said it was impossible to—Fie now—see if I was not going to preach a sermon from a text in favor of myself! But come, Morton, come, I long for your face again; it is not so soft as Aubrey's, nor so regular as Gerald's, but it is twice as kind as either. Come, before it is too late; I feel myself going; and, to tell thee a secret, the doctors tell me I may not last many months longer. Come, and laugh once more at the old knight's stories. Come, and show him that there is still some one not too good to love him. Come, and I will tell thee a famous thing of old Rowley, which I am too ill and too sad to tell thee now.

“WM. DEVEREUX.”

Need I say that upon receiving this letter, I resolved, without any delay, to set out for Devereux Court? I summoned Desmarais to me; he answered not my call; he was from home—an unfrequent occurrence with the necessitarian valet. I waited his return, which was not for some hours, in order to give him sundry orders for my departure. The exquisite Desmarais hemmed thrice—“Will Monsieur be so very kind as to excuse my accompanying him?” said he, with his usual air and tone of obsequious respect.

“And why?” The valet explained. A relation of his was in England only for a few days—the philosopher was most anxious to enjoy his society—a pleasure which fate might not again allow him.

Though I had grown accustomed to the man's services, and did not like to lose him even for a time, yet I could not refuse his request; and I therefore ordered another of my servants to supply his place. This change, however, determined me to adopt a plan which I had before meditated, viz. the conveying of my own person to Devereux Court on horseback, and sending my servant with my luggage in my post-chaise. The equestrian mode of travelling is, indeed to this day, the one most pleasing to me; and the reader will find me pursuing it many years afterwards, and to the same spot.

I might as well observe here that I had never entrusted Desmarais, no, nor one of my own servants, with the secret of my

marriage with, or my visits to, Isora. I am a very fastidious person on those matters, and of all confidants, even in the most trifling affairs, I do most eschew those by whom we have the miserable honor to be served.

In order, then, to avoid having my horse brought me to Isora's house by any of these menial spies, I took the steed which I had selected for my journey, and rode to Isora's, with the intention of spending the evening there, and thence commencing my excursion with the morning light.

CHAPTER II.

Love—Parting—a Death Bed. After all Human Nature is a beautiful Fabric ; and even its Imperfections are not odious to him who has studied the Science of its Architecture, and formed a reverent Estimate of its Creator.

It is a noticeable thing how much fear increases love. I mean—for the aphorism requires explanation—how much we love, in proportion to our fear of losing (or even to our fear of injury done to) the beloved object. 'Tis an instance of the reaction of the feelings—the love produces the fear, and the fear reproduces the love. This is one reason, among many, why women love so much more tenderly and anxiously than we do ; and it is also one reason among many, why frequent absences are, in all stages of love, the most keen excitors of the passion. I never breathed, away from Isora, without trembling for her safety. I trembled lest this Barnard, if so I should still continue to call her persecutor, should again discover and molest her. Whenever (and that was almost daily) I rode to the quiet and remote dwelling I had procured her, my heart beat so vehemently, and my agitation was so intense, that on arriving at the gate I have frequently been unable, for several minutes, to demand admittance. There was, therefore, in the mysterious danger which ever seemed to hang over Isora, a perpetual irritation to a love otherwise but little inclined to slumber ; and this constant excitement took away from the torpor into which domestic affection too often languishes, and increased my passion even while it diminished my happiness.

On my arrival now at Isora's, I found her already stationed at the window, watching for my coming. How her dark eyes lit into lustre when they saw me ! How the rich blood mantled up under the soft cheek which feeling had refined of late into a paler hue than it was wont, when I first gazed upon it, to

wear! Then how sprung forth her light step to meet me! How trembled her low voice to welcome me! How spoke, from every gesture of her graceful form, the anxious, joyful, all-animating gladness of her heart! It is a melancholy pleasure to the dry, harsh, after-thoughts of later life, to think one has been thus loved; and one marvels, when one considers what one is now, how it could have ever been! That love of *ours* was never made for after-years! It could never have flowed into the common and cold channel of ordinary affairs! It could never have been mingled with the petty cares and the low objects with which the loves of all who live long together in this sordid and earthly earth are sooner or later blended! We could not have spared to others an atom of the great wealth of our affection. We were misers of every coin in that boundless treasury. It would have pierced me to the soul to have seen Isora smile upon another. I know not even, had we had children, if I should not have been jealous of my child! Was this selfish love? Yes, it was intensely, wholly selfish; but it was a love made so only by its excess; nothing selfish on a smaller scale polluted it. There was not on earth that which the one would not have forfeited at the lightest desire of the other. So utterly were happiness and Isora entwined together that I could form no idea of the one with which the other was not connected. Was this love made for the many and miry roads through which man must travel? Was it made for age, or, worse than age, for those cool, ambitious, scheming years that we call mature, in which all the luxuriance and verdure of things are pared into tame shapes that mimic life, but a life that is estranged from nature, in which art is the only beauty, and regularity the only grace? No, in my heart of hearts, I feel that our love was not meant for the stages of life through which I have already passed; it would have made us miserable to see it fritter itself away, and to remember what it once was. Better as it is! better to mourn over the green bough than to look upon the sapless stem. You who now glance over these pages, are you a mother? if so, answer me one question—Would you not rather that the child whom you have cherished with your soul's care, whom you have nurtured at your bosom, whose joys your eyes have sparkled to behold, whose lightest grief you have wept to witness, as you would have wept not for your own; over whose pure and unvexed sleep you have watched and prayed, and, as it lay before you thus still and unconscious of your vigil, have shaped out, oh, such bright hopes for its future lot; would you not rather that,

while thus young and innocent, not a care tasted, not a crime incurred, it went down at once into the dark grave? Would you not rather suffer this grief, bitter though it be, than watch the predestined victim grow and ripen, and wind itself more and more around your heart, and when it is of full and mature age, and you yourself are stricken by years, and can form no new ties to replace the old that are severed, when woes have already bowed the darling of your hope, whom woe never was to touch, when sins have already darkened the bright, seraph, unclouded heart which sin never was to dim; behold it sink day by day altered, diseased, decayed, into the tomb which its childhood had in vain escaped? Answer me: would not the earlier fate be far gentler than the last? And if you *have* known and wept over that early tomb—if you have seen the infant flower fade away from the green soil of your affections—if you have missed the bounding step, and the laughing eye, and the winning mirth which made this sterile world a perpetual holiday—Mother of the Lost, if you have known, and you still pine for these, answer me yet again!—Is it not a comfort, even while you mourn, to think of all that that breast, now so silent, has escaped? The cream, the sparkle, the elixir of life, it had already quaffed; is it not sweet to think it shunned the wormwood and the dregs? Answer me, even though the answer be in tears! Mourner, your child was to you what my early and only love was to me; and could you pierce down, down through a thousand fathom of ebbing thought, to the far depths of my heart, you would there behold a sorrow *and a consolation*, that have something in unison with your own!

When the light of the next morning broke into our room, Isora was still sleeping. Have you ever observed that the young, seen asleep and by the morning light, seem much younger even than they are? partly because the air and the light sleep of dawn bring a fresher bloom to the cheek, and partly, because the careless negligence and the graceful postures exclusively appropriated to youth, are forbidden by custom and formality through the day, and developing themselves unconsciously in sleep, they strike the eye like the ease and freedom of childhood itself. There, as I looked upon Isora's tranquil and most youthful beauty, over which circled and breathed an ineffable innocence—even as the finer and subtler air, which was imagined by those dreamy bards who kindled the soft creations of naiad and of nymph, to float around a goddess—I could not believe that aught evil awaited one for whom infancy

itself seemed to linger,—linger as if no elder shape and less delicate hue were meet to be the garment of so much guilelessness and tenderness of heart. I felt, indeed, while I bent over her, and her regular and quiet breath came upon my cheek, that feeling which is exactly the reverse to a presentiment of ill. I felt as if, secure in her own purity, she had nothing to dread, so that even the pang of parting was lost in the confidence which stole over me as I then gazed.

I rose gently, went to the next room and dressed myself—I heard my horse neighing beneath, as the servant walked him lazily to and fro. I re-entered the bed-chamber, in order to take leave of Isora ; she was already up. “What !” said I, “it is but three minutes since I left you asleep, and I stole away as gently as time does when with you.”

“Ah !” said Isora, smiling and blushing too, “but for my part, I think there is an instinct to know, even if all the senses were shut up, whether the one we love is with us or not. The moment you left me, I felt it at once, even in sleep, and I woke. But you will not, no, you will not leave me yet !”

I think I see Isora now, as she stood by the window which she had opened, with a woman’s minute anxiety, to survey even the aspect of the clouds, and beseech caution against the treachery of the skies. I think I see her now, as she stood the moment after I had torn myself from her embrace, and had looked back, as I reached the door, for one parting glance—her eyes all tenderness, her lips parted, and quivering with the attempt to smile—the long, glossy ringlets (through whose raven hue the *purpureum lumen* broke like an imprisoned sunbeam), straying in dishevelled beauty over her transparent neck ; the throat bent in mute despondency ; the head drooping ; the arms half extended, and dropping gradually as my steps departed ; the sunken, absorbed expression of face, form, and gesture, so steeped in the very bitterness of dejection—all are before me now, sorrowful, and lovely in sorrow, as they were beheld years ago, by the gray, cold, comfortless light of morning !

“God bless you—my own, own love,” I said ; and as my look lingered, I added, with a full but an assured heart ; “and He will !” I tarried no more—I flung myself on my horse, and rode on as if I were speeding *to*, and not *from*, my bride.

The noon was far advanced, as, the day after I left Isora, I found myself entering the park in which Devereux Court is situated. I did not enter by one of the lodges, but through a private gate. My horse was thoroughly jaded ; for the distance

I had come was great, and I had ridden rapidly ; and as I came into the park, I dismounted, and throwing the rein over my arm, proceeded slowly on foot. I was passing through a thick, long plantation, which belted the park and in which several walks and rides had been cut, when a man crossed the same road which I took, at a little distance before me. He was looking on the ground, and appeared wrapt in such earnest meditation that he neither saw nor heard me. But I had seen enough of him, in that brief space of time, to feel convinced that it was Montreuil whom I beheld. What brought him hither, him, whom I believed in London, immersed with Gerald in political schemes, and for whom these woods were not only interdicted ground, but to whom they must have also been but a tame field of interest, after his audiences with ministers and nobles? I did not, however, pause to consider on his apparition ; I rather quickened my pace towards the house, in the expectation of there ascertaining the cause of his visit.

The great gates of the outer court were open as usual : I rode unheedingly through them, and was soon at the door of the hall. The porter, who unfolded to my summons the ponderous door, uttered, when he saw me, an exclamation that seemed to my ear to have in it more of sorrow than welcome.

“ How is your master ? ” I asked.

The man shook his head, but did not hasten to answer: and impressed with a vague alarm, I hurried on without repeating the question. On the staircase I met old Nicholls, my uncle's valet : I stopped and questioned him. My uncle had been seized on the preceding day with gout in the stomach ; medical aid had been procured, but it was feared ineffectually, and the physicians had declared, about an hour before I arrived, that he could not, in human probability, outlive the night. Stiffing the rising at my heart, I waited to hear no more—I flew up the stairs—I was at the door of my uncle's chamber—I stopped there, and listened ; all was still—I opened the door gently—I stole in, and, creeping to the bed-side, knelt down and covered my face with my hands ; for I required a pause for self-possession, before I had courage to look up. When I raised my eyes, I saw my mother on the opposite side ; she sat on a chair with a draught of medicine in one hand, and a watch in the other. She caught my eye, but did not speak ; she gave me a sign of recognition, and looked down again upon the watch. My uncle's back was turned to me, and he lay so still that, for some moments, I thought he was asleep ; at last, however, he moved restlessly.

"It is past noon!" said he to my mother, "is it not?"

"It is three minutes and six seconds after four," replied my mother, looking closer at the watch.

My uncle sighed. "They have sent an express for the dear boy, madam!" said he.

"Exactly at half-past nine last evening," answered my mother, glancing at me.

"He could scarcely be here by this time," said my uncle, and he moved again in the bed. "Pish—how the pillow frets one."

"Is it too high?" said my mother.

"No," said my uncle faintly, "no—no—the discomfort is not in the pillow, after all—'tis a fine day—is it not?"

"Very!" said my mother; "I wish you could go out."

My uncle did not answer: there was a pause. "Od'sfish, madam, are those carriage wheels?"

"No, Sir William—but—"

"There *are* sounds in my ear—my senses grow dim," said my uncle, unheeding her,—“would that I might live another day—I should not like to die without seeing him. 'Sdeath, madam, I do hear something behind!—Sobs, as I live!—Who sobs for the old knight?" and my uncle turned round, and saw me.

"My dear—dear uncle!" I said, and could say no more.

"Ah, Morton," cried the kind old man, putting his hand affectionately upon mine. "Beshrew me, but I think I have conquered the grim enemy now that you are come. But what's this, my boy?—tears—tears,—why, little Sid—no, nor Rochester either, would ever have believed this if I had sworn it! Cheer up—cheer up."

But, seeing that I wept and sobbed the more, my uncle, after a pause, continued in the somewhat figurative strain which the reader has observed he sometimes adopted, and which perhaps his dramatic studies had taught him.

"Nay, Morton, what do you grieve for?—that Age should throw off its fardel of aches and pains, and no longer groan along its weary road, meeting cold looks and unwilling welcomes, as both host and comrade grow weary of the same face, and the spendthrift heart has no longer quip or smile wherewith to pay the reckoning? No—no—let the poor pedler shuffle of his dull pack, and fall asleep. But I am glad you are come: I would sooner have one of your kind looks at your uncle's stale saws or jests than all the long faces about me, saving only the presence of your mother"; and with his characteristic gallantry, my uncle turned courteously to her.

“Dear Sir William!” said she, “it is time you should take your draught; and then would it not be better that you should see the chaplain—he waits without.”

“Od’sfish,” said my uncle, turning again to me, “tis the way with them all—when the body is past hope, comes the physician, and when the soul is past mending, comes the priest. No, madam, no, ’tis too late for either.—Thank ye, Morton, thank ye,” (as I started up—took the draught from my mother’s hand, and besought him to drink it) “’tis of no use; but if it pleases thee, I must,”—and he drank the medicine.

My mother rose, and walked towards the door—it was ajar, and, as my eye followed her figure, I perceived, through the opening, the black garb of the chaplain.

“Not yet,” said she quietly; “wait.” And then gliding away, she seated herself by the window in silence, and told her beads.

My uncle continued: “They have been at me, Morton, as if I had been a pagan; and I believe, in their hearts, they are not a little scandalized that I don’t try to win the next world, by trembling like an ague. Faith now, I never could believe that Heaven was so partial to cowards; nor can I think, Morton, that Salvation is like a soldier’s muster-roll, and that we may play the devil between hours, so that, at the last moment, we whip in, and answer to our names. Od’sfish, Morton, I could tell thee a tale of that; but ’tis a long one, and we have not time now. Well, well, for my part, I believe reverently and gratefully of God, and do not think He will be very wroth with our past enjoyment of life, if we have taken care that others should enjoy it too; nor do I think, with thy good mother, and Aubrey, dear child! that an idle word has the same weight in the Almighty’s scales as a wicked deed.”

“Blessed, blessed are they,” I cried, through my tears, “on whose souls there is as little stain as there is on yours!”

“Faith, Morton, that’s kindly said; and thou knowest not how strangely it sounds, after their exhortations to repentance. I know I have had my faults, and walked on to our common goal in a very irregular line: but I never wronged the living nor slandered the dead, nor ever shut my heart to the poor—’twere a burning sin if I had; and I have loved all men and all things, and I never bore ill-will to a creature. Poor Ponto, Morton, thou wilt take care of poor Ponto, when I’m dead—nay, nay, don’t grieve so. Go, my child, go—compose thyself while I see the priest, for ’twill please thy poor mother;

and though she thinks harshly of me now, I should not like her to do so *to-morrow!* Go, my dear boy go."

I went from the room, and waited by the door, till the office of the priest was over. My mother then came out, and said Sir William had composed himself to sleep. While she was yet speaking, Gerald surprised me by his appearance. I learned that he had been in the house for the last three days, and when I heard this, I involuntarily accounted for the appearance of Montreuil. I saluted him distantly, and he returned my greeting with the like pride. He seemed, however, though in a less degree, to share in my emotions; and my heart softened to him for it. Nevertheless we stood apart, and met not as brothers should have met by the death-bed of a mutual benefactor.

"Will you wait without?" said my mother.

"No," answered I, "I will watch over him." So I stole in, with a light step, and seated myself by my uncle's bed-side. He was asleep, and his sleep was as hushed and quiet as an infant's. I looked upon his face, and saw a change had come over it, and was increasing sensibly: but there was neither harshness nor darkness in the change, awful as it was. The soul, so long nurtured on benevolence, could not, in parting, leave a rude stamp on the kindly clay which had seconded its impulses so well.

The evening had just set in, when my uncle woke; he turned very gently, and smiled when he saw me.

"It is late," said he, and I observed with a wrung heart, that his voice was fainter.

"No, sir, not very," said I.

"Late enough, my child; the warm sun has gone down; and 'tis a good time to close one's eyes, when all without looks gray and chill: methinks it is easier to wish thee farewell, Morton, when I see thy face indistinctly. I am glad I shall not die in the day-time. Give me thy hand, my child, and tell me that thou art not angry with thine old uncle for thwarting thee in that love business. I have heard tales of the girl, too, which make me glad, for thy sake, that it is all off, though I might not tell thee of them before. 'Tis very dark, Morton. I have had a pleasant sleep.—Od'sfish, I do not think a bad man would have slept so well.—The fire burns dim, Morton—it is very cold. Cover me up—double the counterpane over the legs, Morton. I remember once walking in the Mall—little Sid said 'Devereux.' It is colder and colder, Morton—raise the blankets more over the back. 'Devereux,' said little

Sid—faith, Morton, 'tis ice now—where art thou?—is the fire out, that I can't see thee? Remember thine old uncle, Morton—and—and—don't forget poor—Ponto.—Bless thee, my child—bless you all!”

And my uncle died!

CHAPTER III.

A great Change of Prospects.

I SHUT myself up in the apartments prepared for me (they were not those I had formerly occupied), and refused all participation in my solitude, till, after an interval of some days, my mother came to summon me to the opening of the will. She was more moved than I had expected. “It is a pity,” said she, as we descended the stairs, “that Aubrey is not here, and that we should be so unacquainted with the exact place where he is likely to be that I fear the letter I sent him may be long delayed, or, indeed, altogether miscarry.”

“Is not the Abbé here?” said I, listlessly.

“No!” answered my mother, “to be sure not.”

“He has *been* here,” said I, greatly surprised. “I certainly saw him on the day of my arrival.”

“Impossible!” said my mother, in evident astonishment; and seeing that, at all events, she was unacquainted with the circumstance, I said no more.

The will was to be read in the little room, where my uncle had been accustomed to sit. I felt it as a sacrilege to his memory to choose that spot for such an office, but I said nothing. Gerald and my mother, the lawyer (a neighboring attorney, named Oswald), and myself, were the only persons present; Mr. Oswald hemmed thrice, and broke the seal. After a preliminary, strongly characteristic of the testator, he came to the disposition of the estates. I had never once, since my poor uncle's death, thought upon the chances of his will—indeed, knowing myself so entirely his favorite, I could not, if I had thought upon them, have entertained a doubt as to their result. What then was my astonishment, when, couched in terms of the strongest affection, the whole bulk of the property was bequeathed to Gerald; to Aubrey the sum of forty, to myself that of twenty, thousand pounds (a capital considerably less than the yearly income of my uncle's princely estates), was allotted. Then followed a list of minor bequests,—to my mother an annuity of three thousand a year, with the privilege

of apartments in the house during her life ; to each of the servants legacies sufficient for independence ; to a few friends, and distant connections of the family, tokens of the testator's remembrance,—even the horses to his carriage, and the dogs that fed from his menials' table, were not forgotten, but were to be set apart from work, and maintained in indolence during their remaining span of life. The will was concluded—I could not believe my senses : not a word was said as a reason for giving Gerald the priority.

I rose calmly enough. "Suffer me, sir," said I to the lawyer, "to satisfy my own eyes." Mr. Oswald bowed, and placed the will in my hands. I glanced at Gerald as I took it : his countenance betrayed, or feigned, an astonishment equal to my own. With a jealous, searching, scrutinizing eye, I examined the words of the bequest. I examined especially (for I suspected that the names must have been exchanged) the place in which my name and Gerald's occurred. In vain : all was smooth and fair to the eye, not a vestige of possible erasure or alteration was visible. I looked next at the wording of the will : it was evidently my uncle's—no one could have feigned or imitated the peculiar turn of his expressions ; and, above all, many parts of the will : (the affectionate and personal parts) were in his own handwriting.

"The date," said I "is, I perceive, of very recent period ; the will is signed by two witnesses besides yourself. Who and where are they ?"

"Robert Lister, the first signature, my clerk,—he is since dead, sir."

"Dead !" said I ; "and the other witness, George Davis ?"

"Is one of Sir William's tenants, and is below, sir, in waiting."

"Let him come up," and a middle-sized, stout man, with a blunt, bold, open countenance, was admitted.

"Did you witness this will ?" said I.

"I did, your honor !"

"And this is your handwriting?" pointing to the scarcely legible scrawl.

"Yees, your honor," said the man, scratching his head. "I think it be, they are my *ees*, and *G*, and *D*, sure enough."

"And do you know the purport of the will you signed ?"

"Anan !"

"I mean, do you know to whom Sir William—stop, Mr. Oswald—suffer the man to answer me—to whom Sir William left his property ?"

"Noa, to be sure, sir ; the will was a woundy long one, and

Maister Oswald there told me it was no use to read it over to me, but merely to sign, as a witness to Sir William's handwriting."

"Enough ; you may retire " ; and George Davis vanished.

"Mr. Oswald," said I, approaching the attorney, "I may wrong you, and if so, I am sorry for it, but I suspect there has been foul practice in this deed. I have reason to be convinced that Sir William Devereux could never have made this devise. I give you warning, sir, that I shall bring the business immediately before a court of law, and that if guilty—ay, tremble, sir—of what I suspect you will answer for this deed at the foot of the gallows."

I turned to Gerald, who rose while I was yet speaking. Before I could address him, he exclaimed with evident and extreme agitation :

"You cannot, Morton—you cannot—you dare not insinuate that I, your brother, have been base enough to forge, or to instigate the forgery of, this will?"

Gerald's agitation made me still less doubtful of his guilt.

"The case, sir," I answered coldly, "stands thus : my uncle could not have made this will—it is a devise that must seem incredible to all who knew aught of our domestic circumstances. Fraud has been practiced, how I know not ! by whom I do know."

"Morton, Morton—this is insufferable—I cannot bear such charges, even from a brother."

"Charges!—your conscience speaks, sir—not I ; no one benefits by this fraud but you : pardon me if I draw an inference from a fact."

So saying, I turned on my heel, and abruptly left the apartment. I ascended the stairs which led to my own : there I found my servant preparing the paraphernalia in which that very evening I was to attend my uncle's funeral. I gave him, with a calm and collected voice, the necessary instructions for following me to town immediately after that event, and then I passed on to the room where the deceased lay in state. The room was hung with black—the gorgeous pall, wrought with the proud heraldry of our line, lay over the coffin, and by the lights which made, in that old chamber, a more brilliant, yet more ghastly day, sat the hired watchers of the dead.

I bade them leave me, and kneeling down beside the coffin, I poured out the last expressions of my grief. I rose, and was retiring once more to my room, when I encountered Gerald.

"Morton," said he, "I own to you, I myself am astounded

by my uncle's will. I do not come to make you offers—you would not accept them—I do not come to vindicate myself, it is beneath me; and we have never been as brothers, and we know not their language—but I *do* come to demand you to retract the dark and causeless suspicions you have vented against me, and also to assure you that, if you have doubts of the authenticity of the will, so far from throwing obstacles in your way, I myself will join in the inquiries you institute, and the expenses of the law."

I felt some difficulty in curbing my indignation while Gerald thus spoke. I saw before me the persecutor of Isora—the fraudulent robber of my rights, and I heard this enemy speak to me of aiding in the inquiries which were to convict himself of the basest, if not the blackest, of human crimes; there was something too in the reserved and yet insolent tone of his voice which, reminding me as it did of our long aversion to each other, made my very blood creep with abhorrence. I turned away, that I might not break my oath to Isora, for I felt strongly tempted to do so; and said in as calm an accent as I could command, "The case will, I trust, require no king's evidence; and at least, I will not be beholden to the man whom my reason condemns for any assistance in bringing upon himself the ultimate condemnation of the law."

Gerald looked at me sternly: "Were you not my brother," said he in a low tone, "I would, for a charge so dishonoring my fair name, strike you dead at my feet."

"It is a wonderful exertion of fraternal love," I rejoined, with a scornful laugh, but an eye flashing with passions a thousand times more fierce than scorn, "that prevents your adding that last favor to those you have already bestowed on me."

Gerald, with a muttered curse, placed his hand upon his sword; my own rapier was instantly half drawn, when to save us from the great guilt of mortal contest against each other, steps were heard, and a number of the domestics charged with melancholy duties at the approaching rite were seen slowly sweeping in black robes along the opposite gallery. Perhaps that interruption restored both of us to our senses, for we said, almost in the same breath, and nearly in the same phrase, "This way of terminating strife is not for us"; and, as Gerald spoke, he turned slowly away, descended the staircase, and disappeared.

The funeral took place at night: a numerous procession of the tenants and peasantry attended. My poor uncle! there was not a dry eye for thee but those of thine own kindred. Tall, stately, erect in the power and majesty of his unrivalled form,

stood Gerald, already assuming the dignity and lordship which, to speak frankly, so well became him; my mother's face was turned from me, but her attitude proclaimed her utterly absorbed in prayer. As for myself, my heart seemed hardened: I could not betray to the gaze of a hundred strangers the emotion which I would have hidden from those whom I loved the most; wrapped in my cloak, with arms folded on my breast, and eyes bent to the ground; I leaned against one of the pillars of the chapel, apart, and apparently unmoved.

But when they were about to lower the body into the vault, a momentary weakness came over me. I made an involuntary step forward, a single but deep groan of anguish broke from me, and then, covering my face with my mantle, I resumed my former attitude, and all was still. The rite was over; in many and broken groups the spectators passed from the chapel: some to speculate on the future lord, some to mourn over the late, and all to return the next morning to their wonted business, and let the glad sun teach them to forget the past, until for themselves the sun should be no more, and the forgetfulness eternal.

The hour was so late that I relinquished my intention of leaving the house that night; I ordered my horse to be in readiness at daybreak, and, before I retired to rest, I went to my mother's apartments: she received me with more feeling than she had ever testified before.

"Believe me, Morton," said she, and she kissed my forehead; "believe me, I can fully enter into the feelings which you must naturally experience on an event so contrary to your expectations. I cannot conceal from you how much I am surprised. Certainly Sir William never gave any of us cause to suppose that he liked either of your brothers—Gerald less than Aubrey—so much as yourself; nor poor man, was he in other things at all addicted to conceal his opinions."

"It is true, my mother," said I; "it is true. Have you not therefore some suspicions of the authenticity of the will?"

"Suspicions!" cried my mother. "No!—impossible!—suspicions of whom? You could not think Gerald so base, and who else had an interest in deception?—Besides, the signature is undoubtedly Sir William's handwriting, and the will was regularly witnessed; suspicions, Morton—no, impossible! Reflect too, how eccentric and humorsome your uncle always was: suspicions!—no, impossible!"

"Such things have been, my mother, nor are they uncommon: men will hazard their souls, ay, and what to some is more precious still, their lives too—for the vile clay we call money.

But enough of this now: the Law—that great arbiter—that eater of the oyster, and divider of its shells—the Law will decide between us, and if against me, as I suppose, and fear the decision will be—why I must be a suitor to Fortune, instead of her commander. Give me your blessing, my dearest mother; I cannot stay longer in this house: to-morrow I leave you.”

And my mother did bless me, and I fell upon her neck and clung to it. “Ah!” thought I, “this blessing is almost worth my uncle’s fortune.”

I returned to my room—there I saw on the table the case of the sword sent me by the French king. I had left it with my uncle, on my departure to town, and it had been found among his effects and reclaimed by me. I took out the sword, and drew it from the scabbard.

“Come,” said I, and I kindled with a melancholy, yet a deep, enthusiasm, as I looked along the blade, “come, my bright friend, with thee through this labyrinth which we call the world, will I carve my way! Fairest and speediest of earth’s levellers, thou makest the path from the low valley to the steep hill, and shapest the soldier’s axe into the monarch’s sceptre! The laurel and the fasces, the curule car, and the emperor’s purple—what are these but thy playthings, alternately thy scorn and thy reward? Founder of all empires, propagator of all creeds, thou leddest the Gaul and the Goth, and the Gods of Rome and Greece crumbled upon their altars! Beneath thee, the fires of the Gheber waxed pale, and on thy point the badge of the camel-driver blazed like a sun over the startled East! Eternal arbiter, and unconquerable despot, while the passions of mankind exist! Most solemn of hypocrites—circling blood with glory as with a halo, and consecrating homicide and massacre with a hollow name, which the parched throat of thy votary, in the battle and the agony, shouteth out with its last breath! Star of all human destinies! I kneel before thee, and invoke from thy bright astrology an omen and a smile.”

CHAPTER IV.

An Episode.—The Son of the Greatest Man who (one only excepted) ever rose to a *Throne*, but by no means of the Greatest Man (save one) who ever existed.

BEFORE sunrise the next morning, I had commenced my return to London. I had previously entrusted to the *locum tenens* of the sage Desmarais the royal gift, and (singular conjunc-

tion!) poor Ponto, my uncle's dog. Here let me pause, as I shall have no other opportunity to mention him, to record the fate of the canine bequest. He accompanied me some years afterwards to France, and he died there in extreme age. I shed tears, as I saw the last relic of my poor uncle expire, and I was not consoled even though he was buried in the garden of the gallant Villars, and immortalized by an epitaph from the pen of the courtly Chaulieu.

Leaving my horse to select his own pace, I surrendered myself to reflection upon the strange alteration that had taken place in my fortunes. There did not, in my own mind, rest a doubt that some villainy had been practiced with respect to the will. My uncle's constant and unvarying favor towards me; the unequivocal expressions he himself from time to time had dropped indicative of his future intentions on my behalf; the easy and natural manner in which he had seemed to consider, as a thing of course, my heritage and succession of his estates; all, coupled with his own frank and kindly character, so little disposed to raise hopes which he meant to disappoint, might alone have been sufficient to arouse my suspicions at a devise so contrary to all past experience of the testator. But when to these were linked the bold temper and the daring intellect of my brother, joined to his personal hatred to myself: his close intimacy with Montreuil, whom I believed capable of the darkest designs; the sudden and evidently concealed appearance of the latter on the day my uncle died; the agitation and paleness of the attorney; the enormous advantages accruing to Gerald, and to no one else, from the terms of the devise: when these were all united into one focus of evidence, they appeared to me to leave no doubt of the forgery of the testament, and the crime of Gerald. Nor was there anything in my brother's bearing and manner calculated to abate my suspicions. His agitation was real; his surprise might have been feigned; his offer of assistance in investigation was an unmeaning bravado; his conduct to myself testified his continued ill-will towards me—an ill-will which might possibly have instigated him in the fraud, scarcely less than the whispers of interest and cupidity.

But while this was the natural and indelible impression on my mind, I could not disguise from myself the extreme difficulty I should experience in resisting my brother's claim. So far as my utter want of all legal knowledge would allow me to decide, I could perceive nothing in the will itself which would admit of a lawyer's successful cavil: my reasons for suspicion, so conclusive to myself, would seem nugatory to a judge. My un-

cle was known as a humorist ; and prove that a man differs from others in one thing, and the world will believe that he differs from them in a thousand. His favor to me would be, in the popular eye, only an eccentricity, and the unlooked-for disposition of his will only a caprice. Possession, too, gave Gerald a proverbial vantage-ground, which my whole life might be wasted in contesting ; while his command of an immense wealth might, more than probably, exhaust my spirit by delay, and my fortune by expenses. Precious prerogative of law, to reverse the attribute of the Almighty ! to fill the *rich* with good things, but to send the poor empty away ! *In corruptissimâ republicâ plurimæ leges.* Legislation perplexed is synonymous with crime unpunished. A reflection, by the way, I should never have made, if I had never had a law-suit—sufferers are ever reformers.

Revolving, then, these anxious and unpleasing thoughts, interrupted, at times, by regrets of a purer and less selfish nature for a friend I had lost, and wandering, at others, to the brighter anticipations of rejoining Isora, and drinking from her eyes my comfort for the past, and my hope for the future, I continued and concluded my day's travel.

The next day, on resuming my journey, and on feeling the time approach that would bring me to Isora, something like joy became the most prevalent feeling on my mind. So true is it that misfortunes little affect us so long as we have some ulterior object, which, by arousing hope, steals us from affliction. Alas ! the pang of a moment becomes intolerable when we know of nothing *beyond* the moment, which it soothes us to anticipate ! Happiness lives in the light of the future : attack the present—she defies you ! Darken the future, and you destroy her !

It was a beautiful morning : through the vapors which rolled slowly away beneath his beams, the sun broke gloriously forth ; and over wood and hill, and the low plains which, covered with golden corn, stretched immediately before me, his smile lay in stillness, but in joy. And ever from out the brake and the scattered copse, which at frequent intervals beset the road, the merry birds sent a fitful and glad music to mingle with the sweets and freshness of the air.

I had accomplished the greater part of my journey, and had entered into a more wooded and garden-like description of country, when I perceived an old man, in a kind of low chaise, vainly endeavoring to hold in a little, but spirited horse, which had taken alarm at some object on the road, and was running away with its driver. The age of the gentleman, and the lightness of the chaise, gave me some alarm for the safety of the

driver ; so, tying my horse to a gate, lest the sound of his hoofs might only increase the speed and fear of the fugitive, I ran with a swift and noiseless step along the other side of the hedge, and coming out into the road, just before the pony's head, I succeeded in arresting him, at rather a critical spot and moment. The old gentleman very soon recovered his alarm ; and, returning me many thanks for my interference, requested me to accompany him to his house, which he said was two or three miles distant.

Though I had no desire to be delayed in my journey, for the mere sake of seeing an old gentleman's house, I thought my new acquaintance's safety required me, at least, to offer to act as his charioteer till we reached his house. To my secret vexation at that time, though I afterwards thought the petty inconvenience was amply repaid by a conference with a very singular and once noted character, the offer was accepted. Surrendering my own steed to the care of a ragged boy, who promised to lead it with equal judgment and zeal, I entered the little car, and, keeping a firm hand and constant eye on the reins, brought the offending quadruped into a very equable and sedate pace.

"Poor Pob," said the old gentleman, apostrophizing his horse ; "poor Pob, like thy betters, thou knowest the weak hand from the strong ; and when thou art not held in by power, thou wilt chafe against love ; so that thou renewest in my mind the remembrance of its favorite maxim, viz., 'The only preventative to rebellion is restraint !'"

"Your observation, sir," said I, rather struck by this address, "makes very little in favor of the more generous feelings by which we ought to be actuated. It is a base mind which always requires the bit and bridle."

"It is, sir," answered the old gentleman ; "I allow it ; but, though I have some love for human nature, I have no respect for it ; and while I pity its infirmities, I cannot but confess them."

"Methinks, sir," replied I, "that you have uttered in that short speech more sound philosophy than I have heard for months. There is wisdom in not thinking too loftily of human clay, and benevolence in not judging it too harshly, and something, too, of magnanimity in this moderation ; for we seldom contemn mankind till they have hurt us, and when they have hurt us, we seldom do anything but detest them for the injury."

"You speak shrewdly, sir, for one so young," returned the old man, looking hard at me ; "and I will be sworn you have

suffered some cares ; for we never begin to think, till we are a little afraid to hope."

I sighed as I answered, "There are some men, I fancy, to whom constitution supplies the office of care ; who, naturally melancholy, become easily addicted to reflection, and reflection is a soil which soon repays us for whatever trouble we bestow upon its culture."

"True, sir!" said my companion—and there was a pause. The old gentlemen resumed : "We are not far from my home now (or rather my temporary residence, for my proper and general home is at Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire); and, as the day is scarcely half spent, I trust you will not object to partake of a hermit's fare. Nay, nay, no excuse : I assure you that I am not a gossip in general, or a liberal dispenser of invitations ; and I think, if you refuse me now, you will hereafter regret it."

My curiosity was rather excited by this threat ; and, reflecting that my horse required a short rest, I subdued my impatience to return to town, and accepted the invitation. We came presently to a house of moderate size, and rather antique fashion. This, the old man informed me, was his present abode. A servant, almost as old as his master, came to the door, and, giving his arm to my host, led him, for he was rather lame and otherwise infirm, across a small hall into a long, low apartment. I followed.

A miniature of Oliver Cromwell, placed over the chimney-piece, forcibly arrested my attention.

"It is the only portrait of the Protector, I ever saw," said I, "which impresses on me the certainty of a likeness ; that resolute, gloomy brow—that stubborn lip—that heavy, yet not stolid, expression—all seem to warrant resemblance to that singular and fortunate man, to whom folly appears to have been as great an instrument of success as wisdom, and who rose to the supreme power, perhaps, no less from a pitiable fanaticism than an admirable genius. So true is it that great men often soar to their height, by qualities the least obvious to the spectator, and (to stoop to a low comparison,) resemble that animal* in which a common ligament supplies the place, and possesses the property, of wings."

The old man smiled very slightly, as I made this remark. "If this be true," said he, with an impressive tone, "though we may wonder less at the talents of the Protector, we must be more indulgent to his character, nor condemn him for insincerity, when at heart he himself was deceived."

* The flying squirrel.

“It is in that light,” said I, “that I have always viewed his conduct. And though myself, by prejudice, a cavalier and a tory, I own that Cromwell (hypocrite as he is esteemed) appears to me as much to have exceeded his royal antagonist and victim in the virtue of sincerity, as he did in the grandeur of his genius and the profound consistency of his ambition.”

“Sir,” said my host, with a warmth that astonished me, “you seem to have known that man, so justly do you judge him. Yes,” said he, after a pause, “yes, perhaps no one ever so varnished to his own breast his designs—no one, so covetous of glory, was ever so duped by conscience—no one ever rose to such a height, through so few acts that seemed to himself worthy of remorse.”

At this part of our conversation, the servant, entering, announced dinner. We adjourned to another room, and partook of a homely yet not uninviting repast. When men are pleased with each other, conversation soon gets beyond the ordinary surfaces to talk; and an exchange of deeper opinions is speedily effected by what old Barnes* quaintly enough terms. “The Gentleman Usher of all Knowledge—Sermocination!”

It was a pretty, though small room, where we dined; and I observed that in this apartment, as in the other into which I had been first ushered, there were several books scattered about, in that confusion and number which show that they have become to their owner both the choicest luxury and the least dispensable necessary. So, during dinner time, we talked principally upon books, and I observed that those that my host seemed to know the best were of the elegant and poetical order of philosophers, who, more fascinating than deep, preach up the blessings of a solitude which is useless, and a content, which, deprived of passion, excitement, and energy, would, if it could ever exist, only be a dignified name for vegetation.

“So,” said he, when the dinner being removed, we were left alone with that substitute for all society—wine! “so you are going to town: in four hours more you will be in that great focus of noise, falsehood, hollow joy, and real sorrow. Do you know that I have become so wedded to the country that I cannot but consider all those who leave it for the turbulent city, in the same light, half wondering, half compassionating, as that in which the ancients regarded the hardy adventurers who left the safe land and their happy homes, voluntarily to expose themselves in a frail vessel to the dangers of an uncertain sea.

* In the Gerania.

Here, when I look out on the green fields, and the blue sky, the quiet herds, basking in the sunshine, or scattered over the unpolluted plains, I cannot but exclaim with Pliny, 'This is the true *Μουσικειον*!' this the source whence flow inspiration to the mind and tranquillity to the heart! And in my love of nature—more confiding and constant than ever is the love we bear to women—I cry with the tender and sweet Tibullus—

'Ego composito securus acervo
Despiciam dites—despiciamque famem.'**

"These," said I, "are the sentiments we all (perhaps the most restless of us the most passionately) at times experience. But there is in our hearts some secret, but irresistible, principle, that impels us, as a rolling circle, onward, onward, in the great orbit of our destiny; nor do we find a respite until the wheels on which we move are broken—at the tomb."

"Yet," said my host, "the internal principle you speak of can be arrested before the grave: at least stilled and impeded. You will smile incredulously, perhaps (for I see you do not know who I am), when I tell you that I might once have been a monarch, and that obscurity seemed to me more enviable than empire; I resigned the occasion: the tide of fortune rolled onward, and left me safe, but solitary and forsaken, upon the dry land. If you wonder at my choice, you will wonder still more when I tell you that I have never repented it."

Greatly surprised, and even startled, I heard my host make this strange avowal. "Forgive me," said I, "but you have powerfully excited my interest; dare I inquire from whose experience I am now deriving a lesson?"

"Not yet," said my host, smiling, "not till our conversation is over, and you have bid the old anchorite adieu, in all probability, for ever: you will then know that you have conversed with a man, perhaps more universally neglected and contemned than any of his contemporaries. Yes," he continued, "yes, I resigned power, and I got no praise for my moderation, but contempt for my folly; no human being would believe that I could have relinquished that treasure through a disregard for its possession which others would only have relinquished through an incapacity to retain it; and that which, had they seen it recorded in an ancient history, men would have regarded as the height of philosophy, they despised when acted under their eyes, as the extremest abasement of imbecility. Yet I compare my lot with that of the great man whom I was expected to equal in ambition, and to whose grandeur I might

* Satisfied with my little hoard, I can despise wealth--and fear not hunger.

have succeeded; and am convinced that in this retreat I am more to be envied than he in the plenitude of his power and the height of his renown; yet is not happiness the aim of wisdom? if my choice is happier than his, is it not wiser?"

"Alas," thought I, "the wisest men seldom have the loftiest genius, and perhaps happiness is granted rather to mediocrity of mind than to mediocrity of circumstance"; but I did not give so uncourteous a reply to my host an audible utterance; on the contrary: "I do not doubt," said I, as I rose to depart, "the wisdom of a choice which has brought you self-gratulation. And it has been said by a man both great and good, a man to whose mind was open the lore of the closet and the experience of courts—that in wisdom or in folly, 'the only difference between one man and another, is whether a man governs his passions or his passions him.' According to this rule, which indeed is a classic and a golden aphorism, Alexander, on the throne of Persia, might have been an idiot to Diogenes in his tub. And now, sir, in wishing you farewell, let me again crave your indulgence to my curiosity."

"Not yet, not yet," answered my host; and he led me once more into the other room. While they were preparing my horse, we renewed our conversation. To the best of my recollection, we talked about Plato; but I had now become so impatient to rejoin Isora that I did not accord to my worthy host the patient attention I had hitherto given him. When I took leave of him he blessed me, and placed a piece of paper in my hand; "Do not open this," said he, "till you are at least two miles hence; your curiosity will then be satisfied. If ever you travel this road again, or if ever you pass by Cheshunt, pause and see if the old philosopher is dead. Adieu!"

And so we parted.

You may be sure that I had not passed the appointed distance of two miles very far when I opened the paper and read the following words:

"Perhaps, young stranger, at some future period of a life, which I venture to foretell will be adventurous and eventful, it may afford you a matter for reflection, or a resting-spot for a moral, to remember that you have seen, in old age and obscurity, the son of Him who shook an empire, avenged a people, and obtained a throne, only to be the victim of his own passions and the dupe of his own reason. I repeat now the question I before put to you—was the fate of the great Protector fairer than that of the despised and forgotten

"RICHARD CROMWELL?"

“So,” thought I, “it is indeed with the son of the greatest ruler England or perhaps, in modern times, Europe has ever produced, that I have held this conversation upon content! Yes, perhaps your fate *is* more to be envied than that of your illustrious father; but who *would* envy it more? Strange that while we pretend that happiness is the object of all desire, happiness is the last thing which we covet. Love, and wealth, and pleasure, and honor,—these are the roads which we take, so long that, accustomed to the mere travel, we forget that it was first undertaken, not for the course, but the goal; and, in the common infatuation which pervades all our race, we make the toil the meed, and in following the means forsake the end.”

I never saw my host again; very shortly afterward he died:* and fate, which had marked with so strong a separation the lives of the father and the son, united in that death—as its greatest, so its only universal, blessing—the philosopher and the recluse with the warrior and the chief!

CHAPTER V.

In which the Hero shows decision on more points than one.—More of Isora’s character is developed.

To use the fine image in the *Arcadia*, it was “when the sun, like a noble heart, began to show his greatest countenance in his lowest estate,” that I arrived at Isora’s door. I had written to her once, to announce my uncle’s death, and the day of my return; but I had not mentioned in my letter my reverse of fortunes: I reserved that communication till it could be softened by our meeting. I saw by the countenance of the servant who admitted me that all was well; so I asked no question—I flew up the stairs—I broke into Isora’s chamber, and in an instant she was in my arms. Ah, Love, Love! wherefore art thou so transitory a pilgrim on the earth—an evening cloud which hovers on our horizon, drinking the hues of the sun, that grows ominously brighter as it verges to the shadow and the night, and which, the moment that sun is set, wanders on in darkness or descends in tears?

“And now, my bird of Paradise,” said I, as we sat alone in the apartment I had fitted up as the banqueting room, and on which, though small in its proportions, I had lavished all the love of luxury and show which made one of my most prevailing

* Richard Cromwell died in 1712.—ED.

weaknesses, "and now, how has time passed with you since we parted?"

"Need you ask, Morton? Ah, have you ever noted a poor dog deserted by its master, or rather not deserted, for that you know is not my case yet," added Isora playfully, "but left at home while the master went abroad? have you noted how restless the poor animal is—how it refuses all company and all comfort—how it goes a hundred times a day into the room which its master is wont mostly to inhabit—how it creeps on the sofa or the chair which the same absent idler was accustomed to press—how it selects some article of his very clothing, and curls jealously around it, and hides and watches over it, as I have hid and watched over this glove, Morton? Have you ever noted that humble creature whose whole happiness is the smile of one being, when the smile was away?—then, Morton, you can tell how my time has passed during your absence."

I answered Isora by endearments and by compliments. She turned away from the latter.

"Never call me those fine names, I implore you," she whispered; "call me only by those pretty pet words by which I know you will never call any one else. Bee and bird are my names, and mine only; but beauty and angel are names you have given, or may give, to a hundred others! Promise me, then, to address me only in our own language."

"I promise, and lo, the seal to the promise. But tell me, Isora, do you not love these rare scents that make an Araby of this unmellowed clime? Do you not love the profusion of light which reflects so dazzling a lustre on that soft cheek—and those eyes which the ancient romancer* must have dreamt of when he wrote so prettily of 'eyes that seemed a temple where love and beauty were married'? Does not yon fruit take a more tempting hue, bedded as it is in those golden leaves? Does not sleep seem to hover with a downier wing over those sofas on which the limbs of a princess have been laid? In a word, is there not in luxury and in pomp a spell which no gentler or wiser mind would disdain?"

"It may be so!" said Isora, sighing; "but the splendor which surrounds us chills and almost terrifies me. I think that every proof of your wealth and rank puts me farther from you; then, too, I have some remembrance of the green sod, and the silver rill, and the trees upon which the young winds sing and play—

* Sir Philip Sydney, who, if we may judge from the number of quotations from his works scattered in this book, seems to have been an especial favorite with Count Devereux.—ED.

and I own that it is with the country, and not the town, that all my ideas of luxury are wed."

"But the numerous attendants, the long row of liveried hirelings, through which you may pass, as through a lane, the caparisoned steeds, the stately equipage, the jewelled tiara, the costly robe which matrons imitate and envy, the music, which lulls you to sleep, the lighted show, the gorgeous stage,—all these, the attributes or gifts of wealth, all these that you have the right to hope you will one day or other command, you will own are what you could very reluctantly forego!"

"Do you think so, Morton? Ah, I wish you were of my humble temper: the more we limit and concentrate happiness the more certain, I think, we are of securing it—they who widen the circle encroach upon the boundaries of danger; and they who freight their wealth upon an hundred vessels are more liable, Morton, are they not, to the peril of the winds and the waves than they who venture it only upon one?"

"Admirably reasoned, my little sophist; but if the one ship sink?"

"Why, I would embark myself in it as well as my wealth, and should sink with it."

"Well, well, Isora, your philosophy will, perhaps, soon be put to the test. I will talk to you to-morrow of business."

"And why not to-night?"

"To-night, when I have just returned! No, to-night I will only talk to you of love!"

As may be supposed, Isora was readily reconciled to my change of circumstances, and indeed that sum which seemed poverty to me appeared positive wealth to her. But perhaps few men are by nature and inclination more luxurious and costly than myself; always accustomed to a profuse expenditure at my uncle's, I fell insensibly and *con amore* on my *début* in London, into all the extravagancies of the age. Sir William, pleased, rather than discontented with my habits, especially as they were attended with some *éclat*, pressed upon me proofs of his generosity which, since I knew his wealth and considered myself his heir, I did not scruple to accept, and at the time of my return to London after his death, I had not only spent to the full the princely allowance I had received from him, but was above half my whole fortune in debt. However, I had horses and equipages, jewels and plate, and I did not long wrestle with my pride before I obtained the victory, and sent all my valuables to the hammer. They sold pretty well, all things considered, for I had a certain reputation in the world for taste and mu-

nificence ; and when I had received the product and paid my debts, I found that the whole balance in my favor, including, of course, my uncle's legacy, was fifteen thousand pounds.

It was no bad younger brother's portion, perhaps, but I was in no humor to be made a younger brother without a struggle. So I went to the lawyers ; they looked at the will, considered the case, and took their fees. Then the honestest of them, with the coolest air in the world, told me to content myself with my legacy, for the case was hopeless ; the will was sufficient to exclude a wilderness of elder sons. I need not add that I left this lawyer with a very contemptible opinion of his understanding. I went to another, he told me the same thing, only in a different manner, and I thought him as great a fool as his fellow practitioner. At last I chanced upon a little brisk gentleman, with a quick eye and a sharp voice, who wore a wig that carried conviction in every curl ; had an independent, upright mien, and such a logical, emphatic way of expressing himself, that I was quite charmed with him. This gentleman scarce heard me out before he assured me that I had a famous case of it, that he liked making quick work, and proceeding with vigor, that he hated rogues, and delay which was the sign of a rogue, but not the necessary sign of law, that I was the most fortunate man imaginable in coming to him, and, in short, that I had nothing to do but to commence proceedings, and leave all the rest to him. I was very soon talked into this proposal, and very soon embarked in the luxurious ocean of litigation.

Having settled this business so satisfactorily, I went to receive the condolence and sympathy of St. John. Notwithstanding the arduous occupations both of pleasure and of power, in which he was constantly engaged, he had found time to call upon me very often, and to express by letter great disappointment that I had neither received nor returned his visits. Touched by the phenomenon of so much kindness in a statesman, I paid him in return the only compliment in my power, viz., I asked his advice—with a view of taking it.

"Politics—politics, my dear Count," said he, in answer to that request, "nothing like it ; I will get you a seat in the House by next week,—you are just of age, I think,—Heavens ! a man like you, who has learning enough for a German professor—assurance that would almost abash a Milesian—a very pretty choice of words, and a pointed way of consummating a jest—why, with you by my side, my dear Count, I will soon—"

"St. John," said I, interrupting him, "you forget I am a Catholic !"

“ Ah, I did forget that,” replied St. John slowly. “ Heaven help me, Count, but I am sorry your ancestors were not converted ; it was a pity they should bequeath you their religion without the estate to support it, for papacy has become a terrible tax to its followers.”

“ I wonder,” said I, “ whether the earth will ever be governed by Christians, not cavillers ; by followers of our Saviour, not by co-operators of the devil ; by men who obey the former, and ‘ love one another,’ not by men who walk about with the latter (that roaring lion), ‘ seeking whom they may devour.’ Intolerance makes us acquainted with strange nonsense, and folly is never so ludicrous as when associated with something sacred ; it is then like Punch and his wife in Powell’s puppet-show, *dancing in the Ark*. For example, to tell those who differ from us that they are in a delusion, and yet to persecute them for that delusion, is to equal the wisdom of our forefathers, who, we are told, in the *Dæmonologie* of the Scottish Solomon, ‘ burnt a whole monasterie of nunnes for being misled, not by men, but *dreames* !’ ”

And being somewhat moved, I ran on for a long time in a very eloquent strain, upon the disadvantages of intolerance ; which, I would have it, was a policy as familiar to Protestantism now as it had been to Popery in the dark ages ; quite forgetting that it is not the vice of a peculiar sect, but of a ruling party.

St. John, who thought, or affected to think, very differently from me on these subjects, shook his head gently, but, with his usual good breeding, deemed it rather too sore a subject for discussion.

“ I will tell you a discovery I have made,” said I.

“ And what is it ? ”

“ Listen : that man is wisest who is happiest—granted. What does happiness consist in ? Power, wealth, popularity, and, above all, content ! Well, then, no man ever obtains so much power, so much money, so much popularity, and, above all, such thorough self-content as a fool ; a fool, therefore (this is no paradox), is the wisest of men. Fools govern the world in purple—the wise laugh at them—but they laugh in rags. Fools thrive at court—fools thrive in state chambers—fools thrive in boudoirs—fools thrive in rich men’s legacies. Who is so beloved as a fool ? Every man seeks him, laughs at him, and hugs him. Who is so secure in his own opinion—so high in complacency, as a fool ? *sua virtute involvit*. Hark ye, St. John, let us turn fools—they are the only potentates—the only philosophers of earth. Oh, motley, ‘ motley’s your only wear !’ ”

“Ha! ha!” laughed St. John; and, rising, he insisted upon carrying me with him to the rehearsal of a new play, in order, as he said, to dispel my spleen, and prepare me for ripe decision upon the plans to be adopted for bettering my fortune.

But, in good truth, nothing calculated to advance so comfortable and praiseworthy an end seemed to present itself. My religion was an effectual bar to any hope of rising in the state. Europe now began to wear an aspect that promised universal peace, and the sword which I had so poetically apostrophized was not likely to be drawn upon any more glorious engagement than a brawl with the Mohawks, any incautious noses appertaining to which fraternity I was fully resolved to slit whenever they came conveniently in my way. To add to the unpromising state of my worldly circumstances, my uncle's death had removed the only legitimate barrier to the acknowledgment of my marriage with Isora, and it became due to her to proclaim and publish that event. Now, if there be any time in the world when a man's friends look upon him most coldly, when they speak of his capacities of rising the most despondingly, when they are most inclined, in short, to set him down as a silly sort of fellow, whom it is no use inconveniencing oneself to assist, it is at that moment when he has made what the said friends are pleased to term an imprudent marriage! It was, therefore, no remarkable instance of good luck that the express time for announcing that I had contracted that species of marriage, was the express time for my wanting the assistance of those kind-hearted friends. Then, too, by the pleasing sympathies in worldly opinion, the neglect of one's friends is always so damnably neighbored by the exultation of one's foes! Never was there a man who, without being very handsome, very rude, or very much in public life, had made unto himself more enemies than it had been my lot to make. How the rascals would all sneer and coin dull jests when they saw me so down in the world! The very old maids, who, so long as they thought me single, would have declared that the will was a fraud, would, directly they heard I was married, ask if Gerald was handsome, and assert, with a wise look, that my uncle knew well what he was about. Then the joy of the Lady Hasselton, and the curled lip of the haughty Tarleton! It is a very odd circumstance, but it is very true, that the people we most despise have the most influence over our actions: a man never ruins himself by giving dinners to his father, or turning his house into a palace in order to feast his bosom friend: on the contrary, 'tis the poor devil of a friend who fares the worst, and starves on the family

joint, while mine host begs himself to banquet "that disagreeable Mr. A., who is such an insufferable ass," and mine hostess sends her husband to the Fleet by vying with "that odious Mrs. B., who was always her aversion!"

Just in the same manner, no thought disturbed me, in the step I was about to take, half so sorely as the recollection of Lady Hasselton the coquette, and Mr. Tarleton the gambler. However, I have said somewhere or other that nothing selfish on a small scale polluted my love for Isora—nor did there. I had resolved to render her speedy and full justice; and if I sometimes recurred to the disadvantages to myself, I always had pleasure in thinking that they were *sacrifices* to her. But to my great surprise, when I first announced to Isora my intention of revealing our marriage, I perceived in her countenance, always such a traitor to her emotions, a very different expression from that which I had anticipated. A deadly paleness spread over her whole face, and a shudder seemed to creep through her frame. She attempted, however, to smile away the alarm she had created in me; nor was I able to penetrate the cause of an emotion so unlooked for. But I continued to speak of the public announcement of our union as of a thing decided; and at length she listened to me while I arranged the method of making it, and sympathized in the future projects I chalked out for us to adopt. Still, however, when I proposed a definite time for the re-celebration of our nuptials, she ever drew back, and hinted the wish for a longer delay.

"Not so soon, dear Morton," she would say tearfully, "not so soon; we are happy now, and perhaps when you are with me always, you will not love me so well!"

I reasoned against this notion, and this reluctance, but in vain; and day passed on day, and even week on week, and our marriage was still undeclared. I now lived, however, almost wholly with Isora, for busy tongues could no longer carry my secret to my uncle; and, indeed, since I had lost the fortune which I was expected to inherit, it is astonishing how little people troubled themselves about my movements or myself. I lived then almost wholly with Isora—and did familiarity abate my love? Strange to say, it did not abate even the romance of it. The reader may possibly remember a conversation with St. John recorded in the Second Book of this history. "The deadliest foe to love," said he, (he who had known all love—that of the senses and that also of the soul), "is not change, nor misfortune, nor jealousy, nor wrath, nor

anything that flows from passion, or emanates from fortune. The deadliest foe to love is CUSTOM !”

Was St. John right?—I believe that in most instances he was ; and perhaps the custom was not continued in my case long enough for me to refute the maxim. But as yet, the very gloss upon the god’s wings was fresh as on the first day when I had acknowledged his power. Still was Isora to me the light and the music of existence!—still did my heart thrill and leap within me when her silver and fond voice made the air a blessing. Still would I hang over her, when her beautiful features lay hushed in sleep, and watch the varying hues of her cheek ; and fancy, while she slept, that in each low, sweet breath that my lips drew from hers, was a whisper of tenderness and endearment ! Still when I was absent from her, my soul seemed to mourn a separation from its better and dearer part, and the joyous senses of existence saddened and shrunk into a single want ! Still was her presence to my heart as a breathing atmosphere of poesy which circled and tinted all human things ; still was my being filled with that delicious and vague melancholy which the very excess of rapture alone produces—the knowledge we dare not breathe to ourselves that the treasure in which our heart is stored is not above the casualties of fate. The sigh that mingles with the kiss, the tear that glistens in the impassioned and yearning gaze, the deep tide in our spirit, over which the moon and the stars have power ; the chain of harmony within the thought, which has a mysterious link with all that is fair, and pure, and bright in Nature, knitting as it were loveliness with love !—all this, all that I cannot express—all that to the young for whom the real world has had few spells, and the world of visions has been a home, who love at last and for the first time,—all that to them are known were still mine.

In truth, Isora was one well calculated to sustain and to rivet romance. The cast of her beauty was so dreamlike, and yet so varying—her temper was so little mingled with the common characteristics of woman ; it had so little of caprice, so little of vanity, so utter an absence of all jealous and all angry feeling ; it was so made up of tenderness and devotion, and yet so imaginative and fairy-like in its fondness, that it was difficult to bear only the sentiments of earth, for one who had so little of earth’s clay. She was more like the women whom one imagines are the creations of poetry, and yet of whom no poetry, save that of Shakspeare’s, reminds us ; and to this day, when I go into the world, I never see aught of our own kind

which recalls her, or even one of her features, to my memory. But when I am alone with Nature, methinks a sweet sound or a new-born flower has something of familiar power over those stored and deep impressions which do make her image, and it brings her more vividly before my eyes than any shape or face of her own sex, however beautiful it may be.

There was also another trait in her character which, though arising in her weakness, not her virtues, yet perpetuated the more dreamlike and imaginary qualities of our passion; this was a melancholy superstition, developing itself in forebodings and omens which interested, because they were steeped at once in the poetry and in the deep sincerity of her nature. She was impressed with a strong and uncontrollable feeling that her fate was predestined to a dark course and an early end; and she drew from all things around her something to feed the pensive character of her thoughts. The stillness of noon—the holy and eloquent repose of twilight, its rosy sky, and its soft air, its shadows and its dews, had equally for her heart a whisper and a spell. The wan stars, where, from the eldest time, man has shaped out a chart of the undiscoverable future; the mysterious moon, to which the great ocean ministers from its untrodden shrines; the winds, which traverse the vast air, pilgrims from an eternal home to an unpenetrated bourne; the illimitable Heavens, on which none ever gazed without a vague craving for something that the earth cannot give, and a vague sense of a former existence in which that something was enjoyed; the holy night—that solemn and circling sleep, which seems, in its repose, to image our death, and in its living worlds to shadow forth the immortal realms which only through that death we can survey,—all had, for the deep heart of Isora, a language of omen and of doom. Often would we wander alone, and for hours together, by the quiet and wild woods and streams that surrounded her retreat, and which we both loved so well; and often, when the night closed over us, with my arm around her, and our lips so near that our atmosphere was our mutual breath, would she utter, in that voice which “made the soul plant itself in the ears,”—the predictions which had nursed themselves at her heart.

I remember one evening, in especial! The rich twilight had gathered over us, and we sat by a slender and soft rivulet, overshadowed by some stunted yet aged trees. We had both, before she spoke, been silent for several minutes; and only when, at rare intervals, the birds sent from the copse that backed us a solitary and vesper note of music, was the stillness around

us broken. Before us, on the opposite bank of the stream, lay a valley, in which shadow and wood concealed all trace of man's dwellings, save at one far spot, where, from a single hut, rose a curling and thin vapor,—like a spirit released from earth, and losing gradually its earthier particles, as it blends itself with the loftier atmosphere of Heaven.

It was then that Isora, clinging closer to me, whispered her forebodings of death. "You will remember," said she, smiling faintly, "you will remember me, in the lofty and bright career which yet awaits you, and I scarcely know whether I would not sooner have that memory—free as it will be from all recollection of my failings and faults, and all that I have cost you, than incur the chance of your future coldness or decrease of love."

And when Isora turned, and saw that the tears stood in my eyes, she kissed them away, and said, after a pause:

"It matters not, my own guardian angel, what becomes of me: and now that I am near you, it is wicked to let my folly cost you a single pang. But why should you grieve at my forebodings? there is nothing painful or harsh in them to me, and I interpret them thus: 'if my life passes away before the common date, perhaps it will be a sacrifice to yours.'" And it will, Morton—it will. The love I bear to you I can but feebly express now; all of us wish to prove our feelings, and I would give one proof of mine for you. It seems to me that I was made only for one purpose—to love you; and I would fain hope that my death may be some sort of sacrifice to you—some token of the ruling passion and the whole object of my life."

As Isora said this, the light of the moon, which had just risen, shone full upon her cheek, flushed as it was with a deeper tint than it usually wore; and in her eye—her features—her forehead—the lofty nature of her love seemed to have stamped the divine expression of itself.

Have I lingered too long on these passages of life,—they draw near to a close—and a more adventurous and stirring period of manhood will succeed. Ah, little could they, who in after years beheld in me but the careless yet stern soldier—the companion alternately so light and so moodily reserved—little could they tell how soft, and weak, and doting my heart was once!

CHAPTER VI.

An Unexpected Meeting.—Conjecture and Anticipation.

THE day for the public solemnization of our marriage was at length appointed. In fact, the plan for the future that appeared to me most promising was to proffer my services to some foreign Court, and that of Russia held out to me the greatest temptation. I was therefore anxious, as soon as possible, to conclude the rite of a second or public nuptials, and I purposed leaving the country within a week afterward. My little lawyer assured me that my suit would go on quite as well in my absence, and whenever my presence was necessary he would be sure to inform me of it. I did not doubt him in the least—it is a charming thing to have confidence in one's man of business.

Of Montreuil I now saw nothing ; but I accidentally heard that he was on a visit to Gerald, and that the latter had already made the old walls ring with premature hospitality. As for Aubrey, I was in perfect ignorance of his movements ; and the unsatisfactory shortness of his last letter, and the wild expressions so breathing of fanaticism in the postscript, had given me much anxiety and alarm on his account. I longed above all to see him,—to talk with him over old times and our future plans, and to learn whether no new bias could be given to a temperament which seemed to lean so strongly towards a self-punishing superstition. It was about a week before the day fixed for my public nuptials, that I received at last from him the following letter:

“MY DEAREST BROTHER :

“I have been long absent from home—absent on affairs on which we will talk hereafter. I have not forgotten you, though I have been silent, and the news of my poor uncle's death has shocked me greatly. On my arrival here I learnt your disappointment and your recourse to law. I am not so much surprised, though I am as much grieved, as yourself, for I will tell you now what seemed to me unimportant before. On receiving your letter, requesting consent to your designed marriage, my uncle seemed greatly displeased as well as vexed, and afterwards he heard much that displeased him more ; from what quarter came his news I know not, and he only spoke of it in innuendos and angry insinuations. As far as I was able, I endeavored to learn his meaning, but could not, and to my praises of you I thought latterly he seemed to lend but a cold ear ; he told me at last, when I was about to leave him, that you had acted ungratefully to him, and that he should alter his will. I scarcely thought of this speech at the time, or rather I consid-

ered it as the threat of a momentary anger. Possibly, however, it was the prelude to that disposition of property which has so wounded you,—I observe too that the will bears date about that period. I mention this fact to you—you can draw from it what inference you will ; but I do solemnly believe that Gerald is innocent of any fraud towards you.

“I am all anxiety to hear whether your love continues. I beseech you to write to me instantly and inform me on that head as on all others. We shall meet soon.

“Your ever affectionate Brother,

“AUBREY DEVEREUX.”

There was something in this letter that vexed and displeased me: I thought it breathed a tone of unkindness and indifference which my present circumstances rendered peculiarly inexcusable. So far, therefore, from answering it immediately, I resolved not to reply to it till after the solemnization of my marriage. The anecdote of my uncle startled me a little when I coupled it with the words my uncle had used toward myself on his death-bed; viz, in hinting that he had heard some things unfavorable to Ishra, unnecessary then to repeat; but still if my uncle had altered his intentions towards me, would he not have mentioned the change and its reasons? Would he have written to me with such kindness, or received me with such affection? I could not believe that he would: and my opinions of the fraud and the perpetrator were not a whit changed by Aubrey's epistle. It was clear, however, that he had joined the party against me: and as my love for him was exceedingly great, I was much wounded by the idea.

“All leave me,” said I, “upon this reverse,—all but Isora!” and I thought with renewed satisfaction on the step which was about to ensure to her a secure home and an honorable station. My fears lest Isora should again be molested by her persecutor were now pretty well at rest; having no doubt in my own mind as to that persecutor's identity, I imagined that in his new acquisition of wealth and pomp, a boyish and unreturned love would easily be relinquished; and that, perhaps, he would scarcely regret my obtaining the prize himself had sought for, when in my altered fortunes it would be followed by such worldly depreciation. In short, I looked upon him as possessing a characteristic common to most bad men, who are never so influenced by love as they are by hatred; and imagined therefore, that if he had lost the object of the love, he could console himself by exulting over any decline of prosperity in the object of the hate

As the appointed day drew near, Isora's despondency seemed

to vanish, and she listened, with her usual eagerness in whatever interested me, to my continental schemes of enterprise. I resolved that our second wedding, though public, should be modest and unostentatious, suitable rather to our fortunes than our birth. St. John, and a few old friends of the family, constituted all the party I invited, and I requested them to keep my marriage secret until the very day of celebrating it arrived. I did this from a desire of avoiding compliments intended as sarcasms and visits rather of curiosity, than friendship. On flew the days, and it was now the one preceding my wedding. I was dressing to go out upon a matter of business connected with the ceremony, and I then, as I received my hat from Desmarais, for the first time thought it requisite to acquaint that accomplished gentleman with the rite of the morrow. Too well bred was Monsieur Desmarais to testify any other sentiment than pleasure at the news; and he received my orders and directions for the next day with more than the graceful urbanity which made one always feel quite honored by his attentions.

"And how goes on the philosophy?" said I,— "faith, since I am about to be married, I shall be likely to require its consolations."

"Indeed, Monsieur," answered Desmarais, with that expression of self-conceit which was so curiously interwoven with the obsequiousness of his address, "indeed, Monsieur, I have been so occupied of late in preparing a little powder very essential to dress, that I have not had time for any graver, though not perhaps more important, avocations."

"Powder—and what is it?"

"Will Monsieur condescend to notice its effect?" answered Desmarais, producing a pair of gloves which were tinted of the most delicate flesh-color; the coloring was so nice that, when the gloves were on, it would have been scarcely possible, at any distance, to distinguish them from the naked flesh.

"'Tis a rare invention," said I.

"Monsieur is very good, but I flatter myself it is so," rejoined Desmarais; and he forthwith ran on far more earnestly on the merits of his powder than I have ever heard him descant on the beauties of Fatalism. I cut him short in the midst of his harangue; too much eloquence in any line is displeasing in one's dependent.

I had just concluded my business abroad, and was returning homeward with downcast eyes, and in a very abstracted mood, when I was suddenly startled by a loud voice that exclaimed in a tone of surprise: "What!—Count Devereux—how fortunate!"

I looked up, and saw a little, dark man, shabbily dressed; his face did not seem unfamiliar to me, but I could not at first remember where I had seen it—my look, I suppose, testified my want of memory, for he said, with a low bow—

“You have forgotten me, Count, and I don’t wonder at it; so please you, I am the person who once brought you a letter from France to Deverex Court.”

At this, I recognized the bearer of that epistle which had embroiled me with the Abbé Montreuil. I was too glad of the meeting to show any coolness in my reception of the gentleman, and, to speak candidly, I never saw a gentleman less troubled with *mauvaise honte*.

“Sir!” said he, lowering his voice to a whisper, “it is most fortunate that I should thus have met you; I only came to town this morning, and for the sole purpose of seeking you out. I am charged with a packet, which I believe will be of the greatest importance to your interests. But,” he added, looking round, “the streets are no proper place for my communication; *parbleu*, there are those about who hear whispers through stone walls—suffer me to call upon you to-morrow.”

“To-morrow! it is a day of great business with me, but I can possibly spare you a few moments, if that will suffice; or, on the day after, your own pleasure may be the sole limit of our interview.”

“*Parbleu, Monsieur*, you are very obliging—very; but I will tell you in one word who I am, and what is my business. My name is Marie Oswald; I was born in France, and I am the half-brother of that Oswald who drew up your uncle’s will.”

“Good Heavens!” I exclaimed, “is it possible that you know anything of that affair?”

“Hush—yes, all! my poor brother is just dead; and, in a word, I am charged with a packet given me by him on his death-bed. Now, will you see me if I bring it to-morrow?”

“Certainly; can I not see you to-night?”

“To-night?—No, not well; *parbleu!* I want a little consideration as to the reward due to me for my eminent services to your lordship. No: let it be to-morrow.”

“Well! at what hour! I fear it must be in the evening.”

“Seven, *s’il vous plait*, Monsieur.”

“Enough! be it so.”

And Mr. Marie Oswald, who seemed, during the whole of this short conference, to have been under some great apprehension of being seen or overheard, bowed, and vanished in an instant, leaving my mind in a most motley state of incoherent, unsatisfactory, yet sanguine conjecture.

CHAPTER VII.

The Events of a Single Night.—Moments make the Hues in which Years are colored.

MEN of the old age! what wonder that in the fondness of a dim faith, and in the vague guesses which, from the frail ark of reason, we send to hover over a dark and unfathomable abyss,—what wonder that ye should have wasted hope and life in striving to penetrate the future! What wonder that ye should have given a language to the stars, and to the night a spell, and gleaned from the uncomprehended earth an answer to the enigmas of Fate! We are like the sleepers who, walking under the influence of a dream, wander by the verge of a precipice, while, in their own deluded vision, they perchance believe themselves surrounded by bowers of roses, and accompanied by those they love. Or rather like the blind man, who can retrace every step of the path he has *once* trodden, but who can guess not a single inch of that which he has not yet travelled, our reason can re-guide us over the roads of past experience with a sure and unerring wisdom, even while it recoils, baffled and bewildered, before the blackness of the very moment whose boundaries we are about to enter.

The few friends I had invited to my wedding were still with me, when one of my servants, not Desmarais, informed me that Mr. Oswald waited for me. I went out to him.

"*Parbleu!*" said he, rubbing his hands, "I perceive it is a joyous time with you, and I don't wonder you can only spare me a few moments."

The estates of Devereux were not to be risked for a trifle, but I thought Mr. Marie Oswald exceeding impertinent. "Sir," said I very gravely, "pray be seated: and now to business. In the first place, may I ask to whom I am beholden for sending you with that letter you gave me at Devereux Court? and secondly, what that letter contained?—for I never read it."

"Sir," answered the man, "the history of the letter is perfectly distinct from that of the will, and the former (to discuss the least important first) is briefly this. You have heard, sir, of the quarrels between Jesuit and Jansenist?"

"I have."

"Well—but first, Count, let me speak of myself. There were three young men of the same age, born in the same village in France, of obscure birth each, and each desirous of getting on in the world. Two were deuced clever fellows: the third nothing particular. One of the two at present shall be nameless;

the third, 'who was nothing particular' (in his own opinion, at least, though his friends may think differently), was Marie Oswald. We soon separated: I went to Paris, was employed in different occupations, and at last became secretary, and (why should I disavow it?) valet to a lady of quality, and a violent politician. She was a furious Jansenist; of course I adopted her opinions. About this time, there was much talk among the Jesuits, of the great genius and deep learning of a young member of the order—Julian Montreuil. Though not residing in the country, he had sent one or two books to France, which had been published and had created a great sensation. Well, sir, my mistress was the greatest intriguante of her party: she was very rich, and tolerably liberal; and, among other packets of which a messenger from England was *carefully* robbed, between Calais and Abbeville (you understand me, sir, *carefully* robbed: *parbleu!* I wish I were robbed in the same manner every day in my life!) was one from the said Julian Montreuil to a political friend of his. Among other letters in this packet—all of importance—was one descriptive of the English family with whom he resided. It hit them all, I am told, off to a hair; and it described, in particular, one, the supposed inheritor of the estates, a certain Morton, Count Devereux. Since you say you did not read the letter, I spare your blushes, sir, and I don't dwell upon what he said of your talent, energy, ambition, etc. I will only tell you that he dilated far more upon your prospects than your powers; and that he expressly stated what was his object in staying in your family and cultivating your friendship—he expressly stated that £30,000 a year would be particularly serviceable to a certain political cause which he had strongly at heart."

"I understand you," said I; "the Chevalier's?"

"Exactly. 'This sponge,' said Montreuil,—I remember the very phrase—'this sponge will be well filled, and I am handling it softly now, in order to squeeze its juices hereafter according to the uses of the party we have so strongly at heart.'"

"It was not a metaphor very flattering to my understanding," said I.

"True, sir. Well, as soon as my mistress learnt this, she remembered that your father, the Marshal, had been one of her *plus chers amis*—in a word, if scandal says true, he had been *the cher ami*. However, she was instantly resolved to open your eyes, and ruin the *maudit Jésuite*: she enclosed the letter in an envelope, and sent me to England with it. I came—I gave it you—and I discovered, in that moment, when the Abbé en-

tered, that this Julian Montreuil was an old acquaintance of my own—was one of the two young men who I told you were such deuced clever fellows. Like many other adventurers, he had changed his name on entering the world, and I had never till now suspected that Julian Montreuil was Bertrand Collinot. Well, when I saw what I had done, I was exceedingly sorry, for I had liked my companion well enough not to wish to hurt him; besides, I was a little afraid of him. I took horse, and went about some other business I had to execute, nor did I visit that part of the country again, till a week ago (now I come to the other business), when I was summoned to the death-bed of my half-brother, the attorney, peace be with him! He suffered much from hypochondria in his dying moments—I believe it is the way with people of his profession—and he gave me a sealed packet, with a last injunction to place it in your hands, and your hands only. Scarce was he dead—(do not think I am unfeeling, sir, I had seen very little of him, and he was only my half-brother, my father having married for a second wife a foreign lady, who kept an inn, by whom he was blessed with myself)—scarce, I say, was he dead when I hurried up to town; Providence threw you in my way, and you shall have the document upon two conditions.”

“Which are, first to reward you; secondly, to—”

“To promise you will not open the packet for seven days.”

“The devil! and why?”

“I will tell you candidly:—one of the papers in the packet I believe to be my brother’s written confession—nay, I know it is—and it will criminate one I have a love for, and who, I am resolved, shall have a chance of escape.”

“Who is that one? Montreuil?”

“No—I do not refer to him; but I cannot tell you more. I require the promise, Count—it is indispensable. If you don’t give it me, *parbleu*, you shall not have the packet.”

There was something so cool, so confident, and so impudent about this man that I did not well know whether to give way to laughter or to indignation. Neither, however, would have been politic in my situation; and, as I said before, the estates of Devereux were not to be risked for a trifle.

“Pray,” said I, however, with a shrewdness which I think did me credit—“pray, Mr. Marie Oswald, do you expect the reward before the packet is opened?”

“By no means,” answered the gentleman who in his own opinion was nothing particular; “by no means; nor until you and your lawyers are satisfied that the papers enclosed in the

packet are sufficient fully to restore you to the heritage of Devereux Court and its demesnes."

There was something fair in this; and as the only penalty to me, incurred by the stipulated condition, seemed to be the granting escape to the criminals, I did not think it incumbent upon me to lose my cause from the desire of a prosecution. Besides, at that time, I felt too happy to be revengeful; and so, after a moment's consideration, I acceded to the proposal, and gave my honor as a gentleman, Mr. Oswald obligingly dispensed with an oath—that I would not open the packet till the end of the seventh day. Mr. Oswald then drew forth a piece of paper, on which sundry characters were inscribed, the purport of which was that if, through the papers given me by Marie Oswald, my lawyers were convinced that I could become master of my uncle's property, now enjoyed by Gerald Devereux, I should bestow on the said Marie £5000: half on obtaining this legal opinion, half on obtaining possession of the property. I could not resist a smile, when I observed that the word of a gentleman was enough surety for the safety of the man he had a love for, but that Mr. Oswald required a written bond for the safety of his reward. One is ready enough to trust one's friends to the conscience of another, but as long as a law can be had instead, one is rarely so credulous in respect to one's money.

"The reward shall be doubled if I succeed," said I, signing the paper; and Oswald then produced a packet, on which was writ, in a trembling hand—"For Count Devereux—private—and with haste." As soon as he had given me this precious charge, and reminded me again of my promise, Oswald withdrew. I placed the packet in my bosom, and returned to my guests.

Never had my spirit been so light as it was that evening. Indeed the good people I had assembled thought matrimony never made a man so little serious before. They did not however stay long, and the moment they were gone, I hastened to my own sleeping apartment, to secure the treasure I had acquired. A small escritoire stood in this room, and in it I was accustomed to keep whatever I considered most precious. With many a wistful look and murmur at my promise, I consigned the packet to one of the drawers of this escritoire. As I was locking the drawer, the sweet voice of Desmarais accosted me. Would, Monsieur, he asked, suffer him to visit a friend that evening in order to celebrate so joyful an event in Monsieur's destiny? It was not often that he was addicted to

vulgar merriment, but on such an occasion he owned that he was tempted to transgress his customary habits, and he felt that Monsieur, with his usual good taste, would feel offended if his servant, within Monsieur's own house, suffered joy to pass the limits of discretion, and enter the confines of noise and inebriety, especially as Monsieur had so positively interdicted all outward sign of extra hilarity. He implored *mille pardons* for the presumption of his request.

"It is made with your usual discretion—there are five guineas for you: go and get drunk with your friend, and be merry instead of wise. But, tell me, is it not beneath a philosopher to be moved by anything, especially anything that occurs to another—much less to get drunk upon it?"

"Pardon me, Monsieur," answered Desmarais, bowing to the ground; "one ought to get drunk sometimes, because the next morning one is sure to be thoughtful; and, moreover, the practical philosopher ought to indulge every emotion in order to judge how that emotion would affect another; at least, this is my opinion."

"Well, go."

"My most grateful thanks be with Monsieur; Monsieur's nightly toilet is entirely prepared."

And away went Desmarais, with the light, yet slow, step with which he was accustomed to combine elegance with dignity.

I now passed into the room I had prepared for Isora's *boudoir*. I found her leaning by the window, and I perceived that she had been in tears. As I paused to contemplate her figure, so touchingly, yet so unconsciously mournful in its beautiful and still posture, a more joyous sensation than was wont to mingle with my tenderness for her swelled at my heart. "Yes," thought I, "you are no longer the solitary exile, or the persecuted daughter of a noble but ruined race; you are not even the bride of a man who must seek in foreign climes, through danger and through hardship, to repair a broken fortune and establish an adventurer's name! At last the clouds have rolled from the bright star of your fate—wealth, and pomp, and all that awaits the haughtiest of England's matrons shall be yours." And at these thoughts, Fortune seemed to be a gift a thousand times more precious than—much as my luxuries prized it—it had ever seemed to me before.

I drew near and laid my hand upon Isora's shoulder and kissed her cheek. She did not turn round, but strove, by bending over my hand and pressing it to her lips, to conceal that she had been weeping. I thought it kinder to favor the

artifice than to complain of it. I remained silent for some moments, and I then gave vent to the sanguine expectations for the future which my new treasure entitled me to form. I had already narrated to her the adventure of the day before—I now repeated the purport of my last interview with Oswald; and, growing more and more elated as I proceeded, I dwelt at last upon the description of my inheritance, as glowingly as if I had already recovered it. I painted to her imagination its rich woods and its glassy lake, and the fitful and wandering brook that, through brake and shade, went bounding on its wild way; I told her of my early roamings, and dilated with a boy's rapture upon my favorite haunts. I brought visibly before her glistening and eager eyes the thick copse where, hour after hour, in vague verse and still vaguer dreams, I had so often whiled away the day; the old tree which I had climbed to watch the birds in their glad mirth, or to listen unseen to the melancholy sound of the forest deer; the antique gallery and the vast hall which, by the dim twilights, I had paced with a religious awe, and looked upon the pictured forms of my bold fathers, and mused high and ardently upon my destiny to be; the old gray tower which I had consecrated to myself, and the unwitnessed path which led to the yellow beach, and the wide gladness of the solitary sea; the little arbor which my earliest ambition had reared, that looked out upon the joyous flowers and the merry fountain, and, through the ivy and the jessamine, wooed the voice of the bird, and the murmur of the summer bee; and, when I had exhausted my description, I turned to Isora, and said in a lower tone, "And I shall visit these once more, and with you."

Isora sighed faintly, and it was not till I had pressed her to speak that she said:

"I wish I could deceive myself, Morton, but I cannot—I cannot root from my heart an impression that I shall never again quit this dull city, with its gloomy walls and its heavy air. A voice within me seems to say—'Behold from this very window the boundaries of your living wanderings!'"

Isora's words froze all my previous exaltation. "It is in vain," said I, after chiding her for her despondency, "it is in vain to tell me that you have for this gloomy notion no other reason than that of a vague presentiment. It is time now that I should press you to a greater confidence upon all points consistent with your oath to our mutual enemy than you have hitherto given me. Speak, dearest, have you not some yet unrevealed causes for alarm?"

It was but for a moment that Isora hesitated before she answered with that quick tone which indicates that we force words against the will.

"Yes, Morton, I *will* tell you now, though I would not before the event of this day. On the last day that I saw that fearful man, he said, 'I warn you, Isora D'Alvarez, that my love is far fiercer than hatred; I warn you that your bridals with Morton Devereux shall be stained with blood. Become his wife, and you perish! Yes, though I suffer hell's tortures forever and forever from that hour, my own hand shall strike you to the heart!': Morton, these words have thrilled through me again and again, as if again they were breathed in my very ear; and I have often started at night and thought the very knife glittered at my breast. So long as our wedding was concealed, and concealed so closely, I was enabled to quiet my fears till they scarcely seemed to exist. But when our nuptials were to be made public, when I knew that they were to reach the ears of that fierce and unaccountable being, I thought I heard my doom pronounced. This, mine own love, must excuse your Isora, if she seemed ungrateful for your generous eagerness to announce our union. And perhaps she would not have acceded to it so easily as she has done were it not that, in the first place, she felt it was beneath your wife to suffer any terror so purely selfish to make her shrink from the proud happiness of being yours in the light of day; and if she had not felt (here Isora hid her blushing face in my bosom) that she was fated to give birth to another, and that the announcement of our wedded love had become necessary to your honor as to mine!"

Though I was in reality awed even to terror by learning from Isora's lip so just a cause for her forebodings—though I shuddered with a horror surpassing even my wrath, when I heard a threat so breathing of deadly and determined passions—yet I concealed my emotions, and only thought of cheering and comforting Isora. I represented to her how guarded and vigilant should ever henceforth be the protection of her husband; that nothing should again separate him from her side; that the extreme malice and fierce persecution of this man were sufficient even to absolve her conscience from the oath of concealment she had taken; that I would procure from the sacred head of our church her own absolution from that vow; that the moment concealment was over, I could take steps to prevent the execution of my rival's threats; that, however near to me he might be in blood, no consequences arising from a

dispute between us could be so dreadful as the least evil to Isora; and, moreover, to appease her fears, that I would solemnly promise he should never sustain personal assault or harm from my hand; in short, I said all that my anxiety could dictate, and at last I succeeded in quieting her fears, and she smiled as brightly as the first time I had seen her in the little cottage of her father. She seemed, however, averse to an absolution from her oath, for she was especially scrupulous as to the sanctity of those religious obligations; but I secretly resolved that her safety absolutely required it, and that at all events I would procure absolution from my own promise to her.

At last Isora, turning from that topic, so darkly interesting, pointed to the heavens, which, with their thousand eyes of light, looked down upon us. "Tell me, love," said she playfully, as her arm embraced me yet more closely, "if, among yonder stars we could chose a home, which should we select?"

I pointed to one which lay to the left of the moon, and which, though not larger, seemed to burn with an intenser lustre than the rest. Since that night it has ever been to me a fountain of deep and passionate thought, a well wherein fears and hopes are buried, a mirror in which, in stormy times, I have fancied to read my destiny, and to find some mysterious omen of my intended deeds, a haven which I believe others have reached before me, and a home immortal and unchanging, where, when my wearied and fettered soul is escaped, as a bird, it shall flee away, and have its rest at last.

"What think you of my choice?" said I. Isora looked upward, but did not answer; and as I gazed upon her (while the pale light of heaven streamed quietly upon her face) with her dark eyes, where the tear yet lingered, though rather to soften than to dim, with her noble, yet tender features, over which hung a melancholy calm, with her lips apart, and her rich locks wreathing over her marble brow, and contrasted by a single white rose (that rose I have now—I would not lose one withered leaf of it for a kingdom!)—her beauty never seemed to me of so rare an order, nor did my soul ever yearn towards her with so deep a love.

It was past midnight. All was hushed in our bridal chamber. The single lamp, which hung above, burnt still and clear; and through the half-closed curtains of the window the moonlight looked in upon our couch, quiet, and pure, and holy, as if it were charged with blessings.

"Hush!" said Isora gently; "do you not hear a noise below!"

"Not a breath," said I; "I hear not a breath, save yours."

"It was my fancy, then!" said Isora, "and it has ceased now"; and she clung closer to my breast and fell asleep. I looked on her peaceful and childish countenance, with that concentrated and full delight with which we clasp all that the universe holds dear to us, and feel as if the universe held nought beside—and thus sleep also crept upon me.

I awoke suddenly; I felt Isora trembling palpably by my side. Before I could speak to her, I saw standing at a little distance from the bed, a man wrapt in a long dark cloak and masked; but his eyes shown through the mask, and they glared full upon me. He stood with his arms folded, and perfectly motionless; but at the other end of the room, before the escritoire in which I had locked the important packet, stood another man, also masked, and wrapped in a disguising cloak of similar hue and fashion. This man, as if alarmed, turned suddenly, and I perceived then that the escritoire was already opened, and that the packet was in his hand. I tore myself from Isora's clasp—I stretched my hand to the table by my bedside, upon which I had left my sword,—it was gone! No matter! I was young, strong, fierce, and the stake at hazard was great. I sprung from the bed, I precipitated myself upon the man who held the packet. With one hand I grasped at the important document, with the other I strove to tear the mask from the robber's face. He endeavored rather to shake me off than to attack me; and it was not till I had nearly succeeded in unmasking him that he drew forth a short poniard, and stabbed me in the side. The blow, which seemed purposely aimed to avoid a mortal part, staggered me, but only for an instant. I renewed my gripe at the packet—I tore it from the robber's hand, and collecting my strength, now fast ebbing away, for one effort, I bore my assailant to the ground, and fell struggling with him.

But my blood flowed fast from my wound, and my antagonist, if less sinewy than myself, had greatly the advantage in weight and size. Now for one moment I was uppermost, but in the next his knee was upon my chest, and his blade gleamed on high in the pale light of the lamp and moon. I thought I beheld my death—would to God that I had! With a piercing cry, Isora sprang from the bed, flung herself before the lifted blade of the robber, and arrested his arm. This man had, in the whole contest, acted with a singular forbearance,—he did so now; he paused for a moment and dropped his hand. Hitherto the other man had not stirred from his mute position; he

now moved one step towards us, brandishing a poniard like his comrade's. Isora raised her hand supplicatingly towards him, and cried out, "Spare him, spare *him!* Oh, mercy, mercy!" With one stride the murderer was by my side; he muttered some words which passion seemed to render inarticulate; and, half pushing aside his comrade, his raised weapon flashed before my eyes, now dim and reeling. I made a vain effort to rise—the blade descended—Isora, unable to arrest it, threw herself before it—her blood, her heart's blood gushed over me—I saw and felt no more.

When I recovered my senses, my servants were round me; a deep red, wet stain upon the sofa on which I was laid brought the whole scene I had witnessed again before me—terrible and distinct. I sprang to my feet and asked for Isora; a low murmur caught my ear—I turned, and beheld a dark form stretched on the bed, and surrounded, like myself, by gazers and menials; I tottered towards that bed—my bridal bed—with a fierce gesture motioned the crowd away—I heard my name breathed audibly—the next moment I was by Isora's side. All pain, all weakness, all consciousness of my wound, of my very self, were gone—life seemed curdled into a single agonizing and fearful thought. I fixed my eye upon hers; and though *there* the film was gathering dark and rapidly, I saw yet visible and unconquered the deep love of that faithful and warm heart which had lavished its life for mine.

I threw my arms around her—I pressed my lips wildly to hers. "Speak—speak!" I cried, and my blood gushed over her with the effort; "in mercy speak?"

Even in death and agony, the gentle being who had been as wax unto my lightest wish struggled to obey me. "Do not grieve for me," she said, in a tremulous and broken voice; "it is dearer to die for you than to live!"

Those were her last words. I felt her breath abruptly cease. The heart, pressed to mine, was still! I started up in dismay—the light shone full upon her face. O God! that I should live to write that Isora was—no more!

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

A Re-entrance into Life through the Ebon Gate.—Affliction.

MONTHS passed away before my senses returned to me. I rose from the bed of suffering and of madness, calm, collected, immovable—altered, but tranquil. All the vigilance of justice had been employed to discover the murderers, but in vain. The packet was gone ; and directly I, who alone was able to do so, recovered enough to state the loss of that document, suspicion naturally rested on Gerald, as on one whom that loss essentially benefited. He came publicly forward to anticipate inquiry. He proved that he had not stirred from home during the whole week in which the event had occurred. That seemed likely enough to others ; it is the tools that work, not the instigator—the bravo, not the employer ; but I, who saw in him not only the robber, but that fearful rival who had long threatened Isora that my bridals should be stained with blood, was somewhat staggered by the undeniable proofs of his absence from the scene of that night ; and I was still more bewildered in conjecture by remembering that, so far as their disguises and my own hurried and confused observation could allow me to judge, the person of neither villain, still less that of Isora's murderer, corresponded with the proportions and height of Gerald. Still, however, whether mediately or immediately—whether as the executor or the designer—not a doubt remained on my mind that against his head was justice due. I directed inquiry towards Montreuil—he was abroad at the time of my recovery ; but, immediately on his return, he came forward boldly and at once to meet and even to court the inquiry I had instituted ; he did more—he demanded on what ground, besides my own word, it rested that this packet had ever been in my possession ; and to my surprise and perplexity, it was utterly impossible to produce the smallest trace of Mr. Marie Oswald. His half-brother, the attorney, had died, it is true, just before the event of that night ; and it was also true that he had seen Marie on his death-bed ; but no other corroboration of my story could be substantiated, and no other information of the man obtained ; and the partisans of Gerald were not

slow in hinting at the great interest I had in forging a tale respecting a will, about the authenticity of which I was at law.

The robbers had entered the house by a back-door, which was found open. No one had perceived their entrance or exit, except Desmarais, who stated that he heard a cry—that he, having spent the greater part of the night abroad, had not been in bed above an hour before he heard it—that he rose and hurried towards my room, whence the cry came—that he met two men masked on the stairs—that he seized one, who struck him in the breast with a poniard, dashed him to the ground, and escaped—that he then immediately alarmed the house, and, the servants accompanying him, he proceeded, despite his wound, to my apartment, where he found Isora and myself bleeding and lifeless, with the *escritoire* broken open.

The only contradiction to this tale was, that the officers of justice found the *escritoire* not broken open, but unlocked; and yet the key which belonged to it was found in a pocket-book in my clothes, where Desmarais said, rightly, I always kept it. How, then, had the *escritoire* been unlocked? it was supposed by the master-keys peculiar to experienced burglars; this diverted suspicion into a new channel, and it was suggested that the robbery and the murder had really been committed by common house-breakers. It was then discovered that a large purse of gold, and a diamond cross, which the *escritoire* contained, were gone. And a few articles of ornamental *bijouterie*, which I had retained from the wreck of my former profusion in such baubles, and which were kept in a room below stairs, were also missing. These circumstances immediately confirmed the opinion of those who threw the guilt upon vulgar and mercenary villains, and a very probable and plausible supposition was built on this hypothesis. Might not this Oswald, at best an adventurer with an indifferent reputation, have forged this story of the packet in order to obtain admission into the house, and reconnoitre, during the confusion of a wedding, in what places the most portable articles of value were stowed? a thousand opportunities, in the opening and shutting of the house-doors, would have allowed an ingenious villain to glide in; nay, he might have secreted himself in my own room, and seen the place where I had put the packet—certain would he then be that I had selected for the repository of a document I believed so important, that place where all that I most valued was secured; and hence he would naturally resolve to break open the *escritoire*, above all other places, which, to an uninformed robber, might

have seemed not only less exposed to danger, but equally likely to contain articles of value. The same confusion which enabled him to enter and conceal himself would have also enabled him to withdraw and introduce his accomplice. This notion was rendered probable by his insisting so strongly on my not opening the packet within a certain time; had I opened it immediately, I might have perceived that a deceit had been practised, and not have hoarded it in that place of security which it was the villain's object to discover. Hence, too, in opening the escritoire, he would naturally retake the packet (which other plunderers might not have cared to steal), as well as things of more real price—naturally retake it, in order that his previous imposition might not be detected, and that suspicion might be cast upon those who would appear to have an interest in stealing a packet which I believed to be so inestimably important.

What gave a still greater color to this supposition was the fact that none of the servants had seen Oswald leave the house, though many had seen him enter. And what put his guilt beyond a doubt in the opinion of many, was his sudden and mysterious disappearance. To my mind, all those circumstances were not conclusive. Both the men seemed taller than Oswald; and I knew that that confusion, which was so much insisted upon, had not—thanks to my singular fastidiousness in those matters—existed. I was also perfectly convinced that Oswald could not have been hid in my room while I locked up the packet; and there was something in the behavior of the murderer utterly unlike that of a common robber, actuated by common motives.

All these opposing arguments were, however, of a nature to be deemed nugatory by the world, and on the only one of any importance, in their estimation, viz., the height of Oswald being different from that of the robbers, it was certainly very probable that, in a scene so dreadful, so brief, so confused, I should easily be mistaken. Having therefore once flowed into this direction, public opinion soon settled into the full conviction that Oswald was the real criminal, and against Oswald was the whole strength of inquiry ultimately, but still vainly, bent. Some few, it is true, of that kind class who love family mysteries, and will not easily forego the notion of a brother's guilt, for that of a mere vulgar house-breaker, still shook their heads, and talked of Gerald; but the suspicion was vague and partial, and it was only in the close gossip of private circles that it was audibly vented.

I had formed an opinion by no means favorable to the inno-

cence of Mr. Jean Desmarais ; and I took especial care that the Necessitarian, who would only have thought robbery and murder pieces of ill-luck, should undergo a most rigorous examination. I remembered that he had seen me put the packet into the escritoire ; and this circumstance was alone sufficient to arouse my suspicion. Desmarais bared his breast gracefully to the magistrate. "Would a man, sir," he said, "a man of my youth, suffer such a scar as that, if he could help it?" The magistrate laughed : frivolity is often a rogue's best policy, if he did but know it. One finds it very difficult to think a coxcomb can commit robbery and murder. Howbeit Desmarais came off triumphantly ; and, immediately after this examination, which had been his second one, and instigated solely at my desire, he came to me with a blush of virtuous indignation on his thin cheeks. "He did not presume," he said, with a bow profounder than ever, "to find fault with Monsieur le Comte ; it was his fate to be the victim of ungrateful suspicion ; but philosophical truths could not always conquer the feelings of the man, and he came to request his dismissal." I gave it him with pleasure.

I must now state my own feelings on the matter : but I shall do so briefly. In my own mind, I repeat, I was fully impressed with the conviction that Gerald was the real, and the head criminal ; and thrice did I resolve to repair to Devereux Court, where he still resided, to lie in wait for him, to reproach him with his guilt, and at the sword's point in deadly combat to seek its earthly expiation. I spare the reader a narration of the terrible struggles which nature, conscience, all scruples and prepossessions of education and of blood, held with this resolution, the unholiness of which I endeavored to clothe with the name of justice to Isora. Suffice it to say that this resolution I forewent at last : and I did so more from a feeling that, despite my own conviction of Gerald's guilt, one rational doubt rested upon the circumstance that the murderer seemed to my eyes of an inferior height to Gerald, and that the person whom I had pursued on the night I had received that wound which brought Isora to my bed-side, and who, it was natural to believe, was my rival, appeared to me not only also slighter and shorter than Gerald, but of a size that seemed to tally with the murderer's.

This solitary circumstance, which contradicted my other impressions, was, I say, more effectual in making me dismiss the thought of personal revenge on Gerald, than the motives which virtue and religion should have dictated. The deep

desire of vengeance is the calmest of all the passions, and it is the one which most demands certainty to the reason, before it releases its emotions, and obeys their dictates. The blow which was to do justice to Isora, I had resolved should not be dealt, till I had obtained the most utter certainty that it fell upon the true criminal. And thus, though I cherished through all time, and through all change, the burning wish for retribution, I was doomed to cherish it in secret, and not for years and years to behold a hope of attaining it. Once only I vented my feelings upon Gerald. I could not rest, or sleep, or execute the world's objects, till I had done so; but when they were thus once vented methought I could wait the will of time with a more settled patience, and I re-entered upon the common career of life more externally fitted to fulfil its duties and its aims.

That single indulgence of emotion followed immediately after my resolution of not forcing Gerald into bodily contest. I left my sword, lest I might be tempted to forget my determination. I rode to Devereux Court—I entered Gerald's chamber, while my horse stood unstalled at the gate. I said but few words, but each word was a volume. I told him to enjoy the fortune he had acquired by fraud, and the conscience he had stained with murder. "Enjoy them while you may," I said, "but know that sooner or later shall come a day, when the blood that cries from earth shall be heard in Heaven—and *your* blood shall appease it. Know, if I seem to disobey the voice at my heart, I hear it night and day—and I only live to fulfil at one time its commands."

I left him stunned and horror-stricken. I flung myself on my horse, and cast not a look behind as I rode from the towers and domains of which I had been despoiled. Never from that time would I trust myself to meet or see the despoiler. Once, directly after I had thus braved him in his usurped hall, he wrote to me. I returned the letter unopened. Enough of this; the reader will now perceive what was the real nature of my feelings of revenge; and will appreciate the reasons which, throughout this history, will cause me never or rarely to recur to those feelings again, until at least he will perceive a just hope of their consummation.

I went with a quiet air and a set brow into the world. It was a time of great political excitement. Though my creed forbade me the open senate, it could not deprive me of the veiled intrigue. St. John found ample employment for my ambition, and I entered into the toils and objects of my race with a seeming avidity, more eager and engrossing than their

own. In what ensues, you will perceive a great change in the character of my memoirs. Hitherto, I chiefly portrayed to you *myself*. I bared open to you my heart and temper—my passions; and the thoughts which belong to our passions. I shall now rather bring before you the natures and the minds of others. The lover and the dreamer are no more! The satirist and the observer—the derider of human follies, participating while he derides—the worldly and keen actor in the human drama,—these are what the district of my history on which you enter will portray me. From whatever pangs to me the change may have been wrought, you will be the gainer by that change. The gaudy dissipation of courts; the vicissitudes and the vanities of those who haunt them; the glittering jest, and the light strain; the passing irony, or the close reflection; the characters of the great; the colloquies of wit; these are what delight the temper and amuse the leisure more than the solemn narrative of fated love. As the monster of the Nile is found beneath the sunniest banks, and in the most freshening wave, the stream may seem to wander on in melody and mirth—the ripple and the beam; but *who* shall tell what lurks, dark, and fearful, and ever vigilant, below!

CHAPTER II.

Ambitious Projects.

IT is not my intention to write a political history, instead of a private biography. No doubt, in the next century, there will be volumes enough written in celebration of that era which my contemporaries are pleased to term the greatest that in modern times has ever existed. Besides, in the private and more concealed intrigues with which I was engaged with St. John, there was something which regard for others would compel me to preserve in silence. I shall therefore briefly state that, in 1712, St. John dignified the peerage by that title which his exile and his genius have rendered so illustrious.

I was with him on the day this honor was publicly announced. I found him walking to and fro in his room, with his arms folded, and with a very peculiar compression of his nether lip, which was a custom he had when anything greatly irritated or disturbed him.

“Well,” said he, stopping abruptly as he saw me, “well, considering the peacock Harley brought so bright a plume to his

own nest, we must admire the generosity which spared this gay dunghill feather to mine!"

"How!" said I, though I knew the cause of his angry metaphor. St. John used metaphors in speech scarcely less than in writing.

"How!" cried the new peer, eagerly, and with one of those flashing looks which made his expression of indignation the most powerful I ever saw. "How! Was the sacred promise granted to me of my own collateral earldom, to be violated; and while the weight—the toil—the difficulty—the odium, of affairs, from which Harley, the despotic dullard, shrunk alike in imbecility and fear, had been left exclusively to my share, an insult in the shape of an honor, to be left exclusively to my reward? You know my disposition is not to over-rate the mere baubles of ambition—you know I care little for titles and for orders in themselves; but the most worthless thing becomes of consequence, if made a symbol of what is of value, or designed as the token of an affront. Listen: a collateral earldom falls vacant—it is partly promised me. Suddenly I am dragged from the House of Commons where I am all powerful; I am given—not this earldom, which, as belonging to my house, would alone have induced me to consent to a removal from a sphere where my enemies allow I had greater influence than any single commoner in the kingdom—I am given, not this, but a miserable compromise of distinction—a new and an inferior rank—given it against my will—thrust into the Upper House, to defend what this pompous driveller, Oxford, is forced to forsake; and not only exposed to all the obloquy of a most infuriate party, opposed to me, but mortified by an intentional affront from the party which, heart and soul, I have supported. You know that my birth is to the full as noble as Harley's—you know that my influence in the Lower House is far greater—you know that my name in the country, nay, throughout Europe, is far more popular—you know that the labor allotted to me has been far more weighty—you know that the late Peace of Utrecht is entirely my framing—that the foes to the measure direct all their venom against me—that the friends of the measure heap upon me all the honor:—when, therefore, this exact time is chosen for breaking a promise formerly made to me—when a pretended honor, known to be most unpalatable to me, is thrust upon me—when, at this very time, too, six vacant ribbons of the garter flaunt me—one resting on the knee of this Harley, who was able to obtain an earldom for himself—the others given to men of far inferior pretensions, though not inferior rank, to my own—my-

self markedly, glaringly passed by,—how can I avoid feeling that things, despicable in themselves, are become of a vital power, from the evident intention that they should be insults to me! the insects we despise as they buzz around us become dangerous when they settle on ourselves and we feel their sting! But," added Bolingbroke, suddenly relapsing into a smile, "I have long wanted a nickname, I have now found one for myself. You know Oxford is called 'The Dragon'; well, henceforth call me 'St. George'; for, as sure as I live, will I overthrow the Dragon. I say this in jest, but I mean it in earnest. And now that I have discharged my bile, let us talk of this wonderful poem, which, though I have read it a hundred times, I am never wearied of admiring."

"Ah—the Rape of the Lock! It is indeed beautiful, but I am not fond of poetry now. By the way, how is it that all our modern poets speak to the taste, the mind, the judgment, and never to the *feelings*? Are they right in doing so?"

"My friend, we are now in a polished age. What have feelings to do with civilization?"

"Why, more than you will allow. Perhaps the greater our civilization, the more numerous our feelings. Our animal passions lose in excess, but our mental gain; and it is to the mental that poetry should speak. Our English muse, even in this wonderful poem, seems to me to be growing, like our English beauties, too glitteringly artificial—it wears rouge and a hoop."

"Ha! ha!—yes, they ornament now, rather than create—cut drapery, rather than marble. Our poems remind me of the ancient statues. Phidias made them, and Bubo and Bombax dressed them in purple. But this does not apply to young Pope, who has shown in this very poem that he can work the quarry as well as choose the gems. But see, the carriage awaits us. I have worlds to do,—first there is Swift to see—next, there is some exquisite Burgundy to taste—then, too, there is the new actress; and, by the by, you must tell me what you think of Bentley's Horace: we will drive first to my bookseller's to see it—Swift shall wait—Heavens! how he would rage if he heard me. I was going to say what a pity it is that that man should have so much littleness of vanity; but I should have uttered a very foolish sentiment if I had!"

"And why?"

"Because, if he had not so much littleness perhaps he would not be so great: what, but vanity, makes a man write and speak and slave, and become famous? Alas!" and here St. John's countenance changed from gaiety to thought; "'tis a melan-

choly thing in human nature that so little is good and noble, both in itself and in its source ! Our very worst passions will often produce sublimer effects than our best. Phidias (we will apply to him for another illustration,) made the wonderful statue of Minerva for his country ; but, in order to avenge himself on that country, he eclipsed it in the far more wonderful statue of the Jupiter Olympius. Thus, from a vicious feeling emanated a greater glory than from an exalted principle ; and the artist was less celebrated for the monument of his patriotism than for that of his revenge ! But *allons, mon cher*, we grow wise and dull. Let us go to choose our Burgundy and our comrades to share it."

However, with his characteristic affectation of bounding ambition, and consequently hope, to no one object in particular, and of mingling affairs of light importance with those of the most weighty, Lord Bolingbroke might pretend not to recur to, or to dwell upon, his causes of resentment—from that time they never ceased to influence him to a great, and for a statesman an unpardonable, degree. We cannot, however, blame politicians for their hatred, until, without hating anybody, we have for a long time been politicians ourselves ; strong minds have strong passions, and men of strong passions must hate as well as love.

The two years passed, on my part, in perpetual intrigues of diplomacy, combined with an unceasing, though secret, endeavour to penetrate the mystery which hung over the events of that dreadful night. All, however, was in vain. I know not what the English police may be hereafter, but in my time its officers seem to be chosen, like honest Dogberry's companions, among "the most senseless and fit men." They are, however, to the full, as much knaves as fools ; and perhaps a wiser posterity will scarcely believe that, when things of the greatest value are stolen, the owners, on applying to the chief magistrate, will often be told that no redress can be given there, while one of the officers will engage to get back the goods, upon paying the thieves a certain sum in exchange—if this is refused—your effects are gone forever ! A pretty state of internal government.

It was about a year after the murder that my mother informed me of an event which tore from my heart its last private tie, viz., the death of Aubrey. The last letter I had received from him has been placed before the reader ; it was written at Devereux Court, just before he left it forever. Montreuil had been with him during the illness which proved fatal, and which occurred in Ireland. He died of consumption ; and when I heard from my mother that Montreuil dwelt most glowingly upon the de-

votion he had manifested during the last months of his life, I could not help fearing that the morbidity of his superstition had done the work of physical disease. On this fatal news, my mother retired from Devereux Court to a company of ladies of our faith, who resided together, and practised the most ascetic rules of a nunnery, though they gave not to their house that ecclesiastical name. My mother had long meditated this project, and it was now a melancholy pleasure to put it into execution. From that period I rarely heard from her, and by little and little she so shrunk from all worldly objects that my visits, and I believe even those of Gerald, became unwelcome and distasteful.

As to my lawsuit, it went on gloriously, according to the assertions of my brisk little lawyer, who had declared so emphatically that he liked making quick work of a suit. And, at last, what with bribery and feeing, and pushing, a day was fixed for the final adjustment of my claim—it came—the cause was heard and lost. I should have been ruined, but for one circumstance; the old lady, my father's godmother, who had witnessed my first and concealed marriage, left me a pretty estate near Epsom. I turned it into gold, and it was fortunate that I did so soon, as the reader is about to see.

The Queen died—and a cloud already began to look menacing to the eyes of the Viscount Bolingbroke, and therefore to those of the Count Devereux. "We will weather out the shower," said Bolingbroke.

"Could not you," said I, "make our friend Oxford the Talapat?"* and Bolingbroke laughed. All men find wit in the jests broken on their enemies!

One morning, however, I received a laconic note from him, which, notwithstanding its shortness and seeming gayety, I knew well signified that something, not calculated for laughter, had occurred. I went, and found that his new majesty had deprived him of the seals and secured his papers. We looked very blank at each other. At last, Bolingbroke smiled. I must say that, culpable as he was in some points as a politician—culpable, not from being ambitious (for I would not give much for the statesman who is otherwise), but from not having inseparably linked his ambition to the welfare of his country, rather than to that of a party—for, despite of what has been said of him, his ambition was never selfish—culpable as he was when glory allured

* A thing used by the Siamese for the same purpose as we now use the umbrella. A work descriptive of Siam by M. de la Loubere, in which the Talapat is somewhat minutely described, having been translated into English, and having excited some curiosity, a few years before Count Devereux now uses the word, the allusion was probably familiar.—ED.

him, he was most admirable when danger assailed him! * and, by the shade of that Tully whom he so idolized, his philosophy was the most conveniently worn of any person's I ever met. When it would have been in the way—at the supper of an actress—in the levées of a court—in the boudoir of a beauty—in the arena of a senate—in the intrigue of the cabinet, you would not have observed a seam of the good old garment. But directly it was wanted—in the hour of pain—in the day of peril—in the suspense of exile—in (worst of all) the torpor of tranquillity, my extraordinary friend unfolded it piece by piece—wrapped himself up in it—sat down—defied the world, and uttered the most beautiful sentiments upon the comfort and luxury of his raiment, that can possibly be imagined. It used to remind me, that same philosophy of his, of the enchanted tent in the Arabian Tale, which one moment lay wrapped in a nutshell, and the next covered an army.

Bolingbroke smiled, and quoted Cicero, and after an hour's conversation, which on his part was by no means like that of a person whose very head was in no enviable state of safety, he slid at once from a sarcasm upon Steele into a discussion as to the best measures to be adopted. Let me be brief on this point! Throughout the whole of that short session, he behaved in a manner more delicately and profoundly wise than, I think, the whole of his previous administration can equal. He sustained with the most unflinching, the most unwearied, dexterity, the sinking spirits of his associates. Without an act, or the shadow of an act, that could be called time-serving, he laid himself out to conciliate the King, and to propitiate Parliament; with a dignified prudence which, while it seemed above petty

* I know well that it has been said otherwise, and that Bolingbroke has been accused of timidity for not staying in England, and making Mr. Robert Walpole a present of his head. The elegant author of "De Vere," has fallen into a very great, though a very hackneyed error, in lauding Oxford's political character, and condemning Bolingbroke's, because the former awaited a trial and the latter shunned it. A very little reflection might, perhaps, have taught the accomplished novelist that there could be no comparison between the two cases, because there was no comparison between the relative *danger* of Oxford and Bolingbroke. Oxford, as their subsequent impeachment proved, was far more numerous and powerfully supported than his illustrious enemy; and there is really no earthly cause for doubting the truth of Bolingbroke's assertion, viz., that "He had received repeated and certain information that a resolution was taken, by those who had power to execute it, to pursue him to the scaffold." There are certain situations in which a brave and a good man should willingly surrender life; but I humbly opine that there may sometimes exist a situation in which he should preserve it: and if ever man was placed in that latter situation, it was Lord Bolingbroke. To choose *unnecessarily* to put one's head under the axe, without benefiting any but one's enemies by the act, is, in my eyes, the proof of a fool, not a hero; and to attack a man for not placing his head in that agreeable and most useful predicament—for preferring, in short, to live for a world, rather than to perish by a faction, appears to be a mode of arguing that has a wonderful resemblance to nonsense. When Lord Bolingbroke was impeached, two men only out of those numerous retainers in the Lower House who had been wont so loudly to applaud the secretary of state, in his prosecution of those very measures for which he was now to be condemned—two men only (General Ross and Mr. Hungerford) uttered a single syllable in defence of the minister disgraced.—ED.

pique, was well calculated to remove the appearance of that disaffection with which he was charged, and discriminated justly between the King and the new administration, he lent his talents to the assistance of the monarch, by whom his impeachment was already resolved on, and aided in the settlement of the civil list, while he was in full expectation of a criminal accusation.

The new Parliament met, and all doubt was over. An impeachment of the late administration was decided upon. I was settling bills with my little lawyer one morning, when Bolingbroke entered my room. He took a chair, nodded to me not to dismiss my assistant, joined our conversation, and when conversation was merged in accounts, he took up a book of songs, and amused himself with it till my business was over and my disciple of Coke retired. He then said, very slowly, and with a slight yawn—"You have never been at Paris, I think?"

"Never—you are enchanted with that gay city."

"Yes, but when I was last there, the good people flattered my vanity enough to bribe my taste. I shall be able to form a more unbiassed and impartial judgment in a few days."

"A few days!"

"Ay, my dear Count: does it startle you? I wonder whether the pretty *D^e Tencin* will be as kind to me as she was, and whether *tout le monde* (that most exquisite phrase for five hundred people,) will rise now at the Opera on my entrance. Do you think that a banished minister can have any, the smallest, resemblance to what he was when in power? By gumdragon, as our friend Swift so euphoniously and elegantly says, or swears,—by gumdragon, I think not! What altered Satan so after his fall? what gave him horns and a tail? nothing but his disgrace. Oh! years, and disease, plague, pestilence, and famine, never alter a man so much as the loss of power."

"You say wisely; but what am I to gather from your words? is it all over with us in real earnest?"

"Us! with *me* it is indeed all over—you may stay here for ever. *I* must fly—a packet boat to Calais, or a room in the Tower—I must choose between the two. I had some thoughts of remaining, and confronting my trial, but it would be folly—there is a difference between Oxford and me. He has friends, though out of power; I have none. If they impeach him—he will escape; if they impeach me, they will either shut me up like a rat in a cage, for twenty years, till, old and forgotten, I tear my heart out with my confinement, or they will bring me at once to the block. No, no—I must keep myself for another

day ; and, while they banish me, I will leave the seeds of the true cause to grow up till my return. Wise and exquisite policy of my foes—‘*Frustra Cassium amovisti, si gliscere et vigere Brutorum emulos passurus es.*’ * But I have no time to lose—farewell, my friend—God bless you—you are saved from these storms ; and even intolerance, which prevented the exercise of your genius, preserves you now from the danger of having applied that genius to the welfare of your country : Heaven knows, whatever my faults, I have sacrificed what I loved better than all things—study and pleasure—to her cause. In her wars I served even my enemy Marlborough, in order to serve her ; her peace I effected, and I suffer for it. Be it so, I am

‘*Fidens animi atque in utrumque paratus.*’ †

Once more I embrace you—farewell.”

“Nay,” said I, “listen to me, you shall not go alone. France is already, in reality, my native country ; there did I receive my birth, it is no hardship to return to my *natale solum*—it is an honor to return in the company of Henry St. John. I will have no refusal ; my law case is over, my papers are few, my money I will manage to transfer. Remember the anecdote you told me, yesterday, of Anaxagoras, who, when asked where his country was, pointed with his finger to heaven. It is applicable, I hope, as well to me as to yourself ; to me, uncelebrated and obscure, to you, the senator and the statesman.”

In vain Bolingbroke endeavored to dissuade me from this resolution ; he was the only friend fate had left me, and I was resolved that misfortune should not part us. At last he embraced me tenderly, and consented to what he could not resist. “But you cannot,” he said, “quit England to-morrow night, as I must.”

“Pardon me,” I answered, “the briefer the preparation, the greater the excitement, and what in life is equal to *that* ?”

“True,” answered Bolingbroke ; “To some natures, too restless to be happy, excitement can compensate for all ; compensate for years wasted, and hopes scattered—compensate for bitter regret at talents perverted and passions unrestrained. But we will talk philosophically when we have more leisure. You will dine with me to-morrow ; we will go to the play together—I promised poor Lucy that I would see her at the theater, and I cannot break my word—and an hour afterwards

* Vainly have you banished Cassius, if you shall suffer the rivals of the Brutuses to spread themselves and flourish.

† Confident of soul and prepared for either fortune,

we will commence our excursion to Paris. And now I will explain to you the plan I have arranged for our escape."

CHAPTER III.

The real Actors Spectators of the false ones.

It was a brilliant night at the theatre. The boxes were crowded to excess. Every eye was directed towards Lord Bolingbroke, who, with his usual dignified and consummate grace of manner, conversed with the various loiterers with whom, from time to time, his box was filled.

"Look yonder," said a very young man, of singular personal beauty, "look yonder, my lord, what a panoply of smiles the Duchess wears to-night, and how triumphantly she directs those eyes, which they say were once so beautiful, to your box."

"Ah," said Bolingbroke, "her grace does me too much honor; I must not neglect to acknowledge her courtesy"; and, leaning over the box, Bolingbroke watched his opportunity till the Duchess of Marlborough, who sat opposite him, and who was talking with great and evidently joyous vivacity to a tall, thin man beside her, directed her attention, and that of her whole party, in a fixed and concentrated stare, to the imperilled minister. With a dignified smile Lord Bolingbroke then put his hand to his heart, and bowed profoundly; the Duchess looked a little abashed, but returned the courtesy quickly and slightly, and renewed her conversation.

"Faith, my lord," cried the young gentleman who had before spoken, "you managed that well! No reproach is like that which we clothe in a smile, and present with a bow."

"I am happy," said Lord Bolingbroke, "that my conduct receives the grave support of a son of my political opponent."

"*Grave* support, my Lord! you are mistaken—never apply the epithet grave to anything belonging to Philip Wharton. But, in sober earnest, I have sat long enough with you to terrify all my friends, and must now show my worshipful face in another part of the house. Count Devereux, will you come with me to the Duchess's?"

"What! the Duchess's immediately after Lord Bolingbroke's!—the Whig after the Tory—it would be as trying to one's assurance as a change from the cold bath to the hot to one's constitution."

"Well, and what so delightful as a trial in which one triumphs?"

and a change in which one does not lose even one's countenance?"

"Take care, my lord," said Bolingbroke, laughing; "those are dangerous sentiments for a man like you, to whom the hopes of two great parties are directed, to express so openly, even on a trifle, and in a jest."

"'Tis for that reason I utter them. I like being the object of hope and fear to men, since my miserable fortune made me marry at fourteen, and cease to be aught but a wedded thing to the women. But, sup with me at the Bedford—you, my lord, and the Count."

"And you will ask Walpole, Addison, and Steele * to join us; eh?" said Bolingbroke, "No, we have other engagements for to-night; but we shall meet again soon."

And the eccentric youth nodded his adieu, disappeared, and a minute afterwards was seated by the side of the Duchess of Marlborough.

"There goes a boy," said Bolingbroke, "who, at the age of fifteen, has in him the power to be the greatest man of his day, and in all probability will only be the most singular. An obstinate man is sure of doing well; a wavering or a whimsical one (which is the same thing) is as uncertain, even in his elevation, as a shuttlecock. But look to the box at the right—do you see the beautiful Lady Mary?"

"Yes," said Mr. Trefusis, who was with us, "she has only just come to town. 'Tis said she and Ned Montague live like doves."

"How!" said Lord Bolingbroke; "that quick, restless eye seems to have very little of the dove in it."

"But how beautiful she is!" said Trefusis, admiringly. "What a pity that those exquisite hands should be so dirty! It reminds me" (Trefusis loved a coarse anecdote) "of her answer to old Madame de Noailles, who made exactly the same remark to her. 'Do you call my hands dirty?' cried Lady Mary, holding them up with the most innocent *naïveté*, 'Ah, Madame, *si vous pouvez voir mes pieds!*'"

"*Fi donc!*" said I, turning away; "but who is that very deformed man behind her,—he with the bright black eye?"

"Know you not?" said Bolingbroke; "Tell it not in Gath!—'tis a rising sun, whom I have already learned to worship—the young author of the 'Essay on Criticism,' and the 'Rape of the Lock.' Egad, the little poet seems to eclipse us with the women as much as with the men. Do you mark how eagerly

* All political opponents of Lord Bolingbroke.

Lady Mary listens to him, even though the tall gentleman in black, who in vain attempts to win her attentions, is thought the handsomest gallant in London? Ah, Genius is paid by smiles from all females but Fortune; little, methinks, does that young poet, in his first intoxication of flattery and fame, guess what a lot of contest and strife is in store for him. The very breath which a literary man respires is hot with hatred, and the youthful proselyte enters that career which seems to him so glittering, even as Dame Pliant's brother in the Alchemist entered town—not to be fed with luxury, and diet on pleasure, but 'to learn to quarrel and live by his wits.'"

The play was now nearly over. With great gravity Lord Bolingbroke summoned one of the principal actors to his box, and bespoke a play for the next week; leaning then on my arm, he left the theatre. We hastened to his home, put on our disguises, and, without any adventure worth recounting, effected our escape, and landed safely at Calais.

CHAPTER IV.

Paris.—A Female Politician, and an Ecclesiastical One.—Sundry other Matters.

THE ex-minister was received both at Calais and at Paris with the most gratifying honors—he was then entirely the man to captivate the French. The beauty of his person, the grace of his manner, his consummate taste in all things, the exceeding variety and sparkling vivacity of his conversation, enchanted them. In later life he has grown more reserved and profound, even in habitual intercourse, and attention is now fixed to the solidity of the diamond, as at that time one was too dazzled to think of anything but its brilliancy.

While Bolingbroke was receiving visits of state, I busied myself in inquiring after a certain Madame de Balzac. The reader will remember that the envelope of that letter which Oswald had brought to me at Devereux Court was signed by the letters C. de B. Now, when Oswald disappeared, after that dreadful night to which even now I can scarcely bring myself to allude, these initials occurred to my remembrance, and Oswald having said they belonged to a lady formerly intimate with my father, I inquired of my mother if she could guess to what French lady such initials would apply. She, with an evident pang of jealousy, mentioned a Madame de Balzac; and to this

lady I now resolved to address myself, with the faint hope of learning from her some intelligence respecting Oswald. It was not difficult to find out the abode of one who in her day had played no inconsiderable *rôle* in that Comedy of Errors,—the Great World. She was still living at Paris; what Frenchwoman would, if she could help it, live any where else? “There are a hundred gates,” said the witty Madame de Choisi to me, “which lead into Paris, but only two roads out of it,—the convent, or (odious word!) the grave.”

I hastened to Madame Balzac’s hotel. I was ushered through three magnificent apartments into one, which to my eyes seemed to contain a throne: upon a nearer inspection I discovered it was a bed. Upon a large chair, by a very bad fire—it was in the month of March—sat a tall, handsome woman, excessively painted, and dressed in a manner which to my taste, accustomed to English finery, seemed singularly plain. I had sent in the morning to request permission to wait on her, so that she was prepared for my visit. She rose, offered me her cheek, kissed mine, shed several tears, and in short testified a great deal of kindness towards me. Old ladies, who have flirted with our fathers, always seem to claim a sort of property in the sons!

Before she resumed her seat she held me out at arm’s length. “You have a family likeness to your brave father,” said she, with a little disappointment; “but—”

“Madame de Balzac would add,” interrupted I, filling up the sentence which I saw her *bienveillance* had made her break off, “Madame de Balzac would add that I am not so good-looking. It is true; the likeness is transmitted to me within rather than without; and if I have not my father’s privilege to be admired, I have at least his capacities to admire,” and I bowed.

Madame de Balzac took three large pinches of snuff. “That is very well said,” said she gravely: “very well indeed! not at all like your father, though, who never paid a compliment in his life. Your clothes, by the by, are in exquisite taste: I had no idea that English people had arrived at such perfection in the fine arts. Your face is a little too long! You admire Racine, of course? How do you like Paris?”

All this was not said gayly or quickly: Madame de Balzac was by no means a gay or a quick person. She belonged to a peculiar school of Frenchwomen, who affected a little languor, a great deal of stiffness, an indifference to forms when forms were to be used by themselves, and an unrelaxing demand of forms when forms were to be observed to them by others. Added to this, they talked plainly upon all matters, without

ever entering upon sentiment. This was the school she belonged to; but she possessed the traits of the individual as well as of the species. She was keen, ambitious, worldly, not unaffectionate, nor unkind; very proud, a little of the devotee—because it was the fashion to be so—an enthusiastic admirer of military glory, and a most prying, searching, intriguing schemer of politics without the slightest talent for the science.

“Like Paris!” said I, answering only the last question, and that not with the most scrupulous regard to truth. “Can Madame de Balzac think of Paris, and not conceive the transport which must inspire a person entering it for the first time? But I had something more endearing than a stranger’s interest to attach me to it; I longed to express to my father’s friend my gratitude for the interest which I venture to believe she on one occasion manifested towards me.”

“Ah! you mean my caution to you against that terrible De Montreuil. Yes, I trust I was of service to you *there*.”

And Madame de Balzac then proceeded to favor me with the whole history of the manner in which she had obtained the letter she had sent me, accompanied by a thousand anathemas against those *atroces Jésuites*, and a thousand eulogies on her own genius and virtues. I brought her from this subject, so interesting to herself, as soon as decorum would allow me: and I then made inquiry if she knew aught of Oswald, or could suggest any mode of obtaining intelligence respecting him. Madame de Balzac hated plain, blunt, blank questions, and she always travelled through a wilderness of parentheses, before she answered them. But at last I did ascertain her answer, and found it utterly unsatisfactory. She had never seen nor heard anything of Oswald since he had left her charged with her commission to me. I then questioned her respecting the character of the man, and found Mr. Marie Oswald had little to plume himself upon in that respect. He seemed, however, from her account of him, to be more a rogue than a villain; and, from two or three stories of his cowardice, which Madame de Balzac related, he appeared to me utterly incapable of a design so daring and systematic as that of which it pleased all persons who troubled themselves about my affairs, to suspect him.

Finding, at last, that no further information was to be gained on this point, I turned the conversation to Montreuil. I found, from Madame de Balzac’s very abuse of him, that he enjoyed a great reputation in the country, and a great favor at court. He had been early befriended by Father la Chaise, and he was

now especially trusted and esteemed by the successor of that Jesuit, Le Tellier; Le Tellier, that rigid and bigoted servant of Loyola—the sovereign of the king himself—the destroyer of the Port Royal, and the mock and terror of the be-devilled and persecuted Jansenists. Besides this, I learnt what has been before pretty clearly evident—viz., that Montreuil was greatly in the confidence of the Chevalier, and that he was supposed already to have rendered essential service to the Stuart cause. His reputation had increased with every year, and was as great for private sanctity as for political talent.

When this information, given in a very different spirit from that in which I retail it, was over, Madame de Balzac observed: “Doubtless you will obtain a private audience with the King?”

“Is it possible, in his present age and infirmities?”

“It ought to be, to the son of the brave Marshal Devereux.”

“I shall be happy to receive Madame’s instructions how to obtain the honor: her name would, I feel, be a greater passport to the royal presence than that of a deceased soldier; and Venus’s cestus may obtain that grace which would never be accorded to the truncheon of Mars!”

Was there ever so natural and so easy a compliment? My Venus of fifty smiled.

“You are mistaken, Count,” said she; “I have no interest at court: the Jesuits forbid that to a Jansenist: but I will speak this very day to the Bishop of Fréjus: he is related to me, and will obtain so slight a boon for you with ease. He has just left his bishopric: you know how he hated it. Nothing could be pleasanter than his signing himself, in a letter to Cardinal Quirini—‘*Fleuri, évêque de Fréjus par l’indignation divine.*’ The King does not like him much; but he is a good man on the whole, though Jesuitical; he shall introduce you.”

I expressed my gratitude for the favor, and hinted that possibly the relations of my father’s first wife, the haughty and ancient house of La Tremouille, might save the Bishop of Fréjus from the pain of exerting himself on my behalf.

“You are very much mistaken,” answered Madame de Balzac: “priests point the road to court, as well as to heaven; and warriors and nobles have as little to do with the former as they have with the latter, the unlucky Duc de Villars only excepted—a man whose ill fortune is enough to destroy all the laurels of France. *Ma foi!* I believe the poor Duke might rival in luck that Italian poet who said, in a fit of despair, that

if he had been bred a hatter, men would have been born without heads."

And Madame de Balzac chuckled over this joke till, seeing that no farther news was to be gleaned from her, I made my adieu, and my departure.

Nothing could exceed the kindness manifested towards me by my father's early connections. The circumstance of my accompanying Bolingbroke, joined to my age, and an address which, if not animated nor gay, had not been acquired without some youthful cultivation of the graces, gave me a sort of *éclat* as well as consideration. And Bolingbroke, who was only jealous of superiors in power, and who had no equals in anything else, added greatly to my reputation by his panegyrics.

Every one sought me—and the attention of society at Paris would, to most, be worth a little trouble to repay. Perhaps, if I had liked it, I might have been the rage; but that vanity was over. I contented myself with being admitted into society as an observer, without a single wish to become the observed. When one has once outlived the ambition of fashion I know not a greater affliction than an over-attention; and the Spectator did just what I should have done in a similar case, when he left his lodgings "because he was asked every morning how he had slept." In the immediate vicinity of the court, the King's devotion, age, and misfortunes threw a damp over society; but there were still some sparkling circles, who put the King out of the mode, and declared that the defeats of his generals made capital subjects for epigrams. What a delicate and subtle air did hang over those *soirées*, where all that were bright and lovely, and noble and gay, and witty and wise, were assembled in one brilliant cluster! Imperfect as my rehearsals must be, I think the few pages I shall devote to a description of these glittering conversations must still retain something of that original piquancy which the *soirées* of no other capital could rival or appreciate.

One morning, about a week after my interview with Madame de Balzac, I received a note from her, requesting me to visit her that day, and appointing the hour.

Accordingly I repaired to the house of the fair politician. I found her with a man in a clerical garb, and of a benevolent and prepossessing countenance. She introduced him to me as the Bishop of Fréjus, and he received me with an air very uncommon to his countrymen, viz., with an ease that seemed to result from real good nature, rather than artificial grace.

"I shall feel," said he, quietly, and without the least appear-

ance of paying a compliment, "very glad to mention your wish to his Majesty; and I have not the least doubt but that he will admit to his presence one who had such hereditary claims on his notice. Madame de Maintenon, by the way, has charged me to present you to her, whenever you will give me the opportunity. She knew your admirable mother well, and, for her sake, wishes once to see you. You know, perhaps, Monsieur, that the extreme retirement of her life renders this message from Madame de Maintenon an unusual and rare honor."

I expressed my thanks; the bishop received them with a paternal rather than a courtier-like air, and appointed a day for me to attend him to the palace. We then conversed a short time upon indifferent matters, which, I observed, the good bishop took especial pains to preserve clear from French politics. He asked me, however, two or three questions about the state of parties in England—about finance and the national debt—about Ormond and Oxford; and appeared to give the most close attention to my replies. He smiled once or twice, when his relation, Madame de Balzac, broke out into sarcasms against the Jesuits, which had nothing to do with the subjects in question.

"Ah, *ma chere cousine*," said he, "you flatter me by showing that you like me not as the politician, but the private relation—not as the Bishop of Fréjus, but as André de Fleuri."

Madame de Balzac smiled, and answered by a compliment. She was a politician for the kingdom, it is true, but she was also a politician for herself. She was far from exclaiming with Pindar, "Thy business, O my city, I prefer willingly to my own." Ah, there is a nice distinction between politics and policy, and Madame de Balzac knew it. The distinction is this: Politics is the art of being wise for others! Policy is the art of being wise for oneself.

From Madame de Balzac's I went to Bolingbroke. "I have just been offered the place of Secretary of State, by the English king on this side of the water," said he; "I do not, however, yet like to commit myself so fully. And, indeed, I am not unwilling to have a little relaxation of pleasure, after all these dull and dusty travails of state. What say you to Boulainvilliers to-night—you are asked?"

"Yes! all the wits are to be there—Anthony Hamilton—and Fontenelle—young Arouet—Chaulieu, that charming old man. Let us go and polish away the wrinkles of our hearts. What cosmetics are to the face, wit is to the temper; and, after all, there is no wisdom like that which teaches us to forget."

"Come then," said Bolingbroke, rising, "we will lock up these papers, and take a melancholy drive, in order that we may enjoy mirth the better by and by."

CHAPTER V.

A Meeting of Wits.—Conversation gone out to Supper in her Dress of Velvet and Jewels.

BOULAINVILLIERS! Comte de St. Saire! What will our great grandchildren think of that name! Fame is indeed a riddle! At the time I refer to, wit—learning—grace—all things that charm and enlighten—were supposed to center in one word—*Boulainvilliers!* The good count had many rivals, it is true, but he had that exquisite tact peculiar to his countrymen, of making the very reputation of those rivals contribute to his own. And while he assembled them around him, the lustre of their *bons mots*, though it emanated from themselves, was reflected upon him.

It was a pleasant, though not a costly, apartment, in which we found our host. The room was sufficiently full of people to allow scope and variety to one group of talkers, without being full enough to permit those little knots and coteries which are the destruction of literary society. An old man of about seventy, of a sharp, shrewd, yet polished and courtly expression of countenance, of a great gayety of manner, which was now and then rather displeasingly contrasted by an abrupt affectation of dignity, that, however, rarely lasted above a minute, and never withstood the shock of a *bon mot*, was the first person who accosted us. This old man was the wreck of the once celebrated Anthony, Count Hamilton!

"Well, my lord," said he to Bolingbroke, "how do you like the weather at Paris?—it is a little better than the merciless air of London—is it not? 'Slife!—even in June one could not go open-breasted in those regions of cold and catarrh—a very great misfortune, let me tell you, my lord, if one's cambric happened to be of a very delicate and brilliant texture, and one wished to penetrate the inward folds of a lady's heart, by developing to the best advantage the exterior folds that covered his own."

"It is the first time," answered Bolingbroke, "that I ever heard so accomplished a courtier as Count Hamilton repine, with sincerity, that he could not bare his bosom to inspection."

"Ah!" cried Boulainvilliers, "but vanity makes a man show much that discretion would conceal."

"*Au diable* with your discretion!" said Hamilton, "'tis a vulgar virtue. Vanity is a truly aristocratic quality, and every way fitted to a gentleman. Should I ever have been renowned for my exquisite lace and web-like cambric, if I had not been vain? Never, *mon cher!* I should have gone into a convent and worn sackcloth, and, from *Count Antoine*, I should have thickened into *Saint Anthony*."

"Nay," cried Lord Bolingbroke, "there is as much scope for vanity in sackcloth as there is in cambric; for vanity is like the Irish ogling master in the *Spectator*, and if it teaches the playhouse to ogle by candle-light, it also teaches the church to ogle by day! But, pardon me, Monsieur Chaulieu, how well you look! I see that the myrtle sheds its verdure, not only over your poetry, but the poet. And it is right that, to the modern Anacreon, who has bequeathed to Time a treasure it will never forego, Time itself should be gentle in return."

"Milord," answered Chaulieu, an old man who, though considerably past seventy, was animated, in appearance and manner, with a vivacity and life that would have done honor to a youth—"Milord, it was beautifully said by the Emperor Julian, that Justice retained the Graces in her vestibule. I see, now, that he should have substituted the word *Wisdom* for that of Justice."

"Come," cried Anthony Hamilton, "this will never do. Compliments are the dullest things imaginable. For Heaven's sake, let us leave panegyric to blockheads, and say something bitter to one another, or we shall die of *ennui*."

"Right," said Boulainvilliers: "Let us pick out some poor devil to begin with. Absent or present?—Decide which."

"Oh, absent," cried Chaulieu; "'tis a thousand times more piquant to slander than to rally! Let us commence with his Majesty: Count Devereux, have you seen Madame Maintenon and her devout infant since your arrival?"

"No!—the priests must be petitioned before the miracle is made public."

"What!" cried Chaulieu, "would you insinuate that his Majesty's piety is really nothing less than a miracle?"

"Impossible!" said Boulainvilliers, gravely,—"*piety* is as natural to kings as flattery to their courtiers: are we not told that they are made in God's own image?"

"If that were true," said Count Hamilton, somewhat pro

fanely—"if that were true, I should no longer defy the impossibility of Atheism!"

"Fie, Count Hamilton," said an old gentleman, in whom I recognized the great Huet, "fie—wit should beware how it uses wings—its province is earth, not heaven."

"Nobody can better tell what wit is *not* than the learned Abbé Huet!" answered Hamilton with a mock air of respect.

"Psha!" cried Chaulieu, "I thought when we once gave the rein to satire it would carry us *pêle-mêle* against one another. But, in order to sweeten that drop of lemon-juice for you my dear Huet, let me turn to Milord Bolingbroke, and ask him whether England can produce a scholar equal to Peter Huet, who in twenty years wrote notes to sixty-two volumes of Classics,* for the sake of a prince who never read a line in one of them?"

"We have some scholars," answered Bolingbroke; "but we certainly have no Huet. It is strange enough, but learning seems to me like a circle; it grows weaker the more it spreads. We now see many people capable of reading commentaries, but very few indeed capable of writing them."

"True," answered Huet; and in his reply he introduced the celebrated illustration which is at this day mentioned among his most felicitous *bons mots*. "Scholarship, formerly the most difficult and unaided enterprise of Genius, has now been made, by the very toils of the first mariners, but an easy and commonplace voyage of leisure. But who would compare the great men, whose very difficulties not only proved their ardor, but brought them the patience and the courage which alone are the parents of a genuine triumph, to the indolent loiterers of the present day, who, having little of difficulty to conquer, have nothing of glory to attain? For my part, there seems to me the same difference between a scholar of our days and one of the past as there is between Christopher Columbus and the master of a packet-boat from Calais to Dover!"

"But," cried Anthony Hamilton, taking a pinch of snuff with the air of a man about to utter a witty thing—"but what have we—we spirits of the world, not imps of the closet,"—and he glanced at Huet—"to do with scholarship? All the waters of Castaly, which we want to pour into our brain, are such as will flow the readiest to our tongue."

"In short, then," said I, "you would assert that all a friend cares for in one's head is the quantity of talk in it?"

"Precisely my dear Count," said Hamilton seriously; "and

* The Delphin Classics.

to that maxim I will add another, applicable to the opposite sex. All that a mistress cares for in one's heart is the quantity of love in it."

"What! are generosity, courage, honor, to go for nothing with our mistress, then?" cried Chaulieu.

"No; for she will believe, if you are a passionate lover, that you have all those virtues; and if not, she will never believe that you have one."

"Ah! it was a pretty court of love in which the friend and biographer of Count Grammont learned the art!" said Bolingbroke.

"We believed so at the time, my lord; but there are as many changes in the fashion of making love as there are in that of making dresses. Honor me, Count Devereux, by using my snuff-box, and then looking at the lid."

"It is the picture of Charles the Second, which adorns it—is it not?"

"No, Count Devereux, it is the diamonds which adorn it. His Majesty's face I thought very beautiful while he was living; but now, on my conscience, I consider it the ugliest phiz I ever beheld. But I directed your notice to the picture because we were talking of love; and Old Rowley believed that he could make it better than any one else. All his courtiers had the same opinion of themselves; and I dare say the *beaux garçons* of Queen Anne's reign would say that not one of King Charley's gang knew what love was. Oh! 'tis a strange circle of revolutions, that love! Like the earth, it always changes, and yet always has the same materials."

"*L'Amour—l'amour—toujours l'amour*, with Count Anthony Hamilton!" said Boulainvilliers. "He is always on that subject; and *sacre bleu!* when he was younger, I am told he was like Cacus, the son of Vulcan, and breathed nothing but flames."

"You flatter me," said Hamilton. "Solve me now a knotty riddle, my Lord Bolingbroke. Why does a young man think it the greatest compliment to be thought wise, while an old man thinks it the greatest compliment to be told he has been foolish?"

"Is love foolish, then?" said Lord Bolingbroke.

"Can you doubt it?" answered Hamilton; "it makes a man think more of another than himself! I know not a greater proof of folly!"

"Ah—*mon aimable ami*"—cried Chaulieu; "you are the wickedest witty person I know. I cannot help loving your language, while I hate your sentiments."

"My language is my own—my sentiments are those of all

men," answered Hamilton; "but are we not, by the by, to have young *Arouet* here to-night? What a charming person he is!"

"Yes," said Boulainvilliers. "He said he should be late; and I expect Fontenelle, too, but *he* will not come before supper. I found Fontenelle this morning conversing with my cook on the best manner of dressing asparagus. I asked him, the other day, what writer, ancient or modern, had ever given him the most sensible pleasure? After a little pause, the excellent old man said—'Daphnus'—'Daphnus!' repeated I, 'who the devil is he?' 'Why,' answered Fontenelle, with tears of gratitude in his benevolent eyes, 'I had some hypochondriacal ideas that suppers were unwholesome; and Daphnus is an ancient physician, who asserts the contrary; and declares,—think, my friend what a charming theory!—that the moon is a great assistant of the digestion!'"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the Abbé de Chaulieu. "How like Fontenelle! what an anomalous creature 'tis! He has the most kindness and the least feeling of any man I ever knew. Let Hamilton find a pithier description for him if he can!"

Whatever reply the friend of the *preux Grammont* might have made was prevented by the entrance of a young man of about twenty-one.

In person he was tall, slight, and very thin. There was a certain affectation of polite address in his manner and mien which did not quite become him; and though he was received by the old wits with great cordiality, and on a footing of perfect equality, yet the inexpressible air which denotes birth was both pretended to and wanting. This, perhaps, was however owing to the ordinary inexperience of youth; which, if not awkwardly bashful, is generally awkward in its assurance. Whatever its cause, the impression vanished directly he entered into conversation. I do not think I ever encountered a man so brilliantly, yet so easily, witty. He had but little of the studied allusion—the antithetical point—the classic metaphor, which chiefly characterize the wits of my day. On the contrary, it was an exceeding and *naïve* simplicity, which gave such unrivalled charm and piquancy to his conversation. And while I have not scrupled to stamp on my pages some faint imitation of the peculiar dialogue of other eminent characters, I must confess myself utterly unable to convey the smallest idea of his method of making words irresistible. Contenting my efforts, therefore, with describing his personal appearance—interesting, because that of the most striking literary character it has been my lot to meet—I shall omit his share in the remainder of the

conversation I am rehearsing, and beg the reader to recall that passage in Tacitus, in which the great historian says, that in the funeral of Junia, "the images of Brutus and Cassius outshone all the rest, from the very circumstance of their being the sole ones excluded from the rite."

The countenance, then, of Marie François Arouet (since so celebrated under the name of Voltaire) was plain in feature, but singularly striking in effect; its vivacity was the very perfection of what Steele once happily called "physiognomical eloquence." His eyes were blue, fiery rather than bright, and so restless that they never dwelt in the same place for a moment; * his mouth was at once the worst and the most peculiar feature of his face: it betokened humor, it is true; but it also betrayed malignancy—nor did it ever smile without sarcasm. Though flattering to those present, his words against the absent, uttered by that bitter and curling lip, mingled with your pleasure at their wit a little fear at their causticity. I believe no one, be he as bold, as callous, or as faultless as human nature can be, could be one hour with that man and not feel apprehension. Ridicule, so lavish, yet so true to the mark—so wanton, yet so seemingly just—so bright, that while it wandered round its target, in apparent, though terrible playfulness, it burned into the spot, and engraved there a brand and a token indelible and perpetual,—this no man could witness, when darted towards another, and feel safe for himself. The very caprice and levity of the jester seemed more perilous, because less to be calculated upon, than a systematic principle of bitterness or satire. Bolingbroke compared him, not unaptly, to a child who has possessed himself of Jupiter's bolts, and who makes use of those bolts in sport, which a God would only have used in wrath.

Arouet's forehead was not remarkable for height, but it was nobly and grandly formed, and, contradicting that of the mouth, wore a benevolent expression. Though so young, there was already a wrinkle on the surface of the front, and a prominence on the eyebrow, which showed that the wit and the fancy of his conversation were, if not regulated, at least contrasted, by more thoughtful and lofty characteristics of mind. At the time I write, this man has obtained a high throne among the powers of the lettered world. What he may yet be, it is in vain to guess: he

*The reader will remember that this is a description of Voltaire as a very young man. I do not know any where a more impressive, almost a more ghastly, contrast, than that which the pictures of Voltaire, grown old, present to Largilliere's picture of him at the age of twenty-four; and he was somewhat younger than twenty-four at the time of which the Count now speaks.—ED.

may be all that is great and good, or—the reverse ; but I cannot but believe that his career is only begun. Such men are born monarchs of the mind ; they may be benefactors or tyrants : in either case, they are greater than the kings of the physical empire, because they defy armies and laugh at the intrigues of state. From themselves only come the balance of their power, the laws of their government, and the boundaries of their realm.

We sat down to supper. "Count Hamilton," said Boulainvilliers, "are we not a merry set for such old fellows? Why, excepting Arouet, Milord Bolingbroke, and Count Devereux, there is scarcely one of us under seventy. Where, but at Paris, would you see *bons vivants* of our age? *Vivent la joie—la bagatelle!—l'amour!*"

"*Et le vin de Champagne,*" cried Chaulieu, filling his glass ; "but what is there strange in our merriment? Philemon, the comic poet, laughed at ninety-seven. May we all do the same!"

"You forget," cried Bolingbroke "that Philemon died of the laughing."

"Yes," said Hamilton ; "but, if I remember right, it was at seeing an ass eat figs. Let us vow, therefore, never to keep company with asses!"

"Bravo, Count," said Boulainvilliers, "you have put the true moral on the story. Let us swear, by the ghost of Philemon, that we will never laugh at an ass's jokes—practical or verbal."

"Then we must always be serious, except when we are with each other," cried Chaulieu. "Oh, I would sooner take my chance of dying prematurely at ninety-seven than consent to such a vow!"

"Fontenelle," cried our host "you are melancholy. What is the matter?"

"I mourn for the weakness of human nature," answered Fontenelle, with an air of patriarchal philanthropy. "I told your cook three times about the asparagus : and now—taste it. I told him not to put too much sugar, and he has put none. Thus it is with mankind—ever in extremes and consequently ever in error! Thus it was that Luther said, so felicitously and so truly, that the human mind was like a drunken peasant on horseback—prop it on one side, and it falls on the other."

"Ha! ha! ha!" cried Chaulieu, "who would have thought one could have found so much morality in a plate of asparagus! Taste this *salsifis*."

"Pray, Hamilton," said Huet, "what *jeu de mot* was that you made yesterday at Madame d'Epernonville's which gained you such applause?"

"Ah, repeat it, Count," cried Boulainvilliers; "'twas the most classical thing I have heard for a long time."

"Why," said Hamilton, laying down his knife and fork, and preparing himself by a large draught of the champagne—"why Madame d'Eprenonville appeared without her *tour*; you know, Lord Bolingbroke, that *tour* is the polite name for false hair. '*Ah, sacre!*' cried her brother, courteously, '*ma sœur, que vous êtes laide aujourd'hui—vous n'avez pas votre tour!*' '*Voilà, pourquoi elle n'est pas si-belle (Cybele),*'" answered I.

"Excellent! famous!" cried we all, except Huet, who seemed to regard the punster with a very disrespectful eye. Hamilton saw it. "You do not think, Monsieur Huet, that there is wit in these *jeux de mots*—perhaps you do not admire wit at all?"

"Yes, I admire wit as I do the wind. When it shakes the trees, it is fine; when it cools the wave it is refreshing; when it steals over flowers, it is enchanting; but when, Monsieur Hamilton, it whistles through the key-hole, it is unpleasant."

"The very worst illustration I ever heard," said Hamilton, coolly. "Keep to your classics, my dear Abbé. When Jupiter edited the work of Peter Huet, he did with wit as Peter Huet did with Lucan, when he edited the classics—he was afraid it might do mischief, and so left it out altogether."

"Let us drink!" cried Chaulieu; "let us drink!" and the conversation was turned again.

"What is that you say of Tacitus, Huet?" said Boulainvilliers.

"That his wisdom arose from his malignancy," answered Huet. "He is a perfect penetrator* into human vices; but knows nothing of human virtues. Do you think that a good man would dwell so constantly on what is evil? Believe me—no! A man cannot write much and well upon virtue without being virtuous, nor enter minutely and profoundly into the causes of vice without being vicious himself."

"It is true," said Hamilton: "and your remark, which affects to be so deep, is but a natural corollary from the hackneyed maxim that from experience comes wisdom."

"But, for my part," said Boulainvilliers, "I think Tacitus is not so invariably the analyzer of vice as you would make him. Look at the *Agricola* and the *Germania*."

"Ah! the Germany, above all things!" cried Hamilton, dropping a delicious morsel of *sanglier* in its way from hand to mouth, in his hurry to speak. "Of course, the historian, Boulainvilliers, advocates the Germany, from its mention of the

* A remark similar to this the reader will probably remember in the *Huetiana*, and will, I hope, agree with me in thinking it showy and untrue.—ED.

origin of the feudal system—that incomparable bundle of excellences, which Le Comte de Boulainvilliers has declared to be *le chef d'œuvre de l'esprit humain*: and which the same gentleman regrets, in the most pathetic terms, no longer exists in order that the seigneur may feed upon *des gros morceaux de bœuf demi-cru*, may hang up half his peasants *pour encourager les autres*, and ravish the daughters of the defunct *pour leur donner quelque consolation*."

"Seriously, though," said the old Abbé de Chaulieu, with a twinkling eye, "*the last* mentioned evil, my dear Hamilton, was not without a little alloy of good."

"Yes," said Hamilton, "if it was only the daughters; but perhaps the seigneur was not too scrupulous with regard to the wives."

"Ah! shocking, shocking!" cried Chaulieu, solemnly. "Adultery is, indeed, an atrocious crime. I am sure I would most conscientiously cry out with the honest preacher—'Adultery, my children, is the blackest of sins.' I do declare that I would rather have *ten* virgins in love with me than *one* married woman!"

We all laughed at this enthusiastic burst of virtue from the chaste Chaulieu. And Arouet turned our conversation towards the ecclesiastical dissensions between Jesuits and Jansenists, that then agitated the kingdom. "Those priests," said Bolingbroke, "remind me of the nurses of Jupiter—they make a great clamor, in order to drown the voice of their God."

"Bravissimo!" cried Hamilton. "Is it not a pity, messieurs, that my Lord Bolingbroke was not a Frenchman? He is almost clever enough to be one."

"If he would drink a little more, he would be," cried Chaulieu, who was now setting us all a glorious example.

"What say you, Morton?" exclaimed Bolingbroke; "must we not drink these gentlemen under the table for the honor of our country?"

"A challenge! a challenge!" cried Chaulieu. "I march first to the field!"

"Conquest or death!" shouted Bolingbroke. And the rites of Minerva were forsaken for those of Bacchus.

CHAPTER VI.

A Court, Courtiers, and a King.

I THINK it was the second day after this "feast of reason" that Lord Bolingbroke deemed it advisable to retire to Lyons till his plans of conduct were ripened into decision. We took an affectionate leave of each other; but before we parted, and after he had discussed his own projects of ambition, we talked a little upon mine. Although I was a Catholic and a pupil of Montreuil, although I had fled from England, and had nothing to expect from the House of Hanover, I was by no means favorably disposed towards the Chevalier and his cause. I wonder if this avowal will seem odd to Englishmen of the next century. To Englishmen of the present one, a Roman Catholic, and a lover of priestcraft and tyranny, are two words for the same thing; as if we could not murmur at tithes and taxes—insecurity of property—or arbitrary legislation, just as sourly as any other Christian community. No! I never loved the cause of the Stuarts—unfortunate, and therefore interesting, as the Stuarts were; by a very stupid, and yet uneffaceable confusion of ideas, I confounded it with the cause of Montreuil, and I hated the latter enough to dislike the former: I fancy all party principles are formed much in the same manner. I frankly told Bolingbroke my disinclination to the Chevalier.

"Between ourselves be it spoken," said he, "there is but little to induce a wise man, in *your* circumstances, to join James the Third. I would advise you rather to take advantage of your father's reputation at the French court, and enter into the same service he did. Things wear a dark face in England for you, and a bright one everywhere else."

"I have already," said I, "in my own mind, perceived and weighed the advantages of entering into the service of Louis. But he is old—he cannot live long. People now pay court to parties—not to the king. Which party, think you, is the best—that of Madame de Maintenon?"

"Nay, I think not; she is a cold friend, and never asks favors of Louis for any of her family. A bold game might be played by attaching yourself to the Duchesse d'Orleans (the Duke's mother). She is at daggers-drawn with Maintenon, it is true, and she is a violent, haughty, and coarse woman; but she has wit, talent, strength of mind, and will zealously serve any person of high birth, who pays her respect. But she can do nothing for you till the King's death, and then only on the chance

of her son's power. But—let me see—you say Fleuri, the Bishop of Fréjus, is to introduce you to Madame de Maintenon?"

"Yes; and has appointed the day after to-morrow for that purpose."

"Well, then, make close friends with him—you will not find it difficult; he has a delightful address, and if you get hold of his weak points, you may win his confidence. Mark me—Fleuri has no *faux-brillant*, no genius, indeed, of very prominent order; but he is one of those soft and smooth minds, which, in a crisis like the present, when parties are contending, and princes wrangling, always slip silently and unobtrusively into one of the best places. Keep in with Fréjus—you cannot do wrong by it—although you must remember that at present he is in ill odor with the King, and you need not go with *him twice* to Versailles. But, above all, when you are introduced to Louis, do not forget that you cannot please him better than by appearing awe-stricken."

Such was Bolingbroke's parting advice. The Bishop of Fréjus carried me with him (on the morning we had appointed) to Versailles. What a magnificent work of royal imagination is that palace! I know not in any epic a grander idea than terming the avenues which lead to it the roads "*to Spain, to Holland,*" etc. In London, they would have been the roads to Chelsea and Pentonville!

As we were driving slowly along in the bishop's carriage, I had ample time for conversation with that personage, who has since, as the Cardinal de Fleuri, risen to so high a pitch of power. He certainly has in him very little of the great man; nor do I know any where so striking an instance of this truth—that in that game of honors which is played at courts, we obtain success less by our talents than our tempers. He laughed, with a graceful turn of badinage, at the political peculiarities of Madame de Balzac: and said that it was not for the uppermost party to feel resentment at the chafings of the under one. Sliding from this topic, he then questioned me as to the gayeties I had witnessed. I gave him a description of the party at Boulaivilliers's. He seemed much interested in this, and showed more shrewdness than I should have given him credit for, in discussing the various characters of the *litterati* of the day. After some general conversation on works of fiction, he artfully glided into treating on those of statistics and politics, and I then caught a sudden, but thorough, insight into the depths of his policy. I saw that, while he affected to be indifferent to the difficulties and puzzles of state, he lost no opportunity of gain-

ing every particle of information respecting them ; and that he made conversation, in which he was skilled, a vehicle for acquiring that knowledge which he had not the force of mind to create from his own intèllect, or to work out from the *written* labors of others. If this made him a superficial statesman, it made him a prompt one ; and there was never so lucky a minister with so little trouble to himself.*

As we approached the end of our destination, we talked of the King. On this subject he was jealously cautious. But I gleaned from him, despite of his sagacity, that it was high time to make all use of one's acquaintance with Madame de Maintenon that one could be enabled to do ; and that it was so difficult to guess the exact places in which power would rest after the death of the old King, that supineness and silence made at present the most profound policy.

As we alighted from the carriage, and I first set my foot within the palace, I could not but feel involuntarily, yet powerfully, impressed with the sense of the spirit of the place. I was in the precincts of that mighty court that had gathered into one dazzling focus all the rays of genius which half a century had emitted ; the court at which time had passed at once from the morn of civilization into its full noon and glory ; the court of Condé and Turenne—of Villars and of Tourville ; the court where, over the wit of Grammont, the profusion of Fouquet, the fatal genius of Louvois (fatal to humanity and to France), Love, real Love, had not disdained to shed its pathos and its truth, and to consecrate the hollow pageantries of royal pomp with the tenderness, the beauty, and the repentance of La Vallière. Still over that scene hung the spells of a genius which, if artificial and cold, was also vast, stately, and magnificent—a genius which had swelled in the rich music of Racine—which had raised the nobler spirit and the freer thought of Pierre Corneille,† which had given edge to the polished weapon of Boileau—which had lavished over the bright page of Molière—Molière ; more wonderful than all—a knowledge of the humors and the hearts of men, which no dramatist, save Shakspeare, has surpassed. Within those walls still glowed, though now waxing faint and dim, the fame of that monarch who had enjoyed, at least till his later day, the fortune of Augustus, unsullied by the crimes of Octavius. Nine times, since the sun

* At his death appeared the following punning epigram :

" *Floruit sine fructu ;*
" *Defloruit sine luctu.*"

He flowered without fruit, and faded without regret.—ED.

† Rigidly speaking, Corneille belongs to a period earlier than that of Louis XIV., though he has been included in the era formed by that reign.—ED.

of that monarch rose, had the Papal Chair received a new occupant! Six sovereigns had reigned over the Ottoman hordes! The fourth emperor, since the birth of the same era, bore sway over Germany! Five czars, from Michael Romanoff to the Great Peter, had held, over their enormous territory, the precarious tenure of their iron power! Six kings had borne the painful cincture of the English crown;* two of those kings had been fugitives to that court—to the son of the last it was an asylum at that moment.

What wonderful changes had passed over the face of Europe during that single reign! In England only, what a vast leap in the waste of events, from the reign of the first Charles to that of George the First! I still lingered—I still gazed, as these thoughts, linked to one another in an electric chain, flashed over me! I still paused on the threshold of those stately halls which Nature herself had been conquered to rear! Where, through the whole earth, could I find so meet a symbol for the character and the name which that sovereign would leave to posterity, as this place itself afforded? A gorgeous monument of regal state raised from a desert—crowded alike with empty pageantries and illustrious names—a prodigy of elaborate artifice, grand in its whole effect, petty in its small details; a solitary oblation to a splendid selfishness, and most remarkable for the revenues which it exhausted, and the poverty by which it is surrounded!

Fleuri, with his usual urbanity—an urbanity that, on a great scale, would have been benevolence—had hitherto indulged me in my emotions; he now laid his hand upon my arm, and recalled me to myself. Before I could apologize for my abstraction, the bishop was accosted by an old man of evident rank, but of a countenance more strikingly demonstrative of the little cares of a mere courtier than any I ever beheld. “What news, Monsieur le Marquis?” said Fleuri, smiling.

“Oh! the greatest imaginable! the king talks of receiving the Danish minister on *Thursday*, which, you know, is his day of *domestic* business! What *can* this portend? Besides,” and here the speaker’s voice lowered into a whisper, “I am told by the Duc de la Rochefoucault that the King intends, out of all ordinary rule and practice, to take physic to-morrow—I can’t believe it—no, I positively can’t; but don’t let this go farther!”

“Heaven forbid!” answered Fleuri, bowing, and the cour-

* Besides Cromwell; viz., Charles I., Charles II., James II., William and Mary, Anne, George I.

tier passed on to whisper his intelligence to others. "Who's that gentleman," I asked.

"The Marquis de Dangeau," answered Fleuri; "a nobleman of great quality, who keeps a diary of all the King says and does. It will perhaps be a posthumous publication, and will show the world of what importance nothings can be made. I dare say, Count, you have already, in England, seen enough of a court to know that there are some people who are as human echoes, and have no existence except in the noise occasioned by another."

I took care that my answer should not be a witticism, lest Fleuri should think I was attempting to rival him; and so we passed on in an excellent humor with each other.

We mounted the grand staircase, and came to an ante-chamber, which, though costly and rich, was not remarkably conspicuous for splendor. Here the bishop requested me to wait for a moment. Accordingly, I amused myself with looking over some engravings of different saints. Meanwhile, my companion passed through another door, and I was alone.

After an absence of nearly ten minutes, he returned. "Madame de Maintenon," said he, in a whisper, "is but poorly to-day. However, she has eagerly consented to see you—follow me!"

So saying, the ecclesiastical courtier passed on, with myself at his heels. We came to the door of a second chamber, at which Fleuri *scraped* gently. We were admitted, and found therein three ladies, one of whom was reading, a second laughing, and a third yawning, and entered into another chamber, where, alone, and seated by the window, in a large chair, with one foot on a stool, in an attitude that rather reminded me of my mother, and which seems to me a favorite position with all devotees, we found an old woman without rouge, plainly dressed, with spectacles on her nose, and a large book on a little table before her. With a most profound salutation, Fréjus approached, and taking me by the hand, said,—

"Will Madame suffer me to present to her the Count Devereux?"

Madame de Maintenon, with an air of great meekness and humility, bowed a return to the salutation. "The son of Madame la Maréchale de Devereux will always be most welcome to me!" Then, turning towards us, she pointed to two stools, and, while we were seating ourselves, said—

"And how did you leave my excellent friend?"

"When, Madame, I last saw my mother, which is now nearly

a year ago, she was in health, and consoling herself for the advance of years by that tendency to wean the thoughts from this world which (in her own language) is the divinest comfort of old age!"

"Admirable woman!" said Madame de Maintenon, casting down her eyes; "such are, indeed, the sentiments in which I recognize the Maréchale. And how does her beauty wear? Those golden locks, and blue eyes, and that snowy skin, are not yet, I suppose, wholly changed for an adequate compensation of the beauties within!"

"Time, Madame, has been gentle with her; and I have often thought, though never, perhaps, more strongly than at this moment, that there is in those divine studies, which bring calm and light to the mind, something which preserves and embalms, as it were, the beauty of the body."

A faint blush passed over the face of the devotee. No, no—not even at eighty years of age is a compliment to a woman's beauty misplaced! There was a slight pause. I thought that respect forbade me to break it.

"His Majesty," said the bishop, in the tone of one who is sensible that he encroaches a little, and does it with consequent reverence—"his Majesty, I hope, is well."

"God be thanked, yes, as well as we can expect. It is now nearly the hour in which his Majesty awaits your personal inquiries."

Fleuri bowed as he answered—

"The King then, will receive us to-day? My young companion is very desirous to see the greatest monarch, and consequently the greatest man, of the age."

"The desire is natural," said Madame de Maintenon: and then, turning to me, she asked if I had yet seen King James the Third.

I took care, in my answer, to express that even if I had resolved to make that stay in Paris which allowed me to pay my respects to him at all, I should have deemed that both duty and inclination led me, in the first instance, to offer my homage to one who was both the benefactor of my father, and the monarch whose realms afforded me protection.

"You have not, then," said Madame de Maintenon, "decided on the length of your stay in France?"

"No," said I—and my answer was regulated by my desire to see how far I might rely on the services of one who expressed herself so warm a friend of that excellent woman, Madame la Maréchale—"No, Madame. France is the country of my birth,

if England is that of my parentage ; and could I hope for some portion of that royal favor which my father enjoyed, I would rather claim it as the home of my hopes than the refuge of my exile. But"—and I stopped short purposely.

The old lady looked at me very earnestly through her spectacles for one moment, and then, hemming twice with a little embarrassment, again remarked to the bishop, that the time for seeing the King was nearly arrived. Fleuri, whose policy at that period was very like that of the concealed queen, and who was, besides, far from desirous of introducing any new claimants on Madame de Maintenon's official favor, though he might not object to introduce them to her private friendship, was not slow in taking the hint. He rose, and I was forced to follow his example.

Madame de Maintenon thought she might safely indulge in a little cordiality when I was just on the point of leaving her, and accordingly, blest me and gave me her hand, which I kissed very devoutly. An extremely pretty hand it was, too, notwithstanding the good queen's age. We then retired, and, repassing the three ladies who were now all yawning, repaired to the King's apartments.

"What think you of Madame?" asked Fleuri.

"What can I think of her," said I, cautiously, "but that greatness seems in her to take its noblest form—that of simplicity?"

"True," rejoined Fleuri, "never was there so meek a mind joined to so lowly a carriage? Do you remark any trace of former beauty?"

"Yes, indeed, there is much that is soft in her countenance, and much that is still regular in her features; but what struck me most was the pensive and even sad tranquillity that rests upon her face when she is silent."

"The expression betrays the mind," answered Fleuri; "and the curse of the great is *ennui*."

"Of the great in station," said I, "but not necessarily of the great in mind. I have heard that the Bishop of Fréjus, notwithstanding his rank and celebrity, employs every hour to the advantage of others, and consequently without tedium to himself."

"Aha!" said Fleuri, smiling gently, and patting my cheek: "see, now, if the air of palaces is not absolutely prolific of pretty speeches." And, before I could answer, we were in the apartments of the King.

Leaving me awhile to cool my heels in a gallery, filled with the butterflies who bask in the royal sunshine, Fréjus then dis-

appeared among the crowd ; he was scarcely gone when I was agreeably surprised by seeing Count Hamilton approach towards me.

“ *Mort diable !* ” said he, shaking me by the hand, *à l’Anglaise* ; “ I am really delighted to see any one here who does not insult my sins with his superior excellence. Eh, now, look round this apartment for a moment ! Whether would you believe yourself at the court of a great king, or the levee of a Roman cardinal ? Whom see you chiefly ? Gallant soldiers, with worn brows and glittering weeds ; wise statesmen, with ruin to Austria and defiance to Rome in every wrinkle ; gay nobles in costly robes, and with the bearing that so nicely teaches mirth to be dignified and dignity to be merry ? No ! cassock and hat, rosary and gown, decking sly, demure, hypocritical faces, flit, and stalk, and sadden round us. It seems to me,” continued the witty Count, in a lower whisper, “ as if the old King, having fairly buried his glory at Ramilies and Blenheim, had summoned all these good gentry to sing psalms over it ! But are you waiting for a private audience ? ”

“ Yes, under the auspices of the Bishop of Fréjus.”

“ You might have chosen a better guide—the King has been too much teased about him,” rejoined Hamilton, “ and now that we are talking of him, I will show you a singular instance of what good manners can do at court, in preference to good abilities. You observe yon quiet, modest-looking man, with a sensible countenance, and a clerical garb ; you observe how he edges away when any one approaches to accost him ; and how, from his extreme dis-esteem of himself, he seems to inspire every one with the same sentiment. Well, that man is a namesake of Fleuri’s, the Prior of Argenteuil ; he has come here, I suppose, for some particular and temporary purpose, since, in reality, he has left the court. Well, that worthy priest—do remark his bow ; did you ever see anything so awkward ?—is one of the most learned divines that the church can boast of ; he is as immeasurably superior to the smooth-faced Bishop of Fréjus as Louis the Fourteenth is to my old friend Charles the Second. He has had equal opportunities with the said bishop ; been preceptor to the princes of Conti, and the Count de Vermandois ; and yet, I will wager that he lives and dies a tutor—a bookworm—and a prior ; while t’other Fleuri, without a particle of merit, but of the most superficial order, governs already kings through their mistresses, kingdoms through the kings, and may, for aught I know, expand into a prime minister, and ripen into a cardinal.”

"Nay," said I, smiling, "there is little chance of so exalted a lot for the worthy bishop."

"Pardon me," interrupted Hamilton, "I am an old courtier, and look steadily on the game I no longer play. Suppleness, united with art, may do anything in a court like this; and the smooth and unelevated craft of a Fleuri may win even to the same height as the deep wiles of the glittering Mazarin, or the superb genius of the imperious Richelieu."

"Hist!" said I, "the bishop has reappeared. Who is that old priest, with a fine countenance, and an address that will, at least, please you better than that of the Prior of Argenteuil, who has just stopped our episcopal courtier?"

"What! do you not know? It is the most celebrated preacher of the day—the great Massillon. It is said that that handsome person goes a great way towards winning converts among the court ladies; it is certain, at least, that when Massillon first entered the profession, he was to the soul something like the spear of Achilles to the body; and though very efficacious in healing the wounds of conscience, was equally ready, in the first instance, to inflict them."

"Ah!" said I, "see the malice of wit; and see, above all, how much more ready one is to mention a man's frailties than to enlarge upon his virtues."

"To be sure," answered Hamilton coolly, and patting his snuff-box—"to be sure, we old people like history better than fiction; and frailty is certain, while virtue is always doubtful."

"Don't judge of all people," said I, "by your experience among the courtiers of Charles the Second."

"Right," said Hamilton. "Providence never assembled so many rascals together before, without hanging them. And he would indeed be a bad judge of human nature who estimated the characters of men in general by the heroes of Newgate and the victims of Tyburn. But your bishop approaches. Adieu!"

"What!" said Fleuri, joining me and saluting Hamilton, who had just turned to depart, "what, Count Antoine! Does anything but whim bring you here to-day?"

"No," answered Hamilton; "I am only here for the same purpose as the poor go to the temples of Caitan—to *inhale the steam of those good things which I see the priests devour.*"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the good-natured bishop, not in the least disconcerted; and Count Hamilton, congratulating himself on his *bon mot*, turned away.

"I have spoken to his Most Christian Majesty," said the bishop: "he is willing, as he before ordained, to admit you to

his presence. The Duc de Maine is with the King, as also some other members of the royal family ; but you will consider this a private audience."

I expressed my gratitude—we moved on—the doors of an apartment were thrown open—and I saw myself in the presence of Louis XIV.

The room was partially darkened. In the centre of it, on a large sofa, reclined the King ; he was dressed (although this, if I may so speak, I rather remembered than noted) in a coat of black velvet, slightly embroidered ; his vest was of white satin ; he wore no jewels nor orders, for it was only on grand or gala days that he displayed personal pomp. At some little distance from him stood three members of the royal family—them I never regarded—all my attention was bent upon the King. My temperament is not that on which greatness, or indeed any external circumstances, makes much impression, but, as following, at a little distance, the Bishop of Fréjus, I approached the royal person, I must confess that Bolingbroke had scarcely need to have cautioned me not to appear too self-possessed. Perhaps, had I seen that great monarch in his *beaux jours*—in the plenitude of his power—his glory—the dazzling and meridian splendor of his person, his court, and his renown, pride might have made me more on my guard against too deep, or at least too apparent, an impression ; but the many reverses of that magnificent sovereign—reverses in which he had shown himself more great than in all his previous triumphs and earlier successes ; his age—his infirmities—the very clouds round the setting sun—the very howls of joy at the expiring lion—all were calculated, in my mind, to deepen respect into reverence, and tincture reverence itself with awe. I saw before me not only the majesty of Louis-le-Grand, but that of misfortune, of weakness, of infirmity, and of age ; and I forgot at once, in that reflection, what otherwise would have blunted my sentiments of deference, viz., the crimes of his ministers, and the exactions of his reign ! Endeavoring to collect my mind from an embarrassment which surprised myself, I lifted my eyes towards the King, and saw a countenance where the trace of the superb beauty, for which his manhood had been celebrated, still lingered, broken, not destroyed, and borrowing a dignity even more imposing from the marks of encroaching years, and from the evident exhaustion of suffering and disease.

Fleuri said, in a low tone, something which my ear did not catch. There was a pause—only a moment's pause ; and then, in a voice, the music of which I had hitherto deemed exagger-

ated, the King spoke; and in that voice there was something so kind and encouraging that I felt reassured at once. Perhaps its tone was not the least conciliating from the evident effect which the royal presence had produced upon me.

"You have given us, Count Devereux," said the King, "a pleasure which we are glad, in person, to acknowledge to you. And it has seemed to us fitting that the country in which your brave father acquired his fame should also be the asylum of his son."

"Sire," answered I, "Sire, it shall not be my fault if that country is not henceforth my own; and, in inheriting my father's name, I inherit also his gratitude and his ambition."

"It is well said, sir," said the King; and I once more raised my eyes, and perceived that his were bent upon me. "It is well said," he repeated, after a short pause; "and in granting to you this audience, we were not unwilling to hope that you were desirous to attach yourself to our court. The times do not require" (here I thought the old King's voice was not quite so firm as before) "the manifestation of your zeal in the same career as that in which your father gained laurels to France and to himself. But we will not neglect to find employment for your abilities, if not for your sword."

"That sword which was given to me, Sire," said I, "by your Majesty, shall be ever drawn (against all nations but one) at your command; and, in being your Majesty's petitioner for future favors, I only seek some channel through which to evince my gratitude for the past."

"We do not doubt," said Louis, "that whatever be the number of the ungrateful we may make by testifying our good pleasure on your behalf, *you* will not be among the number." The king here made a slight, but courteous inclination, and turned round. The observant Bishop of Fréjus, who had retired to a little distance, and who knew that the King never liked talking more than he could help it, gave me a signal. I obeyed, and backed, with all due deference, out of the royal presence.

So closed my interview with Louis XIV. Although his Majesty did not indulge in prolixity, I spoke of him for a long time afterwards as the most eloquent of men. Believe me, there is no orator like a king; one word from a royal mouth stirs the heart more than Demosthenes could have done. There was a deep moral in that custom of the ancients, by which the Goddess of Persuasion was always represented *with a diadem on her head*.

CHAPTER VII.

Reflections—A Soirée—The appearance of one important in the History—
A Conversation with Madame de Balzac highly satisfactory and cheering—
A Rencontre with a curious old Soldier—The extinction of a once
great Luminary.

I HAD now been several weeks at Paris; I had neither eagerly sought, nor sedulously avoided, its gayeties. It is not that one violent sorrow leaves us without power of enjoyment—it only lessens the power, and deadens the enjoyment; it does not take away from us the objects of life—it only forestalls the more indifferent calmness of age. The blood no longer flows in an irregular, but delicious, course of vivid and wild emotion; the step no longer spurns the earth; nor does the ambition wander, insatiable, yet undefined, over the million paths of existence; but we lose not our old capacities—they are quieted, not extinct. The heart can never utterly and long be dormant; trifles may not charm it any more, nor levities delight; but its pulse has not yet ceased to beat. We survey the scene that moves around, with a gaze no longer distracted by every hope that flutters by; and it is therefore that we find ourselves more calculated than before for the graver occupations of our race. The overflowing temperament is checked to its proper level, the ambition bounded to its prudent and lawful goal. The earth is no longer so green, nor the heaven so blue, nor the fancy that stirs within us so rich in its creations; but we look more narrowly on the living crowd, and more rationally on the aims of men. The misfortune which has changed us has only adapted us the better to a climate in which misfortune is a portion of the air. The grief, that has thrall'd our spirit to a more narrow and dark cell, has also been a chain that has linked us to mankind with a strength of which we dreamt not in the day of a wilder freedom and more luxuriant aspirings. In later life, a new spirit, partaking of that which was our earliest, returns to us. The solitude which delighted us in youth, but which, when the thoughts that make solitude a fairy-land are darkened by affliction, becomes a fearful and sombre void, resumes its old spell, as the more morbid and urgent memory of that affliction crumbles away by time. Content is a hermit; but so also is Apathy. Youth love the solitary couch, which it surrounds with dreams. Age, or Experience (which is the mind's age) loves the same couch for the rest which it affords; but the wide interval between is that of exertion, of labor, and

labor among men. The woe which makes our *hearts* less social, often makes our *habits* more so. The thoughts, which in calm would have shunned the world, are driven upon it by the tempest, even as the birds which forsake the habitable land can, so long as the wind sleeps, and the thunder rests within its cloud, become the constant and solitary brooders over the waste sea: but the moment the storm awakes, and the blast pursues them; they fly, by an overpowering instinct, to some wandering bark, some vestige of human and social life; and exchange, even for danger from the hands of men, the desert of an angry Heaven, and the solitude of a storm.

I heard no more, either of Madame de Maintenon or the King. Meanwhile, my flight and friendship with Lord Bolingbroke had given me a consequence in the eyes of the exiled prince, which I should not otherwise have enjoyed; and I was honored by very flattering overtures to enter actively into his service. I have before said that I felt no enthusiasm in his cause, and I was far from feeling it for his person. My ambition rather directed its hopes towards a career in the service of France. France was the country of my birth, and the country of my father's fame. There no withering remembrances awaited me—no private regrets were associated with its scenes—and no public penalties with its political institutions. And, although I had not yet received any token of Louis's remembrance, in the ordinary routine of court favors, expectation as yet would have been premature; besides, his royal fidelity to his word was proverbial; and, sooner or later, I indulged the hope to profit by the sort of promise he had insinuated to me. I declined, therefore, with all due respect, the offers of the Chevalier, and continued to live the life of idleness and expectation, until Lord Bolingbroke returned to Paris, and accepted the office of secretary of state in the service of the Chevalier. As he has publicly declared his reasons, in this step, I do not mean to favor the world with his private conversations on the same subject.

A day or two after his return, I went with him to a party given by a member of the royal family. The first person by whom we were accosted—and I rejoiced at it, for we could not have been accosted by a more amusing one—was Count Anthony Hamilton.

“Ah! my Lord Bolingbroke,” said he, sauntering up to us; “how are you?—delighted to see you again. Do look at Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans? Saw you ever such a creature? Whither are you moving, my lord? Ah! see him, Count, see him, gliding off to that pretty duchess, of course; well, he has a

beautiful bow, it must be owned—why, you are not going too?—what would the world say if Count Anthony Hamilton were seen left to himself? No, no, come and sit down by Madame de Cornuel—she longs to be introduced to you, and is one of the wittiest women in Europe.”

“With all my heart! provided she employs her wit ill-naturedly, and uses it in ridiculing other people, not praising herself.”

“Oh! nobody can be more satirical; indeed, what difference is there between wit and satire? Come, Count!”

And Hamilton introduced me forthwith to Madame de Cornuel. She received me very politely; and, turning to two or three people who formed the circle round her, said, with the greatest composure, “Messieurs, oblige me by seeking some other object of attraction; I wish to have a private conference with my new friend.”

“I may stay,” said Hamilton.

“Ah! certainly; you are never in the way.”

“In that respect, *Madame*,” said Hamilton, taking snuff, and bowing very low, “in that respect I must strongly remind you of your excellent husband.”

“Fie!” cried Madame de Cornuel; then, turning to me, she said, “Ah! Monsieur if you *could* have come to Paris some years ago, you would have been enchanted with us—we are sadly changed. Imagine the fine old King, thinking it wicked, not to hear plays, but to hear *players* act them, and so making the royal family a company of comedians. *Mon Dieu!* how villainously they perform! but do you know why I wished to be introduced to you?”

“Yes! in order to have a new listener; old listeners must be almost as tedious as old news.”

“Very shrewdly said, and not far from the truth. The fact is, that I wanted to talk about all these fine people present, to some one for whose ear my anecdotes would have the charm of novelty. Let us begin with Louis Armand, Prince of Conti—you see him?”

“What, that short-sighted, stout, and rather handsome man, with a cast of countenance somewhat like the pictures of *Henri Quatre*, who is laughing so merrily?”

“*O Ciel!* how droll! No, that handsome man is no less a person than the *Duc d’Orléans*. You see a little ugly thing, like an anatomized ape—there, see—he has just thrown down a chair, and, in stooping to pick it up, has almost fallen over the Dutch ambassadress—that is Louis Armand, Prince of Conti. Do you know what the Duc d’Orléans said to him the other day? ‘*Mon bon ami,*’ he said, pointing to the prince’s limbs—(did you

ever see such limbs out of a menagerie, by-the-by?)—‘*Mon bon ami*, it is a fine thing for you that the Psalmist has assured us “that the Lord delighteth not in any man’s legs.”’ Nay, don’t laugh, it is quite true!”

It was now for Count Hamilton to take up the ball of satire; he was not a whit more merciful than the kind Madame de Cornuel. “The Prince,” said he, “has so exquisite an awkwardness, that, whenever the King hears a noise, and inquires the cause, the invariable answer is, that ‘the Prince of Conti has just tumbled down!’ But, tell me, what do you think of Madame d’Aumont? She is in the English head-dress, and looks *triste à la mort*.”

“She is rather pretty, to my taste.”

“Yes,” cried Madame de Cornuel, interrupting the gentle Antoine—(it did one’s heart good to see how strenuously each of them tried to talk more scandal than the other), “yes, she is thought very pretty; but I think her very like a *fricandeau*—white, soft, and insipid. She is always in tears,” added the good-natured Cornuel, “after her prayers, both at morning and evening. I asked why; and she answered, pretty simpleton, that she was always forced to pray to be made good, and she feared Heaven would take her at her word! However, she has many worshippers, and they call her the evening star.”

“They should rather call her the Hyades!” said Hamilton, “if it be true that she sheds tears every morning and night, and her rising and setting are thus always attended by rain.”

“Bravo, Count Antoine! she shall be so called in future,” said Madame de Cornuel. “But now, Monsieur Devereux, turn your eyes to that hideous old woman.”

“What! the Duchesse d’Orléans?”

“The same. She is in full dress to-night; but in the daytime you generally see her in a riding-habit and a man’s wig; she is—”

“Hist!” interrupted Hamilton “do you not tremble to think what she would do if she overheard you? she is such a terrible creature at fighting! You have no conception, Count, what an arm she has. She know her ugliness, and laughs at it, as all the rest of the world does. The king took her hand one day, and said, smiling, ‘What could Nature have meant when she gave this hand to a German princess instead of a Dutch peasant?’ ‘Sire,’ said the Duchesse, very gravely, ‘Nature gave this hand to a German princess for the purpose of boxing the ears of her ladies in waiting!’”

“Ha! ha! ha!” said Madame de Cornuel; “one is never

at a loss for jokes upon a woman who eats *salade au lard*, and declares that, whenever she is unhappy, her only consolation is ham and sausages! Her son treats her with the greatest respect, and consults her in all his amours, for which she professes the greatest horror, and which she retails to her correspondents all over the world, in letters as long as her pedigree. But you are looking at her son, is he not of a good mien?"

"Yes, pretty well; but does not exhibit to advantage, by the side of Lord Bolingbroke, with whom he is now talking. Pray, who is the third personage that has just joined them?"

"Oh, the wretch! it is the Abbé Dubois; a living proof of the folly of the French proverb, which says that Mercurys should *not* be made *du bois*. Never was there a Mercury equal to the Abbé—but, do look at that old man to the left—he is one of the most remarkable persons of the age."

"What! he with the small features, and comely countenance, considering his years?"

"The same," said Hamilton; "it is the notorious Choisi. You know that he is the modern Tiresias, and has been a woman as well as man."

"How do you mean?"

"Ah, you may well ask!" cried Madame de Cornuel. "Why, he lived for many years in the disguise of a woman, and had all sorts of curious adventures."

"*Mort diable!*" cried Hamilton: "it was entering your ranks, Madame, as a spy. I hear he makes but a sorry report of what he saw there."

"Come, Count Antoine," cried the lively de Cornuel, "we must not turn our weapons against each other; and when you attack a woman's sex, you attack her individually. But what makes you look so intently, Count Devereux, at that ugly priest?"

The person thus flatteringly designated was Montreuil; he had just caught my eye, among a group of men who were conversing eagerly.

"Hush, Madame!" said I, "spare me for a moment"; and I rose, and mingled with the Abbé's companions. "So, you have only arrived to-day," I heard one of them say to him.

"No, I could not dispatch my business before."

"And how are matters in England?"

"Ripe!—if the life of his Majesty (of France) be spared a year longer, we will send the Elector of Hanover back to his principality."

"Hist!" said the companion, and looked towards me. Mon-

treuil ceased abruptly—our eyes met—his fell. I affected to look among the group as if I had expected to find there some one I knew, and then, turning away, I seated myself alone and apart. There, unobserved, I kept my looks on Montreuil. I remarked that, from time to time, his keen dark eye glanced toward me, with a look rather expressive of vigilance than anything else. Soon afterwards his little knot dispersed; I saw him converse for a few moments with Dubois, who received him, I thought, distantly; and then he was engaged in a long conference with the Bishop of Fréjus, whom, till then, I had not perceived among the crowd.

As I was loitering on the staircase, where I saw Montreuil depart with the bishop, in the carriage of the latter, Hamilton, accosting me, insisted on my accompanying him to Chaulieu's, where a late supper awaited the sons of wine and wit. However, to the good Count's great astonishment, I preferred solitude and reflection, for that night, to anything else.

Montreuil's visit to the French capital boded me no good. He possessed great influence with Fleuri, and was in high esteem with Madame de Maintenon, and, in effect, very shortly after his return to Paris, the Bishop of Fréjus looked upon me with a most cool sort of benignancy; and Madame de Maintenon told her friend, the Duchesse de St. Simon, that it was a great pity a young nobleman of my birth and prepossessing appearance—(ay! my prepossessing appearance would never have occurred to the devotee, if I had not seemed so sensible of her own)—should not only be addicted to the wildest dissipation, but, worse still, to Jansenistical tenets. After this, there was no hope for me, save in the King's word, which his increasing infirmities, naturally engrossing his attention, prevented my hoping too sanguinely would dwell very acutely on his remembrance. I believe, however, so religiously scrupulous was Louis upon a point of honor, that, had he lived, I should have had nothing to complain of. As it was—but I anticipate!—Montreuil disappeared from Paris, almost as suddenly as he had appeared there. And, as drowning men catch at a straw, so, finding my affairs at a very low ebb, I thought I would take advice, even from Madame de Balzac.

I accordingly repaired to her hotel. She was at home, and, fortunately, alone.

"You are welcome, *mon fils*," said she: "suffer me to give you that title—you are welcome—it is some days since I saw you."

"I have numbered them, I assure you, Madame," said I,

"and they have crept with a dull pace; but you know that business has claims as well as pleasure!"

"True!" said Madame de Balzac pompously; "I myself find the weight of politics a little insupportable, though so used to it; to your young brain I can readily imagine how irksome it must be!"

"Would, Madame, that I could obtain your experience by contagion: as it is I fear that I have profited little by my visit to his Majesty. Madame de Maintenon will not see me, and the Bishop of Fréjus (excellent man!) has been seized with a sudden paralysis of memory, whenever I present myself in his way." "That party will never do—I thought not," said Madame de Balzac, who was a wonderful imitator of the fly on the wheel; "*my* celebrity, and the knowledge that *I* loved you for your father's sake, were, I fear, sufficient to destroy your interest with the Jesuits and their tools. Well, well, we must repair the mischief we have occasioned you. What place would suit you best?"

"Why, anything diplomatic. I would rather travel, at my age, than remain in luxury and indolence even at Paris!"

"Ah, nothing like diplomacy!" said Madame de Balzac, with the air of a Richelieu, and emptying her snuff-box at a pinch; "but have you, my son, the requisite qualities for that science, as well as the tastes? Are you capable of intrigue? Can you say one thing and mean another? Are you aware of the immense consequence of a look or a bow? Can you live like a spider, in the centre of an inexplicable net—inexplicable as well as dangerous—to all but the weaver? That, my son, is the art of politics—that is to be a diplomatist!"

"Perhaps, to one less penetrating than Madame de Balzac," answered I, "I might, upon trial, not appear utterly ignorant of the noble art of state duplicity which she has so eloquently depicted."

"Possibly!" said the good lady; "it must indeed be a profound dissimulator to deceive *me*."

"But what would you advise me to do in the present crisis? What party to adopt—what individual to flatter?"

Nothing, I already discovered, and have already observed, did the inestimable Madame de Balzac dislike more than a downright question—she never answered it.

"Why, really," said she, preparing herself for a long speech, "I am quite glad you consult me, and I will give you the best advice in my power. *Ecoutez donc*—you have seen the Duc de Maine?"

“Certainly!”

“Hum! ha! it would be wise to follow him; but—you take me—you understand.—Then, you know, my son, there is the Duc d’Orléans—fond of pleasure—full of talent—but you know—there is a little—what do you call it—you understand. As for the Duc de Bourbon, ’tis quite a simpleton—nevertheless we must consider—nothing like consideration—believe me, no diplomatist ever hurries. As for Madame de Maintenon—you know, and I know too, that the Duchesse d’Orleans calls her an old hag—but then—a word to the wise—Eh?—what shall we say to Madame the Duchesse herself?—what a fat woman she is—but excessively clever—such a letter-writer!—Well—you see, my dear young friend, that it is a very difficult matter to decide upon—but you must already be fully aware what plan I should advise.”

“Already, Madame!”

“To be sure! What have I been saying to you all this time?—did you not hear me?—Shall I repeat my advice?”

“Oh, no! I perfectly comprehend you now; you would advise me—in short—to—to—do—as well as I can.”

“You have said it, my son. I thought you would understand me on a little reflection.”

“To be sure—to be sure,” said I.

And three ladies being announced, my conference with Madame de Balzac ended.

I now resolved to wait a little till the tides of power seemed somewhat more settled, and I could ascertain in what quarter to point my bark of enterprise. I gave myself rather more eagerly to society, in proportion as my political schemes were suffered to remain torpid. My mind could not remain quiet, without preying on itself; and no evil appeared to me so great as tranquillity. Thus the spring and earlier summer passed on, till, in August, the riots preceding the Rebellion broke out in Scotland. At this time I saw but little of Lord Bolingbroke in private; though, with his characteristic affectation, he took care that the load of business, with which he was really oppressed, should not prevent his enjoyment of all gayeties in public. And my indifference to the cause of the Chevalier, in which he was so warmly engaged, threw a natural restraint upon our conversation, and produced an involuntary coldness in our intercourse—so impossible is it for men to be private friends who differ on a public matter.

One evening I was engaged to meet a large party, at a country-house about forty miles from Paris. I went, and stayed

some days. My horses had accompanied me; and, when I left the château, I resolved to make the journey to Paris on horseback. Accordingly, I ordered my carriage to follow me, and attended by a single groom commenced my expedition. It was a beautiful still morning—the first day of the first month of autumn. I had proceeded about ten miles, when I fell in with an old French officer. I remember—though I never saw him but that once—I remember his face as if I had encountered it yesterday. It was thin and long, and yellow enough to have served as a caricature, rather than a portrait, of Don Quixote. He had a hook nose, and a long, sharp chin; and all the lines, wrinkles, curves and furrows, of which the human visage is capable, seemed to have met in his cheeks. Nevertheless, his eye was bright and keen—his look alert—and his whole bearing firm, gallant, and soldier-like. He was attired in a sort of military undress—wore a mustachio, which, though thin and gray, was carefully curled; and at the summit of a very respectable wig was perched a small cocked-hat, adorned with a black feather. He rode very upright in his saddle; and his horse, a steady, stalwart quadruped of the Norman breed, with a terribly long tail, and a prodigious breadth of chest, yut one stately leg before another in a kind of trot, which, though it seemed, from its height of action, and the proud look of the steed, a pretension to motion more than ordinarily brisk, was, in fact, a little slower than a common walk.

This noble cavalier seemed sufficiently an object of curiosity to my horse to induce the animal to testify his surprise by shying, very jealously and very vehemently, in passing him. This ill-breeding on his part was indignantly returned on the part of the Norman charger, who, uttering a sort of squeak, and shaking his long mane and head, commenced a series of curvets and capers which cost the old Frenchman no little trouble to appease. In the midst of these equine freaks, the horse came so near me as to splash my nether garment, with a liberality as little ornamental as it was pleasurable.

The old Frenchman, seeing this, took off his cocked hat very politely, and apologized for the accident. I replied with equal courtesy; and, as our horses slid into quiet, their riders slid into conversation. It was begun and chiefly sustained by my new comrade; for I am little addicted to commence unnecessary socialities myself, though I should think very meanly of my pretensions to the name of a gentleman and a courtier, if I did not return them when offered, even by a beggar.

“It is a fine horse of yours, Monsieur,” said the old French-

man; "but I cannot believe—pardon me for saying so—that your slight English steeds are so well adapted to the purposes of war as our strong chargers—such as mine for example."

"It is very possible, Monsieur," said I. "Has the horse you now ride done service in the field as well as on the road?"

"Ah! *le pauvre petit mignon*—no!"—(*petit*, indeed—this little darling was seventeen hands high at the very least)—"no, Monsieur; it is but a young creature this—his grandfather served me well!"

"I need not ask you, Monsieur, if you have borne arms—the soldier is stamped upon you!"

"Sir, you flatter me highly!" said the old gentleman, blushing to the very tip of his long lean ears, and bowing as low as if I had called him a *Condé*; "I have followed the profession of arms for more than fifty years."

"Fifty years—'tis a long time!"

"A long time," rejoined my companion, "a long time to look back upon with regret."

"Regret! by Heaven—I should think the remembrance of fifty years' excitement and glory would be a remembrance of triumph."

The old man turned round on his saddle, and looked at me for some moments very wistfully—"You are young, sir," he said, "and at your years I should have thought with you—but—" (then abruptly changing his voice he continued)—"Triumph, did you say? sir, I have had three sons; they are dead—they died in battle—I did not weep—I did not shed a tear, sir—not a tear! But I will tell you when I did weep. I came back, an old man, to the home I had left as a young one. I saw the country a desert. I saw that the noblesse had become tyrants—the peasants had become slaves—such slaves—savage from despair—even when they were most gay, most fearfully gay, from constitution. Sir, I saw the priest rack and grind, and the seigneur exact and pillage, and the tax-gatherer squeeze out the little the other oppressors had left:—anger, discontent, wretchedness, famine, a terrible separation between one order of people and another—an incredible indifference to the miseries of their despotism caused, on the part of the aristocracy—a sullen and vindictive hatred for the perpetration of those miseries on the part of the people—all places sold—even all honors priced, at the court, which was become a public market—a province of peasants—of living men bartered for a few livres, and literally passed from one hand to another—to be squeezed and drained anew by each new possessor—in a word,

sir, an abandoned court, an unredeemed noblesse—unredeemed, sir, by a single benefit which, in other countries, even the most feudal, the vassal obtains from the master—a peasantry famished—a nation loaded with debt, which it sought to pay by tears,—these are what I saw—these are the consequences of that heartless and miserable vanity, from which arose wars neither useful nor honorable—these are the real components of that *triumph*, as you term it, which you wonder that I regret.”

Now, although it was impossible to live at the court of Louis XIV. in his latter days, and not feel, from the general discontent that prevailed even *there*, what a dark truth the old soldier's speech contained—yet I was somewhat surprised by an enthusiasm so little military in a person whose bearing and air were so conspicuously martial.

“You draw a melancholy picture,” said I; “and the wretched state of culture which the lands that we now pass through exhibit, is a witness how little exaggeration there is in your coloring. However, these are but the ordinary evils of war, and, if your country endures them, do not forget that she has also inflicted them. Remember what France did to Holland, and own that it is but a retribution that France should now find that the injury we do to others is (among nations as well as individuals) injury to ourselves.”

My old Frenchman curled his moustaches with the finger and thumb of his left hand; this was rather too subtle a distinction for him.

“That may be true enough, Monsieur,” said he; “but, *morbleu*, those *maudits* Dutchmen deserved what they sustained at our hands. No, sir, no—I am not so base as to forget the glory my country acquired, though I weep for her wounds.”

“I do not quite understand you, sir,” said I; “did you not just now confess that the wars you had witnessed were neither honorable nor useful? What glory, then, was to be acquired in a war of that character, even though it was so delightfully animated by cutting the throats of ‘those *maudits* Dutchmen’?”

“Sir,” answered the Frenchman, drawing himself up, “you do *not* understand me. When we punished Holland, we did rightly. *We conquered!*”

“Whether you conquered, or not (for the good folk of Holland are not so sure of the fact),” answered I, “that war was the most unjust in which your king was ever engaged; but pray, tell me, sir, what war it is that you lament.”

The Frenchman frowned—whistled—put out his under lip, in

a sort of angry embarrassment—and then, spurring his great horse into a curvet, said,

“That last war with the English!”

“Faith,” said I, “that was the justest of all.”

“Just!” cried the Frenchman, halting abruptly, and darting at me a glance of fire, “just! no more, sir! no more! I was at Blenheim, and at Ramillies!”

As the old warrior said the last words, his voice faltered; and though I could not help inly smiling at the confusion of ideas, by which wars were just or unjust, according as they were fortunate or not, yet I respected his feelings enough to turn away my face, and remain silent.

“Yes,” renewed my comrade, coloring with evident shame, and drawing his cocked hat over his brows, “yes I received my last wound at Ramillies. *Then* my eyes were opened to the horrors of war; *then* I saw and cursed the evils of ambition; *then* I resolved to retire from the armies of a king who had lost forever his name, his glory, and his country.”

Was there ever a better type of the French nation than this old soldier? As long as fortune smiles on them, it is “*Marchons au diable!*” and “*Vive la gloire!*” Directly they get beat, it is “*Ma pauvre patrie!*” and “*Les calamités affreuses de la guerre!*”

“However,” said I, “the old King is drawing near the end of his days, and is said to express his repentance at the evils his ambition has occasioned.”

The old soldier shoved back his hat, and offered me his snuff-box. I judged by this that he was a little mollified.

“Ah!” he renewed, after a pause, “Ah! times are sadly changed, since the year 1667; when the young King—he was young then—took the field, in Flanders, under the great Turenne. *Sacristie!* What a hero he looked upon his white war-horse! I would have gone—ay, and the meanest and backwardest soldier in the camp would have gone—into the very mouth of the cannon, for a look from that magnificent countenance, or a word from that mouth which knew so well what words were! Sir, there was in the war of '72, when we were at peace with Great Britain, an English gentleman, then in the army, afterwards a marshal of France: I remember, as if it were yesterday, how gallantly he behaved. The King sent to compliment him after some signal proof of courage and conduct, and asked what reward he would have. ‘Sire,’ answered the Englishman, ‘give me the white plume you wore this day.’ From that moment the Englishman’s fortune was made.”

"The flattery went farther than the valor!" said I, smiling as I recognized in the anecdote the first great step which my father had made in the ascent of fortune.

"*Sacristie!*" cried the Frenchman, "it was no flattery then. We so idolized the King, that mere truth would have seemed disloyalty; and we no more thought that praise, however extravagant, was adulation, when directed to him, than we should have thought there was adulation in the praise we would have given to our first mistress. But it is all changed now! Who now cares for the old priest-ridden monarch?"

And upon this the veteran, having conquered the momentary enthusiasm which the remembrance of the King's earlier glories had excited, transferred all his genius of description to the opposite side of the question, and declaimed, with great energy, upon the royal vices and errors, which were so charming in prosperity, and were now so detestable in adversity.

While we were thus conversing we approached Versailles. We thought the vicinity of the town seemed unusually deserted. We entered the main street—crowds were assembled—a universal murmur was heard—excitement sat on every countenance. Here an old crone was endeavoring to explain something, evidently beyond his comprehension, to a child of three years old; who, with open mouth and fixed eyes, seemed to make up in wonder for the want of intelligence; there a group of old disbanded soldiers occupied the way, and seemed, from their muttered conversations, to vent a sneer and a jest at a priest, who, with downward countenance and melancholy air, was hurrying along.

One young fellow was calling out—"At least, it is a holyday, and I shall go to Paris!"—and, as a contrast to him, an old withered artisan, leaning on a gold-headed cane, with sharp avarice eloquent in every line of his face, muttered out to a fellow miser—"No business to-day—no money, John—no money!" One knot of women of all ages, close by which my horse passed, was entirely occupied with a single topic, and that so vehemently, that I heard the leading words of the discussion. "Mourning—becoming—what fashion?—how long?—*O ciel!*" Thus do follies weave themselves round the bier of death!

"What is the news, gentlemen?" said I.

"News—what, you have not heard it?—The King is dead!"

"Louis dead—Louis the Great, dead!" cried my companion.

"Louis the Great!" said a sullen-looking man—"Louis the persecutor!"

"Ah, he's a Huguenot!" cried another with haggard cheeks and hollow eyes, scowling at the last speaker. "Never mind what he says—the King was right when he refused protection to the Heretics—but was he right when he levied such taxes on the Catholics?"

"Hush!" said a third—"hush—it may be unsafe to speak—there are spies about; for my part, I think it was all the fault of the Noblesse."

"And the Favorites!" cried a soldier fiercely.

"And the Harlots!" cried a hag of eighty.

"And the Priests!" muttered the Huguenot.

"And the Tax-gatherers!" added the lean Catholic.

We rode slowly on. My comrade was evidently and powerfully affected.

"So he is dead!" said he. "Dead!—well—well—peace be with him. He conquered in Holland—he humbled Genoa—he dictated to Spain—he commanded Condé and Turenne—he—Bah! What is all this?" (then, turning abruptly to me, my companion cried)—"I did not speak against the King, did I, sir?"

"Not much."

"I am glad of that—yes, very glad!" And the old man glared fiercely round on a troop of boys, who were audibly abusing the dead lion.

"I would have bit out my tongue, rather than it had joined in the base joy of these yelping curs. Heavens! when I think what shouts I have heard—when the name of that man, then deemed little less than a god, was but breathed!—and now—why do you look at me, sir? My eyes are moist—I know it, sir—I know it. The old, battered, broken soldier, who made his first campaigns, when that which is now dust was the idol of France, and the pupil of Turenne—the old soldier's eyes shall not be dry, though there is not another tear shed in the whole of this great empire."

"Your three sons!" said I; "you did not weep for them?"

"No, sir—I loved them when I was old; but I loved Louis *when I was young!*"

"Your oppressed and pillaged country!" said I—"think of that."

"No, sir, I will not think of it!" cried the old warrior in a passion. "I will not think of it—to-day, at least."

"You are right, my brave friend; in the grave let us bury even public wrongs—but let us not bury their remembrance. May the joy we read in every face that we pass—joy at the

death of one whom idolatry once almost seemed to deem immortal—be a lesson to future kings ! ”

My comrade did not immediately answer ; but, after a pause, and we had turned our backs upon the town, he said :

“ Joy, sir—you spoke of joy ! Yes, we are Frenchmen—we forgive our rulers easily for private vices and petty faults ; but we never forgive them if they commit the greatest of faults, and suffer a stain to rest upon—”

“ What ? ” I asked, as my comrade broke off.

“ The national glory, Monsieur ! ” said he.

“ You have hit it,” said I, smiling at the turgid sentiment which was so really and deeply felt. “ And had you written folios upon the character of your countrymen, you could not have expressed it better.”

CHAPTER VIII.

In which there is reason to fear that Princes are not invariably free from Human Peccadillos.

ON entering Paris, my veteran fellow-traveller took leave of me, and I proceeded to my hotel. When the first excitement of my thoughts was a little subsided, and after some feelings of a more public nature, I began to consider what influence the King's death was likely to have on my own fortunes : I could not but see, at a glance, that for the cause of the Chevalier, and the destiny of his present exertions in Scotland, it was the most fatal event that could have occurred.

The balance of power, in the contending factions of France, would, I foresaw, lie entirely between the Duke of Orleans and the legitimized children of the late King ; the latter, closely leagued as they were with Madame de Maintenon, could not be much disposed to consider the welfare of Count Devereux ; and my wishes, therefore, naturally settled on the former. I was not doomed to a long suspense. Every one knows, that the very next day the Duke of Orleans appeared before Parliament, and was proclaimed Regent—that the will of the late king was set aside—and that the Duke of Maine suddenly became as low in power as he had always been despicable in intellect. A little hubbub ensued—people in general laughed at the Regent's finesse—and the more sagacious admired the courage and address of which the finesse was composed. The Regent's mother wrote a letter of sixty-nine pages about it ; and the Duchess of Maine boxed the duke's ears very heartily

for not being as clever as herself. All Paris teemed with joyous forebodings ; and the Regent, whom every one, some time ago, had suspected of poisoning his cousins, every one now declared to be the most perfect prince that could possibly be imagined, and the very picture of *Henri Quatre*, in goodness as well as in physiognomy. Three days after this event, one happened to myself, with which my public career may be said to commence.

I had spent the evening at a house in a distant part of Paris, and, invited by the beauty of the night, had dismissed my carriage, and was walking home alone, and on foot. Occupied with my reflections, and not very well acquainted with the dangerous and dark streets of Paris, in which it was very rare for those who have carriages to wander on foot, I insensibly strayed from my proper direction. When I first discovered this disagreeable fact, I was in a filthy and obscure lane rather than street, which I did not remember having ever honored with my presence before. While I was pausing in the vain hope and anxious endeavor to shape out some imaginary chart—some “map of the mind,” by which to direct my bewildered course, I heard a confused noise proceed from another lane at right angles with the one in which I then was. I listened—the sound became more distinct—I recognized human voices in loud and angry altercation—a moment more, and there was a scream. Though I did not attach much importance to the circumstance, I thought I might as well approach nearer to the quarter of noise. I walked to the door of the house from which the scream proceeded ; it was very small, and mean. Just as I neared it, a window was thrown open, and a voice cried—“Help ! help ! for God’s sake, help !”

“What’s the matter ?” I asked.

“Whoever you are, save us !” cried the voice, “and that instantly, or we shall be murdered” : and, the moment after, the voice ceased abruptly, and was succeeded by the clashing of swords.

I beat loudly at the door—I shouted out—no answer ; the scuffle within seemed to increase ; I saw a small blind alley to the left ; one of the unfortunate women, to whom such places are homes, was standing in it.

“What possibility is there of entering the house ?” I asked.

“Oh !” said she, “it does not matter ; it is not the first time gentlemen have cut each other’s throats *there*.”

“What ! is it a house of bad repute ?”

“Yes ; and where there are bullies who wear knives, and take purses—as well as ladies, who—”

"Good heavens!" cried I, interrupting her, "there is no time to be lost. Is there no way of entrance but at this door?"

"Yes, if you are bold enough to enter at another!"

"Where?"

"Down this alley."

Immediately I entered the alley—the woman pointed to a small, dark, narrow flight of stairs—I ascended—the sounds increased in loudness. I mounted to the second flight—a light streamed from a door—the clashing of swords was distinctly audible within—I broke open the door, and found myself a witness and intruder in a scene at once ludicrous and fearful.

A table, covered with bottles and the remnants of a meal, was in the centre of the room; several articles of women's dress were scattered over the floor; two women of unequivocal description were clinging to a man richly dressed, and who having fortunately got behind an immense chair, that had been overthrown, probably in the scuffle, managed to keep off with awkward address a fierce-looking fellow, who had less scope for the ability of his sword-arm, from the circumstance of his attempting to pull away the chair with his left hand. Whenever he stooped to effect this object, his antagonist thrust at him very vigorously, and had it not been for the embarrassment his female enemies occasioned him, the latter would, in all probability, have dispatched or disabled his besieger. This fortified gentleman, being backed by the window, I immediately concluded to be the person who had called to me for assistance.

At the other corner of the apartment was another cavalier, who used his sword with singular skill, but who, being hard pressed by two lusty fellows, was forced to employ that skill rather in defence than attack. Altogether, the disordered appearance of the room, the broken bottles, the fumes with which the hot atmosphere teemed, the evident profligacy of the two women, the half-undressed guise of the cavaliers, and the ruffian air and collected ferocity of the assailants, plainly denoted that it was one of those perilous festivals of pleasure in which imprudent gallants were often, in that day, betrayed by treacherous Delilahs into the hands of Philistines, who, not contented with stripping them for the sake of plunder, frequently murdered them for the sake of secrecy.

Having taken a rapid, but satisfactory, survey of the scene, I did not think it necessary to make any preparatory parley. I threw myself upon the nearest bravo with so hearty a good will that I ran him through the body before he had recovered

his surprise at my appearance. This somewhat startled the other two; they drew back and demanded quarter.

"Quarter, indeed!" cried the farther cavalier, releasing himself from his astonished female assailants, and leaping nimbly over his bulwark, into the centre of the room—"quarter, indeed, rascally *ivrognes!* No; it is our turn now; and, by Joseph of Arimathea! you shall sup with Pilate to night." So saying, he pressed his old assailant so fiercely that, after a short contest, the latter retreated till he had backed himself to the door; he then suddenly turned round, and vanished in a twinkling. The third and remaining ruffian was far from thinking himself a match for three men: he fell on his knees, and implored mercy. However the *ci-devant* sustainer of the besieged chair was but little disposed to afford him the clemency he demanded, and approached the crestfallen bravo with so grim an air of truculent delight, brandishing his sword, and uttering the most terrible threats, that there would have been small doubt of the final catastrophe of the trembling bully, had not the other gallant thrown himself in the way of his friend.

"Put up thy sword," said he, laughing, and yet with an air of command; "we must not court crime, and then punish it." Then, turning to the bully, he said. "Rise, Sir Rascal! the devil spares thee a little longer, and this gentleman will not disobey *his*, as well as *thy* master's wishes.—Begone!"

The fellow wanted no second invitation: he sprang to his legs, and to the door. The disappointed cavalier assisted his descent down the stairs with a kick, that would have done the work of the sword to any flesh not accustomed to similar applications. Putting up his rapier, the milder gentleman then turned to *the ladies*, who lay huddled together under shelter of the chair which their intended victim had deserted.

"Ah, Mesdames," said he, gravely, and with a low bow, "I am sorry for your disappointment. As long as you contented yourselves with robbery, it were a shame to have interfered with your innocent amusements; but cold steel becomes serious. Monsieur d'Argenson will favor you with some inquiries to-morrow; at present, I recommend you to empty what remains in the bottle. Adieu! Monsieur, to whom I am so greatly indebted, honor me with your arm down these stairs. You" (turning to his friend) "will follow us, and keep a sharp look behind. *Allons! Vive Henri Quatre!*"

As we descended the dark and rough stairs, my new companion said, "What an excellent antidote to the effects of the *vin de champagne* is this same fighting. I feel as if I had not

tasted a drop these six hours. What fortune brought you hither, Monsieur?" addressing me.

We were now at the foot of the first flight of stairs, a high and small window admitted the moonlight, and we saw each others' faces clearly.

"That fortune," answered I, looking at my acquaintance steadily, but with an expression of profound respect—"that fortune which watches over kingdoms, and which, I trust, may in no place or circumstance be a deserter from your Highness."

"Highness!" said my companion, coloring, and darting a glance, first at his friend and then at me. "Hist—sir, you know me, then—speak low—you know, then, for whom you have drawn your sword?"

"Yes, so please your Highness. I have drawn it this night for Philip of Orleans; I trust yet, in another scene, and for another cause, to draw it for the Regent of France!"

CHAPTER IX.

A Prince—an Audience—and a Secret Embassy.

THE Regent remained silent for a moment; he then said in an altered and grave voice, "*C'est bien, Monsieur!* I thank you for the distinction you have made. It were not amiss" (he added, turning to his comrade) "that *you* would now and then deign, henceforward, to make the same distinction. But this is neither time nor place for parlance. On, gentlemen!"

We left the house, passed into the street, and moved on rapidly, and in silence, till the constitutional gaiety of the Duke, recovering its ordinary tone, he said with a laugh—

"Well, now, it is a little hard that a man who has been toiling all day for the public good should feel ashamed of indulging for an hour or two at night in his private amusements; but so it is. 'Once grave, always grave!' is the maxim of the world—eh, Chatran?"

The companion bowed. "Tis a very good saying, please your royal Highness, and is intended to warn us from the sin of *ever* being grave!"

"Ha, ha! you have a great turn for morality, my good *Chatran!*" cried the Duke, "and would draw a rule for conduct out of the wickedest *bon mot* of Dubois. Monsieur, pardon me, but I have seen you before: you are the Count—"

"Devereux, Monseigneur."

“True, true! I have heard much of you: you are intimate with Milord Bolingbroke. Would that I had fifty friends like *him*.”

“Monseigneur would have little trouble in his regency if his wish were realized,” said Chatran.

“*Tant mieux*, so long as I had little odium, as well as little trouble—a happiness which, thanks to you and Dubois, I am not likely to enjoy—But there is the carriage!”

And the Duke pointed to a dark, plain carriage, which we had suddenly come upon.

“Count Devereux,” said the merry Regent, “you will enter; my duty requires that, at this seductive hour, I should see a young gentleman of your dangerous age safely lodged at his hotel!”

We entered, Chatran gave the orders, and we drove off rapidly.

The Regent hummed a tune, and his two companions listened to it in respectful silence.

“Well, well, Messieurs,” said he, bursting out at last into open voice, “I will ever believe in future, that the gods *do* look benignantly on us worshippers of the *Alma Venus*! Do you know much of Tibullus, Monsieur Devereux? And can you assist my memory with the continuation of the line—

“‘*Quisquis amore tenetur, eat—*’”

—“‘*tutusque sacerque
Qualibet, insidias non timuisse decet.*’”*

answered I.

“*Bon!*” cried the duke. “I love a gentleman from my very soul, when he can both fight well and read Latin! I hate a man who is merely a wine-bibber and blade-drawer. By St. Louis, though it is an excellent thing to fill the stomach, especially with Tokay, yet there is no reason in the world why we should not fill the head too. But here we are. Adieu, Monsieur Devereux—we shall see you at the Palace.”

I expressed my thanks briefly at the Regent’s condescension, descended from the carriage (which instantly drove off with renewed celerity), and once more entered my hotel.

Two or three days after my adventure with the Regent, I thought it expedient to favor that eccentric prince with a visit. During the early part of his regency, it is well known how successfully he combated with his natural indolence, and how devotedly his mornings were surrendered to the toils of his new office; but when pleasure has grown habit, it requires a

* Whoever is possessed by Love may go safe and holy whithersoever he likes. It becomes not him to fear snares.

stronger mind than that of *Philippe Debonnair* to give it a permanent successor in business. Pleasure is, indeed, like the genius of the fable, the most useful of slaves, while you subdue it: the most intolerable of tyrants the moment your negligence suffers it to subdue you.

The hours in which the Prince gave audience to the comrades of his lighter, rather than grave occupations, were those immediately before and after his levee. I thought that this would be the best season for me to present myself. Accordingly, one morning after the levee, I repaired to his palace.

The ante-chamber was already crowded. I sat myself quietly down in one corner of the room, and looked upon the motley groups around. I smiled inly as they reminded me of the scenes my own ante-room, in my younger days of folly and fortune was wont to exhibit; the same heterogeneous assemblage (only upon a grander scale) of the ministers to the physical appetites and the mental tastes. There was the fretting and impudent mountebank, side by side with the gentle and patient scholar—the harlot's envoy and the priest's messenger—the agent of the police, and the licensed breaker of its laws—there; but what boots a more prolix description? What is the ante-room of a great man, who has many wants and many tastes, but a panorama of the blended disparities of this compounded world!

While I was moralizing, a gentleman suddenly thrust his head out of a door, and appeared to reconnoitre us. Instantly the crowd swept up to him. I thought I might as well follow the general example, and pushing aside some of my fellow loiterers, I presented myself and my name to the gentleman, with the most ingratiating air I could command.

The gentleman, who was tolerably civil for a great man's great man, promised that my visit should be immediately announced to the Prince; and then, with the politest bow imaginable, slapped the door in my face. After I had waited about seven or eight minutes longer, the gentleman reappeared, singled me from the crowd, and desired me to follow him; I passed through another room, and was presently in the Regent's presence.

I was rather startled when I saw, by the morning light, and in *déshabille*, the person of that royal martyr to dissipation. His countenance was red, but bloated, and a weakness in his eyes added considerably to the jaded and haggard expression of his features. A proportion of stomach rather inclined to corpulency seemed to betray the taste for the pleasures of the

table, which the most radically coarse, and yet (strange to say) the most generally accomplished and really good-natured of royal profligates, combined with his other qualifications. He was yawning very elaborately over a great heap of papers, when I entered. He finished his yawn (as if it were too brief and too precious a recreation to lose), and then said, "Good morning, Monsieur Devereux ; I am glad that you have found me out *at last*."

"I was afraid, Monseigneur, of appearing an intruder on your presence, by offering my homage to you before."

"So like my good fortune," said the Regent, turning to a man seated at another table at some distance, whose wily, astute countenance, piercing eye, and licentious expression of lip and brow indicated at once the ability and vice which composed his character. "So like my good fortune, is it not Dubois? If ever I meet with a tolerably pleasant fellow, who does not disgrace me by his birth or reputation, he is always so terribly afraid of intruding! and whenever I pick up a respectable personage without wit, or a wit without respectability, he attaches himself to me like a burr, and can't live a day without inquiring after my health."

Dubois smiled, bowed, but did not answer, and I saw that his look was bent darkly and keenly upon me.

"Well," said the Prince, "what think you of our opera, Count Devereux?—It beats your English one—eh?"

"Ah, certainly, Monseigneur; ours is but a reflection of yours."

"So says your friend, Milord Bolingbroke, a person who knows about operas almost as much as I do, which, vanity apart, is saying a great deal. I should like very well to visit England—what should I learn best there? In Spain (I shall always love Spain), I learnt to cook."

"Monseigneur, I fear," answered I, smiling, "could obtain but little additional knowledge in that art in our barbarous country. A few rude and imperfect inventions have, indeed, of late years astonished the cultivators of the science; but the night of ignorance rests still upon its main principles and leading truths. Perhaps, what Monseigneur would find best worth studying in England would be—the women."

"Ah, the women all over the world!" cried the Duke, laughing; "but I hear your *belles Anglaises* are sentimental, and love à l'*Arcadienne*."

"It is true at present: but who shall say how far Monseigneur's example might enlighten them in a train of thought so erroneous?"

"True. Nothing like example, eh, Dubois? What would Philip of Orleans have been but for thee?"

" 'L'exemple souvent n'est qu'un miroir trompeur ;
 Quelquefois l'un se brise où l'autre s'est sauvé,
 Et par où l'un périt, un autre est conservé, ' " *

answered Dubois out of *Cinna*.

"Corneille is right," rejoined the Regent. "After all, to do thee justice, *mon petit Abbé*, example has little to do with corrupting us. Nature pleads the cause of Pleasure, as Hypérides pleaded that of Phyrne. She has no need of eloquence: she unveils the bosom of her client, and her client is acquitted."

"Monseigneur shows at least that he has learnt to profit by my humble instructions in the classics," said Dubois.

The Duke did not answer. I turned my eyes to some drawings on the table—I expressed my admiration of them. "They are mine," said the Regent. "Ah! I should have been much more accomplished as a private gentleman than I fear I ever shall be as a public man of toil and business. Business—bah! But Necessity is the only real sovereign in the world, the only despot for whom there is no law. What! are you going already, Count Devereux?"

"Monseigneur's anti-room is crowded with less fortunate persons than myself, whose sins of envy and covetousness I am now answerable for."

"Ah—well! I must hear the poor devils; the only pleasure I have is in seeing how easily I can make them happy. Would to heaven, Dubois, that one could govern a great kingdom only by fair words! Count Devereux, you have seen me to-day as my acquaintance; see me again as my petitioner. *Bon jour, Monsieur.*"

And I retired, very well pleased with my reception: from that time, indeed, during the rest of my short stay at Paris, the Prince honored me with his especial favor. But I have dwelt too long on my sojourn at the French court. The persons whom I have described, and who alone made that sojourn memorable, must be my apology.

One day I was honored by a visit from the Abbé Dubois. After a short conversation upon indifferent things, he accosted me thus:

"You are aware, Count Devereux, of the partiality which the Regent has conceived towards you. Fortunate would it be

* Example is often but a deceitful mirror; where sometimes one destroys himself, while another comes off safe; and where one perishes, another is preserved,

for that Prince" (here Dubois elevated his brows with an ironical and arch expression), "so good by disposition, so injured by example, if his partiality had been more frequently testified towards gentlemen of your merit. A mission of considerable importance, and one demanding great personal address, gives his Royal Highness an opportunity of testifying his esteem for you. He honored me with a conference on the subject yesterday, and has now commissioned me to explain to you the technical objects of this mission, and to offer to you the honor of undertaking it. Should you accept the proposals, you will wait upon his highness before his levée to-morrow."

Dubois then proceeded, in the clear, rapid manner peculiar to him, to comment on the state of Europe. "For France," said he, in concluding his sketch, "peace is absolutely necessary. A drained treasury, an exhausted country, require it. You see, from what I have said, that Spain and England are the principal quarters from which we are to dread hostilities. Spain we must guard against—England we must propitiate; the latter object is easy in England in any case, whether James or George be uppermost. For whoever is king in England will have quite enough to do at home to make him agree willingly enough to peace abroad. The former requires a less simple and a more enlarged policy. I fear the ambition of the Queen of Spain, and the turbulent genius of her minion Alberoni. We must fortify ourselves by new forms of alliance, at various courts; which shall at once defend us and intimidate our enemies. We wish to employ some nobleman of ability and address, on a secret mission to Russia—will you be that person? Your absence from Paris will be but short—you will see a very droll country, and a very droll sovereign; you will return hither, doubly the rage and with a just claim to more important employment hereafter. What say you to the proposal?"

"I must hear more," said I, "before I decide."

The Abbé renewed. It is needless to repeat all the particulars of the commission that he enumerated. Suffice it that after a brief consideration, I accepted the honor proposed to me. The Abbé wished me joy, relapsed into his ordinary strain of coarse levity for a few minutes, and then reminding me that I was to attend the Regent on the morrow, departed. It was easy to see that in the mind of that subtle and crafty ecclesiastic, with whose manœuvres private intrigues were always blended with public, this offer of employment veiled a desire to banish me from the immediate vicinity of the good-natured Regent, whose favor the aspiring Abbé wished at that exact moment ex-

clusively to monopolize. Mere men of pleasure he knew would not interfere with his aims upon the Prince; mere men of business still less: but a man who was thought to combine the capacities of both, and who was moreover distinguished by the Regent, he deemed a more dangerous rival than the inestimable person thus suspected really was.

However, I cared little for the honest man's motives. Adventure to me had always greater charms than dissipation, and it was far more agreeable to the nature of my ambition, and to win distinction by any honorable method, than by favoritism at a court, so hollow, so unprincipled, and so grossly licentious as that of the Regent. There to be the most successful courtier was to be the most amusing profligate. Alas, when the heart is away from its objects, and the taste revolts at its excess, Pleasure is worse than palling—it is a torture!—and the devil in Jonson's play did not perhaps greatly belie the truth when he averred “that the pains in his native country were pastimes to the life of a person of Fashion.”

The Duke of Orleans received me the next morning with more than his wonted *bonhomie*. What a pity that so good-natured a prince should have been so bad a man! He enlarged more easily and carelessly than his worthy preceptor had done upon the several points to be observed in my mission—then condescendingly told me he was very sorry to lose me from his court, and asked me, at all events, before I left Paris, to be a guest at one of his select suppers. I appreciated this honor at its just value. To these suppers none were asked but the Prince's chums, or *roués*,* as he was pleased to call them. As, *entre nous*, these chums were for the most part the most good-for-nothing people in the kingdom, I could not but feel highly flattered at being deemed, by so deep a judge of character as the Regent, worthy to join them. I need not say that the invitation was eagerly accepted, nor that I left *Philippe le Débonnaire* impressed with the idea of his being the most admirable person in Europe. What a fool a great man is if he does not study to be affable—weigh a prince's condescension in one scale, and all the cardinal virtues in the other, and the condescension will outweigh them all! The Regent of France ruined his country as much as he well could do, and there was not a dry eye when he died!

A day had now effected a change—a great change in my fate.

* The term *roué*, now so comprehensive, was first given by the Regent to a select number of his friends; according to them, because they would be broken on the wheel for his sake; according to himself, because they deserved to be so broken.—ED.

A new court—a new theatre of action—a new walk of ambition, were suddenly opened to me. Nothing could be more promising than my first employment—nothing could be more pleasing, than the anticipation of change. “I must force myself, to be agreeable to-night,” said I, as I dressed for the Regent’s supper. “I must leave behind me the remembrance of a *bon mot*, or I shall be forgotten.”

And I was right. In that whirlpool, the capital of France, everything sinks but wit—that is always on the surface, and we must cling to it with a firm grasp, if we would not go down to—“the deep oblivion.”

CHAPTER X.

Royal Exertions for the Good of the People.

WHAT a singular scene was that private supper with the Regent of France and his *roués!* The party consisted of twenty: nine gentlemen of the court besides myself, four men of low rank and character—but admirable buffoons—and six ladies, such ladies as the Duke loved best—witty, lively, sarcastic, and good for nothing.

De Chatran accosted me.

“*Je suis ravi, mon cher Monsieur Devereux,*” said he gravely, “to see you in such excellent company—you must be a little surprised to find yourself here!”

“Not at all! every scene is worth one visit. He, my good Monsieur Chatran, who goes to the House of Correction once is a philosopher—he who goes twice is a rogue!”

“Thank you, Count, what am I then—I have been *here* twenty times?”

“Why, I will answer you with a story. The soul of a Jesuit one night, when its body was asleep, wandered down to the lower regions; Satan caught it, and was about to consign it to some appropriate place; the soul tried hard to excuse itself: you know what a cunning thing a Jesuit’s soul is! ‘Monsieur Satan,’ said the spirit; ‘no king should punish a traveller as he would a native. Upon my honor, I am merely here *en voyageur.*’ ‘Go, then,’ said Satan, and the soul flew back to its body. But the Jesuit died, and came to the lower regions a second time. He was brought before his Satanic majesty, and made the same excuse. ‘No, no,’ cried Beelzebub; ‘once here is to be only *le diable voyageur*—twice here, and you are *le diable tout de bon.*’”

"Ha! ha! ha!" said Chatran, laughing: "I then am the *diable tout de bon!* 'tis well I *am no worse*; for we reckon the *roués* a devilish deal worse than the very worst of the devils—but see, the Regent approaches us."

And, leaving a very pretty and gay-looking lady, the Regent sauntered towards us. It was in walking, by the by, that he lost all the grace of his mien. I don't know, however, that one wishes a great man to be graceful, so long as he's familiar.

"Ah, Monsieur Devereux!" said he, "we will give you some lessons in cooking to-night—we shall show you how to provide for yourself in that barbarous country which you are about to visit. *Tout voyageur doit tout savoir!*"

"A very admirable saying; which leads me to understand that Monseigneur has been a great traveller," said I.

"Ay, in all things and *all places*—eh, Count!" answered the Regent, smiling; "but," here he lowered his voice a little, "I have never yet learned how *you* came so opportunely to our assistance that night. *Dieu me damne!* but it reminds me of the old story of the two sisters meeting at a gallant's house. 'Oh, sister, how came *you* here?' said one, in virtuous amazement. '*Ciel! ma sœur!*' cries the other; 'what brought *you?*'" *

"Monseigneur is pleasant," said I, laughing; "but a man does now and then (though I own it is very seldom) do a good action, without having previously resolved to commit a bad one!"

"I like your parenthesis," cried the Regent, "it reminds me of my friend St. Simon, who thinks so ill of mankind, that I asked him one day, whether it was possible for him to despise anything more than men? 'Yes,' said he, with a low bow, 'women!'"

"His experience," said I, glancing at the female part of the coterie, "was, I must own, likely to lead him to that opinion."

"None of your sarcasms, Monsieur," cried the Regent. "*L'amusement est un des besoins des l'homme*—as I hear young Arouet very pithily said the other day; and we owe gratitude to whomsoever it may be that supplies that want. Now, you will agree with me that none supply it like women; therefore we owe them gratitude—therefore we must not hear them abused. Logically proved, I think!"

"Yes, indeed," said I, "it is a pleasure to find they have so able an advocate; and that your Highness can so well apply

* The reader will remember a better version of this anecdote in one of the most popular of the English comedies.—ED.

to yourself *both* the assertions in the motto of the great master of fortification, Vauban—"I destroy, but I defend."

"Enough," said the duke gayly, "now to *our fortifications*"; and he moved away towards the women; I followed the royal example; and soon found myself seated next to a pretty, and very small woman. We entered into conversation; and, when once begun, my fair companion took care that it should not cease, without a miracle. By the goddess Facundia, what volumes of words issued from that little mouth! and on all subjects too! church—state—law—politics—play-houses—lampoons—lace—liveries—kings—queens—roturiers—beggars—you would have thought, had you heard her, so vast was her confusion of all things, that chaos had come again. Our royal host did not escape her. "You never before supped here *en famille*," said she,—"Mon Dieu! it will do your heart good to see how much the Regent will eat. He has such an appetite—you know he never eats any dinner, in order to eat the more at supper. You see that little dark woman he is talking to?—well, she is Madame de Parabère—he calls her his little black crow—was there ever such a pet name? Can you guess why he likes her? Nay, never take the trouble of thinking—I will tell you at once—simply because she eats and drinks so much. *Parole d'honneur*, 'tis true. The Regent says he likes sympathy in all things!—is it not droll? What a hideous old man is that Nocé—his face looks as if it had caught the rainbow. That impudent fellow Dubois scolded him for squeezing so many louis out of the good Regent. The yellow creature attempted to deny the fact. 'Nay,' cried Dubois, 'you cannot contradict me; I see their very ghosts in your face.'"

While my companion was thus amusing herself, Nocé, unconscious of her panegyric on his personal attractions, joined us.

"Ah! my dear Nocé," said the lady, most affectionately, "how well you are looking! I am delighted to see you."

"I do not doubt it," said Nocé, "for I have to inform you that your petition is granted; your husband will have the place."

"Oh, how eternally grateful I am to you!" cried the lady in an extasy; "my poor, dear husband will be so rejoiced. I wish I had wings to fly to him!"

The gallant Nocé uttered a compliment—I thought myself *de trop*, and moved away. I again encountered Chatran.

"I overheard your conversation with Madame la Marquise," said he, smiling; "she has a bitter tongue—has she not?"

"Very ! how she abused the poor rogue Nocé !"

"Yes, and yet he is her lover !"

"Her lover !—you astonish me ; why, she seemed almost fond of her husband—the tears came in her eyes when she spoke of him."

"She *is* fond of him !" said Chatran drily. "She loves the ground he treads on—it is precisely for that reason she favors Nocé ; she is never happy but when she is procuring something *pour son cher bon mari*. She goes to spend a week at Nocé's country-house, and writes to her husband, with a pen dipped in her blood, saying, 'My *heart* is with thee !'"

"Certainly," said I, "France is the land of enigmas ; the sphynx must have been a *Parisiennne*. And when Jupiter made man, he made two natures utterly distinct from one another. One was *Human nature*, and the other *French nature* !"

At this moment supper was announced. We all adjourned to another apartment, where, to my great surprise, I observed the cloth laid—the sideboard loaded—the wines ready, but nothing to eat on the table ! A Madame de Savori, who was next me, noted my surprise.

"What astonishes you, Monsieur ?" said she.

"*Nothing*, Madame !" said I, "that is, the absence of *all* things."

"What ! you expected to see supper ?"

"I own my delusion—I did."

"It is not cooked yet !"

"Oh ! well, I can wait !"

"And officiate too !" said the lady ; "in a word, this is one of the Regent's cooking nights."

Scarcely had I received this explanation, before there was a general adjournment to an inner apartment, where all the necessary articles for cooking were ready to our hand.

"The Regent led the way,
To light us to our prey,"

and, with an irresistible gravity and importance of demeanor, entered upon the duties of *chef*. In a very short time we were all engaged. Nothing could exceed the zest with which every one seemed to enter into the rites of the kitchen. You would have imagined they had been born scullions, they handled the *batterie de cuisine* so naturally. As for me, I sought protection with Madame de Savori ; and as, fortunately, she was very deeply skilled in the science, she had occasion to employ me

in many minor avocations which her experience taught her would not be above my comprehension.

After we had spent a certain time in this dignified occupation, we returned to the *salle à manger*. The attendants placed the dishes on the table, and we all fell to. Whether out of self-love to their own performances, or complaisance to the performances of others, I cannot exactly say, but certain it is that all the guests acquitted themselves *à merveille*; you would not have imagined the Regent the only one who had gone without dinner to eat the more at supper. Even that devoted wife to her *cher bon mari*, who had so severely dwelt upon the good Regent's infirmity, occupied herself with an earnestness that would have seemed almost wolf-like in a famished grenadier.

Very silent indeed was the conversation till the supper was nearly over; then the effects of the wine became more perceptible. The Regent was the first person who evinced that he had ate sufficiently to be able to talk. Utterly dispensing with the slightest veil of reserve or royalty, he leant over the table, and poured forth a whole tide of jests. The guests then began to think it was indecorous to stuff themselves any more, and, as well as they were able, they followed their host's example. But the most amusing personages were the buffoons; they mimicked, and joked, and lampooned, and lied as if by inspiration. As the bottle circulated, and the talk grew louder, the lampooning and the lying were not, however, confined to the buffoons. On the contrary, the best-born and best-bred people seemed to excel the most in those polite arts. Every person who boasted a fair name, or a decent reputation at court, was seized, condemned, and mangled in an instant. And how elaborately the good folks slandered! It was no hasty word and flippant repartee which did the business of the absent—there was a precision, a polish, a labor of malice, which showed that each person had brought so many reputations already cut up. The good-natured convivialists differed from all other backbiters that I have ever met, in the same manner as the toads of Surinam differ from all other toads, viz.: their venomous offspring were not half-formed, misshapen tadpoles of slander, but sprung at once into life—well shaped and fully developed.

"*Chantons!*" cried the Regent, whose eyes, winking and rolling, gave token of his approaching that state which equals the beggar to the king, "let us have a song. Nocé, lift up thy voice, and let us hear what the tokay has put into thy head!"

Nocé obeyed, and sang as men half drunk generally do sing.

"*O Ciel!*" whispered the malicious Savori, "what a hideous screech—one would think he had *turned his face into a voice!*"

"*Bravissimo!*" cried the duke, when his guest had ceased,— "what happy people we are! Our doors are locked—not a soul can disturb us—we have plenty of wine—we are going to get drunk—and we have all Paris to abuse! what were you saying of Marshal Villars, my little Parabère?"

And pounce went the little Parabère upon the unfortunate marshal. At last, slander had a respite—nonsense began its reign—the full inspiration descended upon the orgies—the good people lost the use of their faculties. Noise—clamor, uproar, broken bottles, falling chairs, and (I grieve to say) their occupants falling too—conclude the scene of the royal supper. Let us drop the curtain.

CHAPTER XI.

An Interview.

I WENT a little out of my way, on departing from Paris, to visit Lord Bolingbroke, who at that time was in the country. There are some men whom one never really sees in capitals; one sees their masks, not themselves; Bolingbroke was one. It was in retirement, however brief it might be, that his true nature expanded itself, and, weary of being admired, he allowed one to love, and even in the wildest course of his earlier excesses, to respect him. My visit was limited to a few hours, but it made an indelible impression upon me.

"Once more," I said, as we walked to and fro in the garden of his temporary retreat, "once more you are in your element; minister and statesman of a prince, and chief supporter of the great plans which are to restore him to his throne."

A slight shade passed over Bolingbroke's fine brow. "To you my constant friend," said he, "to you—who of all my friends alone remained true in exile, and unshaken by misfortune—to you I will confide a secret that I would entrust to no other. I repent me already of having espoused this cause. I did so while yet the disgrace of an unmerited attainder tingled in my veins; while I was in the full tide of those warm passions which have so often misled me. Myself attainted—the best beloved of my associates in danger—my party deserted, and seemingly lost but for some bold measure such as then offered; these were all that I saw. I listened eagerly to repre-

sentations I now find untrue; and I accepted that rank and power from one prince which were so rudely and gallingly torn from me by another. I perceive that I have acted imprudently, but what is done, is done; no private scruples, no private interest, shall make me waver in a cause that I have once pledged myself to serve; and if I *can* do aught to make a weak cause powerful, and a divided party successful, I will; but, Devereux, you are wrong, this is *not* my element. Ever in the paths of strife I have sighed for quiet; and, while most eager in the pursuit of ambition, I have languished the most fondly for content. The littleness of intrigue disgusts me, and while *the branches* of my power soared the highest, and spread with the most luxuriance, it galled me to think of the miry soil in which that power was condemned to strike *the roots*,* upon which it stood, and by which it must be nourished."

I answered Bolingbroke as men are wont to answer statesmen who complain of their calling—half in compliment, half in contradiction, but he replied with unusual seriousness:

"Do not think I affect to speak thus: you know how eagerly I snatch any respite from state, and how unmovedly I have borne the loss of prosperity and of power. You are now about to enter those perilous paths which I have trod for years. Your passions, like mine, are strong! Beware, oh, beware, how you indulge them without restraint! They are the fires which should warm; let them not be the fires which destroy."

Bolingbroke paused in evident and great agitation—he resumed: "I speak strongly, for I speak in bitterness; I was thrown early into the world; my whole education had been framed to make me ambitious; it succeeded in its end. I was ambitious and of all success—success in pleasure, success in fame. To wean me from the former, my friends persuaded me to marry; they chose my wife for her connections and her fortune, and I gained those advantages at the expense of what was better than either—happiness! You know how unfortunate has been that marriage, and how young I was when it was contracted. Can you wonder that it failed in the desired effect? Every one courted me, every temptation assailed me; pleasure even became more alluring abroad, when at home I had no longer the hope of peace: the indulgence of one passion begat the indulgence of another; and though my better sense *prompted* all my actions, it never *restrained* them to a

* Occasional Writer.—No. 1. The Editor has, throughout this work, usually, but not invariably, noted the passages in Bolingbroke's writings, in which there occur similes, illustrations, or striking thoughts, correspondent with those in the text.

proper limit. Thus the commencement of my actions has been generally prudent, and their *continuation* has deviated into rashness, or plunged into excess. Devereux, I have paid the forfeit of my errors with a terrible interest—when my motives have been pure, men have seen a fault in the conduct, and calumniated the motives; when my conduct has been blameless, men have remembered its former errors, and asserted that its present goodness only arose from some sinister intention—thus I have been termed crafty, when I was in reality rash, and that was called the inconsistency of interest which in reality was the inconstancy of passion.* I have reason, therefore, to warn you how you suffer your subjects to become your tyrants; and believe me no experience is so deep as that of one who has committed faults, and who has discovered their causes."

"Apply, my dear lord, that experience to your future career. You remember what the most sagacious of all pedants,† even though he was an emperor, has so happily expressed—'Repentance is a goddess, and the preserver of those who have erred.'"

"May I find her so!" answered Bolingbroke; "but as *Montaigne* or *Charron* would say ‡ . . . 'Every man is at once his own sharper and his own bubble.' We make vast promises to ourselves, and a passion, an example, sweeps even the remembrance of those promises from our minds. One is too apt to believe men hypocrites, if their conduct squares not with their sentiments; but *perhaps no vice is more rare, for no task is more difficult, than systematic hypocrisy*: and the same susceptibility which exposes men to be easily impressed by the allurements of vice, renders them at heart most struck by the loveliness of virtue. Thus their language and their hearts worship the divinity of the latter, while their conduct strays the most erringly towards the false shrines over which the former presides. Yes! I have never been blind to the surpassing excellence of GOOD. The still, sweet whispers of virtue have been heard, even when the storm has been loudest, and the

* This I do believe to be the real (though perhaps it is a new) light in which Lord Bolingbroke's life and character are to be viewed. The same writers who tell us of his ungovernable passions, always prefix to his name the epithets "designing, cunning, crafty," etc. Now I will venture to tell these historians that if they had studied human nature instead of party pamphlets, they would have discovered that there are certain incompatible qualities which can never be united in one character—that no man can have violent passions to which he is in the habit of yielding, and be systematically crafty and designing. No man can be all heat, and at the same time all coolness; but opposite causes not unoften produce like effects. Passion usually makes men changeable, so sometimes does craft; hence the mistake of the uninquiring or the shallow; and hence while — writes, and — compiles, will the characters of great men be transmitted to posterity misstated and belied.—E.D.

† The Emperor Julian. The original expression is paraphrased in the text.

‡ "Spirit of Patriotism."

bark of Reason been driven the most impetuously over the waves : and, at this moment, I am impressed with a foreboding that sooner or later, the whispers will not only be heard, but their suggestions be obeyed ; and that, far from courts and intrigue, from dissipation and ambition, I shall learn, in retirement, the true principles of wisdom, and the real objects of life."

Thus did Bolingbroke converse, and thus did I listen, till it was time to depart. I left him impressed with a melancholy that was rather soothing than distasteful. Whatever were the faults of that most extraordinary and most dazzling genius, no one was ever more candid* in confessing his own errors. A systematically bad man either ridicules what is good, or disbelieves in its existence ; but no man can be hardened in vice whose heart is still sensible of the excellence and the glory of virtue.

BOOK V.

CHAPTER I.

A Portrait.

MYSTERIOUS impulse at the heart, which never suffers us to be at rest, which urges us onward as by an unseen, yet irresistible law—human planets in a petty orbit, hurried forever and forever, till our course is run and our light is quenched—through the circle of a dark and impenetrable destiny! art thou not some faint forecast and type of our wanderings hereafter? of the unslumbering nature of the soul? of the everlasting progress which we are pre-doomed to make through the

* It is impossible to read the letter to Sir W. Windham, without being remarkably struck with the dignified and yet open candor which it displays. The same candor is equally visible in whatever relates to *himself*, in all Lord Bolingbroke's writings and correspondence, and yet candor is the last attribute usually conceded to him. But never was there a writer whom people have talked of more and read less ; and I do not know a greater proof of this than the ever-repeated assertion (echoed from a most incompetent authority) of the said letter to Sir W. Windham being the finest of all Lord Bolingbroke's writings. It is an article of great value to the history of the times ; but, as to all the higher graces and qualities of composition, it is one of the least striking (and on the other hand it is one of the most verbally incorrect) which he has bequeathed to us (the posthumous works always excepted). I am not sure whether the most brilliant passages—the most noble illustrations—the most profound reflections, and most useful truths—to be found in all his writings, are not to be gathered from the least popular of them—such as that volume entitled " Political Tracts,"—Ed.

countless steps, and realms, and harmonies in the infinite creation? Oh, often in my roving have I dared to dream so—often have I soared on the wild wings of thought above the “smoke and stir” of this dim earth, and wrought, from the restless visions of my mind, a chart of the glories and the wonders which the released spirit may hereafter visit and behold!

What a glad awakening from self,—what a sparkling and fresh draught from a new source of being,—what a wheel within wheel, animating, impelling, arousing all the rest of this animal machine, is the first excitement of Travel! The first free escape from the bonds of the linked and tame life of cities and social vices,—the jaded pleasure and the hollow love, the monotonous round of sordid objects and dull desires,—the eternal chain that binds us to things and beings, mockeries of ourselves,—alike, but oh, how different! the shock that brings us nearer to men only to make us strive against them, and learn, from the harsh contest of veiled deceit and open force, that the more we share the aims of others, the more deeply and basely rooted we grow to the littleness of self.

I passed more lingeringly through France than I did through the other portions of my route. I had dwelt long enough in the capital to be anxious to survey the country. It was then that the last scale which the magic of Louis Quatorze and the memory of his gorgeous court had left upon the moral eye, fell off, and I saw the real essence of that monarch's greatness, and the true relics of his reign. I saw the poor, and the degraded, and the racked, and the priest-ridden, tillers and plowers of the soil, which made the substance beneath the glittering and false surface—the body of that vast empire, of which I had hitherto beheld only the face, and THAT darkly, and for the most part covered by a mask!

No man can look upon France, beautiful France, her rich soil, her temperate yet maturing clime, the gallant and bold spirits which she produces, her boundaries so indicated and protected by nature itself, her advantages of ocean and land, of commerce and agriculture, and not wonder that her prosperity should be so bloated, and her real state so wretched and diseased.

Let England draw the moral, and beware not only of wars which exhaust, but of governments which impoverish. A waste of the public wealth is the most lasting of public afflictions; and “the treasury which is drained by extravagance must be refilled by crime.”*

* Tacitus,

I remember one beautiful evening an accident to my carriage occasioned my sojourn for a whole afternoon in a small village. The *Curé* honored me with a visit, and we strolled, after a slight repast, into the hamlet. The priest was complaisant, quiet in manner, and not ill informed, for his obscure station and scanty opportunities of knowledge; he did not seem, however, to possess the vivacity of his countrymen, but was rather melancholy and pensive, not only in his expression of countenance, but his cast of thought.

“You have a charming scene here; I almost feel as if it were a sin to leave it so soon.”

We were, indeed, in a pleasant and alluring spot at the time I addressed this observation to the good *Curé*. A little rivulet emerged from a copse to the left and ran sparkling and dimpling beneath our feet, to deck with a more living verdure the village green, which it intersected with a winding, nor unmelodious stream. We had paused, and I was leaning against an old and solitary chestnut tree, which commanded the whole scene. The village was a little in the rear, and the smoke from its few chimneys rose slowly to the silent and deep skies, not wholly unlike the human wishes, which, though they spring from the grossness and the fumes of earth, purify themselves as they ascend to Heaven. And from the village (when other sounds, which I shall note presently, were for an instant still), came the whoop of children, mellowed, by distance, into a confused, yet thrilling sound, which fell upon the heart like a voice of our gone childhood itself. Before, in the far expanse, stretched a chain of hills on which the autumn sun sunk slowly, pouring its yellow beams over groups of peasantry, which, on the opposite side of the rivulet, and at some interval from us, were scattered, partly over the green, and partly gathered beneath the shade of a little grove. The former were of the young, and those to whom youth's sports are dear, and were dancing to the merry music, which (ever and anon blended with the laugh and the tone of a louder jest) floated joyously on our ears. The fathers and matrons of the hamlet were inhaling a more quiet joy beneath the trees, and I involuntarily gave a tenderer interest to their converse by supposing them to sanction to each other the rustic loves which they might survey among their children.

“Will not Monsieur draw nearer to the dancers,” said the *Curé*; “there is a plank thrown over the rivulet a little lower down?”

“No!” said I, “perhaps they are seen to better advantage

where we are—what mirth will bear too close an inspection?"

"True, sir," remarked the priest, and he sighed.

"Yet," I resumed musingly, and I spoke rather to myself than to my companion, "yet, how happy do they seem! what a revival of our Arcadian dreams are the flute and the dance, the glossy trees all glowing in the autumn sunset, the green sod, and the murmuring rill, and the buoyant laugh startling the satyr in his leafy haunts; and the rural loves which will grow sweeter still than the sun has set, and the twilight has made the sigh more tender, and the blush of a mellower hue! Ah, why is it only the revival of a dream? why must it be only an interval of labor and woe—the brief saturnalia of slaves—the green resting-spot in a dreary and long road of travail and toil?"

"You are the first stranger I have met," said the Curé, "who seems to pierce beneath the thin veil of our Gallic gayety; the first to whom the scene we now survey is fraught with other feelings than a belief in the happiness of our peasantry, and an envy at its imagined exuberance. But as it is not the happiest individuals, so I fear it is not the happiest nations, that are the gayest."

I looked at the Curé with some surprise. "Your remark is deeper than the ordinary wisdom of your tribe, my father," said I.

"I have travelled over three parts of the globe," answered the Curé; "I was not always intended for what I am"; and the priest's mild eyes flashed with a sudden light that as suddenly died away. "Yes, I have travelled over the greater part of the known world," he repeated, in a more quiet tone, "and I have noted that where a man has many comforts to guard, and many rights to defend, he necessarily shares the thought and the seriousness of those who feel the value of a treasure which they possess, and whose most earnest meditations are intent upon providing against its loss. I have noted, too, that the joy produced by a momentary suspense of labor is naturally great, in proportion to the toil; hence it is that no European mirth is so wild as that of the Indian slave, when a brief holiday releases him from his task. Alas! that very mirth is the strongest evidence of the weight of the previous chains; even as, in ourselves, we find the happiest moment we enjoy is that immediately succeeding the cessation of deep sorrow to the mind, or violent torture to the body."*

* This reflection, if true, may console us for the loss of those village dances and peasant holidays for which "merry England" was once celebrated. The loss of them has been ascribed to the gloomy influence of the Puritans; but it has never occurred to the good poets, who have so mourned over that loss, that it is also to be ascribed to the *liberty* which those Puritans *generalized*, if they did not introduce.—ED.

I was struck by this observation of the priest.

"I see now," said I, "that, as an Englishman, I have no reason to repine at the proverbial gravity of my countrymen, or to envy the lighter spirit of the sons of Italy and France."

"No," said the Curé, "the happiest nations are those in whose people you witness the least sensible reverses from gayety to dejection ; and that *thought*, which is the noblest characteristic of the isolated man, is also that of a people. Freemen are serious, they have objects at their heart worthy to engross attention. It is reserved for slaves to indulge in groans at one moment, and laughter at another."

"At that rate," said I, "the best sign for France will be when the gayety of her sons is no longer a just proverb, and the laughing lip is succeeded by the thoughtful brow."

We remained silent for several minutes ; our conversation had shed a gloom over the light scene before us, and the voice of the flute no longer sounded musically on my ear. I proposed to the Curé to return to my inn. As we walked slowly in that direction, I surveyed my companion more attentively than I had hitherto done. He was a model of masculine vigor and grace of form ; and, had I not looked earnestly upon his cheek, I should have thought him likely to outlive the very oaks around the hamlet church where he presided. But the cheek was worn and hectic, and seemed to indicate that the keen fire which burns at the deep heart, unseen, but unslaking, would consume the mortal fuel, long before Time should even have commenced his gradual decay.

"You have travelled then, much, sir," said I, and the tone of my voice was that of curiosity.

The good Curé penetrated into my desire to hear something of his adventures ; and few are the recluses who are not gratified by the interest of others, or who are unwilling to reward it by recalling those portions of life most cherished by themselves. Before we parted that night, he told me his little history. He had been educated for the army ; and before he entered the profession he had seen the daughter of a neighbor—loved her—and the old story—she loved him again, and died before the love passed the ordeal of marriage. He had no longer a desire for glory, but he had for excitement. He sold his little property and travelled, as he had said, for nearly fourteen years, equally over the polished lands of Europe, and the far climates, where Truth seems fable, and Fiction finds her own legends realized or excelled.

He returned home, poor in pocket, and wearied in spirit.

He became what I beheld him. "My lot is fixed now," said he in conclusion; "but I find there is all the difference between quiet and content; my heart eats itself away here; it is the moth fretting the garment laid by, more than the storm or the fray would have worn it."

I said something, common-place enough, about solitude, and the blessings of competence, and the country. The Curé shook his head gently, but made no answer; perhaps he did wisely in thinking the feelings are ever beyond the reach of a stranger's reasoning. We parted more affectionately than acquaintances of so short a time usually do; and when I returned from Russia, I stopped at the village on purpose to inquire after him. A few months had done the work: the moth had already fretted away the human garment; and I walked to his lowly and nameless grave, and felt that it contained the only quiet in which monotony is not blended with regret!

CHAPTER II.

The entrance into Petersburg—a Rencontre with an inquisitive and mysterious Stranger.—Nothing like Travel.

It was certainly like entering a new world when I had the frigid felicity of entering Russia. I expected to have found Petersburg a wonderful city, and I was disappointed; it was a wonderful beginning of a city, and that was all I ought to have expected. But never, I believe, was there a place which there was so much difficulty in arriving at: such winds—such climate—such police arrangements—arranged, too, by such fellows! six feet high, with nothing human about them, but their uncleanliness and ferocity! Such vexatious delays, difficulties, ordeals, through which it was necessary to pass, and to pass, too, with an air of the most perfect satisfaction and content. By the Lord! one would have imagined, at all events, it must be an earthly paradise, to be so arduous of access, instead of a Dutch-looking town, with comfortless canals, and the most terrible climate in which a civilized creature was ever frozen to death. "It is just the city a nation of bears would build, if bears ever became architects," said I to myself, as I entered the northern capital, with my teeth chattering, and my limbs in a state of perfect insensibility.

My vehicle stopped at last, at a hotel to which I had been directed. It was a circumstance, I believe, peculiar to Petersburg, that, at the time I speak of, none of its streets had a

name; and if one wanted to find out a house, one was forced to do so by oral description. A pleasant thing it was, too, to stop in the middle of a street to listen to such descriptions at full length, and find oneself rapidly becoming ice as the detail progressed. After I was lodged, thawed, and fed, I fell fast asleep, and slept for eighteen hours, without waking once; to my mind it was a miracle that I ever woke again.

I then dressed myself, and, taking my interpreter, who was a Livonian, a great rascal, but clever, who washed twice a week, and did not wear a beard above eight inches long, I put myself into my carriage, and went to deliver my letters of introduction. I had one in particular to the Admiral Apraxin; and it was with him that I was directed to confer, previous to seeking an interview with the Emperor. Accordingly I repaired to his hotel, which was situated on a sort of quay, and was really, for Petersburg, very magnificent. In this quarter, then, or a little later, lived about thirty officers of the court, General Jagoyinsky, General Cyernichoff, etc.; and appropriately enough, the most remarkable public building in the vicinity is the great slaughter-house—a fine specimen that of practical satire!

On endeavoring to pass through the Admiral's hall, I had the mortification of finding myself rejected by his domestics. As two men in military attire were instantly admitted, I thought this a little hard upon a man who had travelled so far to see his admiralship, and accordingly hinted my indignation to Mr. Muscotofsky, my interpreter.

"You are not so richly dressed as those gentlemen," said he.

"That is the reason, is it?"

"If it so please St. Nicholas, it is; and, besides, those gentlemen have two men running before them, to cry, 'Clear the way!'"

"I had better, then, dress myself better, and take two *avant couriers*."

"If it so please St. Nicholas."

Upon this I returned, robed myself in scarlet and gold, took a couple of lacqueys, returned to Admiral Apraxin's, and was admitted in an instant. Who would have thought these savages so like us? Appearances, you see, produce realities all over the world?

The Admiral, who was a very great man at court—though he narrowly escaped Siberia, or the knout, some time after—was civil enough to me: but I soon saw that, favorite as he was with the Czar, that great man left but petty moves in the grand chess-board of politics to be played by any but himself: and

my proper plan in this court appeared evidently to be unlike that pursued in most others, where it is better to win the favorite than the prince. Accordingly, I lost no time in seeking an interview with the Czar himself, and readily obtained an appointment to that effect.

On the day before the interview took place, I amused myself with walking over the city, gazing upon its growing grandeur, and casting, in especial, a wistful eye upon the fortress or citadel, which is situated in an island, surrounded by the city; and upon the building of which more than one hundred thousand men are supposed to have perished. So great a sacrifice does it require to conquer nature.

While I was thus amusing myself, I observed a man in a small chaise with one horse pass me twice, and look at me very earnestly. Like most of my countrymen, I do not love to be stared at; however, I thought it better in that unknown country to change my intended frown for a good-natured expression of countenance, and turned away. A singular sight now struck my attention; a couple of men with beards that would have hidden a cassowary were walking slowly along in their curious long garments, and certainly (I say it reverently) disgracing the semblance of humanity, when, just as they came by a gate, two other men of astonishing height started forth, each armed with a pair of shears. Before a second was over, off went the beards of the first two passengers; and before another second expired, off went the skirts of their garments too—I never saw excrescences so expeditiously lopped. The two operators, who preserved a profound silence during this brief affair, then retired a little, and the mutilated wanderers pursued their way with an air of extreme discomfiture.

“Nothing like travel, certainly!” said I unconsciously aloud.

“True!” said a voice in English behind me. I turned, and saw the man who had noticed me so earnestly in the one-horse chaise. He was a tall, robust man, dressed very plainly, and even shabbily, in a green uniform, with a narrow tarnished gold lace; and I judged him to be a foreigner, like myself, though his accent and pronunciation evidently showed that he was not a native of the country in the language of which he accosted me.

“It is very true,” said he again; “there is nothing like travel!”

“And travel,” I rejoined courteously, “in those places where travel seldom extends. I have only been six days at Petersburg, and, till I came hither, I knew nothing of the variety of human nature or the power of human genius. But will you

allow me to ask the meaning of the very singular occurrence we have just witnessed?"

"Oh, nothing," rejoined the man with a broad, strong smile, "nothing but an attempt to make men out of brutes. This custom of shaving is not, thank Heaven, much wanted now—some years ago it was requisite to have several stations for barbers and tailors to perform their duties in. Now this is very seldom necessary: those gentlemen were especially marked out for the operation. By —— (and here the man swore a hearty English and somewhat seafaring oath, which a little astonished me in the streets of Petersburgh), I wish it were as easy to lop off all old customs! that it were as easy to clip the *beard of the mind*, sir! Ha—ha!"

"But the Czar must have found a little difficulty in effecting even this outward amendment, and to say truth, I see so many beards about still that I think the reform has been more partial than universal."

"Ah, those are the beards of the common people; the Czar leaves those for the present. Have you seen the docks yet?"

"No: I am not sufficiently a sailor to take much interest in them."

"Humph! humph! you are a soldier, perhaps?"

"I hope to be so one day or other—I am not yet?"

"Not yet! humph! there are opportunities in plenty for those who wish it—what is your profession then, and what do you know best?"

I was certainly not charmed with the honest inquisitiveness of the stranger. "Sir," said I, "sir, my profession is to answer no questions; and what I know best is—to hold my tongue!"

The stranger laughed out. "Well, well, that is what all Englishmen know best!" said he; "but don't be offended—if you will come home with me I will give you a glass of brandy!"

"I am very much obliged for the offer, but business obliges me to decline it—good-morning, sir."

"Good-morning!" answered the man, slightly moving his hat, in answer to my salutation.

We separated, as I thought, but I was mistaken. As ill-luck would have it, I lost my way in endeavoring to return home. While I was interrogating a French artisan, who seemed in a prodigious hurry, up comes my inquisitive friend in green again. "Ha! you have lost your way—I can put you into it better than any man in Petersburgh!"

I thought it right to accept the offer; and we moved on, side by side. I now looked pretty attentively at my gentleman. I

have said that he was tall and stout—he was also remarkably well-built, and had a kind of seaman's ease and freedom of gait and manner. His countenance was very peculiar; short, firm, and strongly marked; a small, but thick mustachio covered his upper lip—the rest of his face was shaved. His mouth was wide, but closed, when silent, with that expression of iron resolution which no feature *but* the mouth can convey. His eyes were large, well-opened, and rather stern; and when, which was often in the course of conversation, he pushed back his hat from his forehead, the motion developed two strong deep wrinkles between the eyebrows, which might be indicative either of thought or of irascibility—perhaps of both. He spoke quick, and with a little occasional embarrassment of voice, which, however, never communicated itself to his manner. He seemed, indeed, to have a perfect acquaintance with the mazes of the growing city; and, every now and then, stopped to say when such a house was built—whither such a street was to lead, &c. As each of these details betrayed some great triumph over natural obstacles, and sometimes over national prejudices, I could not help dropping a few enthusiastic expressions in praise of the genius of the Czar. The man's eyes sparkled as he heard them.

“It is easy to see,” said I, “that you sympathize with me, and that the admiration of this great man is not confined to Englishmen. How little in comparison seem all other monarchs: they ruin kingdoms—the Czar creates one. The whole history of the world does not afford an instance of triumphs so vast—so important—so glorious as his have been. How his subjects should adore him!”

“No,” said the stranger, with an altered and thoughtful manner, “it is not his subjects, but *their posterity*, that will appreciate his motives, and forgive him for wishing Russia to be an empire of MEN. The present generation may sometimes be laughed, sometimes forced, out of their more barbarous habits and brute-like customs, but they cannot be reasoned out of them; and they don't love the man who attempts to do it. Why, sir, I question whether Ivan IV., who used to butcher the dogs between prayers for an occupation, and between meals for an appetite, I question whether his memory is not to the full as much loved as the living Czar. I know, at least, that whenever the latter attempts a reform, the good Muscovites shrug up their shoulders, and mutter, ‘We did not do these things in the good old days of Ivan IV.’”

“Ah! the people of all nations are wonderfully attached to

their ancient customs ; and it is not unfrequently that the most stubborn enemies to living men are their ancestors."

"Ha, ha!—true—good!" cried the stranger; and then, after a short pause, he said in a tone of deep feeling which had not hitherto seemed at all a part of his character, "We should do that which is good to the human race, from some principle within, and should not therefore abate our efforts for the opposition, the rancor, or the ingratitude that we experience without. It will be enough reward for Peter I., if hereafter, when (in that circulation of knowledge throughout the world which I can compare to nothing better than the circulation of the blood in the human body) the glory of Russia shall rest, not upon the extent of her dominions, but that of her civilization—not upon the number of inhabitants, embruted and besotted, but the number of enlightened, prosperous, and free men; it will be enough for him, if he be considered to have laid the first stone of that great change—if his labors be fairly weighed against the obstacles which opposed them—if, for his honest and unceasing endeavor to improve millions, he be not too severely judged for offences in a more limited circle—and if, in consideration of having fought the great battle against custom, circumstances, and opposing nature, he be sometimes forgiven for not having invariably conquered himself."

As the stranger broke off abruptly, I could not but feel a little oppressed by his words and the energy with which they were spoken. We were now in sight of my lodging. I asked my guide to enter it; but the change in our conversation seemed to have unfitted him a little for my companionship.

"No," said he, "I have business now: we shall meet again; what's your name?"

"Certainly," thought I, "no man ever scrupled so little to ask plain questions": however, I answered him truly and freely.

"Devereux!" said he, as if surprised: "Ha!—well—we shall meet again. Good-day."

CHAPTER III.

The Czar—the Czarina.—A Feast at a Russian Nobleman's.

THE next day I dressed myself in my richest attire; and, according to my appointment, went with as much state as I could command to the Czar's palace (if an exceedingly humble

abode can deserve so proud an appellation). Although my mission was private, I was a little surprised by the extreme simplicity and absence from pomp which the royal residence presented. I was ushered for a few moments into a paltry antechamber, in which were several models of ships, cannon, and houses; two or three indifferent portraits—one of King William III., another of Lord Caermarthen. I was then at once admitted into the royal presence.

There were only two persons in the room—one a female, the other a man; no officers, no courtiers, no attendants, none of the insignia nor the witnesses of majesty. The female was Catharine, the Czarina; the man was the stranger I had met the day before—and Peter the Great. I was a little startled at the identity of the Czar with my inquisitive acquaintance. However, I put on as assured a countenance as I could. Indeed, I had spoken sufficiently well of the royal person to feel very little apprehension at having unconsciously paid so slight a respect to the royal dignity.

“Ho—ho!” cried the Czar, as I reverently approached him; “I told you we should meet soon!” and, turning round, he presented me to her majesty. That extraordinary woman received me very graciously; and, though I had been a spectator of the most artificial and magnificent court in Europe, I must confess that I could detect nothing in the Czarina’s air calculated to betray her having been the servant of a Lutheran minister and the wife of a Swedish dragoon. Whether it was that greatness was natural to her, or whether (which was more probable) she was an instance of the truth of Suckling’s hackneyed thought, in Brennoralt—“Success is a rare paint—hides all the ugliness.”

While I was making my salutations, the Czarina rose very quietly, and presently, to my no small astonishment, brought me with her own hand, a tolerably large glass of raw brandy. There is nothing in the world I hate so much as brandy; however, I swallowed the potation as if it had been nectar, and made some fine speech about it, which the good Czarina did not seem perfectly to understand. I then, after a few preliminary observations, entered upon my main business with the Czar. Her Majesty sat at a little distance, but evidently listened very attentively to the conversation. I could not but be struck with the singularly bold and strong sense of my royal host. There was no hope of deluding or misleading him by diplomatic subterfuge. The only way by which that wonderful man was ever misled was through his passions. His reason conquered all

errors but those of temperament. I turned the conversation as artfully as I could upon Sweden and Charles XII. "Hatred to one power," thought I, "may produce love to another; and if it does, the child will spring from a very vigorous parent." While I was on this subject, I observed a most fearful convulsion come over the face of the Czar—one so fearful that I involuntarily looked away. Fortunate was it that I did so. Nothing ever enraged him more than being observed in those constitutional contortions of countenance to which from his youth he had been subjected.

After I had conversed with the Czar as long as I thought decorum permitted, I rose to depart. He dismissed me very complaisantly. I re-entered my fine equipage, and took the best of my way home.

Two or three days afterwards, the Czar ordered me to be invited to a large dinner at Apraxin's. I went there, and soon found myself in conversation with a droll little man, a Dutch minister, and a great favorite with the Czar. The Admiral and his wife, before we sat down to eat, handed round to each of their company a glass of brandy on a plate.

"What an odious custom!" whispered the little Dutch minister, smacking his lips, however, with an air of tolerable content.

"Why, said I prudently, "all countries have their customs. Some centuries ago, a French traveller thought it horrible in us Englishmen to eat raw oysters. But the English were in the right to eat oysters; and perhaps, by and by, so much does civilization increase, we shall think the Russians in the right to drink brandy. But really (we had now sat down to the entertainment), I am agreeably surprised here. All the guests are dressed like my own countrymen; a great decorum reigns around. If it were a little less cold, I might fancy myself in London or in Paris."

"Wait," quoth the little Dutchman, with his mouth full of jelly broth—"wait till you hear them talk. What think you, now, that lady next to me is saying?"

"I cannot guess—but she has the prettiest smile in the world; and there is something at once so kind and so respectful in her manner that I should say she was either asking some great favor, or returning thanks for one."

"Right," cried the little minister. "I will interpret for you. She is saying to that old gentleman—'Sir, I am extremely grateful—and may St. Nicholas bless you for it—for your very great kindness in having, the day before yesterday,

at your sumptuous entertainment, made me so deliciously—drunk ! ”

“ You are witty, monsieur,” said I, smiling. “ *Se non è vero è ben trovato.* ”

“ By my soul, it is true,” cried the Dutchman ; “ but, hush !—see, they are going to cut up that great pie.”

I turned my eyes to the center of the table, which was ornamented with a huge pasty. Presently it was cut open, and out—walked a hideous little dwarf.

“ Are they going to eat him ? ” said I.

“ Ha—ha ! ” laughed the Dutchman. “ No ! this is a fashion of the Czar’s, which the Admiral thinks it good policy to follow. See, it tickles the hebeté Russians. They are quite merry on it.”

“ To be sure,” said I ; “ practical jokes are the only witticisms savages understand.”

“ Ay, and if it were not for such jokes now and then, the Czar would be odious beyond measure ; but dwarf pies and mock processions make his subjects almost forgive him for having shortened their clothes and clipped their beards.”

“ The Czar is very fond of those mock processions ? ”

“ Fond ! ” and the little man sunk his voice into a whisper ; “ he is the sublimest buffoon that ever existed. I will tell you an instance (do you like these Hungary wines, by the by ?) : On the 9th of last June, the Czar carried me, and half-a-dozen more of his foreign ministers to his pleasure-house (Peterhoff). Dinner, as usual, all drunk with tokay, and finished by a quart of brandy each, from her Majesty’s own hand. Carried off to sleep,—some in the garden,—some in the wood.—Woke at four, still in the clouds. Carried back to the pleasure-house, found the Czar there, made us a low bow, and gave us a hatchet apiece, with orders to follow him. Off we trudged, rolling about like ships in the Zuyder Zee, entered a wood, and were immediately set to work at cutting a road through it. Nice work for us of the *corps diplomatique* ! And, by my soul, sir, you see that I am by no means a thin man ! We had three hours of it—were carried back—made drunk again—sent to bed—roused again in an hour—made drunk a third time ; and, because we *could not* be waked again, left in peace till eight the next morning. Invited to court to breakfast—such headaches we had—longed for coffee—found nothing but brandy—forced to drink—sick as dogs—sent to take an airing upon the most damnable little horses—not worth a guilder—no bridles nor saddles—bump—bump—bump we go—up and down before the

Czar's window—he and the Czarina looking at us. I do assure you I lost two stone by that ride—two stone, sir!—taken to dinner—drunk again, by the Lord—all bundled on board a *torrenschute*—devil of a storm came on—Czar took the rudder—Czarina on high benches in the cabin, which was full of water—waves beating—winds blowing—certain of being drowned—charming prospect!—tossed about for seven hours—driven into the Port of Cronsflot. Czar leaves us, saying, ‘Too much of a jest, eh, gentlemen!’ All got ashore wet as dog-fishes, made a fire, stripped stark naked (a Dutch ambassador stark naked—think of it, sir!), crept into some covers of sledges, and rose next morning with the ague—positive fact, sir. Had the ague for two months. Saw the Czar in August—‘A charming excursion to my pleasure-house,’ said his majesty—‘we must make another party there soon.’”

As the Dutchman delivered himself of this little history he was by no means forgetful of the Hungary wines; and as Bacchus and Venus have old affinity, he now began to grow eloquent on the women.

“What think you of them yourself?” said he, “they have a rolling look, eh!”

“They have so,” I answered, “but they all have black teeth—what’s the reason?”

“They think it a beauty, and say white teeth are the sign of a blackamoor.”

Here the Dutchman was accosted by some one else, and there was a pause. Dinner at last ceased; the guests did not sit long after dinner, and for a very good reason: the brandy bowl is a great enforcer of a prostrate position! I had the satisfaction of seeing the company safely under the table. The Dutchman went first, and, having dexterously manœuvred an escape from utter oblivion for myself, I managed to find my way home, more edified than delighted by the character of a Russian entertainment.

CHAPTER IV.

Conversations with the Czar—if Cromwell was the greatest man (Cæsar excepted) who ever *rose* to the Supreme Power, Peter was the greatest man ever *born* to it.

It was singular enough that my introduction to the notice of Peter the Great, and Philip the Debonnair, should have taken place under circumstances so far similar that both those

illustrious personages were playing the part rather of subjects than of princes. I cannot, however, conceive a greater mark of the contrast between their characters than the different motives and manners of the incognitos severally assumed.

Philip, in a scene of low riot and debauch, hiding the Jupiter under the Silenus—wearing the mask only for the licentiousness it veiled, and foregoing the prerogative of power, solely for indulgence in the grossest immunities of vice.

Peter, on the contrary, parting with the selfishness of state, in order to watch the more keenly over the interests of his people—only omitting to preside in order to examine—and affecting the subject only to learn the better the duties of the prince. Had I leisure, I might here pause to point out a notable contrast, not between the Czar and the Regent, but between Peter the Great and Louis le Grand; both creators of a new era,—both associated with a vast change in the condition of two mighty empires. There ceases the likeness, and begins the contrast; the blunt simplicity of Peter, the gorgeous magnificence of Louis; the sternness of a legislator for barbarians, the clemency of an idol of courtiers. One the victorious defender of his country—a victory solid, durable, and just; the other the conquering devastator of a neighboring people—a victory glittering, evanescent, and dishonorable. The one, in peace, rejecting parade, pomp, individual honors, and transforming a wilderness into an empire: the other involved in ceremony, and throned on pomp: and exhausting the produce of millions to pamper the bloated vanity of an individual. The one a fire that burns without enlightening beyond a most narrow circle, and whose lustre is tracked by what it ruins, and fed by what it consumes: the other a luminary, whose light, not so dazzling in its rays, spreads over a world, and is noted, not for what it destroys, but for what it vivifies and creates.

I cannot say that it was much to my credit that, while I thought the Regent's condescension towards me natural enough, I was a little surprised by the favor shown me by the Czar. At Paris, I had *seemed* to be the man of pleasure; that alone was enough to charm Philip of Orleans. But in Russia, what could I seem in any way calculated to charm the Czar? I could neither make ships, nor could sail them when they were made; I neither knew, nor, what was worse, cared to know, the stern from the rudder. Mechanics were a mystery to me; road-making was an incomprehensible science. Brandy I could not endure—a blunt bearing, and familiar manner, I could not

assume. What was it then that made the Czar call upon me at least twice a week in private, shut himself up with me by the hour together, and endeavor to make me drunk with tokay, in order (as he very incautiously let out one night), "to learn the secrets of my heart"? I thought, at first, that the nature of my mission was enough to solve the riddle: but we talked so little about it that, with all my diplomatic vanities fresh about me, I could not help feeling I owed the honor I received less to my qualities as a minister, than to those as an individual.

At last, however, I found that the secret attraction was what the Czar termed the philosophical channel into which our conferences flowed. I never saw a man so partial to moral problems and metaphysical inquiries, especially to those connected with what ought to be the beginning or the end of all moral sciences—politics. Sometimes we would wander out in disguise, and select some object from the customs, or things around us, as the theme of reflection and discussion; nor in these moments would the Czar ever allow me to yield to his rank what I might not feel disposed to concede to his arguments. One day, I remember that he arrested me in the streets, and made me accompany him to look upon two men undergoing the fearful punishment of the battaog; * one was a German, the other a Russian; the former shrieked violently—struggled in the hands of his punishers—and, with the utmost difficulty, was subjected to his penalty; the latter bore it patiently, and in silence; he only spoke once, and it was to say, "God bless the Czar!"

"Can your Majesty hear the man," said I warmly, when the Czar interpreted these words to me, "and not pardon him?"

Peter frowned, but I was not silenced. "You don't know the Russians!" said he sharply, and turned aside. The punishment was now over. "Ask the German," said the Czar to an officer, "what was his offence?" The German, who was writhing and howling horribly, uttered some violent words against the disgrace of the punishment, and the pettiness of his fault; what the fault was I forget.

"Now ask the Russian," said Peter. "My punishment was just!" said the Russian, coolly, putting on his clothes as if nothing had happened; "God and the Czar were angry with me!"

"Come away, Count," said the Czar; "and now solve me a problem. I know both those men; and the German, in a battle, would be the braver of the two. How comes it that he

* A terrible kind of flogging, but less severe than the knout.

weeps and writhes like a girl, while the Russian bears the same pain without a murmur?"

"Will your Majesty forgive me," said I, "but I cannot help wishing that the Russian had complained more bitterly; insensibility to punishment is the sign of a brute, not a hero. Do you not see that the German felt the indignity, the Russian did not; and do you not see that that very pride, which betrays agony under the disgrace of the battaog, is exactly the very feeling that would have produced courage in the glory of the battle. A sense of honor makes better soldiers and better men than indifference to pain."

"But had I ordered the Russian to death, he would have gone with the same apathy, and the same speech, 'It is just! I have offended God and the Czar!'"

"Dare I observe, Sire, that that fact would be a strong proof of the dangerous falsity of the old maxims which extol indifference to death as a virtue. In some individuals it may be a sign of virtue, I allow; but, as a *national* trait, it is the strongest sign of national misery. Look round the great globe. What countries are those where the inhabitants bear death with cheerfulness, or, at least, with apathy? Are they the most civilized—the most free—the most prosperous? Pardon me—no! They are the half-starved, half clothed, half-human, sons of the forest and the waste; or, when gathered in states, they are slaves without enjoyment or sense beyond the hour: and the reason that they do not recoil from the pangs of death is because they have never known the real pleasures or the true objects of life."

"Yet," said the Czar musingly, "the contempt of death was the great characteristic of the Spartans."

"And, therefore," said I, "the great token that the Spartans were a miserable horde. Your majesty admires England and the English; you have, beyond doubt, witnessed an execution in that country; you have noted, even where the criminal is consoled by religion, how he trembles and shrinks—how dejected—how prostrate of heart he is before the doom is completed. Take now the vilest slave, either of the Emperor of Morocco, or the great Czar of Russia. He changes neither tint nor muscle: he requires no consolation: he shrinks from no torture. What is the inference? *That slaves dread death less than the free.* And it should be so. The end of legislation is not to make *death*, but *life*, a blessing."

"You have put the matter in a new light," said the Czar; "but you allow that, in individuals, contempt of death is sometimes a virtue."

“Yes, when it springs from mental reasonings, not physical indifference. But your Majesty has already put in action one vast spring of a system, which will ultimately open to your subjects so many paths of existence that they will preserve contempt for its proper objects, and not lavish it solely as they do now, on the degradation which sullies life, and the axe that ends it. You have already begun the conquest of another and a most vital error in the philosophy of the ancients; that philosophy taught that man should have few wants, and made it a crime to increase, and a virtue to reduce, them. A legislator should teach, on the contrary, that man should have many wants: for wants are not only the sources of enjoyment—they are the sources of improvement; and that nation will be the most enlightened among whose populace they are found the most numerous. You, Sire, by circulating the arts, the graces, create a vast herd of moral wants hitherto unknown, and in those wants will hereafter be found the prosperity of your people, the fountain of your resources, and the strength of your empire.”

In conversation on these topics we often passed hours together, and from such conferences the Czar passed only to those on other topics more immediately useful to him. No man, perhaps, had a larger share of the mere human frailties than Peter the Great; yet I do confess that when I saw the nobleness of mind with which he flung aside his rank as a robe, and repaired from man to man, the humblest or the highest, the artisan or the prince, the prosperity of his subjects his only object, and the acquisition of knowledge his only means to obtain it,—I do confess that my mental sight refused even to perceive his frailties, and that I could almost have bent the knee in worship to a being whose benevolence was so pervading a spirit, and whose power was so glorious a minister to utility.

Towards the end of January, I completed my mission, and took my leave of the court of Russia.

“Tell the Regent,” said Peter, “that I shall visit him in France soon, and shall expect to see his drawings, if I show him my models.”

In effect, the next month (February 16), the Czar commenced his second course of travels. He was pleased to testify some regard for me on my departure. “If ever you quit the service of the French court, and your own does not require you, I implore you to come to me; I will give you *carte blanche* as to the nature and appointments of your office.”

I need not say that I expressed my gratitude for the royal con-

descension ; nor that, in leaving Russia, I brought, from the example of its sovereign, a greater desire to be useful to mankind than I had known before. Pattern and Teacher of kings, if each country, in each century, had produced one such ruler as you, either all mankind would *now* be contented with despotism, or all mankind would be *free!* Oh ! when kings have only to be good, to be kept forever in our hearts and souls as the gods and benefactors of the earth, by what monstrous fatality have they been so blind to their fame? When we remember the millions, the generations, they can degrade, destroy, elevate or save, we might almost think (even if the other riddles of the present existence did not require a future existence to solve them), we might almost think a hereafter *necessary*, were it but for the sole purpose of requiring the virtues of princes,—or their SINS.*

CHAPTER V.

Return to Paris.—Interview with Bolingbroke.—A gallant Adventure.—Affair with Dubois.—Public Life is a Drama, in which private Vices generally play the part of the Scene-shifters.

It is a strange feeling we experience on entering a great city by night—a strange mixture of social and solitary impressions. I say by night, because at that time we are most inclined to feel ; and the mind, less distracted than in the day by external objects, dwells the more intensely upon its own hopes and thoughts, remembrances and associations—and sheds over them from that one feeling which it cherishes the most, a blending and a mellowing hue.

It was at night that I re-entered Paris. I did not tarry long at my hotel, before (though it was near upon midnight) I conveyed myself to Lord Bolingbroke's lodgings. Knowing his engagements at St. Germain, where the Chevalier (who had but a very few weeks before returned to France, after the crude and unfortunate affair of 1715) chiefly resided, I was not very sanguine in my hopes of finding him at Paris. I was, however, agreeably surprised. His servant would have ushered me into his study, but I was willing to introduce myself. I withheld the servant, and entered the room alone.

The door was ajar, and Bolingbroke neither heard nor saw

* Upon his death-bed Peter is reported to have said, " God, I dare trust, will look mercifully upon my faults in consideration of the good I have done my country." These are worthy to be the last words of a king ! Rarely has there been a monarch who more required the forgiveness of the Creator ; yet seldom perhaps has there been a human being who more deserved it.—ED.

me. There was something in his attitude and aspect which made me pause to survey him, before I made myself known. He was sitting by a table covered with books. A large folio (it was the Casaubon edition of Polybius) was lying open before him. I recognized the work at once—it was a favorite book with Bolingbroke, and we had often discussed the merits of its author. I smiled as I saw that that book, which has to statesmen so peculiar an attraction, made still the study from which the busy, restless, ardent, and exalted spirit of the statesman before me drew its intellectual food. But at the moment in which I entered, his eye was absent from the page, and turned abstractedly in an opposite, though still downcast, direction. His countenance was extremely pale—his lips were tightly compressed, and an air of deep thought, mingled, as it seemed to me, with sadness—made the ruling expression of his lordly and noble features. “It is the torpor of ambition after one of its storms,” said I, inly—and I approached, and laid my hand on his shoulder.

After our mutual greetings, I said: “Have the dead so strong an attraction that at this hour they detain the courted and courtly Bolingbroke from the admiration and converse of the living?”

The statesman looked at me earnestly. “Have you heard the news of the day?” said he.

“How is it possible? I have but just arrived at Paris.”

“You do not know, then, that I have resigned my office under the Chevalier!”

“Resigned your office!”

“Resigned is a wrong word—I received a dismissal. Immediately on his return the Chevalier sent for me—embraced me—desired me to prepare to follow him to Lorraine; and three days afterwards came the Duke of Ormond to me, to ask me to deliver up the seals and papers. I put the latter very carefully in a little letter-case, and behold an end to the administration of Lord Bolingbroke! The Jacobites abuse me terribly—their king accuses me of neglect, incapacity, and treachery—and Fortune pulls down the fabric she had built for me, in order to pelt me with the stones!”*

“My dear, dear friend, I am indeed grieved for you; but I am more incensed at the infatuation of the Chevalier. Surely, surely he must already have seen his error, and solicited your return.”

“Return!” cried Bolingbroke, and his eyes flashed fire—

* Letter to Sir W. Windham, ~Ed.

“return!—Hear what I said to the queen mother who came to me to attempt a reconciliation: ‘Madam,’ said I, in a tone as calm as I could command, ‘if ever this hand draws the sword, or employs the pen, in behalf of that prince, may it rot!’ Return! not if my head were the price of refusal! Yet, Devereux,”—and here Bolingbroke’s voice and manner changed—“yet it is not at these tricks of fate that a wise man will repine. We do right to cultivate honors; they are sources of gratification to ourselves; they are more—they are incentives to the conduct which works benefit to others; but we do wrong to afflict ourselves at their loss. *Nec querere nec spernere honores oportet.** It is good to enjoy the blessings of fortune; it is better to submit without a pang to their loss. You remember, when you left me, I was preparing myself for this stroke—believe me, I am now prepared.”

And in truth Bolingbroke bore the ingratitude of the Chevalier well. Soon afterwards he carried his long cherished wishes for retirement into effect; and Fate, who delights in reversing her disk, leaving in darkness what she had just illumined, and illumining what she had hitherto left in obscurity and gloom, for a long interval separated us from each other, no less by his seclusion than by the publicity to which she condemned myself.

Lord Bolingbroke’s dismissal was not the only event affecting me that had occurred during my absence from France. Among the most active partisans of the Chevalier, in the expedition of Lord Mar, had been Montreuil. So great, indeed, had been either his services, or the idea entertained of their value, that a reward of extraordinary amount was offered for his head. Hitherto he had escaped, and was supposed to be still in Scotland.

But what affected me more nearly was the condition of Gerald’s circumstances. On the breaking out of the rebellion, he had been suddenly seized, and detained in prison; and it was only upon the escape of the Chevalier that he was released; apparently, however, nothing had been proved against him; and my absence from the headquarters of intelligence left me in ignorance both of the grounds of his imprisonment, and the circumstances of his release.

I heard, however, from Bolingbroke, who seemed to possess some of that information which the ecclesiastical *intriguants* of the day so curiously transmitted from court to court, and corner to corner, that Gerald had retired to Devereux Court in great disgust at his confinement. However, when I considered

* It becomes us neither to court, nor to despise honors.

his bold character, his close intimacy with Montreuil, and the genius for intrigue which that priest so eminently possessed, I was not much inclined to censure the government for unnecessary precaution in his imprisonment.

There was another circumstance connected with the rebellion which possessed for me an individual and deep interest. A man of the name of Barnard had been executed in England for seditious and treasonable practices. I took especial pains to ascertain every particular respecting him. I learned that he was young, of inconsiderable note, but esteemed clever; and had, long previously to the death of the queen, been secretly employed by the friends of the Chevalier. This circumstance occasioned me much internal emotion, though there could be no doubt that the Barnard whom I had such cause to execrate, had only borrowed from this minion the disguise of his name.

The Regent received me with all the graciousness and complaisance for which he was so remarkable. To say the truth my mission had been extremely fortunate in its results; the only cause in which the Regent was concerned, the interests of which Peter the Great appeared to disregard, was that of the Chevalier; but I had been fully instructed on that head anterior to my legation.

There appears very often to be a sort of moral fitness between the beginning and the end of certain alliances or acquaintances. This sentiment is not very clearly expressed. I am about to illustrate it by an important event in my political life. During my absence Dubois had made rapid steps towards being a great man. He was daily growing into power, and those courtiers who were neither too haughty nor too honest to bend the knee to so vicious, yet able a minion, had already singled him out as a fit person to flatter and to rise by. For me, I neither sought nor avoided him; but he was as civil towards me as his *brusque* temper permitted him to be towards most persons; and as our careers were not likely to cross one another, I thought I might reckon on his neutrality, if not on his friendship. Chance turned the scale against me.

One day I received an anonymous letter, requesting me to be, at such an hour, at a certain house in the Rue——. It occurred to me as no improbable supposition, that the appointment might relate to my individual circumstances, whether domestic or political, and I certainly had not at the moment any ideas of gallantry in my brain. At the hour prescribed I appeared at the place of assignation. My mind misgave me when I saw a female conduct me into a little chamber hung with tapestry

descriptive of the loves of Mars and Venus. After I had cooled my heels in this apartment for about a quarter of an hour, in sailed a tall woman, of a complexion almost *Moorish*. I bowed—the lady sighed. An *éclaircissement* ensued—and I found that I had the good fortune to be the object of a *caprice*, in the favorite mistress of the Abbé Dubois. Nothing was farther from my wishes! What a pity it is that one cannot always tell a woman one's mind!

I attempted a flourish about friendship, honor, and the respect due to the *amante* of the most intimate *ami* I had in the world.

"Pooh!" said the tawny Calypso, a little pettishly—"pooh! one does not talk of those things here."

"Madame," said I, very energetically, "I implore you to refrain. Do not excite too severe a contest between passion and duty! I feel that I must fly you—you are already too bewitching."

Just as I rose to depart, in rushes the *femme de chambre*, and announces, not Monsieur, the Abbé, but Monseigneur, the Regent. Of course (the old resort in such cases) I was thrust into a closet; in marches his royal highness, and is received very cavalierly. It is quite astonishing to me what airs those women give themselves when they have princes to manage! However, my confinement was not long—the closet had another door—the *femme de chambre* slips round, opens it, and I congratulate myself on my escape.

When a Frenchwoman is piqued, she passes all understanding. The next day I am very quietly employed at breakfast, when my valet ushers in a masked personage, and, behold my gentlewoman again! Human endurance will not go too far, and this was a case which required one to be in a passion one way or the other; so I feigned anger, and talked with exceeding dignity about the predicament I had been placed in the day before.

"Such must always be the case," said I, "when one is weak enough to form an attachment to a lady who encourages so many others!"

"For your sake," said the tender dame, "for your sake, then, I will discard them all!"

There was something grand in this: it might have elicited a few strokes of pathos, when—never was there anything so strangely provoking—the Abbé Dubois himself was heard in my anti-room. I thought this chance, but it was more; the good Abbé, I afterwards found, had traced cause for suspicion, and had come to pay me a visit of amatory police. I opened my dressing-

room door, and thrust in the lady. "There," said I, "are the back-stairs, and at the bottom of the back-stairs is a door."

Would not any one have thought this hint enough? By no means; this very tall lady stooped to the littleness of listening, and, instead of departing, stationed herself by the keyhole.

I never exactly learned whether Dubois suspected the visit his mistress had paid me, or whether he merely surmised, from his spies or her escritoire, that she harbored an inclination towards me; in either case his policy was natural, and like himself.

He sat himself down—talked of the Regent, of pleasure, of women, and, at last of his very tall lady in question.

"*Le pauvre diablesse,*" said he contemptuously, "I had once compassion on her; I have repented it ever since. You have no idea what a terrible creature she is—has such a wen in her neck—quite a *goître*. *Mort diable!*" (and the Abbé spat in his handkerchief). "I would sooner have a *liaison* with the witch of Endor!"

Not content with this he went on in his usual gross and displeasing manner to enumerate or to forge those various particulars of her personal charms, which he thought most likely to steel me against her attractions. "Thank Heaven, at least," thought I "that she has gone!"

Scarcely had this pious gratulation flowed from my heart, before the door was burst open, and pale—trembling—eyes on fire—hands clenched—forth stalked the lady in question. A wonderful proof how much sooner a woman would lose her character than allow it to be called not worth the losing. She entered, and had all the furies of Hades lent her their tongues she could not have been more eloquent. It would have been a very pleasant scene if one had not been a partner in it. The old Abbé, with his keen, astute, marked face, struggling between surprise, fear, the sense of the ridiculous, and the certainty of losing his mistress; the lady, foaming at the mouth, and shaking her clenched hand most menacingly at her traducer—myself endeavoring to pacify, and acting, as one does at such moments, mechanically—though one flatters one-self afterwards that one acted solely from wisdom.

But the Abbé's mistress was by no means content with vindicating herself—she retaliated—and gave so minute a description of the Abbé's own qualities and graces, coupled with so many pleasing illustrations, that in a very little time his coolness forsook him, and he grew in as great a rage as herself. At last she flew out of the room. The Abbé, trembling with passion, shook me most cordially by the hand, grinned from ear to ear,

said it was a capital joke, wished me good-by, as if he loved me better than his eyes, and left the house, my most irreconcilable and bitter foe !

How could it be otherwise ? The rivalry the Abbé might have forgiven—such things happened every day to him—but the having been made so egregiously ridiculous, the Abbé could not forgive ; and the Abbé's was a critical age for jesting on these matters, sixty or so. And then such unpalatable sarcasms on his appearance ! “ 'Tis all over in that quarter,” said I to myself, “but we may find another,” and I drove out that very day to pay my respects to the Regent.

What a pity it is that one's pride should so often be the bane of one's wisdom ! Ah ! that one could be as good a man of the world in practice as one is in theory ! my master-stroke of policy at that moment would evidently have been this : I should have gone to the Regent and made out a story a little similar to the real one, but with this difference, all the ridicule of the situation should have fallen upon me, and the little Dubois should have been elevated on a pinnacle of respectable appearances ! This, as the Regent told the Abbé everything, would have saved me. I saw the plan ; but was too proud to adopt it ; I followed another course in my game : I threw away the knave and played with the king, *i. e.*, with the Regent. After a little preliminary conversation, I turned the conversation on the Abbé.

“ Ah, the *scélérat* ! ” said Philip, smiling, “ 'tis a sad dog, but very clever and *loves me* ; he would be incomparable, if he were but decently honest.”

“ At least,” said I, “ he is no hypocrite, and that is some praise.”

“ Hem ! ” ejaculated the Duke very slowly, and then, after a pause, he said, “ Count, I have a real kindness for you, and I will therefore give you a piece of advice : think as well of Dubois as you can, and address him as if he were all you endeavored to fancy him.”

After this hint, which in the mouth of any prince but Philip of Orléans would have been not a little remarkable for its want of dignity, my prospects did not seem much brighter : however, I was not discouraged.

“ The Abbé,” said I respectfully, “ is a choleric man : one *may* displease him ; but dare I hope that so long as I preserve inviolate my zeal and my attachment to the interests and the person of your highness, no—”

The Regent interrupted me. “ You mean nobody shall suc-

cessfully misrepresent you to me? No, Count" (and here the Regent spoke with the earnestness and dignity which, when he did assume, few wore with a nobler grace),—"no, Count, I make a distinction between those who minister to the state, and those who minister to me. I consider your services too valuable to the former to put them at the mercy of the latter. And now that the conversation has turned upon business, I wish to speak to you about this scheme of *Gortz*."

After a prolonged conference with the Regent upon matters of business, in which his deep penetration into human nature not a little surprised me, I went away, thoroughly satisfied with my visit. I should not have been so had I added to my other accomplishments the gift of prophecy.

Above five days after this interview, I thought it would be but prudent to pay the Abbé Dubois one of those visits of homage which it was already become policy to pay him. "If I go," thought I, "it will seem as if nothing had happened; if I stay away, it will seem as if I attached importance to a scene I should appear to have forgotten."

It so happened that the Abbé had a very unusual visitor that morning, in the person of the austere but admirable Duc de St. Simon. There was a singular, and almost invariable, distinction in the Regent's mind between one kind of regard and another. His regard for one order of persons always arose either out of his vices or his indolence; his regard for another, out of his good qualities and his strong sense. The Duc de St. Simon held the same place in the latter species of affection that Dubois did in the former. The Duc was just coming out of the Abbé's closet as I entered the ante-room. He paused to speak to me, while Dubois, who had followed the Duc out, stopped for one moment, and surveyed me with a look like a thunder-cloud. I did not appear to notice it, but St. Simon did.

"That look," said he, as Dubois, beckoning to a gentleman to accompany him to his closet, once more disappeared, "that look bodes you no good, Count."

Pride is an elevation which is a spring-board at one time, and a stumbling-block at another. It was with me more often the stumbling-block than the spring-board. "Monseigneur le Duc," said I haughtily enough, and rather in too loud a tone considering the chamber was pretty full, "in no court to which Morton Devereux proffers his services shall his fortune depend upon the looks of a low-born, insolent, or profligate priest."

St. Simon smiled sardonically. "Monsieur le Comte," said

he, rather civilly, "I honor your sentiments, and I wish you success in the world—and a lower voice."

I was going to say something by way of retort, for I was in a very bad humor, but I checked myself; "I need not," thought I, "make two enemies if I can help it."

"I shall never," I replied gravely, "I shall never despair, so long as the Duc de St. Simon lives, of winning by the same arts the favor of princes and the esteem of good men."

The Duc was flattered, and replied suitably, but he very soon afterwards went away. I was resolved that I would not go till I had fairly seen what sort of reception the Abbé would give me. I did not wait long—he came out of his closet, and standing in his usual rude manner with his back to the fireplace, received the addresses and compliments of his visitors. I was not in a hurry to present myself, but I did so at last with a familiar, yet rather respectful, air. Dubois looked at me from head to foot, and abruptly turning his back upon me, said with an oath, to a courtier who stood next to him,—“The plagues of Pharaoh are come again—only instead of Egyptian frogs in our chambers, we have the still more troublesome guests—English adventurers!”

Somehow or other my compliments rarely tell; I am lavish enough of them, but they generally have the air of sarcasms; thank Heaven, however, no one can accuse me of ever wanting a rude answer to a rude speech. "Ha! ha! ha!" said I now, in answer to Dubois, with a courteous laugh, "you have an excellent wit, Abbé. Apropos of adventurers, I met a Monsieur St. Laurent, Principal of the Institution of St. Michael, the other day, 'Count,' said he, hearing I was going to Paris, 'you can do me an especial favor!' 'What is it?' said I. 'Why a cast-off valet of mine is living at Paris—he would have gone long since to the galleys, if he had not taken sanctuary in the Church—if ever you meet him give him a good horsewhipping on my account: his name is William Dubois.' 'Depend upon it,' answered I to Monsieur St. Laurent, 'that if he is servant to any one not belonging to the royal family, I will fulfil your errand, and horsewhip him soundly; if *in* the service of the royal family, why respect for his masters must oblige me to content myself with putting all persons on their guard against a little rascal, who retains, in all situations, the manners of the apothecary's son, and the roguery of the director's valet.'"

All the time I was relating this charming little anecdote, it would have been amusing to the last degree to note the horri-

fied countenances of the surrounding gentlemen. Dubois was too confounded, too aghast, to interrupt me, and I left the room before a single syllable was uttered. Had Dubois at that time been what he was afterwards, cardinal and prime minister, I should in all probability have had permanent lodgings in the Bastille, in return for my story. Even as it was, the Abbé was not so grateful as he ought to have been, for my taking so much pains to amuse him ! In spite of my anger on leaving the favorite, I did not forget my prudence, and accordingly I hastened to the Prince. When the Regent admitted me, I flung myself on my knee, and told him, verbatim, all that had happened. The Regent, who seems to have had very little real liking for Dubois, could not help laughing when I ludicrously described to him the universal consternation my anecdote had excited.*

"Courage, my dear Count," said he kindly, "you have nothing to fear; return home and count upon an embassy !"

I relied on the royal word, returned to my lodgings, and spent the evening with Chaulieu and Fontenelle. The next day the Duc de St. Simon paid me a visit. After a little preliminary conversation, he unburthened the secret with which he was charged. I was desired to leave Paris in forty-eight hours.

"Believe me," said St. Simon, "that this message was not entrusted to me by the Regent, without great reluctance. He sends you many condescending and kind messages; says he shall always both esteem and like you, and hopes to see you again, some time or other, at the Palais Royal. Moreover, he desires the message to be private, and has entrusted it to me in especial, because hearing that I had a kindness for you, and knowing I had a hatred for Dubois, he thought I should be the least unwelcome messenger of such disagreeable tidings. 'To tell you the truth, St. Simon,' said the Regent laughing, 'I only consent to have him banished, from a firm conviction that, if I do not, Dubois will take some opportunity of having him beheaded.'"

"Pray," said I, smiling with a tolerable good grace, "pray give my most grateful and humble thanks to his highness, for his very considerate and kind foresight. I could not have chosen better for myself than his highness has chosen for me: my only regret on quitting France is at leaving a prince so affable as Philip, and a courtier so virtuous as St. Simon."

Though the good Duc went every year to the Abbey de la

* On the death of Dubois, the Regent wrote to the Count de Nocé, whom he had banished for an indiscreet expression against the favorite, uttered at one of his private suppers: "With the beast dies the venom: I expect you to-night to supper at the Palais Royal."

Trappe, for the purpose of mortifying his sins and preserving his religion, in so impious an atmosphere as the Palais Royal, he was not above flattery ; and he expressed himself towards me with particular kindness after my speech.

At court, one becomes a sort of human ant-bear, and learns to catch one's prey by one's tongue.

After we had eased ourselves a little by abusing Dubois, the Duc took his leave in order to allow me time to prepare for my "journey," as he politely called it. Before he left, he however asked me whither my course would be bent. I told him that I should take my chance with the Czar Peter, and see if his czarship thought the same esteem was due to the disgraced courtier, as to the favored diplomatist.

That night I received a letter from St. Simon, enclosing one addressed with all due form to the Czar. "You will consider the enclosed," wrote St. Simon, "a fresh proof of the Regent's kindness to you ; it is a most flattering testimonial in your favor, and cannot fail to make the Czar anxious to secure your services."

I was not a little touched by a kindness, so unusual in princes to their discarded courtiers, and this entirely reconciled me to a change of scene which, indeed, under any other circumstances, my somewhat morbid love for action and variety would have induced me rather to relish than dislike.

Within thirty-six hours from the time of dismissal, I had turned my back upon the French capital.

CHAPTER VI.

A long Interval of Years.—A Change of Mind and its Causes.

THE last accounts received of the Czar reported him to be at Dantzic. He had, however, quitted that place when I arrived there. I lost no time in following him, and presented myself to his Majesty one day after his dinner, when he was sitting with one leg in the Czarina's lap, and a bottle of the best *eau de vie* before him. I had chosen my time well ; he received me most graciously, read my letter from the Regent—about which, remembering the fate of Bellerophon, I had had certain apprehensions, but which proved to be in the highest degree complimentary—and then declared himself extremely happy to see me again. However parsimonious Peter generally was towards foreigners, I never had ground for personal

complaint on that score. The very next day I was appointed to a post of honor and profit about the royal person ; from this I was transferred to a military station, in which I rose with great rapidity ; and I was only occasionally called from my warlike duties, to be entrusted with diplomatic missions of the highest confidence and importance.

It is this portion of my life—a portion of nine years, to the time of the Czar's death—that I shall, in this history, the most concentrate and condense. In truth, were I to dwell upon it at length, I should make little more than a mere record of political events—differing, in some respects, it is true, from the received histories of the time, but containing nothing to compensate in utility for the want of interest. That this was the exact age for adventurers, Alberoni and Dubois are sufficient proofs. Never was there a more stirring, active, restless period ; never one in which the genius of intrigue was so pervadingly at work. I was not less fortunate than my brethren. Although scarcely four and twenty when I entered the Czar's service, my habits of intimacy with men much older—my customary gravity, reserve, and thought—my freedom, since Isora's death, from youthful levity or excess—my early entrance into the world—and a countenance prematurely marked with lines of reflection, and sobered by its hue—made me appear considerably older than I was. I kept my own counsel, and affected to be so ; youth is a great enemy to one's success ; and more esteem is often bestowed upon a wrinkled brow than a plodding brain.

All the private intelligence which, during this space of time, I had received from England was far from voluminous. My mother still enjoyed the quiet of her religious retreat. A fire, arising from the negligence of a servant, had consumed nearly the whole of Devereux Court (the fine old house ! till *that* went, I thought even England held one friend). Upon this accident, Gerald had gone to London ; and though there was now no doubt of his being concerned in the Rebellion of 1715, he had been favorably received at court, and was already renowned throughout London, for his pleasures, his excesses, and his munificent profusion.

Montreuil, whose lot seemed to be always to lose, by intrigue, what he gained by the real solidity of his genius, had embarked very largely in the rash but gigantic schemes of Gortz and Alberoni ; schemes which, had they succeeded, would not only have placed a new king upon the English throne, but wrought an utter change over the whole face of Europe. With Alberoni

and with Gortz fell Montreuil. He was banished France and Spain; the penalty of death awaited him in Britain; and he was supposed to have thrown himself into some convent in Italy, where his name and his character were unknown. In this brief intelligence was condensed all my information of the actors in my first scenes of life. I return to that scene on which I had now entered:

At the age of thirty-three, I had acquired a reputation sufficient to content my ambition—my fortune was larger than my wants—I was a favorite in courts—I had been successful in camps—I had already obtained all that would have rewarded the whole lives of many men superior to myself in merit—more ardent than myself in desires. I was still young—my appearance, though greatly altered, manhood had rather improved than impaired. I had not forestalled my constitution by excesses, nor worn dry the sources of pleasure by too large a demand upon their capacities; why was it then, at that golden age—in the very prime and glory of manhood—in the very zenith and summer of success—that a deep, dark, pervading melancholy fell upon me? A melancholy so gloomy that it seemed to be as a thick and impenetrable curtain drawn gradually between myself and the blessed light of human enjoyment. A torpor crept upon me—an indolent, heavy, clinging languor, gathered over my whole frame—the physical and the mental: I sat for hours without book, paper, object, thought, gazing on vacancy—stirring not—feeling not—yes, feeling, but feeling only one sensation, a sick, sad, drooping despondency—a sinking in of the heart—a sort of gnawing within, as if something living were twisted round my vitals, and, finding no other food, preyed, though with a sickly and dull maw, upon *them*. This disease came upon me slowly: it was not till the beginning of a second year, from its obvious and palpable commencement, that it grew to the height that I have described. It began with a distaste to all that I had been accustomed to enjoy, or to pursue. Music, which I had always passionately loved, though from some defect in the organs of hearing I was incapable of attaining the smallest knowledge of the science, music lost all its diviner spells, all its properties of creating a new existence, a life of dreaming and vague luxuries, within the mind—it became only a monotonous sound, less grateful to the languor of my faculties than utter and dead stillness. I had never been what is generally termed a boon companion, but I had had the social vanities, if not the social tastes: I had insensibly loved the board which echoed with applause at my sallies, and the

comrades who, while they deprecated my satire, had been complaisant enough to hail it as wit. One of my weaknesses is a love of show, and I had gratified a feeling not the less cherished because it arose from a petty source, in obtaining for my equipages, my mansion, my banquets, the celebrity which is given no less to magnificence than to fame; now I grew indifferent alike to the signs of pomp, and to the baubles of taste; praise fell upon a listless ear, and (rare pitch of satiety!) the pleasures that are the offspring of our foibles delighted me no more. I had early learned from Bolingbroke a love for the converse of men, eminent, whether for wisdom or for wit; the graceful badinage, or the keen critique—the sparkling flight of the winged words which encircled and rebounded from lip to lip, or the deep speculation upon the mysterious and unravelled wonders of man, of nature and the world—the light maxim upon manners, or the sage inquiry into the mines of learning; all and each had possessed a link to bind my temper and my tastes to the graces and fascination of social life. Now a new spirit entered within me: the smile faded from my lip, and the jest departed from my tongue; memory seemed no less treacherous than fancy, and deserted me the instant I attempted to enter into those contests of knowledge in which I had been not undistinguished before. I grew confused and embarrassed in speech—my words expressed a sense utterly different to that which I had intended to convey, and at last, as my apathy increased, I sat at my own board, silent and lifeless, freezing into ice the very powers and streams of converse which I had once been the foremost to circulate and to warm.

At the time I refer to, I was minister at one of the small continental courts, where life is a round of unmeaning etiquette and wearisome ceremonials, a daily labor of trifles—a ceaseless pageantry of nothings—I had been sent there upon one important event, the business resulting from it had soon ceased, and all the duties that remained for me to discharge were of a negative and passive nature. Nothing that could arouse—nothing that could occupy faculties that had for years been so perpetually wound up to a restless excitement was left for me in this terrible reservoir of *ennui*. I had come thither at once from the skirmishing and wild warfare of a Tartar foe; a war in which, though the glory was obscure, the action was perpetual and exciting. I had come thither, and the change was as if I had passed from a mountain stream to a stagnant pool.

Society at this court reminded me of a state funeral, everything was pompous and lugubrious, even to the drapery—even to the

feathers—which, in other scenes, would have been consecrated to associations of levity or of grace; the hourly pageant swept on, slow, tedious, mournful, and the object of the attendants was only to entomb the Pleasure which they affected to celebrate. What a change for the wild, the strange, the novel, the intriguing, the varying life, which, whether in courts or camps, I had hitherto led. The internal change that came over myself is scarcely to be wondered at; the winds stood still, and the straw they had blown from quarter to quarter, whether in anger or in sport, began to moulder upon the spot where they had left it.

From this cessation of the aims, hopes, and thoughts of life, I was awakened by the spreading, as it were, of another disease—the dead, dull, aching pain at my heart, was succeeded by one acute and intense; the absence of thought gave way to one thought more terrible—more dark—more despairing than any which had haunted me since the first year of Isora's death; and from a numbness and pause, as it were, of existence, existence became too keen and intolerable a sense. I will enter into an explanation.

At the Court of —, there was an Italian, not uncelebrated for his wisdom, nor unbeloved for an innocence and integrity of life, rarely indeed to be met with among his countrymen. The acquaintance of this man, who was about fifty years of age, and who was devoted, almost exclusively, to the pursuit of philosophical science I had sedulously cultivated. His conversation pleased me; his wisdom improved; and his benevolence, which reminded me of the traits of La Fontaine, it was so infantine, made me incline to love him. Upon the growth of the fearful malady of mind which seized me, I had discontinued my visits and my invitations to the Italian; and Bezoni (so was he called) felt a little offended by my neglect. As soon, however, as he discovered my state of mind, the good man's resentment left him. He forced himself upon my solitude, and would sit by me whole evenings—sometimes without exchanging a word—sometimes with vain attempts to interest, to arouse, or to amuse me.

At last one evening, it was the era of a fearful suffering to me, our conversation turned upon those subjects which are at once the most important, and the most rarely discussed. We spoke of *religion*. We first talked upon the theology of revealed religion. As Bezoni warmed into candor, I perceived that his doctrines differed from my own, and that he inly disbelieved that divine creed which Christians profess to adore. From a dispute on the ground of faith, we came to one upon the more

debatable ground of reason. We turned from the subject of revealed, to that of natural, religion; and we entered long and earnestly into that grandest of all earthly speculations—the metaphysical proofs of the immortality of the soul. Again the sentiments of Bezoni were opposed to mine. He was a believer in the dark doctrine which teaches that man is dust, and that all things are forgotten in the grave. He expressed his opinions with a clearness and precision the more impressive because totally devoid of cavil and of rhetoric. I listened in silence, but with a deep and most chilling dismay. Even now I think I see the man as he sat before me, the light of the lamp falling on his high forehead and dark features; even now I think I hear his calm, low voice—the silver voice of his country—stealing to my heart, and withering the only pure and unsullied hope which I yet cherished there.

Bezoni left me, unconscious of the anguish he bequeathed me, to think over all he had said. I did not sleep, nor even retire to bed. I laid my head upon my hands, and surrendered myself to turbulent, yet intense, reflection. Every man who has lived much in the world, and conversed with its various tribes, has, I fear, met with many who, on this momentous subject, profess the same tenets as Bezoni. But he was the first person I had met of that sect who had evidently thought long and deeply upon the creed he had embraced. He was not a voluptuary, nor a boaster, nor a wit. He had not been misled by the delusions either of vanity or of the senses. He was a man, pure, innocent, modest, full of all tender charities, and meek dispositions towards mankind; it was evidently his interest to believe in a future state: he could have had nothing to fear from it. Not a single passion did he cherish which the laws of another world would have condemned. Add to this, what I have observed before, that he was not a man fond of the display of intellect, nor one that brought to the discussions of wisdom the artillery of wit. He was grave, humble, and self-diffident, beyond all beings. I would have given a kingdom to have found something in the advocate by which I could have condemned the cause. I could not, and I was wretched.

I spent the whole of the next week among my books. I ransacked whatever in my scanty library the theologians had written, or the philosophers had bequeathed upon that mighty secret. I arranged their arguments in my mind. I armed myself with their weapons. I felt my heart spring joyously within me as I felt the strength I had acquired, and I sent to the philosopher to visit me, that I might conquer and confute him. He came:

but he spoke with pain and reluctance. He saw that I had taken the matter far more deeply to heart than he could have supposed it possible in a courtier, and a man of fortune and the world. Little did he know of me or my secret soul. I broke down his reserve at last. I unrolled my arguments. I answered his, and we spent the whole night in a controversy. He left me, and I was more bewildered than ever.

To speak truth, he had devoted years to the subject : I had devoted only a week. He had come to his conclusions step by step ; he had reached the great ultimatum with slowness, with care, and, he confessed, with anguish and with reluctance. What a match was I, who brought a hasty temper, and a limited reflection, on that subject, to a reasoner like this ? His candor staggered and chilled me even more than his logic. Arguments that occurred not to me, upon my side of the question, *he* stated at length, and with force ; I heard, and, till he replied to them, I deemed they were unanswerable—the reply came, and I had no counter-word. A meeting of this nature was often repeated ; and when he left me, tears crept into my wild eyes, my heart melted within me, and I wept !

I must now enter more precisely than I have yet done into my state of mind upon religious matters at the time this dispute with the Italian occurred. To speak candidly, I had been far less shocked with his opposition to me upon matters of doctrinal faith, than with that upon matters of abstract reasoning. Bred a Roman Catholic, though pride, consistency, custom, made me externally adhere to the Papal Church, I inly perceived its errors, and smiled at its superstitions. And in the busy world, where so little but present objects, or *human* anticipations of the future, engross the attention, I had never given the subject that consideration which would have enabled me (as it has since) to separate the dogmas of the priest from the precepts of the Saviour, and thus confirmed my belief as the Christian, by the very means which would have loosened it as the Sectarian. So that at the time Bezoni knew me, a certain indifference to—perhaps arising from an ignorance of—doctrinal points, rendered me little hurt by arguments against opinions which I embraced indeed, but with a lukewarm and imperfect affection. But it was far otherwise upon abstract points of reasoning ; far otherwise, when the hope of surviving this frail and most unhallowed being was to be destroyed. I might have been indifferent to cavil upon *what* was the word of God, but never to question of the justice of God himself. In the whole world, there was not a more ardent believer in our imperishable nature,

nor one more deeply interested in the belief. Do not let it be supposed that because I have not often recurred to Isora's death (or because I have continued my history in a jesting and light tone), that that event ever passed from the memory which it had turned to bitterness and gall. Never, in the mazes of intrigue, in the festivals of pleasure, in the tumults of ambition, in the blaze of a licentious court, or by the rude tents of a barbarous host,—never, my buried love, had I forgotten thee! That remembrance, had no other cause existed, would have led me to God. Every night in whatever toils or objects, whatever failures or triumphs, the day had been consumed—every night, before I laid my head upon my widowed and lonely pillow, I had knelt down, and lifted my heart to Heaven, blending the hopes of that heaven with the memory and the vision of Isora. Prayer had seemed to me a commune not only with the living God, but with the dead by whom His dwelling is surrounded. Pleasant and soft was it to turn to one thought, to which all the holiest portions of my nature clung, between the wearying acts of this hard and harsh drama of existence. Even the bitterness of Isora's early and unavenged death passed away, when I thought of the heaven to which she was gone, and in which, though I journeyed now through sin and travail, and recked little if the paths of others differed from my own, I yet trusted, with a solemn trust, that I should meet her at last. There was I to merit her with a love as undying, and at length as pure, as her own. It was this that at the stated hour in which, after my prayer for our reunion, I surrendered my spirit to the bright and wild visions of her far, but *not impassable* home,—it was this which for that single hour made all around me a paradise of delighted thoughts! It was not the little earth, nor the cold sky, nor the changing wave, nor the perishable turf—no, nor the dead wall, and the narrow chamber which were round me then! No dreamer ever was so far from the localities of flesh and life as I was in that enchanted hour: a light seemed to settle upon all things round me; her voice murmured on my ear, her kisses melted on my brow; I shut my eyes, and I fancied that I beheld her!

Wherefore was this comfort?—whence came the spell which admitted me to this fairy land? What was the source of the hope, and the rapture, and the delusion? Was it not the deep certainty that *Isora yet existed*—that her spirit, her nature, her love were preserved, were inviolate, were the same? That they watched over me yet, that she knew that in that hour I was with her—that she felt my prayer—that even then she anticipated

the moment when my soul should burst the human prison-house, and be once more blended with her own ?

What ! and was this to be no more ? Were those mystic and sweet revealings to be mute to me for ever ? Were my thoughts of Isora to be henceforth bounded to the charnel house and the worm ? Was she indeed *no more* ? *No more*—O, intolerable despair !—Why, there was not a thing I had once known, not a dog that I had caressed, not a book that I had read, which I could know that I should see *no more*, and, knowing, not feel something of regret. No more ! were we, indeed, parted forever and forever ? Had she gone in her young years, with her warm affections, her new hopes, all green and unwithered at her heart, at once into dust, stillness, ice ? And had I known her only for one year, one little year, to see her torn from me by a violent and bloody death, and to be left a mourner in this vast and eternal charnel, without a solitary consolation, or a gleam of hope ? Was the earth to be henceforth a mere mass conjured from the bones and fattened by the clay of our dead sires ?—were the stars and the moon to be mere atoms and specks of a chill light, no longer worlds, which the ardent spirit might hereafter reach, and be fitted to enjoy ? Was the heaven—the tender, blue, loving heaven, in whose far regions I had dreamt was Isora's home, and had, therefore, grown better and happier when I gazed upon it, to be nothing but cloud and air ? and had the love, which had seemed so immortal, and so springing from that which had not blent itself with mortality, been but a gross lamp fed only by the properties of a brute nature, and placed in a dark cell of clay, to glimmer, to burn, and to expire with the frail walls which it had illumined ? Dust, death, worms,—were these the heritage of love and hope, of thought, of passion, of all that breathed, and kindled, and exalted, and *created* within ?

Could I contemplate this idea, could I believe it possible ? *I could not.* But against the abstract, the logical arguments for that idea—had I a reply ? I shudder as I write that *at that* time I had not ! I endeavored to fix my whole thoughts to the study of those subtile reasonings which I had hitherto so imperfectly conned ; but my mind was jarring, irresolute, bewildered, confused ; my stake seemed too vast to allow me coolness for the game.

Whoever has had cause for some refined and deep study in the midst of the noisy and loud world, may perhaps readily comprehend that feeling which now possessed me ; a feeling that it was utterly impossible to abstract and concentrate one's

thoughts, while at the mercy of every intruder, and fevered and fretful by every disturbance. Men, early and long accustomed to mingle such reflections with the avocations of courts and cities, have grown callous to these interruptions, and it has been in the very heart of the multitude that the profoundest speculations have been cherished and produced; but I was not of this mould. The world, which before had been distasteful, now grew insufferable; I longed for some seclusion, some utter solitude, some quiet and unpenetrated nook, that I might give my undivided mind to the knowledge of these things, and build the tower of divine reasonings by which I might ascend to heaven. It was at this time, and in the midst of my fiercest internal conflict, that the great Czar died, and I was suddenly recalled to Russia.

"Now," I said, when I heard of my release, "now shall my wishes be fulfilled."

I sent to Bezoni. He came, but he refused, as indeed he had for some time done, to speak to me further upon the question which so wildly engrossed me. "I forgive you," said I, when we parted, "I forgive you for all that you have cost me; I feel that the moment is now at hand when my faith shall frame a weapon wherewith to triumph over yours!"

Father in Heaven! thanks be to thee that my doubts were at last removed, and the cloud rolled away from my soul.

Bezoni embraced me, and wept over me. "All good men," said he, "have a mighty interest in your success; for me there is nothing dark, even in the mute grave, if it covers the ashes of one who has loved and served his brethren, and done, with a wilful heart, no living creature wrong."

Soon afterwards the Italian lost his life in attending the victims of a fearful and contagious disease, whom even the regular practitioners of the healing art hesitated to visit.

At this moment I am, in the strictest acceptance of the words, a believer and a Christian. I have neither anxiety nor doubt upon the noblest and the most comforting of all creeds, and I am grateful, among the other blessings which faith has brought me—I am grateful that it has brought me CHARITY! Dark to all human beings was Bezoni's doctrine—dark, above all, to those who have mourned on earth; so withering to all the hopes which cling the most enduringly to the heart, was his unhappy creed—that he who knows how inseparably, though insensibly, our moral legislation is woven with our supposed self-interest, will scarcely marvel at, even while he condemns, the unwise and unholy persecution which that creed univers-

ally sustains ! Many a most wretched hour, many a pang of agony and despair, did those doctrines inflict upon myself ; but I know that the intention of Bezoni was benevolence, and that the practice of his life was virtue : and while my reason tells me that God will not punish the reluctant and involuntary error of one to whom all God's creatures were so dear, my religion bids me hope that I shall meet him in that world where no error *is*, and where the Great Spirit, to whom all human passions are unknown, avenges the momentary doubt of His justice by a proof of the infinity of His mercy.

BOOK VI.

CHAPTER I.

The Retreat.

I ARRIVED at St. Petersburg, and found the Czarina, whose conjugal perfidy was more than suspected, tolerably resigned to the extinction of that dazzling life, whose incalculable and god-like utility it is reserved for posterity to appreciate ! I have observed, by the way, that, in general, men are the less mourned by their families in proportion as they are the more mourned by the community. The great are seldom amiable ; and those who are the least lenient to our errors are invariably our relations !

Many circumstances at that time conspired to make my request to quit the imperial service appear natural and appropriate. The death of the Czar, joined to a growing jealousy and suspicion between the English monarch and Russia, which, though long existing, was now become more evident and notorious than heretofore, gave me full opportunity to observe that my pardon had been obtained from King George three years since, and that private as well as national ties rendered my return to England a measure not only of expediency but necessity. The imperial Catherine granted me my dismissal in the most flattering terms, and added the high distinction of the order founded in honor of the memorable feat by which she had

saved her royal consort and the Russian army, to the order of St. Andrew, which I had already received.

I transferred my wealth, now immense, to England, and, with the pomp which became the rank and reputation Fortune had bestowed upon me, I commenced the long land journey I had chalked out to myself. Although I had alleged my wish to revisit England as the main reason for my retirement from Russia, I had also expressed an intention of visiting Italy previous to my return to England. The physicians, indeed, had recommended to me that delicious climate as an antidote to the ills my constitution had sustained in the freezing skies of the north; and in my own heart I had secretly appointed some more solitary part of the Divine Land for the scene of my purposed hermitage and seclusion. It is indeed astonishing how those who have lived much in cold climates yearn for lands of mellow light and summer luxuriance; and I felt for a southern sky the same resistless longing which sailors, in the midst of the vast ocean, have felt for the green fields and various landscape of the shore.

I traversed, then, the immense tracts of Russia—passed through Hungary—entered Turkey, which I had wished to visit, where I remained a short time; and, crossing the Adriatic, hailed, for the first time, the Ausonian shore. It was the month of May—that month, of whose lustrous beauty none in a northern clime can dream—that I entered Italy. It may serve as an instance of the power with which a thought, that, however important, is deemed of too abstract and metaphysical a nature deeply to engross the mind, possessed me then, that I—no cold nor unenthusiastic votary of the classic Muse—made no pilgrimage to city or ruin, but, after a brief sojourn at Ravenna, where I dismissed all my train, set out alone to find the solitary cell for which I now sickened with a hermit's love.

It was in a small village at the foot of the Apennines that I found the object of my search. Strangely enough, there blended with my philosophical ardor a deep mixture of my old romance. Nature, to whose voice the dweller in cities, and struggler with mankind, had been so long obtuse, now pleaded audibly at my heart, and called me to her embraces, as a mother calls unto her wearied child. My eye, as with a new vision, became opened to the mute yet eloquent loveliness of this most fairy earth: and hill and valley—the mirror of silent waters—the sunny stillness of woods, and the old haunts of satyr and nymph—revived in me the fountains of past poetry,

and became the receptacles of a thousand spells, mightier than the charms of any enchanter save Love—which was departed—Youth, which was nearly gone—and Nature, which (more vividly than ever) existed for me still.

I chose, then, my retreat. As I was fastidious in its choice, I cannot refrain from the luxury of describing it. Ah, little did I dream that I had come thither, not only to find a divine comfort, but the sources of a human and most passionate woe! Mightiest of the Roman bards! in whom tenderness and reason were so entwined, and who didst sanctify even thine unholy errors with so beautiful and so rare a genius! what an invariable truth one line of thine has expressed: "Even in the fairest fountain of delight there is a secret and evil spring eternally bubbling up and scattering its bitter waters over the very flowers which surround its margin!"

In the midst of a lovely and tranquil vale was a small cottage; that was my home. The good people there performed for me all the hospitable offices I required. At a neighboring monastery I had taken the precaution to make myself known to the superior. Not all Italians—no, nor all monks—belong to either of the two great tribes into which they are generally divided—knaves or fools. The Abbot Anselmo was a man of rather a liberal and enlarged mind; he not only kept my secret, which was necessary to my peace, but he took my part, which was, perhaps, necessary to my safety. A philosopher, who desires only to convince himself, and upon one subject, does not require many books. Truth lies in a small compass; and for my part, in considering any speculative subject, I would sooner have with me one book of Euclid, as a model, than all the library of the Vatican, as authorities. But then I am not fond of drawing upon any resources but those of reason for reasonings; wiser men than I am are not so strict. The few books that I did require were, however, of a nature very illicit in Italy; the good father passed them to me from Ravenna, under his own protection. "I was a holy man," he said, "who wished to render the Catholic church a great service, by writing a vast book against certain atrocious opinions; and the works I read were, for the most part, works that I was about to confute." This report gained me protection and respect; and, after I had ordered my agent at Ravenna to forward to the excellent Abbot a piece of plate, and a huge cargo of a rare Hungary wine, it was not the Abbot's fault if I was not the most popular person in the neighborhood.

But to my description:—my home was a cottage—the valley

in which it lay was divided by a mountain stream, which came from the forest Apennine, a sparkling and wild stranger, and softened into quiet and calm as it proceeded through its green margin in the vale. And that margin, how dazzlingly green it was ! At the distance of about a mile from my hut, the stream was broken into a slight waterfall, whose sound was heard distinct and deep in that still place : and often I paused, from my midnight thoughts, to listen to its enchanted and wild melody. The fall was unseen by the ordinary wanderer, for there the stream passed through a thick copse ; and even when you pierced the grove, and gained the water-side, dark trees hung over the turbulent wave, and the silver spray was thrown upward through the leaves, and fell in diamonds upon the deep green sod.

This was a most favored haunt with me ; the sun glancing through the idle leaves—the music of the water—the solemn absence of all other sounds, except the songs of birds, to which the ear grew accustomed, and, at last, in the abstraction of thought, scarcely distinguished from the silence—the fragrant herbs—and the unnumbered and nameless flowers which formed my couch—were all calculated to make me pursue uninterruptedly the thread of contemplation which I had, in the less voluptuous and harsher solitude of the closet, first woven from the web of austerest thought. I say pursue, for it was too luxurious and sensual a retirement for the conception of a rigid and severe train of reflection ; at least it would have been so to me. But, when the thought *is once born*, such scenes seem to me the most fit to cradle and to rear it. The torpor of the physical, appears to leave to the mental, frame a full scope and power ; the absence of human cares, sounds, and intrusions, becomes the best nurse to contemplation ; and even that delicious and vague sense of enjoyment which would seem, at first, more genial to the fancy than the mind, preserves the thought undisturbed, because contented ; so that all but the scheming mind becomes lapped in sleep, and the mind itself lives distinct and active as a dream ; a dream, not vague, nor confused, nor unsatisfying, but endowed with more than the clearness, the precision, the vigor of waking life.

A little way from this waterfall was a fountain, a remnant of a classic and golden age. Never did Naiad gaze on a more glassy mirror, or dwell in a more divine retreat. Through a crevice in an overhanging mound of the emerald earth, the father stream of the fountain crept out, born, like Love, among flowers, and in the most sunny smiles ; it then fell, broadening

and glowing, into a marble basin, at whose bottom, in the shining noon, you might see a soil which mocked the very hues of gold, and the water insects, in their quaint shapes, and unknown sports, grouping or gliding in the midmost wave. A small temple, of the lightest architecture, stood before the fountain ; and, in a niche therein, a mutilated statue—possibly of the Spirit of the Place. By this fountain, my evening walk would linger till the short twilight melted away, and the silver wave trembled in the light of the western star. Oh ! then, what feelings gathered over me as I turned slowly homeward ; the air still, breathless, shining—the stars, gleaming over the woods of the far Apennine—the hills, growing huger in the shade—the small insects humming on the wing—and, ever and anon, the swift bat, wheeling round and amidst them—the music of the waterfall deepening on the ear ; and the light and hour lending even a mysterious charm to the cry of the weird owl, flitting after its prey,—all this had a harmony in my thoughts, and a food for the meditations in which my days and nights were consumed. The World moulders away the fabric of our early nature, and Solitude rebuilds it on a firmer base.

CHAPTER II.

The Victory.

O EARTH ! Reservoir of life, over whose deep bosom brood the wings of the Universal Spirit, shaking upon thee a blessing and a power—a blessing and power to produce and reproduce the living from the dead, so that our flesh is woven from the same atoms which were once the atoms of our sires, and the inexhaustible nutriment of Existence is Decay ! O eldest and most solemn Earth, blending even thy loveliness and joy with a terror and an awe ! thy sunshine is girt with clouds, and circled with storm and tempest : thy day cometh from the womb of darkness, and returneth unto darkness, as man returns unto thy bosom. The green herb that laughs in the valley, the water that sings merrily along the wood ; the many-winged and all-searching air, which garners life as a harvest, and scatters it as a seed ; all are pregnant with corruption and carry the cradled death within them, as an oak banqueteth the destroying worm. But who that looks upon thee, and loves thee, and inhales thy blessings, will ever mingle too deep a moral with his joy ? Let us not ask whence come the garlands that we wreath around

our altars, or shower upon our feasts : will they not bloom as brightly, and breathe with as rich a fragrance, whether they be plucked from the garden or the grave? O Earth, my Mother Earth! dark Sepulchre that closes upon all which the Flesh bears, but Vestibule of the vast regions which the Soul shall pass, how leapt my heart within me when I first fathomed thy real spell!

Yes! never shall I forget the rapture with which I hailed the light that dawned upon me at last! Never shall I forget the suffocating—the full—the ecstatic joy, with which I saw the mightiest of all human hopes accomplished; and felt, as if an angel spoke, that there is a life beyond the grave! Tell me not of the pride of ambition—tell me not of the triumphs of science: never had ambition so lofty an end as the search after immortality! never had science so sublime a triumph as the conviction that immortality will be gained! I had been at my task the whole night,—pale alchemist, seeking from meaner truths to extract the greatest of all! At the first hour of day, lo! the gold was there: the labor for which I would have relinquished life, was accomplished; the dove descended upon the waters of my soul. I fled from the house. I was possessed as with a spirit. I ascended a hill, which looked for leagues over the sleeping valley. A gray mist hung around me like a veil; I paused, and the great Sun broke slowly forth; I gazed upon its majesty, and my heart swelled. “So rises the soul,” I said, “from the vapors of this dull being; but the soul waneth not, neither setteth it, nor knoweth it any night, save that from which it dawneth!”—The mists rolled gradually away, the sunshine deepened, and the face of nature lay in smiles, yet silently, before me. It lay before me, a scene that I had often witnessed, and hailed, and worshipped; *but it was not the same*: a glory had passed over it; it was steeped in a beauty and a holiness, in which neither youth, nor poetry, nor even love, had ever robed it before! The change which the earth had undergone was like that of some being we have loved—when death is past, and from a mortal it becomes an angel!

I uttered a cry of joy, and was then as silent as all around me. I felt as if henceforth there was a new compact between nature and myself. I felt as if every tree, and blade of grass, were henceforth to be eloquent with a voice, and instinct with a spell. I felt as if a religion had entered into the earth, and made oracles of all that the earth bears; the old fables of Dodona were to become realized, and *the very leaves* to be hallowed by a sanctity, and to murmur with a truth. I was no

longer only a part of that which withers and decays; I was no longer a machine of clay, moved by a spring, and to be trodden into the mire which I had trod; I was no longer tied to humanity by links which could never be broken, and which, if broken, would avail me not. I was become, as by a miracle, a part of a vast, though unseen, spirit. It was not to the matter, but to the essence of things, that I bore kindred and alliance; the stars and the heavens resumed over me their ancient influence; and, as I looked along the far hills and the silent landscape, a voice seemed to swell from the stillness, and to say, "I am the life of these things, a spirit distinct from the things themselves. It is to me that you belong forever and forever; separate, but equally indissoluble; apart, but equally eternal!"

I spent the day upon the hills. It was evening when I returned. I lingered by the old fountain, and saw the stars rise, and tremble, one by one, upon the wave. The hour was that which Isora had loved the best, and that which the love of her had consecrated the most to me. And never, oh, never did it sink into my heart with a deeper sweetness, or a more soothing balm. I had once more knit my soul to Isora's: I could once more look from the toiling and the dim earth, and forget that Isora had left me, in dreaming of our reunion. Blame me not, you who indulge in a religious hope more severe and more sublime—you who miss no footsteps from the earth, nor pine for a voice that your human wanderings can hear no more—blame me not, you whose pulses beat not for the wild love of the created, but whose spirit languishes only for a nearer commune with the Creator—blame me not too harshly for my mortal wishes, nor think that my faith was the less sincere because it was tinted in the most unchanging dyes of the human heart, and indissolubly woven with the memory of the dead! Often from our weaknesses our strongest principles of conduct are born; and from the acorn, which a breeze has wafted, springs the oak which defies the storm.

The first intoxication and rapture consequent upon the reward of my labor passed away; but, unlike other excitement, it was followed not by languor, or a sated and torpid calm; a soothing and delicious sensation possessed me—my turbulent senses slept; and Memory, recalling the world, rejoiced at the retreat which Hope had acquired.

I now surrendered myself to a nobler philosophy than in crowds and cities I had hitherto known. I no longer satirized—I inquired; I no longer derided—I examined. I looked from the natural proofs of immortality to the written promise of our

Father—I sought not to baffle men, but to worship Truth—I applied myself more to the knowledge of good and evil—I bowed my soul before the loveliness of Virtue; and though scenes of wrath and passion yet lowered in the future, and I was again speedily called forth—to act—to madden—to contend—perchance to sin—the Image is still unbroken, and the Votary has still an offering for its Altar!

CHAPTER III.

The Hermit of the Well.

THE thorough and deep investigation of those principles from which we learn the immortality of the soul, and the nature of its proper ends, leads the mind through such a course of reflection and of study—it is attended with so many exalting, purifying, and, if I may so say, etherealizing thoughts, that I do believe no man has ever pursued it, and not gone back to the world a better and a nobler man than he was before. Nay, so deeply must these elevating and refining studies be conned, so largely and sensibly must they enter the intellectual system, that I firmly think that even a sensualist who has only considered the subject with a view to convince himself that he is clay, and has therefore an excuse to the curious conscience for his grosser desires; nay, should he come to his wished for, yet desolate confusion, from which the abhorrent nature shrinks and recoils, I do nevertheless firmly think, should the study have been long and deep, that he would wonder to find his desires had lost their poignancy, and his objects their charm. He would descend from the Alp he had climbed to the low level on which he formerly deemed it a bliss to dwell, with the feeling of one who, having long drawn in high places an empyreal air, has become unable to inhale the smoke and the thick vapor he inhaled of yore. His soul once aroused would stir within him, though he felt it not, and though he grew not a believer, he would cease to be only the voluptuary.

I meant at one time to have here stated the arguments which had perplexed me on one side, and those which afterwards convinced me on the other. I do not do so for many reasons, one of which will suffice, viz., the evident and palpable circumstance that a dissertation of that nature would, in a biography like the present, be utterly out of place and season. Perhaps, however, at a later period of life, I may collect my own opin-

ions on the subject into a separate work, and bequeath that work to future generations, upon the same conditions as the present memoir.

One day I was favored by a visit from one of the monks at the neighboring abbey. After some general conversation he asked me if I had yet encountered the Hermit of the Well! "No," said I, and I was going to add, that I had not even heard of him, "but I now remember that the good people of the house have more than once spoken to me of him as a rigid and self-mortifying recluse."

"Yes," said the holy friar; "Heaven forbid that I should say aught against the practice of the saints and pious men to deny unto themselves the lusts of the flesh, but such penances may be carried too far. However, it is an excellent custom, and the Hermit of the Well is an excellent creature. *Santa Maria!* what delicious stuff is that Hungary wine your scholarship was pleased to bestow upon our father Abbot. He suffered me to taste it the eve before last. I had been suffering with a pain in the reins, and the wine acted powerfully upon me as an efficacious and inestimable medicine. Do you find, my son, that it bore the journey to your lodging here, as well as to the convent cellars?"

"Why, really, my father, I have none of it here; but the people of the house have a few flasks of a better wine than ordinary, if you will deign to taste it in lieu of the Hungary wine."

"Oh—oh!" said the monk, groaning, "my reins trouble me much—perhaps the wine may comfort me!" and the wine was brought.

"It is not of so rare a flavor as that which you sent to our reverend father," said the monk, wiping his mouth with his long sleeve. "Hungary must be a charming place—is it far from hence?—It joins the heretical—I pray your pardon—it joins the continent of England, I believe?"

"Not exactly, father; but whatever its topography, it is a rare country—for those who like it! But tell me of this Hermit of the Well. How long has he lived here—and how came he by his appellation? Of what country is he—and of what birth?"

"You ask me too many questions at once, my son. The country of the holy man is a mystery to us all. He speaks the Tuscan dialect well, but with a foreign accent. Nevertheless, though the wine is not of Hungary, it has a pleasant flavor. I wonder how the rogues kept it so snugly from the knowledge and comfort of their pious brethren of the monastery."

"And how long has the hermit lived in your vicinity?"

"Nearly eight years, my son. It was one winter's evening that he came to our convent in the dress of a worldly traveller, to seek our hospitality, and a shelter for the night, which was inclement and stormy. He stayed with us a few days, and held some conversation with our father Abbot; and one morning, after roaming in the neighborhood to look at the old stones and ruins, which is the custom of travellers, he returned, put into our box some certain alms, and two days afterwards he appeared in the place he now inhabits, and in the dress he assumes."

"And of what nature, my father, is the place, and of what fashion the dress?"

"Holy St. Francis!" exclaimed the father, with a surprise so great that I thought at first it related to the wine, "Holy St. Francis—have you not seen the well yet?"

"No, father, unless you speak of the fountain about a mile and a quarter distant."

"Tush—tush!" said the good man, "what ignoramuses you travellers are; you affect to know what kind of slippers Pres-ter John wears and to have been admitted to the bed-chamber of *the Pagoda of China*; and yet when one comes to sound you, you are as ignorant of everything a man of real learning knows as an Englishman is of his missal. Why, I thought that every fool in every country had heard of the Holy Well of St. Francis, situated exactly two miles from our famous convent, and that every fool in the neighborhood had seen it."

"What the fools, my father, whether in this neighborhood or any other may have heard or seen, I, who profess not ostensibly to belong to so goodly an order, cannot pretend to know; but be assured that the Holy Well of St. Francis is as unfamiliar to me as the Pagoda of China—Heaven bless *him*—is to you."

Upon this the learned monk, after expressing due astonishment, offered to show it to me; and as I thought I might by acquiescence get rid of him sooner, and as, moreover, I wished to see the Abbot, to whom some books for me had been lately sent, I agreed to the offer.

The well, said the monk, lay not a mile out of the customary way to the monastery; and after *we* had finished the flask of wine, we sallied out on our excursion,—the monk upon a stately and strong ass—myself on foot.

The Abbot, on granting me his friendship and protection, had observed that I was not the only stranger and recluse on

whom his favor was bestowed. He had then mentioned the Hermit of the Well as an eccentric and strange being, who lived an existence of rigid penance, harmless to others, painful only to himself. This story had been confirmed in the few conversations I had ever interchanged with my host and hostess, who seemed to take a peculiar pleasure in talking of the Solitary; and from them I heard also many anecdotes of his charity towards the poor, and his attention to the sick. All these circumstances came into my mind as the good monk indulged his loquacity upon the subject, and my curiosity became, at last, somewhat excited respecting my fellow recluse.

I now learned from the monk that the post of Hermit of the Well was an office of which the present anchorite was by no means the first tenant. The well was one of those springs frequent in Catholic countries, to which a legend and a sanctity are attached; and twice a year, once in the spring, once in the autumn, the neighboring peasants flocked thither, on a stated day, to drink, and lose their diseases. As the spring most probably did possess some medicinal qualities, a few extraordinary cures had occurred; especially among those pious persons who took not biennial, but constant draughts; and to doubt its holiness was downright heresy.

Now, hard by this well was a cavern, which, whether first formed by nature or art, was now, upon the whole, constructed into a very commodious abode; and here, for years beyond the memory of man, some solitary person had fixed his abode to dispense and to bless the water, to be exceedingly well fed by the surrounding peasants, to wear a long gown of serge or sackcloth, and to be called the Hermit of the Well. So fast as each succeeding anchorite died there were enough candidates eager to supply his place; for it was no bad *métier* to some penniless impostor to become the quack and patentee of a holy specific. The choice of these candidates always rested with the superior of the neighboring monastery; and it is not impossible that he made an indifferently good percentage upon the annual advantages of his protection and choice.

At the time the traveller appeared, the former hermit had just departed this life, and it was, therefore, to the vacancy thus occasioned, that he had procured himself to be elected. The incumbent appeared quite of a different mould from the former occupants of the hermitage. He accepted, it is true, the gifts laid at regular periods upon a huge stone between the hermitage and the well, but he distributed among the donors alms far more profitable than their gifts. He entered no village, borne upon

an ass laden with twin sacks, for the purpose of sanctimoniously robbing the inhabitants ; no profane songs were ever heard resounding from his dwelling by the peasant incautiously lingering at a late hour too near its vicinity ; my guide, the monk, complained bitterly of his unsociability, and no scandalous legend of nymph-like comforters and damsel visitants haunting the sacred dwelling, escaped from the garrulous friar's well-loaded budget.

"Does he study much?" said I with the interest of a student.

"I fear me not," quoth the monk. "I have had occasion often to enter his abode, and I have examined all things with a close eye—for, praised be the Lord, I have faculties more than ordinarily clear and observant—but I have seen no books therein, excepting a missal, and a Latin or Greek Testament, I know not well which ; nay, so incurious or unlearned is the holy man that he rejected even a loan of the 'Life of St. Francis,' notwithstanding it has many and rare pictures, to say nothing of its most interesting and amazing tales."

More might the monk have said, had we not now suddenly entered a thick and sombre wood. A path cut through it was narrow, and only capable of admitting a traveller on foot or horseback ; and the boughs overhead were so darkly interlaced that the light scarcely, and only in broken and erratic glimmerings, pierced the canopy.

"It is the wood," said the monk, crossing himself, "wherein the wonderful adventure happened to St. Francis, which I will one day narrate at length to you."

"And we are near the well, I suppose?" said I.

"It is close at hand," answered the monk.

In effect we had not proceeded above fifty yards before the path brought us into a circular space of green sod, in the midst of which was a small, square, stone building, of plain, but not inelegant, shape, and evidently of great antiquity. At one side of this building was an iron handle, for the purpose of raising water, that cast itself into a stone basin, to which was affixed, by a strong chain, an iron cup. An inscription, in monkish Latin, was engraved over the basin, requesting the traveller to pause and drink, and importing that what that water was to the body, faith was to the soul ; near the cistern was a rude seat, formed by the trunk of a tree. The door of the well-house was of iron, and secured by a chain and lock ; perhaps the pump was so contrived that only a certain quantum of the sanctified beverage could be drawn up at a time, without

application to some mechanism within : and wayfarers were thereby prevented from helping themselves *ad libitum*, and thus depriving the anchorite of the profit and the necessity of his office.

It was certainly a strange, lonely, and wild place ; and the green sward, round as a fairy ring, in the midst of trees, which black, close, and huge, circled it like a wall : and the solitary gray building in the centre, gaunt and cold, and startling the eye with the abruptness of its appearance, and the strong contrast made by its wan hues to the dark verdure and forest gloom around it.

I took a draught of the water, which was very cold and tasteless, and reminded the monk of his disorder in the reins, to which a similar potation might possibly be efficacious. To this suggestion the monk answered that he would certainly try the water some other time ; but that at present the wine he had drunk might pullute its divine properties. So saying, he turned off the conversation by inviting me to follow him to the hermitage.

In our way thither he pointed out a large fragment of stone, and observed that the water would do me evil instead of good if I forgot to remunerate its guardian. I took the hint and laid a piece of silver on the fragment.

A short journey through the wood brought us to the foot of a hill covered with trees, and having at its base a strong stone door, the entrance to the excavated home of the anchorite. The monk gently tapped thrice at this door, but no answer came. "The holy man is from home," said he, "let us return."

We did so ; and the monk, keeping behind me, managed, as he thought unseen, to leave the stone as naked as we had found it ! We now struck through another path in the wood, and were soon at the convent. I did not lose the opportunity to question the Abbot respecting his tenant : I learnt from him little more than the particulars I have already narrated, save that, in concluding his details, he said :

"I can scarcely doubt but that the hermit is, like yourself, a person of rank ; his bearing and his mien appear to denote it. He has given, and gives yearly, large sums to the uses of the convent : and, though he takes the customary gifts of the pious villagers, it is only by my advice, and for the purpose of avoiding suspicion. Should he be considered rich, it might attract cupidity ; and there are enough bold hands and sharp knives in the country to place the wealthy and the unguarded in some peril. Whoever he may be,—for he has not confided

his secret to me—I do not doubt but that he is doing penance for some great crime; and, whatever be the crime, I suspect that its earthly punishment is nearly over. The hermit is naturally of a delicate and weak frame, and year after year I have marked him sensibly wearing away; so that when I last saw him, three days since, I was shocked at the visible ravages which disease or penance had engraven upon him. If ever Death wrote legibly, its characters are in that brow and cheek.”

“Poor man! Know you not even whom to apprise of his decease when he is no more?”

“I do not yet; but the last time I saw him he told me that he found himself drawing near his end, and that he should not quit life without troubling me with one request.”

After this the Abbot spoke of other matters, and my visit expired.

Interested in the recluse more deeply than I acknowledged to myself, I found my steps insensibly leading me homeward by the more circuitous road which wound first by the holy well. I did not resist the impulse, but walked musingly onward by the waning twilight, for the day was now over, until I came to the well. As I emerged from the wood, I started involuntarily and drew back. A figure, robed from head to foot in a long sable robe, sat upon the rude seat beside the well; sat so still, so motionless, that coming upon it abruptly in that strange place, the heart beat irregularly at an apparition so dark in hue; and so death-like in its repose. The hat, large, broad, and overhanging, which suited the costume, was lying on the ground: and the face, which inclined upward, seemed to woo the gentle air of the quiet and soft skies. I approached a few steps, and saw the profile of the countenance more distinctly than I had done before. It was of a marble whiteness; the features, though sharpened and attenuated by disease, were of surpassing beauty; the hair was exceedingly, almost effeminately, long, and hung in waves of perfect jet on either side; the mouth was closed firmly, and deep lines or rather furrows, were traced from its corners to either nostril. The stranger's beard, of a hue equally black as the hair, was dishevelled and neglected, but not very long; and one hand, which lay on the sable robe, was so thin and wan you might have deemed the very starlight could have shone through it. I did not doubt that it was the recluse whom I saw; I drew near and accosted him.

“Your blessing, holy father, and your permission to taste the healing of your well,”

Sudden as was my appearance, and abrupt my voice, the hermit evinced by no startled gesture a token of surprise. He turned very slowly round, cast upon me an indifferent glance, and said, in a sweet and very low tone :

“You have my blessing, stranger; there is water in the cistern—drink, and be healed.”

I dipped the bowl in the basin, and took sparingly of the water. In the accent and tone of the stranger, my ear, accustomed to the dialects of many nations, recognized something English; I resolved, therefore, to address him in my native tongue, rather than the indifferent Italian in which I had first accosted him :

“The water is fresh and cooling; would, holy father, that it could penetrate to a deeper malady than the ills of flesh: that it could assuage the fever of the heart, or lave from the wearied mind the dust which it gathers from the mire and travail of the world.”

Now the hermit testified surprise; but it was slight and momentary. He gazed upon me more attentively than he had done before, and said, after a pause :

“My countryman! and in this spot! It is not often that the English penetrate into places where no ostentatious celebrity dwells to sate curiosity and flatter pride. My countryman!—it is well, and perhaps fortunate. Yes,” he said, after a second pause, “yes; it were indeed a boon, had the earth a fountain for the wounds which fester, and the disease which consumes the heart.”

“The earth has oblivion, father, if not a cure.”

“It is false!” cried the hermit passionately, and starting wildly from his seat; “the earth has *no* oblivion. The grave—is *that* forgetfulness? No, no—*there is no grave for the soul!* The deeds pass—the flesh corrupts—but the memory passes not, and withers not. From age to age, from world to world, through eternity, throughout creation, it is perpetuated—an immortality—a curse—a *hell!*”

Surprised by the vehemence of the hermit, I was still more startled by the agonizing and ghastly expression of his face.

“My father,” said I, “pardon me, if I have pressed upon a sore. I also have that within, which, did a stranger touch it, would thrill my whole frame with torture, and I would fain ask from your holy soothing, and pious comfort, something of alleviation or of fortitude.”

The hermit drew near to me; he laid his thin hand upon my arm, and looked long and wistfully in my face. It was then

that a suspicion crept through me which after-observation proved to be true, that the wandering of those dark eyes, and the meaning of that blanched brow were tingured with insanity.

"Brother, and fellow-man," said he mournfully, "hast thou in truth suffered? and dost thou still smart at the remembrance? We are friends then. If thou hast suffered as much as I have, I will fall down and do homage to thee as a superior; for pain has its ranks, and I think, at times, that none ever climbed the height that I have done. Yet you look not like one who has had nights of delirium, and days in which the heart lay in the breast, as a corpse endowed with consciousness might lie in the grave, feeling the worm gnaw it, and the decay corrupt, and yet incapable of resistance or of motion. Your cheek is thin, but firm; your eye is haughty and bright; you have the air of one who has lived with men, and struggled and not been vanquished in the struggle. Suffered! No, man, no—you have not suffered!"

"My father, it is not in the countenance that Fate graves her records. I have it is true, contended with my fellows; and if wealth and honor be the premium, not in vain: but I have not contended against Sorrow with a like success; and I stand before you, a being who, if passion be a tormentor, and the death of the loved a loss, has borne that which the most wretched will not envy."

Again a fearful change came over the face of the recluse—he grasped my arm more vehemently, "You speak my own sorrows—you utter my own curse—I will see you again—you may do my last will better than yon monks. Can I trust you? If you have in truth known misfortune, I will!—I will—yea, even to the outpouring—Merciful, merciful God, what would I say—what would I reveal!"

Suddenly changing his voice, he released me, and said, touching his forehead with a meaning gesture, and a quiet smile, "You say you are my rival in pain? Have you ever known the rage and despair of the heart mount *here*? It is a wonderful thing to be calm as I am now, when that rising makes itself felt in fire and torture!"

"If there be aught, father, which a man who cares not what country he visit, or what deed—so it be not of guilt or shame—he commit, can do toward the quiet of your soul, say it, and I will attempt your will."

"You are kind, my son," said the hermit, resuming his first melancholy and dignified composure of mien and bearing, "and

there is something in your voice, which seems to me like a tone that I have heard in youth. Do you live near at hand?"

"In the valley, about four miles hence; I am, like yourself a fugitive from the world."

"Come to me then to-morrow at eve; to-morrow!—No, that is a holy eve, and I must keep it with scourge and prayer. The next at sunset. I shall be collected then, and I would fain know more of you than I do. Bless you my son—adieu."

"Yet stay, father, may I not conduct you home?"

"No—my limbs are weak, but I trust they can carry me to that home, till I be borne thence to my last. Farewell! the night grows, and man fills even these shades with peril. The eve after next, at sunset, we meet again."

So saying, the hermit waved his hand, and I stood apart, watching his receding figure, until the trees cloaked the last glimpse from my view. I then turned homeward, and reached my cottage in safety, despite of the hermit's caution. But I did not retire to rest: a powerful foreboding, rather than suspicion, that, in the worn and wasted form which I had beheld, there was identity with one whom I had not met for years, and whom I had believed to be no more, thrillingly possessed me.

"Can—can it be?" thought I "Can grief have a desolation, or remembrance an agony, sufficient to create so awful a change? And of all human beings, for that one to be singled out; that one in whom passion and sin were, if they existed, nipped in their earliest germ, and seemingly rendered barren of all fruit! If too, almost against the evidence of sight and sense, an innate feeling has marked in that most altered form the traces of a dread recognition, would not his memory have been yet more vigilant than mine? Am I so changed that he should have looked me in the face so wistfully, and found there nought save the lineaments of a stranger?" And, actuated by this thought, I placed the light by the small mirror which graced my chamber. I recalled, as I gazed, my features as they had been in earliest youth. "No," I said, with a sigh, "there is nothing here that he should recognize."

And I said aright; my features, originally small and delicate, had grown enlarged and prominent. The long locks of my youth (for only upon state occasions did my early vanity consent to the fashion of the day) were succeeded by curls, short and crisped; the hues, alternately pale and hectic, that the dreams of romance had once spread over my cheek, had settled into the unchanging bronze of manhood; the smooth lip and unshaven chin were clothed with a thick hair; the once un-

furrowed brow was habitually knit in thought; and the ardent, restless expression that boyhood wore had yielded to the quiet, unmoved countenance of one in whom long custom has subdued all outward sign of emotion, and many and various events left no prevalent token of the mind, save that of an habitual, but latent resolution. My frame, too, once scarcely less slight than a woman's, was become knit and muscular, and nothing was left by which, in the foreign air, the quiet brow, and the athletic form, my very mother could have recognized the slender figure and changeful face of the boy she had last beheld. The very sarcasm of the eye was gone: and I had learnt the world's easy lesson—the dissimulation of composure.

I have noted one thing in others, and it was particularly noticeable in me, viz., that few who mix very largely with men, and with the courtier's or the citizen's design, ever retain the key and tone of their original voice. The voice of a young man is as yet modulated by nature, and expresses the passion of the moment: that of the matured pupil of art expresses rather the customary occupation of his life: whether he aims at persuading, convincing, or commanding others, his voice irrevocably settles into the key he ordinarily employs; and, as persuasion is the means men chiefly employ in their commerce with each other, especially in the regions of a court, so a tone of artificial blandness and subdued insinuation is chiefly that in which the accents of worldly men are clothed; the artificial intonation, long continued, grows into nature, and the very pith and basis of the original sound fritter themselves away. The change was great in me, for, at that time which I brought in comparison with the present, my age was one in which the voice is yet confused and undecided, struggling between the accents of youth and boyhood; so that even this most powerful and unchanging of all claims upon the memory was in a great measure absent in me; and nothing but an occasional and rare tone could have produced even that faint and unconscious recognition which the hermit had confessed.

I must be pardoned these egotisms, which the nature of my story renders necessary.

With what eager impatience did I watch the hours to the appointed interview with the hermit languish themselves away! However, before that time arrived, and towards the evening of the next day, I was surprised by the rare honor of a visit from Anselmo himself. He came attended by two of the mendicant friars of his order, and they carried between them a basket of tolerable size, which, as mine hostess afterwards informed me,

with many a tear, went back somewhat heavier than it came, from the load of certain *receptacula* of that rarer wine which she had had, the evening before, the indiscreet hospitality to produce.

The Abbot came to inform me that the hermit had been with him that morning, making many inquiries respecting me. "I told him," said he, "that I was acquainted with your name and birth, but that I was under a solemn promise not to reveal them, without your consent; and I am now here, my son, to learn from you whether that consent may be obtained?"

"Assuredly not, holy father!" said I hastily; nor was I contented until I had obtained a renewal of his promise to that effect. This seemed to give the Abbot some little chagrin: perhaps the hermit had offered a reward for my discovery. However, I knew that Anselmo, though a griping, was a trustworthy man, and I felt safe in his renewed promise. I saw him depart with great satisfaction, and gave myself once more to conjectures respecting the strange recluse.

As, the next evening, I prepared to depart towards the hermitage, I took peculiar pains to give my person a foreign and disguised appearance. A loose dress, of rude and simple material, and a high cap of fur, were pretty successful in accomplishing this purpose. And, as I gave the last look at the glass before I left the house, I said, inly, "If there be any truth in my wild and improbable conjecture respecting the identity of the anchorite, I think time and this dress are sufficient wizards to secure me from a chance of discovery. I will keep a guard upon my words and tones, until, if my thought be verified, a moment fit for unmasking myself arrives. But would to God that the thought be groundless! In such circumstances, and after such an absence, to meet *him!* No; and yet—Well, this meeting will decide."

CHAPTER IV.

The Solution of many Mysteries—a dark View of the Life and Nature of Man.

POWERFUL, though not clearly developed in my own mind, was the motive which made me so strongly desire to preserve the incognito during my interview with the hermit. I have before said that I could not resist a vague, but intense belief that he was a person whom I had long believed in the grave;

and I had more than once struggled, against a dark, but passing, suspicion that that person was in some measure—mediately; though not directly—connected with the mysteries of my former life. If both these conjectures were true, I thought it possible that the communication the hermit wished to make might be made yet more willingly to me as a stranger than if he knew who was in reality his confidant. And, at all events, if I could curb the impetuous gushings of my own heart, which yearned for immediate disclosure, I might, by hint and prelude, ascertain the advantages and disadvantages of revealing myself.

I arrived at the well; the hermit was already at the place of rendezvous, seated in the same posture in which I had before seen him. I made my reverence, and accosted him.

“I have not failed you, father.”

“That is rarely a true boast with men,” said the hermit, smiling mournfully, but without sarcasm; “and were the promise of greater avail, it might not have been so rigidly kept.”

“The promise, father, seemed to me of greater weight than you would intimate,” answered I.

“How mean you?” said the hermit, hastily.

“Why, that we may perhaps serve each other by our meeting: you father, may comfort me by your counsels; I, you by my readiness to obey your request.”

The hermit looked at me for some moments, and, as well as I could, I turned away my face from his gaze. I might have spared myself the effort. He seemed to recognize nothing familiar in my countenance; perhaps his mental malady assisted my own alteration.

“I have inquired respecting you,” he said, after a pause, “and I hear that you are a learned and wise man, who have seen much of the world, and played the part both of soldier and of scholar, in its various theatres: is my information true?”

“Not true with respect to the learning, father, but true with regard to the experience. I have been a pilgrim in many countries of Europe.”

“Indeed!” said the hermit eagerly. “Come with me to my home, and tell me of the wonders you have seen.”

I assisted the hermit to rise, and he walked slowly towards the cavern, leaning upon my arm. Oh, how that light touch thrilled through my frame! How I longed to cry, “Are you not the one whom I have loved, and mourned, and believed buried in the tomb?” But I checked myself. We moved on in silence. The hermit's hand was on the door of the cavern,

when he said, in a calm tone, but with evident effort, and turning his face from me while he spoke :

“And did your wanderings ever carry you into the farther regions of the north? Did the fame of the great Czar ever lead you to the city he has founded?”

“I am right—I am right!” thought I, as I answered, “In truth, holy father, I spent not a long time at Petersburg; but I am not a stranger either to its wonders, or its inhabitants.”

“Possibly, then, you may have met with the English favorite of the Czar of whom I hear in my retreat that men have lately spoken somewhat largely?” The hermit paused again. We were now in a long, low passage, almost in darkness. I scarcely saw him, yet I heard a convulsed movement in his throat, before he uttered the remainder of the sentence. “He is called the Count Devereux.”

“Father,” said I calmly, “I have both seen and known the man.”

“Ha!” said the hermit, and he leant for a moment against the wall; “known him—and—how—how—I mean, where is he at this present time?”

“That, father, is a difficult question, respecting one who has led so active a life. He was ambassador at the court of —, just before I left it.”

We had now passed the passage, and gained a room of tolerable size; an iron lamp burnt within, and afforded a sufficient, but somewhat dim, light. The hermit, as I concluded my reply, sunk down on a long stone bench, beside a table of the same substance, and leaning his face on his hand, so that the long, large sleeve he wore perfectly concealed his features, said, “Pardon me, my breath is short, and my frame weak—I am quite exhausted—but will speak to you more, anon.”

I uttered a short answer, and drew a small wooden stool within a few feet of the hermit’s seat. After a brief silence he rose, placed wine, bread, and preserved fruits, before me, and bade me eat. I seemed to comply with his request, and the apparent diversion of my attention from himself somewhat relieved the embarrassment under which he evidently labored.

“May I hope,” he said, “that were my commission to this—to the Count Devereux—you would execute it faithfully and with speed? Yet stay—you have a high mien, as of one above fortune, but your garb is rude and poor; and if aught of gold could compensate your trouble, the hermit has other treasures beside this cell.”

“I will do your bidding, father, without robbing the poor.

"You wish then that I should seek Morton Devereux—you wish that I should summon him hither—you wish to see, and to confer with him!"

"God of mercy forbid!" cried the hermit, and with such vehemence that I was startled from the design of revealing myself, which I was on the point of executing. "I would rather that these walls would crush me into dust, or that this solid stone would crumble beneath my feet—ay, even into a bottomless pit, than meet the glance of Morton Devereux!"

"Is it even so?" said I, stooping over the wine-cup; "ye have been foes then, I suspect.—Well, it matters not—tell me your errand, and it shall be done."

"Done!" cried the hermit, and a new, and certainly a most natural, suspicion darted within him, "done! and—fool that I am!—who, or what are you, that I should believe you take so keen an interest in the wishes of a man utterly unknown to you? I tell you that my wish is that you should cross seas and traverse lands until you find the man I have named to you. Will a stranger do this, and without hire—no—no—I was a fool, and will trust the monks, and give gold, and then my errand will be sped."

"Father, or rather, brother," said I, with a slow and firm voice, "for you are of mine own age, and you have the passion and the infirmity which make brethren of all mankind, I am one to whom all places are alike: it matters not whether I visit a northern or a southern clime—I have wealth, which is sufficient to smooth toil—I have leisure, which makes occupation an enjoyment. More than this, I am one, who in his gayest and wildest moments has ever loved mankind, and would have renounced at any time his own pleasure for the advantage of another. But at this time, above all others, I am most disposed to forget myself, and there is a passion in your words which leads me to hope that it may be a great benefit which I can confer upon you."

"You speak well," said the hermit musingly, "and I may trust you; I will consider yet a little longer, and to-morrow at this hour, you shall have my final answer. If you execute the charge I entrust to you, may the blessing of a dying and most wretched man cleave to you forever!—But hush—the clock strikes—it is my hour of prayer."

And, pointing to a huge black clock that hung opposite the door, and indicated the hour of nine (according to our English mode of numbering the hours), the hermit fell on his knees, and, clasping his hands tightly, bent his face over them in the

attitude of humiliation and devotion. I followed his example. After a few minutes he rose—"Once in every three hours," said he, with a ghastly expression, "for the last twelve years have I bowed my soul in anguish before God, and risen to feel that it was in vain—I am cursed without and within!"

"My father, my father, is this your faith in the mercies of the Redeemer who died for Man?"

"Talk not to me of faith!" cried the hermit wildly. "Ye laymen and worldlings know nothing of its mysteries and its powers. But begone! the dread hour is upon me, when my tongue is loosed, and my brain darkened, and I know not my words, and shudder at my own thoughts. Begone! no human being shall witness those moments—they are only for Heaven and my own soul."

So saying, this unhappy and strange being seized me by the arm and dragged me towards the passage we had entered. I was in doubt whether to yield to, or contend with him; but there was a glare in his eye, and a flush upon his brow, which, while it betrayed the dreadful disease of his mind, made me fear that resistance to his wishes might operate dangerously upon a frame so feeble and reduced. I therefore mechanically obeyed him. He opened again the entrance to his rugged home, and the moonlight streamed wanly over his dark robes and spectral figure.

"Go," said he, more mildly than before—"go, and forgive the vehemence of one whose mind and heart alike are broken within him. Go, but return to-morrow at sunset. Your air disposes me to trust you."

So saying, he closed the door upon me, and I stood without the cavern alone.

But did I return home? Did I hasten to press my couch in sleep and sweet forgetfulness, while he was in that gloomy sepulture of the living, a prey to anguish, and torn by the fangs of madness and a fierce disease? No—on the damp grass, beneath the silent skies, I passed a night which could scarcely have been less wretched than his own. My conjecture was now, and in full, confirmed. Heavens! how I loved that man—how, from my youngest years, had my soul's fondest affections interlaced themselves with him!—with what anguish had I wept his imagined death? and now to know that he lay within those walls, smitten from brain to heart with so fearful and mysterious a curse—to know, too, that he dreaded the sight of me—of me who would have laid down my life for his!—the

grave, which I imagined his home, had been a mercy to a doom like this.

"He fears," I murmured, and I wept as I said it, "to look on one who would watch over, and soothe, and bear with him, with more than a woman's love! By what awful fate has this calamity fallen on one so holy and so pure? or by what pre-ordained destiny did I come to these solitudes, to find at the same time a new charm for the earth, and a spell to change it again into a desert and a place of woe?"

All night I kept vigil by the cave, and listened if I could catch moan or sound; but everything was silent; the thick walls of the rock kept even the voice of despair from my ear. The day dawned, and I retired among the trees, lest the hermit might come out unawares and see me. At sunrise I saw him appear for a few moments, and again retire, and I then hastened home, exhausted and wearied by the internal conflicts of the night, to gather coolness and composure for the ensuing interview, which I contemplated at once with eagerness and dread.

At the appointed hour, I repaired to the cavern: the door was partially closed; I opened it, hearing no answer to my knock, and walked gently along the passage; but I now heard shrieks, and groans, and wild laughter as I neared the rude chamber. I paused for a moment, and then in terror and dismay entered the apartment. It was empty; but I saw near the clock a small door, from within which the sounds that alarmed me proceeded. I had no scruple in opening it, and found myself in the hermit's sleeping-chamber; a small, dark room, where, upon a straw pallet, lay the wretched occupant in a state of frantic delirium. I stood mute and horror-struck, while his exclamations of frenzy burst upon my ear.

"There—there!" he cried, "I have struck thee to the heart, and now I will kneel and kiss those white lips, and bathe my hands in that blood. Ha!—do I hate thee?—hate—ay—hate, abhor, detest! Have you the beads there?—let me tell them. Yes, I will go to the confessional—confess? No, no—all the priests in the world could not lift up a soul so heavy with guilt. Help—help—help! I am falling—falling—there is the pit, and the fire, and the devils! Do you hear them laugh?—I can laugh too!—ha—ha—ha! Hush, I have written it all out in a fair hand—he shall read it—and then, O God! what curses he will heap upon my head! Blessed St. Francis, hear me! Lazarus, Lazarus, speak for me!"

Thus did the hermit rave, while my flesh crept to hear him.

I stood by his bedside, and called on him, but he neither heard nor saw me. Upon the ground, by the bed's head, as if it had dropt from under the pillow, was a packet sealed and directed to myself; I knew the handwriting at a glance, even though the letters were blotted and irregular, and possibly traced in the first moment that his present curse fell upon the writer. I placed the packet in my bosom; the hermit saw not the motion, he lay back on the bed, seemingly in utter exhaustion. I turned away, and hastened to the monastery for assistance. As I hurried through the passage, the hermit's shrieks again broke upon me, with a fiercer vehemence than before. I flew from them, as if they were sounds from the abyss of Hades. I flew till, breathless, and half-senseless myself, I fell down exhausted by the gate of the monastery.

The two most skilled in physic of the brethren were immediately summoned, and they lost not a moment in accompanying me to the cavern. All that evening, until midnight, the frenzy of the maniac seemed rather to increase than abate. But at that hour, indeed, exactly, as the clock struck twelve, he fell at once into a deep sleep.

Then for the first time, but not till the wearied brethren had, at this favorable symptom, permitted themselves to return for a brief interval to the monastery, to seek refreshment for themselves, and to bring down new medicines for the patient,—then for the first time, I rose from the hermit's couch by which I had hitherto kept watch, and, repairing to the outer chamber, took forth the packet superscribed with my name. There, alone, in that gray vault, and by the sepulchral light of the single lamp, I read what follows.

THE HERMIT'S MANUSCRIPT.

“Morton Devereux, if ever this reach you, read it, shudder, and whatever your afflictions, bless God that you are not as I am. Do you remember my prevailing characteristics as a boy? No, you do not. You will say ‘Devotion!’ It was not! ‘Gentleness.’ It was not—it was JEALOUSY! Now does the truth flash on you? Yes, that was the disease that was in my blood, and in my heart, and through whose ghastly medium every living object was beheld. Did I love you? Yes, I loved you—ay, almost with a love equal to your own. I loved my mother—I loved Gerald—I loved Montreuil. It was a part of my nature to love, and I did not resist the impulse. You I loved better than all; but I was jealous of each. If my mother

caressed you or Gerald—if *you* opened your heart to either, it stung me to the quick. I it was who said to my mother, ‘Caress him not, or I shall think you love him better than me.’ I it was who widened, from my veriest childhood, the breach between Gerald and yourself. I it was who gave to the childish reproach a venom, and to the childish quarrel a barb. Was this love? Yes, it *was* love; but I could not endure that ye should love one another as ye loved me. It delighted me when one confided to my ear a complaint against the other, and said, ‘Aubrey, this blow could not have come from thee!’

“Montreuil early perceived my bias of temper; he might have corrected it, and with ease. I was not evil in disposition; I was insensible of my own vice. Had its malignity been revealed to me, I should have recoiled in horror. Montreuil had a vast power over me; he could mould me at his will. Montreuil, I repeat, might have saved me, and thyself, and a third being, better and purer than either of us was, even in our cradles. Montreuil did not; he had an object to serve, and he sacrificed our whole house to it. He found me one day weeping over a dog that I had killed. ‘Why did you destroy it?’ he said; and I answered, ‘Because it loved Morton better than me!’ And the priest said, ‘Thou didst right, Aubrey!’ Yes, from that time he took advantage of my infirmity, and could rouse or calm all my passions in proportion as he irritated or soothed it.

“You know this man’s object during the latter period of his residence with us: it was the restoration of the house of Stuart. He was alternately the spy and the agitator in that cause. Among more comprehensive plans for effecting this object was that of securing the heirs to the great wealth and popular name of Sir William Devereux. This was only a minor mesh in the intricate web of his schemes; but it is the character of the man to take exactly the same pains, and pursue the same laborious intrigues, for a small object as for a great one. His first impression, on entering our house, was in favor of Gerald: and I believe he really likes him to this day better than either of us. Partly your sarcasms, partly Gerald’s disputes with you, partly my representations—for I was jealous even of the love of Montreuil—prepossessed him against you. He thought too, that Gerald had more talent to serve his purposes than yourself, and more facility in being moulded to them; and he believed our uncle’s partiality to you far from being unalienable. I have said that, at the latter period of his residence with us, he was an agent of the exiled cause. At the time I *now* speak of, he had not

entered into the great political scheme which engrossed him afterwards. He was merely a restless and aspiring priest, whose whole hope, object, ambition, was the advancement of his order. He knew that whoever inherited, or whoever shared my uncle's wealth, could, under legitimate regulation, promote *any* end which the heads of that order might select ; and he wished therefore to gain the mastery over us all. Intrigue was essentially woven with his genius, and by intrigue only did he ever seek to arrive at any end he had in view.* He soon obtained a mysterious and pervading power over Gerald and myself. Your temper at once irritated him, and made him despair of obtaining an ascendant over one who, though he testified in childhood none of the talents for which he has since been noted, testified, nevertheless, a shrewd, penetrating and sarcastic power of observation and detection. You, therefore, he resolved to leave to the irregularities of your own nature, confident that they would yield him the opportunity of detaching your uncle from you, and ultimately securing to Gerald his estates.

"The trial at school first altered his intentions. He imagined that he then saw in you powers which might be rendered availing to him : he conquered his pride—a great feature in his character—and he resolved to seek your affection. Your subsequent regularity of habits, and success in study, confirmed him in his resolution ; and when he learnt, from my uncle's own lips, that the Devereux estates would devolve on you, he thought that it would be easier to secure your affection to him than to divert that affection which my uncle had conceived for you. At this time I repeat, he had no particular object in view ; none, at least, beyond that of obtaining, for the interest of his order, the direction of great wealth and some political influence. Some time after—I know not exactly when, but before we returned to take our permanent abode at Devereux Court—a share in the grand political intrigue which was then in so many branches carried on throughout England, and even Europe, was confided to Montreuil.

"In this I believe he was the servant of his order, rather than immediately of the exiled house ; and I have since heard that even at that day he had acquired a great reputation among the professors of the former. You, Morton, he decoyed not into this scheme before he left England : he had not acquired a sufficient influence over you to trust you with the disclosure. To Gerald and myself he was more confidential. Gerald

* It will be observed that Aubrey frequently repeats former assertions ; this is one of the most customary traits of insanity.—ED.

eagerly embraced his projects through a spirit of enterprise—I through a spirit of awe and of religion. RELIGION! Yes,—then,—long after,—now,—when my heart was and is the home of all withering and evil passions, Religion reigned—reigns, over me a despot and a tyrant. Its terrors haunt me at this hour—they people the earth and the air with shapes of ghastly menace! They—Heaven pardon me! what would my madness utter? Madness?—madness? Ay *that* is the real scourge, the real fire, the real torture, the real hell, of this fair earth!

“Montreuil, then, by different pleas, won over Gerald and myself. He left us, but engaged us in constant correspondence. ‘Aubrey,’ he said, before he departed, and when he saw that I was wounded by his apparent cordiality towards you and Gerald—‘Aubrey,’ he said, soothing me on this point, ‘think not that I trust Gerald or the arrogant Morton as I trust you. *You* have my real heart and my real trust. It is necessary to the execution of this project, so important to the interests of religion, and so agreeable to the will of Heaven, that we should secure all co-operators; but they, your brothers, Aubrey, are the tools of that mighty design—you are its friend.’ Thus it was that, at all times when he irritated too sorely the vice of my nature, he flattered it into seconding his views; and thus, instead of conquering my evil passions, he conquered by them. Curses—No, no, no!—*I will* be calm.

“We returned to Devereux Court, and we grew from boyhood into youth. I loved you then, Morton. Ah! what would I not give now for one pure feeling, such as I felt in your love? Do you remember the day on which you had extorted from my uncle his consent to your leaving us for the pleasures and pomps of London? Do you remember the evening of that day, when I came to seek you, and we sat down on a little mound, and talked over your projects, and you spoke then to me of my devotion, and my purer and colder feelings? Morton, at that very moment my veins burnt with passion!—at that very moment my heart was feeding the vulture fated to live and prey within it forever! Thrice did I resolve to confide in you, as we then sat together, and thrice did my evil genius forbid it. You seemed, even in your affection to me, so wholly engrossed with your own hopes—you seemed so little to regret leaving me—you stung, so often and so deeply, in our short conference, that feeling which made me desire to monopolize all things in those I loved, that I said inly—‘Why should I bare my heart to one who can so little understand it?’ And so we turned

home, and you dreamt not of that which was then within me, and which was destined to be your curse and mine.

“Not many weeks previous to that night, I had seen one whom to see was to love! Love!—I tell you, Morton, that *that* word is expressive of soft and fond emotions, and there should be another expressive of all that is fierce, and dark, and unrelenting in the human heart!—all that seems most like the deadliest and the blackest hate, and yet is not hate! I saw this being, and from that moment my real nature, which had slept hitherto, awoke! I remember well, it was one evening in the beginning of summer that I first saw her. She sat alone in the little garden beside the cottage door, and I paused, and, unseen, looked over the slight fence that separated us, and fed my eyes with a loveliness that I thought till then, only twilight or the stars could wear! From that evening I came, night after night, to watch her from the same spot; and every time I beheld her, the poison entered deeper and deeper into my system. At length I had an opportunity of being known to her—of speaking to her—of hearing her speak—of touching the ground she had hallowed—of entering the home where she dwelt!

“I must explain; I said that both Gerald and myself corresponded privately with Montreuil—we were both bound over to secrecy with regard to you—and this, my temper, and Gerald’s coolness with you, rendered an easy obligation to both; I say my temper—for I loved to think I had a secret not known to another; and I carried this reserve even to the degree of concealing from Gerald himself the greater part of the correspondence between me and the Abbé. In his correspondence with each of us, Montreuil acted with his usual skill; to Gerald, as the elder in years, the more prone to enterprise, and the manlier in aspect and in character, was allotted whatever object was of real trust or importance. Gerald it was who, under pretence of pursuing his accustomed sports, conferred with the various agents of intrigue who from time to time visited our coast; and to me the Abbé gave words of endearment, and affected the language of more entire trust. ‘Whatever,’ he would say ‘in our present half-mellowed projects, is exposed to danger, but does not promise reward, I entrust to Gerald; hereafter, far higher employment, under far safer and surer auspices, will be yours. We are the heads—be ours the nobler occupation to plan—and let us leave to inferior natures the vain and perilous triumph to execute what we design.’

“All this I readily assented to; for, despite my acquiescence

in Montreuil's wishes, I loved not enterprise, or rather I hated whatever roused me from the dreamy and abstracted indolence which was most dear to my temperament. Sometimes, however, with a great show of confidence, Montreuil would request me to execute some quiet and unimportant commission; and of this nature was one I received while I was thus, unknown even to the object, steeping my soul in the first intoxication of love. The plots then carried on by certain ecclesiastics, I need not say extended, in one linked chain, over the greater part of the continent. Spain, in especial, was the theatre of these intrigues; and among the tools employed in executing them were some, who, though banished from that country, still, by the rank they had held in it, carried a certain importance in their very names. Foremost of these was the father of the woman I loved—and foremost, in whatever promised occupation to a restless mind, he was always certain to be.

“Montreuil now commissioned me to seek out a certain Barnard (an underling in those secret practices or services, for which he afterwards suffered, and who was then in that part of the country), and to communicate to him some messages, of which he was to be the bearer to this Spaniard. A thought flashed upon me—Montreuil's letter mentioned, accidentally, that the Spaniard had never hitherto seen Barnard: could I not personate the latter—deliver the messages myself, and thus win that introduction to the daughter which I so burningly desired, and which, from the close reserve of the father's habits, I might not otherwise effect? The plan was open to two objections: one that I was known personally in the town in the environs of which the Spaniard lived, and he might therefore very soon discover who I really was; the other, that I was not in possession of all the information which Barnard might possess, and which the Spaniard might wish to learn; but these objections had not much weight with me. To the first, I said inly, ‘I will oppose the most constant caution, I will go always on foot, and alone—I will never be seen in the town itself—and even should the Spaniard, who seems rarely to stir abroad, and who, possibly, does not speak our language—even should he learn, by accident, that Barnard is only another name for Aubrey Devereux, it will not be before I have gained my object; nor, perhaps, before the time when I myself may wish to acknowledge my identity.’ To the second objection I saw a yet more ready answer. ‘I will acquaint Montreuil at once,’ I said, ‘with my intention; I will claim his connivance as a proof of his confidence, and as an essay of my own genius of intrigue.’ I did so;

the priest, perhaps delighted to involve me so deeply, and to find me so ardent in his project, consented. Fortunately, as I before said, Barnard was an underling—young—unknown—and obscure. My youth, therefore, was not so great a foe to my assumed disguise as it might otherwise have been. Montreuil supplied all requisite information. I tried (for the first time, with a beating heart and a tremulous voice) the imposition; it succeeded—I continued it. Yes, Morton, yes!—pour forth upon me your bitterest execration—in me—in your brother—in the brother so dear to you—in the brother whom you imagined so passionless—so pure—so sinless—behold that Barnard—the lover—the idolatrous lover—the foe—the deadly foe—of Isora d'Alvarez!”

Here the manuscript was defaced for some pages, by incoherent and meaningless ravings. It seemed as if one of his dark fits of frenzy had at that time come over the writer. At length, in a more firm and clear character than that immediately preceding it, the manuscript continued as follows :

“I loved her, but even then it was with a fierce and ominous love—(ominous of what it became). Often in the still evenings, when we stood together watching the sun set—when my tongue trembled but did not dare to speak—when all soft and sweet thoughts filled the heart and glistened in the eye of that most sensitive and fairy being—when my own brow, perhaps, seemed to reflect the same emotions—feelings, which I even shuddered to conceive, raged within me. Had we stood together, in those moments, upon the brink of a precipice, I could have wound my arms around her, and leapt with her into the abyss. Every thing but one nursed my passion; nature—solitude—early dreams—all kindled and fed that fire: Religion only combated it; I knew it was a crime to love any of earth's creatures as I loved. I used the scourge and the fast*—I wept hot—burning tears—I prayed and the intensity of my prayer appalled even myself, as it rose from my maddened heart, in the depth and stillness of the lone night: but the flame burnt higher and more scorchingly from the opposition; nay, it was the very knowledge that my love was criminal that made it assume so fearful and dark a shape. ‘Thou art the cause of my downfall from Heaven!’ I muttered, when I looked upon Isora's calm

* I need not point out to the Novel-reader how completely the character of Aubrey has been stolen in a certain celebrated French Romance—But the writer I allude to is not so unmerciful as M. de Balzac, who has pillaged scenes in the *Disowned*, with a most gratifying politeness.

face—thou feelest it not, and I could destroy thee and myself—myself the criminal—thee the cause of the crime !’

“It must have been that my eyes betrayed my feelings, that Isora loved me not—that she shrunk from me even at the first—why else should I not have called forth the same sentiments which she gave to you? Was not my form cast in a mould as fair as yours?—did not my voice whisper in as sweet a tone?—did I not love her with as wild a love? Why should she not have loved me? I was the first whom she beheld—she would—ay, perhaps she would have loved me, if you had not come and marred all. Curse yourself, then that you were my rival!—curse yourself that you made my heart as a furnace, and smote my brain with frenzy—curse—Oh, sweet Virgin forgive me!—I know not—I know not what my tongue utters or my hand traces !

“You came, then, Morton, you came—you knew her—you loved her—she loved you. I learned that you had gained admittance to the cottage, and the moment I learned it, I looked on Isora, and felt my fate, as by intuition : I saw at once that she was prepared to love you—I saw the very moment when that love kindled from conception into form—I saw—and at that moment my eyes reeled and my ears rung as with the sound of a rushing sea, and I thought I felt a chord snap within my brain, which has never been united again.

“Once only, after your introduction to the cottage, did I think of confiding to you my love and rivalry ; you remember one night when we met by the castle cave, and when your kindness touched and softened me, despite of myself. The day after that night I sought you, with the intention of communicating to you all ; and while I was yet struggling with my embarrassment, and the suffocating tide of my emotions, you premeditated me, by giving me *your* confidence. Engrossed with your own feelings, you were not observant of mine ; and as you dwelt and dilated upon your love for Isora, all emotions, save those of agony and of fury, vanished from my breast. I did not answer you then at any length, for I was too agitated to trust to prolix speech ; but by the next day I had recovered myself, and I resolved, as far as I was able, to play the hypocrite. ‘He cannot love her as I do!’ I said ; ‘perhaps I may, without disclosure of my rivalry, and without sin in the attempt, detach him from her by reason.’ Fraught with this idea, I collected myself—sought you—remonstrated with you—represented the worldly folly of your love, and uttered all that prudence preaches—in vain, where it preaches against passion !

“Let me be brief. I saw that it made no impression on you—I stifled my wrath—I continued to visit and watch Isora. I timed my opportunities well—my constant knowledge of your motions allowed me to do that; besides, I represented to the Spaniard the necessity, through political motives, of concealing myself from you; hence, we never encountered each other. One evening, Alvarez had gone out to meet one of his countrymen and confederates. I found Isora alone, in the most sequestered part of the garden,—her loveliness, and her exceeding gentleness of manner, melted me. For the first time audibly, my heart spoke out, and I told her of my idolatry. Idolatry!—ay, *that* is the only word, since it signifies both worship and guilt! She heard me timidly, gently, coldly. She spoke—and I found confirmed, from her own lips, what my reason had before told me—that there was no hope for me. The iron that entered, also roused, my heart. ‘Enough!’ I cried fiercely, ‘you love this Morton Devereux, and for him I am scorned.’ Isora blushed and trembled, and all my senses fled from me. I scarcely know in what words my rage and my despair clothed themselves; but I know that I divulged myself to her—I know that I told her I was the brother—the rival—the enemy of the man she loved,—I know that I uttered the fiercest and the wildest menaces and execrations—I know that my vehemence so overpowered and terrified her that her mind was scarcely less clouded—less lost, rather than my own. At that moment the sound of your horse’s hoofs was heard; Isora’s eye brightened, and her mien grew firm. ‘He comes,’ she said, ‘and he will protect me!’—‘Hark!’ I said, sinking my voice, and, as my drawn sword flashed in one hand, the other grasped her arm with a savage force—‘hark, woman!’ I said—and an oath of the blackest fury accompanied my threats—‘swear that you will never divulge to Morton Devereux who is his real rival—that you will never declare to him nor to any one else, that the false Barnard and the true Aubrey Devereux are the same—swear this, or I swear (and I repeated with a solemn vehemence, that dread oath) that I will stay here—that I will confront my rival—that, the moment he beholds me, I will plunge this sword into his bosom—and that, before I perish myself, I will hasten to the town, and will utter there a secret which will send your father to the gallows—now, your choice?’

“Morton, you have often praised, my uncle has often jested at, the womanish softness of my face. There have been moments when I have seen that face in the glass, and known it

not, but started in wild affright, and fancied that I beheld a demon; perhaps in that moment this change was over it. Slowly Isora gazed upon me—slowly blanched into the hues of death grew her cheek and lip—slowly that lip uttered the oath I enjoined. I released my gripe, and she fell to the earth, sudden and stunned as if struck by lightning. I stayed not to look on what I had done—I heard your step advance—I fled by a path that led from the garden to the beach—and I reached my home without retaining a single recollection of the space I had traversed to attain it.

“Despite the night I passed—a night which I will leave you to imagine—I rose the next morning with a burning interest to learn from you what had passed after my flight, and with a power, peculiar to the stormiest passions, of an outward composure while I listened to the recital. I saw that I was safe, and I heard, with a joy so rapturous, that I question whether even Isora’s assent to *my* love would have given me an equal transport, that she had rejected you. I uttered some advice to you commonplace enough—it displeased you, and we separated.

“That evening, to my surprise, I was privately visited by Montreuil. He had some designs in hand which brought him from France into the neighborhood, but which made him desirous of concealment. He soon drew from me my secret; it is marvellous, indeed, what power he had of penetrating, ruling, moulding my feelings and my thoughts. He wished, at that time, a communication to be made, and a letter to be given, to Alvarez. I could not execute this commission personally, for you had informed me of your intention of watching if you could not discover or meet with Barnard, and I knew you were absent from home on that very purpose. Nor was Montreuil himself desirous of incurring the risk of being seen by you—you over whom, sooner or later, he then trusted to obtain a power equal to that which he held over your brothers. Gerald then was chosen to execute the commission. He did so—he met Alvarez for the first and the only time on the beach, by the town of——. You saw him, and imagined you beheld the real Barnard.

“But I anticipate—for you did not inform me of that occurrence, nor the inference you drew from it, till afterwards. You returned, however, after witnessing that meeting, and for two days your passions (passions which, intense and fierce as mine, show that, under similar circumstances, you might have been equally guilty) terminated in fever. You were confined to your bed for three or four days; meanwhile I took advantage of the

event. Montreuil suggested a plan which I readily embraced. I sought [the Spaniard, and told him in confidence that you were a suitor—but a suitor upon the most dishonorable terms—to his daughter. I told him, moreover, that you had detected his schemes, and in order to deprive Isora of protection, and abate any obstacles resulting from her pride, to betray him to the government. I told him that his best and most prudent, nay, his only, chance of safety for Isora and himself was to leave his present home, and take refuge in the vast mazes of the metropolis. I told him not to betray to you his knowledge of your criminal intentions, lest it might needlessly exasperate you. I furnished him wherewithal to repay you the sum which you had lent him, and by which you had commenced his acquaintance : and I dictated to him the very terms of the note in which the sum was to be enclosed. After this I felt happy. You were separated from Isora—she might forget you—you might forget her. I was possessed of the secret of her father's present retreat—I might seek it at my pleasure, and ultimately—so hope whispered—prosper in my love.

“Some time afterwards you mentioned your suspicions of Gerald ; I did not corroborate, but I did not seek to destroy, them. ‘They already hate each other,’ I said : ‘can the hate be greater ? meanwhile, let it divert suspicion from me !’ Gerald knew of the agency of the real Barnard, though he did not know that I had assumed the name of that person. When you taxed him with his knowledge of the man, he was naturally confused. You interpreted that confusion into the fact of his being your rival, while in truth it arose from his belief that you had possessed yourself of his political schemes. Montreuil, who had lurked chiefly in the islet opposite ‘the Castle Cave,’ had returned to France on the same day that Alvarez repaired to London. Previous to this, we had held some conferences together upon my love. At first he had opposed and reasoned with it, but, startled and astonished by the intensity with which it possessed me, he gave way to my vehemence at last. I have said that I had adopted his advice in one instance. The fact of having received his advice—the advice of one so pious—so free from human passion—so devoted to one object, which appeared to him the cause of Religion—advice, too, in a love so fiery and overwhelming,—that fact made me think myself less criminal than I had done before. He advised me yet further. ‘Do not seek Isora,’ he said, ‘till some time has elapsed—till her new-born love for your brother has died away—till the impression of fear you have caused in her is somewhat effaced—

till time and absence too have done their work in the mind of Morton, and you will no longer have for your rival one who is not only a brother, but a man of a fierce, resolute, and unrelenting temper.'

"I yielded to this advice—partly because it promised so fair; partly because I was not systematically vicious, and I wished, if possible, to do away with our rivalry; and principally because I knew, in the mean while, that if I was deprived of her presence, so also were you; and jealousy with me was a far more intolerable and engrossing passion than the very love from which it sprung. So time passed on—you affected to have conquered your attachment; you affected to take pleasure in levity, and the idlest pursuits of worldly men. I saw deeper into your heart. For the moment I entertained the passion of love in my own breast, my eyes became gifted with a second vision to penetrate the most mysterious and hoarded secrets in the love of others.

"Two circumstances of importance happened before you left Devereux Court for London; the one was the introduction to your service of Jean Desmarais, the second was your breach with Montreuil. I speak now of the first. A very early friend did the priest possess, born in the same village as himself, and in the same rank of life; he had received a good education, and possessed natural genius. At a time when, from some fraud in a situation of trust which he had held in a French nobleman's family, he was in destitute and desperate circumstances, it occurred to Montreuil to provide for him by placing him in our family. Some accidental and frivolous remark of yours, which I had repeated in my correspondence with Montreuil, as illustrative of your manner, and your affected pursuits at that time, presented an opportunity to a plan before conceived. Desmarais came to England in a smuggler's vessel, presented himself to you as a servant, and was accepted. In this plan Montreuil had two views—first, that of securing Desmarais a place in England, tolerably profitable to himself, and convenient for any plot or scheme which Montreuil might require of him in this country; secondly, that of setting a perpetual and most adroit spy upon all your motions.

"As to the second occurrence to which I have referred, viz., your breach with Montreuil—"

Here Aubrey, with the same terrible distinctness which had characterized his previous details, and which shed a double horror over the contrast of the darker and more frantic passages in the manuscript, related what the reader will remember

Oswald had narrated before, respecting the letter he had brought from Madame de Balzac. It seems that Montreuil's abrupt appearance in the hall had been caused by Desmarais, who had recognized Oswald, on his dismounting at the gate, and had previously known that he was in the employment of the Jan-senistical *intriguante*, Madame de Balzac.

Aubrey proceeded then to say that Montreuil, invested with far more direct authority and power than he had been hitherto, in the projects of that wise order whose doctrines he had so darkly perverted, repaired to London; and that, soon after my departure for the same place, Gerald and Aubrey left Devereux Court in company with each other; but Gerald, whom very trifling things diverted from any project, however important, returned to Devereux Court, to accomplish the prosecution of some rustic *amour*, without even reaching London. Aubrey, on the contrary, had proceeded to the metropolis, sought the suburb in which Alvarez lived, procured, in order to avoid any probable chance of meeting me, a lodging in the same obscure quarter, and had renewed his suit to Isora. The reader is already in possession of the ill success which attended it. Aubrey had at last confessed his real name to the father. The Spaniard was dazzled by the prospect of so honorable an alliance for his daughter. From both came Isora's persecution, but in both was it resisted. Passing over passages in the manuscript of the most stormy incoherence and the most gloomy passion, I come to what follows:

"I learned then, from Desmarais, that you had taken away her and the dying father; that you had placed them in a safe and honorable home. That man, so implicitly the creature of Montreuil, or rather of his own interest, with which Montreuil was identified, was easily induced to betray you also to me—me whom he imagined, moreover, utterly the tool of the priest, and of whose torturing interest in this peculiar disclosure he was not at that time aware. I visited Isora in her new abode, and again and again she trembled beneath my rage. Then, for the second time, I attempted force. Ha! ha! Morton! I think I see you now!—I think I hear you muttered curse! Curse on! When you read this I shall be beyond your vengeance—beyond human power. And yet I think if I were mere clay—if I were the mere senseless heap of ashes that the grave covers—if I were not the thing that must live forever and forever, far away in unimagined worlds, where nought that has earth's life can come—I should tremble beneath the sod as your foot pressed, and your execration rung over it. A

second time I attempted force—a second time I was repulsed by the same means—by a woman's hand and a woman's dagger. But I knew that I had one hold over Isora from which, while she loved you, I could never be driven : I knew that by threatening your *life*, I could command her will, and terrify her into compliance with my own. I made her reiterate her vow of concealment ; and I discovered, by some words dropping from her fear, that she believed you already suspected me, and had been withheld, by her entreaties, from seeking me out. I questioned her more, and soon perceived that it was (as indeed I knew before) Gerald whom you suspected, not me ; but I did not tell this to Isora. I suffered her to cherish a mistake, profitable to my disguise ; but I saw at once that it might betray me, if you ever met and conferred at length with Gerald upon this point ; and I exacted from Isora a pledge that she would effectually and forever bind you not to breathe a single suspicion to him. When I had left the room, I returned once more to warn her against uniting herself with you. Wretch, selfish, accursed wretch that you were, why did you suffer her to transgress that warning ?

“I fled from the house, as a fiend flies from a being whom he has possessed. I returned at night to look up at the window, and linger by the door, and keep watch beside the home which held Isora. Such, in her former abode, had been my nightly wont. I had no evil thought nor foul intent in this customary vigil—no, not one ! Strangely enough, with the tempestuous and overwhelming emotions which constituted the greater part of my love, was mingled,—though subdued and latent—a stream of the softest, yea, I might add, almost of the holiest tenderness. Often after one of those outpourings of rage, and menace, and despair, I would fly to some quiet spot, and weep, till all the hardness of my heart was wept away. And often in those nightly vigils I would pause by the door and murmur, ‘This shelter, denied not to the beggar and the beggar's child, this would you deny to me, if you could dream that I was so near you. And yet, had you loved me, instead of lavishing upon me all your hatred and your contempt—had you loved me, I would have served and worshipped you as man knows not worship or service. You shudder at my vehemence now—I could not then have breathed a whisper to wound you. You tremble now at the fierceness of my breast—you would then rather have marvelled at its softness.’

“I was already at my old watch when you encountered me—you addressed me, I answered not—you approached me, and I

fled. Fled—there—there was the shame, and the sting of my sentiments towards you. I am not naturally afraid of danger, though my nerves are sometimes weak, and have sometimes shrunk from it. I have known something of peril in late years, when my frame has been bowed and broken—peril by storms at sea, and the knives of robbers upon land—and I have looked upon it with a quiet eye. But you, Morton Devereux, you I always feared. I had seen from your childhood others, whose nature was far stronger than mine, yield and recoil at yours—I had seen the giant and bold strength of Gerald quail before your bent brow—I had seen even the hardy pride of Montreuil baffled by your curled lip, and the stern sarcasm of your glance—I had seen you, too, in your wild moments of ungoverned rage, and I knew that if earth held one whose passions were fiercer than my own, it was you. But your passions were sustained even in their fiercest excess—your passions were the mere weapons of your mind—my passions were the torturers and the tyrants of mine. Your passions seconded your will—mine blinded and overwhelmed it. From my infancy, even while I loved you most, you awed me; and years, in deepening the impression, had made it indelible. I could not confront the thought of your knowing all, and of meeting you after that knowledge. And this fear, while it unnerved me at some moments, at others only maddened my ferocity the more by the stings of shame and self-contempt.

“I fled from you—you pursued—you gained upon me—you remember now how I was preserved. I dashed through the inebriated revellers who obstructed your path, and reached my own lodging, which was close at hand; for the same day on which I learned Isora’s change of residence I changed my own in order to be near it. Did I feel joy for my escape? No—I could have gnawed the very flesh from my bones in the agony of my shame. ‘I could brave,’ I said; ‘I could threat—I could offer violence to the woman who rejected me, and yet I could not face the rival for whom I am scorned!’ At that moment a resolution flashed across my mind, exactly as if a train of living fire had been driven before it. Morton, I resolved to murder you, and in that very hour! A pistol lay on my table—I took it, concealed it about my person, and repaired to the shelter of a large portico, beside which I knew that you must pass to your own home in the same street. Scarcely three minutes had elapsed between the reaching my house and the leaving it on this errand. I knew, for I had heard swords clash, that you would be detained some time in the street by the rioters—I

thought it probable also that you might still continue the search for me; and I knew even that, had you hastened at once to your home, you could scarcely have reached it before I reached my shelter. I hurried on—I arrived at the spot—I screened myself and awaited your coming. You came, borne in the arms of two men—others followed in the rear—I saw your face destitute of the hue and aspect of life, and your clothes streaming with blood. I was horror-stricken. I joined the crowd—I learnt that you had been stabbed, and it was feared mortally. “I did not return home—no, I went into the fields, and lay out all night, and lifted up my heart to God, and wept aloud, and peace fell upon me—at least, what was peace compared to the tempestuous darkness which had before reigned in my breast. The sight of you, bleeding and insensible—you, against whom I had harbored a fratricide’s purpose—had stricken, as it were, the weapon from my hand, and the madness from my mind. I shuddered at what I had escaped—I blessed God for my deliverance—and with the gratitude and the awe came repentance—and repentance brought a resolution to fly, since I could not wrestle with my mighty and dread temptation: the moment that resolution was formed, it was as if an incubus were taken from my breast. Even the next morning I did not return home—my anxiety for you was such that I forgot all caution—I went to your house myself—I saw one of your servants to whom I was personally unknown. I inquired respecting you, and learnt that your wound had not been mortal, and that the servant had overheard one of the medical attendants say you were not even in danger.

“At this news I felt the serpent stir again within me, but I resolved to crush it at the first—I would not even expose myself to the temptation of passing by Isora’s house—I went straight in search of my horse—I mounted, and fled resolutely from the scene of my soul’s peril. ‘I will go,’ I said, ‘to the home of our childhood—I will surround myself by the mute tokens of the early love which my brother bore me—I will think—while penance and prayer cleanse my soul from its black guilt—I will think that I am also making a sacrifice to that brother.’

“I returned then to Devereux Court, and I resolved to forego all hope—all persecution—of Isora! My brother—my brother, my heart yearns to you at this moment, even though years and distance, and above all, my own crimes, place a gulf between us which I may never pass—it yearns to you when I think of those quiet shades, and the scenes where, pure and unsullied, we wandered together, when life was all verdure and freshness, and

we dreamt not of what was to come! If even now my heart yearns to you, Morton, when I think of that home and those days, believe that it had some softness and some mercy for you then. Yes, I repeat, I resolved to subdue my own emotions, and interpose no longer between Isora and yourself. Full of this determination, and utterly melted towards you, I wrote you a long letter; such as we would have written to each other in our first youth. Two days after that letter, all my new purposes were swept away, and the whole soil of evil thoughts which they had covered, not destroyed, rose again as the tide flowed from it, black and rugged as before.

“The very night on which I had writ that letter, came Montreuil secretly to my chamber. He had been accustomed to visit Gerald by stealth, and at sudden moments; and there was something almost supernatural in the manner in which he seemed to pass from place to place, unmolested and unseen. He had now conceived a villainous project; and he had visited Devereux Court in order to ascertain the likelihood of its success; he there found that it was necessary to involve me in his scheme. My uncle’s physician had said privately that Sir William could not live many months longer. Either from Gerald, or my mother, Montreuil learned this fact; and he was resolved, if possible, the family estates should not glide from all chance of his influence over them into your possession. Montreuil was literally as poor as the rigid law of his order enjoins its disciples to be; all his schemes required the disposal of large sums, and in no private source could he hope for such pecuniary power as he was likely to find in the coffers of any member of our family—yourself only excepted. It was this man’s boast, to want, and yet to command, all things; and he was now determined that if any craft, resolution, or guilt could occasion the transfer of my uncle’s wealth from you to Gerald, or to myself, it should not be wanting.

“Now, then, he found the advantage of the dissensions with each other, which he had either sown or mellowed in our breasts. He came to turn those wrathful thoughts which, when he last saw me, I had expressed towards you, to the favor and success of his design. He found my mind strangely altered, but he affected to applaud the change. He questioned me respecting my uncle’s health, and I told him what had really occurred, viz., that my uncle had, on the preceding day, read over to me some part of a will which he had just made, and in which the vast bulk of his property was bequeathed to you. At this news Montreuil must have perceived at once the necessity

of winning my consent to his project ; for, since I had seen the actual testament, no fraudulent transfer of the property therein bequeathed could take place without my knowledge that some fraud had been recurred to. Montreuil knew me well—he knew that avarice, that pleasure, that ambition, were powerless words with me, producing no effect and affording no temptation ; but he knew that passion, jealousy, spiritual terrors, were the springs that moved every part and nerve of my moral being. The two former then he now put into action—the last he held back in reserve. He spoke to me no further upon the subject he had then at heart ; not a word further on the disposition of the estates—he spoke to me only of Isora and of you ; he aroused, by hint and insinuation, the new sleep into which all those emotions—the furies of the heart—had been for a moment lulled. He told me he had lately seen Isora—he dwelt glowingly on her beauty—he commended my heroism in resigning her to a brother whose love for her was little in comparison to mine—who had, in reality, never loved *me*—whose jests and irony had been levelled no less at myself than at others. He painted your person and your mind, in contrast to my own, in colors so covertly depreciating as to irritate, more and more, that vanity with which jealousy is so woven, and from which, perhaps (a Titan son of so feeble a parent), it is born. He hung lingeringly over all the treasure that you would enjoy, and that I—I, the first discoverer, had so nobly and so generously relinquished.

“ ‘ Relinquished ! ’ I cried, ‘ no, I was driven from it. I left it not while a hope of possessing it remained. ’ The priest affected astonishment. ‘ How ! was I sure of that ? I had, it is true, wooed Isora ; but would she, even if she had felt no preference for Morton, would she have surrendered the heir to a princely wealth for the humble love of the younger son ? I did not know women ; with them all love was either wantonness, custom, or pride—it was the last principle that swayed Isora. Had I sought to enlist it on my side ? Not at all. Again, I had only striven to detach Isora from Morton ; had I ever attempted the much easier task of detaching Morton from Isora ? No, never ; ’ and Montreuil repeated his panegyric on my generous surrender of my rights. I interrupted him : ‘ I had not surrendered—I never would surrender while a hope remained. But where was that hope, and how was it to be realized ? ’ After much artful prelude, the priest explained. He proposed to use every means to array against your union with Isora, all motives of ambition, interest, and aggrandizement. ‘ I know Morton’s character, ’ said he, ‘ to its very depths. His chief

virtue honor—his chief principle is ambition. He will not attempt to win this girl otherwise than by marriage, for the very reasons that would induce most men to attempt it, viz., her unfriended state, her poverty, her confidence in him, and her love, or that semblance of love which he believes to be the passion itself. This virtue—I call it so, though it is none, for there is no virtue out of religion—this virtue, then, will place before him only two plans of conduct, either to marry her or to forsake her. Now, then if we can bring his ambition, that great lever of his conduct, in opposition to the first alternative, only the last remains; I say that we *can* employ that engine in your behalf—leave it to me, and I will do so. Then, Aubrey, in the moment of her pique, her resentment, her outraged vanity, at being thus left, you shall appear; not as you have hitherto done, in menace and terror, but soft, subdued, with looks all love—with vows all penitence—vindicating all your past vehemence, by the excess of your passion, and promising all future tenderness by the influence of the same motive, the motive which to a woman pardons every error, and hallows every crime. Then will she contrast your love with your brother's—then will the scale fall from her eyes—then will she see what hitherto she has been blinded to, that your brother, to yourself, is a satyr to Hyperion—then will she blush and falter, and hide her cheek in your bosom.'—'Hold, hold!' I cried; 'do with me what you will,—counsel, and I will act!'"

Here again the manuscript was defaced by a sudden burst of execration upon Montreuil, followed by ravings that gradually blackened into the most gloomy and incoherent outpourings of madness; at length, the history proceeded:

"You wrote to ask me to sound our uncle on the subject of your intended marriage. Montreuil drew up my answer, and I constrained myself, despite my revived hatred to you, to transcribe its expressions of affection. My uncle wrote to you also; and we strengthened his dislike to the step you had proposed, by hints from myself, disrespectful to Isora, and an anonymous communication dated from London, and to the same purport. All this while I knew not that Isora had been in your house; your answer to my letter seemed to imply that you would not disobey my uncle. Montreuil, who was still lurking in the neighborhood, and who at night privately met or sought me, affected exultation at the incipient success of his advice. He pretended to receive perpetual intelligence of your motions and conduct, and he informed me now that Isora had come to your house on hearing of your wound; that you

had not (agreeably, Montreuil added to his view of your character) taken advantage of her indiscretion; that immediately on receiving your uncle's and my own letters, you had separated yourself from her; and that, though you still visited her, it was apparently with a view of breaking off all connection by gradual and gentle steps; at all events, you had taken no measures towards marriage. 'Now, then,' said Montreuil, 'for one finishing stroke, and the prize is yours. Your uncle cannot, you find, live long: could he but be persuaded to leave his property to Gerald or to you, with only a trifling legacy (comparatively speaking) to Morton, that worldly-minded and enterprising person would be utterly prevented from marrying a penniless and unknown foreigner. Nothing but his own high prospects, so utterly above the necessity of fortune in a wife, can excuse such a measure now, even to his own mind; if, therefore, we can effect this transfer of property, and in the mean while prevent Morton from marrying, your rival is gone forever, and with his brilliant advantages of wealth will also vanish his merits in the eyes of Isora. Do not be startled at this thought; there is no crime in it; I, your confessor, your tutor, the servant of the church, am the last person to counsel, to hint, even, at what is criminal; but the end sanctifies all means. By transferring this vast property, you do not only ensure your object, but you advance the great cause of Kings, the Church, and of the Religion which presides over both. Wealth, in Morton's possession, will be useless to this cause, perhaps pernicious: in your hands, or in Gerald's, it will be of inestimable service. Wealth produced from the public should be applied to the uses of the public, yea, even though a petty injury to one individual be the price.'

"Thus, and in this manner, did Montreuil prepare my mind for the step he meditated; but I was not yet ripe for it. So inconsistent is guilt, that I could commit murder—wrong—almost all villainy that passion dictated, but I was struck aghast by the thought of fraud. Montreuil perceived that I was not yet wholly his, and his next plan was to remove me from a spot where I might check his measures. He persuaded me to travel for a few weeks. 'On your return,' said he, 'consider Isora yours; meanwhile, let change of scene beguile suspense.' I was passive in his hands, and I went whither he directed.

"Let me be brief here on the black fraud that ensued. Among the other arts of Jean Desmarais, was that of copying exactly, any handwriting. He was then in London, in your service: Montreuil sent for him to come to the neighborhood

of Devereux Court. Meanwhile, the priest had procured from the notary who had drawn up, and who now possessed, the will of my unsuspecting uncle, that document. The notary had been long known to, and sometimes politically employed by, Montreuil, for he was half-brother to that Oswald, whom I have before mentioned as the early comrade of the priest and Desmarais. This circumstance, it is probable, first induced Montreuil to contemplate the plan of a substituted will. Before Desmarais arrived in order to copy those parts of the will which my uncle's humor had led him to write in his own hand, you, alarmed by a letter from my uncle, came to the Court, and on the same day Sir William (taken ill the preceding evening) died. Between that day and the one on which the funeral occurred, the will was copied by Desmarais; only Gerald's name was substituted for yours, and the forty thousand pounds left to him—a sum equal to that bestowed on myself—was cut down into a legacy of twenty thousand pounds to you. Less than this, Montreuil dared not insert as the bequest to you; and it is possible that the same regard to probabilities prevented all mention of himself in the substituted will. This was all the alteration made. My uncle's writing was copied exactly; and, save the departure from his apparent intentions in your favor, I believe not a particle in the effected fraud was calculated to excite suspicion. Immediately on the reading of the will, Montreuil repaired to me, and confessed what had taken place.

“‘Aubrey,’ he said, ‘I have done this for your sake partly; but I have had a much higher end in view than even your happiness, or my affectionate wishes to promote it. I live solely for one object—the aggrandizement of that holy order to which I belong; the schemes of that order are devoted only to the interests of Heaven, and by serving them, I serve Heaven itself. Aubrey, child of my adoption and of my earthly hopes, those schemes require carnal instruments, and work, even through Mammon, unto the goal of righteousness. What I have done is just before God and man. I have wrested a weapon from the hand of an enemy, and placed it in the hand of an ally. I have not touched one atom of this wealth, though, with the same ease with which I have transferred it from Morton to Gerald, I might have made my own private fortune. I have not touched one atom of it; nor for you, whom I love more than any living being, have I done what my heart dictated. I might have caused the inheritance to pass to you. I have not done so. Why? Because, then, I should have consulted a selfish desire at the expense of the in-

terests of mankind. Gerald is fitter to be the tool those interests require than you are. Gerald I have made that tool. You, too, I have spared the pangs which your conscience, so peculiarly, so morbidly acute, might suffer at being selected as the instrument of a seeming wrong to Morton. All required of you is silence. If your wants ever ask more than your legacy, you have as I have, a claim to that wealth which your pleasure allows Gerald to possess. Meanwhile, let us secure to you that treasure dearer to you than gold.'

"If Montreuil did not quite blind me by speeches of this nature, my engrossing, absorbing passion required little to make it cling to any hope of its fruition. I assented, therefore, though not without many previous struggles, to Montreuil's project, or rather to its concealment; nay, I wrote some time after, at his desire, and his dictation, a letter to you, stating feigned reasons for my uncle's alteration of former intentions, and exonerating Gerald from all connivance at that alteration, or abetment in the fraud you professed that it was your open belief had been committed. This was due to Gerald; for that time, and for aught I know, at the present, he was perfectly unconscious by what means he had attained his fortune; he believed that your love for Isora had given my uncle offence, and hence your disinheritance; and Montreuil took effectual care to exasperate him against you, by dwelling on the malice which your suspicions and your proceedings against him so glaringly testified. Whether Montreuil really thought you would give over all intention of marrying Isora upon your reverse of fortune, which is likely enough, from his estimate of your character, or whether he only wished by any means, to obtain my acquiescence in a measure important to his views, I know not, but he never left me, nor ever ceased to sustain my fevered and unhallowed hopes, from the hour in which he first communicated to me the fraudulent substitution of the will, till we repaired to London. This we did not do so long as he could detain me in the country, by assurances that I should ruin all by appearing before Isora until you had entirely deserted her.

"Morton, hitherto I have written as if my veins were filled with water, instead of the raging fire that flows through them until it reaches my brain, and there it stops, and eats away all things—even memory, that once seemed eternal! Now I feel as I approach the consummation of—Ha—of what—ay, of what? Brother did you ever, when you thought yourself quite alone—at night—not a breath stirring—did you ever raise your

eyes and see, exactly opposite to you, a devil!—a dread thing, that moves not, speaks not, but glares upon you with a fixed, dead, unrelenting eye?—that thing is before me now, and witnesses every word I write. But it deters me not! no, nor terrifies me. I have said that I would fulfil this task, and I have nearly done it; though at times the gray cavern yawned, and I saw its rugged walls stretch—stretch away, on either side, until they reached hell; and there I beheld—but I will not tell you, till we meet there! Now I am calm again—read on!

“We could not discover Isora, nor her home; perhaps the priest took care that it should be so; for, at that time, what with his devilish whispers and my own heart, I often scarcely knew what I was or what I desired; and I sat for hours and gazed upon the air, and it seemed so soft and still that I longed to make an opening in my forehead that it might enter there, and so cool and quiet the dull, throbbing anguish that lay like molten lead in my brain; at length we found the house. ‘To-morrow,’ said the Abbé, and he shed tears over me—for there were times when that hard man did feel,—‘to-morrow, my child, thou shalt see her—but be soft and calm.’ The morrow came; but Montreuil was pale, paler than I had ever seen him, and he gazed upon me and said, ‘Not to-day, my son, not to-day; she has gone out, and will not return till nightfall.’ My brother, the evening came, and with it came Desmarais; he came in terror and alarm. ‘The villain Oswald,’ he said, ‘has betrayed all’; he drew me aside and told me so. ‘Harkye, Jean,’ he whispered, ‘harkye—your master has my brother’s written confession, and the real will; but I have provided for your safety, and if he pleases it, for Montreuil’s. The packet is not to be opened till the seventh day—fly before then.’ ‘But I know,’ added Desmarais, ‘where the packet is placed’; and he took Montreuil aside, and for a while I heard not what they said; but I did overhear Desmarais at last, and learnt that it was your *bridal night*.

“What felt I then? The same tempestuous fury—the same whirlwind and storm of heart that I had felt before, at the mere anticipation of such an event? No; I felt a bright ray of joy flash through me. Yes, joy: but it was that joy which a conqueror feels when he knows his mortal foe is in his power, and when he dooms that enemy to death. ‘They shall perish—and on this night,’ I said inly. ‘I have sworn it—I swore to Isora that the bridal couch should be stained with blood, and I will keep the oath!’ I approached the pair—they were discussing the means for obtaining the packet. Montreuil urged Desmar-

ais to purloin it from the place where you had deposited it, and then to abscond ; but to this plan Desmarais was vehemently opposed. He insisted that there would be no possible chance of his escape from a search so scrutinizing as that which would necessarily ensue, and he was evidently resolved not *alone* to incur the danger of the *theft*. 'The Count,' said he, 'saw that I was present when he put away the packet. Suspicion will fall solely on me. Whither should I fly? No—I will serve you with my talents, but not with my life.' 'Wretch!' said Montreuil, 'if that packet is opened, thy life is already gone.'—'Yes,' said Desmarais ; 'but we may yet purloin the papers, and throw the guilt upon some other quarter. What if I admit you when the Count is abroad? What if you steal the packet, and carry away other articles of more seeming value? What, too, if you wound *me* in the arm or the breast, and I coin some terrible tale of robbers, and of my resistance, could we not manage then to throw suspicion upon common housebreakers—nay, could we not throw it upon Oswald himself? Let us silence that traitor by death, and who shall contradict our tale? No danger shall attend this plan. I will give you the key of the *escritoire*—the theft will not be the work of a moment.' Montreuil at first demurred to this proposal, but Desmarais was, I repeat, resolved not to incur the danger of the theft alone ; the stake was great, and it was not Montreuil's nature to shrink from peril, when once it became necessary to confront it. 'Be it so,' he said at last, 'though the scheme is full of difficulty and danger : be it so. We have not a day to lose. To-morrow the Count will place the document in some place of greater safety, and unknown to us—the deed shall be done to-night. Procure the key of the *escritoire*—admit me this night—I will steal disguised into the chamber—I will commit the act from which you, who alone could commit it with safety, shrink. Instruct me exactly as to the place where the articles you speak of are placed : I will abstract them also. See that, if the Count wake, he has no weapon at hand. Wound yourself, as you say, in some place not dangerous to life, and to-morrow, or within an hour after my escape, tell what tale you will. I will go, meanwhile, at once to Oswald ; I will either bribe his silence—ay, and his immediate absence from England—or he shall die. A death that secures our own self-preservation is excusable in the reading of all law, divine, or human !'

"I heard, but they deemed me insensible : they had already begun to grow unheeding of my presence. Montreuil saw me, and his countenance grew soft. 'I know all,' I said, as I caught

his eye which looked on me in pity, 'I know all—they are married. Enough! with all my hope ceases my love: care not for me.'

"Montreuil embraced and spoke to me in kindness and in praise. He assured me that you had kept your wedding so close a secret that he knew it not, nor did even Desmarais, till the evening before—till after he had proposed that I should visit Isora that very day. I know not, I care not, whether he was sincere in this. In whatever way one line in the dread scroll of his conduct be read, the scroll was written in guile, and in blood was it sealed. I appeared not to notice Montreuil or his accomplice any more. The latter left the house first. Montreuil stole forth, as he thought, unobserved; he was masked, and in complete disguise. I, too, went forth. I hastened to a shop where such things were procured; I purchased a mask and cloak similar to the priest's. I had heard Montreuil agree with Desmarais that the door of the house should be left ajar, in order to give greater facility to the escape of the former; I repaired to the house in time to see Montreuil enter it. A strange, sharp sort of cunning, which I had never known before, ran through the dark confusion of my mind. I waited for a minute, till it was likely that Montreuil had gained your chamber; I then pushed open the door, and ascended the stairs. I met no one—the moonlight fell around me, and its rays seemed to me like ghosts, pale and shrouded, and gazing upon me with wan and lustreless eyes. I know not how I found your chamber, but it was the only one I entered. I stood in the same room with Isora and yourself—ye lay in sleep—Isora's face—Oh, God! I know no more—no more of that night of horror—save that I fled from the house reeking with blood—a murderer—and the murderer of Isora!

"Then came a long, long dream. I was in a sea of blood—blood-red was the sky, and one still, solitary star that gleamed far away with a sickly and wan light, was the only spot, above and around, which was not of the same intolerable dye. And I thought my eyelids were cut off, as those of the Roman consul are said to have been, and I had nothing to shield my eyes from that crimson light, and the rolling waters of that unnatural sea. And the red air burnt through my eyes into my brain, and then that also, methought, became blood; and all memory—all images of memory—all idea—wore a material shape, and a material color, and were blood, too. Everything was unutterably silent, except when my own shrieks rang over the shoreless ocean, as I drifted on. At last I fixed my eyes—the eyes which I might

never close—upon that pale and single star ; and after I had gazed a little while, the star seemed to change slowly—until it grew like the pale face of that murdered girl, and then it vanished utterly, and *all* was blood !

“This vision was sometimes broken—sometimes varied by others—but it always returned ; and when at last I completely woke from it, I was in Italy, in a convent. Montreuil had lost no time in removing me from England. But once, shortly after my recovery, for I was mad for many months, he visited me, and he saw what a wreck I had become. He pitied me ; and when I told him I longed above all things for liberty—for the green earth and the fresh air, and a removal from that gloomy abode, he opened the convent gates, and blessed me and bade me go forth. ‘All I require of you,’ said he, ‘is a promise. If it be understood that you live, you will be persecuted by inquiries and questions, which will terminate in a conviction of your crime : let it therefore be reported in England that you are dead. Consent to the report, and promise never to quit Italy, nor to see Morton Devereux.’

“I promised—and that promise I have kept ; but I promised not that I would never reveal to you, in writing, the black tale which I have now recorded. May it reach you. There is one in this vicinity who has undertaken to bear it to you ; he says he has known misery—and when he said so, his voice sounded in my ear like yours ; and I looked upon him, and thought his features were cast somewhat in the same mould as your own—so I have trusted him. I have now told all. I have wrenched the secret from my heart in agony and with fear. I have told all—though things which I believe are fiends, have started forth from the grim walls around to forbid it—though dark wings have swept by me, and talons, as of a bird, have attempted to tear away the paper on which I write—though eyes, whose light was never drunk from earth, have glared on me—and mocking voices and horrible laughter have made my flesh creep, and thrilled through the marrow of my bones—I have told all—I have finished my last labor in this world, and I will now lie down and die.

“AUBREY DEVEREUX.”

The paper dropped from my hands. Whatever I had felt in reading it, I had not flinched once from the task. From the first word even to the last, I had gone through the dreadful tale, nor uttered a syllable, nor moved a limb. And now as I rose, though I had found the being who to me had withered

this world into one impassable desert—though I had found the unrelenting foe and the escaped murderer of Isora—the object of the execration and vindictiveness of years—not one single throb of wrath—not one single sentiment of vengeance, was in my breast. I passed at once to the bedside of my brother; he was awake, but still and calm—the calm and stillness of exhausted nature. I knelt down quietly beside him: I took his hand, and I shrank not from the touch, though by that hand the only woman I ever loved had perished.

“Look up, Aubrey!” said I, struggling with tears which, despite of my most earnest effort, came over me; “look up, all is forgiven. Who on earth shall withhold pardon from a crime which on earth has been so awfully punished? Look up Aubrey; I am your brother, and I forgive you. You are right—my childhood *was* harsh and fierce; and had you feared me less you might have confided in me, and you would not have sinned and suffered as you have done now. Fear me no longer. Look up, Aubrey, it is Morton who calls you. Why do you not speak? My brother, my brother—a word, a single word, I implore you.”

For one moment did Aubrey raise his eyes—one moment did he meet mine. His lips quivered wildly—I heard the death-rattle—he sunk back, and his hand dropped from my clasp. My words had snapped asunder the last chord of life. Merciful Heaven! I thank thee that those words were the words of pardon!

CHAPTER V.

In which the History makes a great Stride towards the final Catastrophe.—
The Return to England, and the Visit to a Devotee.

AT night, and in the thrilling forms of the Catholic ritual, was Aubrey Devereux consigned to earth. After that ceremony I could linger no longer in the vicinity of the hermitage. I took leave of the Abbot and richly endowed his convent in return for the protection it had afforded to the anchorite and the masses which had been said for his soul. Before I left Anselmo, I questioned him if any friend to the hermit had ever, during his seclusion, held any communication with the Abbot respecting him. Anselmo, after a little hesitation, confessed that a man, a Frenchman, seemingly of no high rank, had several times visited the convent, as if to scrutinize the habits and life of the anchorite; he had declared himself commissioned

by the hermit's relations to make inquiry of him from time to time ; but he had given the Abbot no clue to discover himself, though Anselmo had especially hinted at the expediency of being acquainted with some quarter to which he could direct any information of change in the hermit's habits or health. This man had been last at the convent about two months before the present date ; but one of the brothers declared that he had seen him in the vicinity of the well on the very day on which the hermit died. The description of this stranger was essentially different from that which would have been given of Montreuil, but I imagined that, if not the Abbé himself, the stranger was one in his confidence or his employ.

I now repaired to Rome, where I made the most extensive, though guarded, inquiries after Montreuil, and at length I learned that he was lying concealed, or rather unnoticed, in England, under a disguised name ; having, by friends or by money, obtained therein a tacit connivance, though not an open pardon. No sooner did I learn this intelligence, than I resolved forthwith to depart to that country. I crossed the Alps—traversed France—and took ship at Calais for Dover.

Behold me then upon the swift seas bent upon a double purpose—reconciliation with a brother whom I had wronged, and vengeance—no not vengeance, but *justice* against the criminal I had discovered ! No ! it was not revenge—it was no infuriate, no unholy desire of inflicting punishment upon a personal foe, which possessed me—it was a steady, calm, unwavering resolution, to obtain justice against the profound and systematized guilt of a villain who had been the bané of all who had come within his contact, that nerved my arm and engrossed my heart. Bear witness, Heaven, I am not a vindictive man ! I have, it is true, been extreme in hatred as in love ; but I have ever had the power to control myself from yielding to its impulse. When the full persuasion of Gerald's crime reigned within me, I had thrall'd my emotion, I had curbed it within the circle of my own heart, though there, thus pent and self-consuming, it was an agony and a torture ; I had resisted the voice of that blood which cried from the earth against a murderer, and which had consigned the solemn charge of justice to my hands. Year after year I had nursed an unappeas'd desire ; nor ever, when it stung the most, suffered it to become an actual revenge. I had knelt in tears and in softness by Aubrey's bed—I had poured forth my pardon over him—I had felt, while I did so,—no, not so much sternness as would have slain a worm. By his hand had the murderous stroke

been dealt—on his soul was the crimson stain of that blood which had flowed through the veins of the gentlest and the most innocent of God's creatures—and yet the blow was unavenged and the crime forgiven. For him there was a palliative, or even a gloomy but an unanswerable excuse. In the confession which had so terribly solved the mystery of my life, the seeds of that curse, which had grown at last into MADNESS, might be discovered even in the first dawn of Aubrey's existence. The latent poison might be detected in the morbid fever of his young devotion—in his jealous cravings of affection—in the first flush of his ill-omened love, even before rivalry and wrath began. Then, too, his guilt had not been regularly organized into one cold and deliberate system—it broke forth in impetuous starts, in frantic paroxysms—it was often wrestled with, though by a feeble mind—it was often conquered by a tender, though a fitful temper—it might not have rushed into the last and most awful crime, but for the damning instigation and the atrocious craft of one, who (Aubrey rightly said) could wield and mould the unhappy victim at his will. Might not, did I say? Nay, but for Montreuil's accursed influence, had I not Aubrey's own word that that crime never *would have* been committed? He had resolved to stifle his love—his heart had already melted to Isora and to me—he had already tasted the sweets of a virtuous resolution, and conquered the first bitterness of opposition to his passion. Why should not the resolution thus auspiciously begun have been mellowed into effect? Why should not the grateful and awful remembrance of the crime he had escaped continue to preserve him from meditating crime anew? And (O, thought, which, while I now write, steals over me and brings with it an unutterable horde of emotions!) but for that all-tainting, all-withering, influence, Aubrey's soul might at this moment have been pure from murder, and Isora—the living Isora—by my side!

What wonder, as these thoughts came over me, that sense, feeling, reason, gradually shrunk and hardened into one stern resolve? I looked as from a height over the whole conduct of Montreuil: I saw him in our early infancy with no definite motive (beyond the general policy of intrigue), no fixed design, which might somewhat have lessened the callousness of the crime, not only fomenting dissensions in the hearts of brothers—not only turning the season of warm affections, and yet of unopened passion, into strife and rancor—but seizing upon the inherent and reigning vice of our bosoms, which he should have seized to crush—in order only by that master-vice to

weave our characters and sway our conduct to his will, whenever a cool-blooded and merciless policy required us to be of that will the minions and the tools. Thus had he taken hold of the diseased jealousy of Aubrey, and by that handle, joined to the latent spring of superstition, guided him on his wretched course of misery and guilt. Thus by a moral irresolution in Gerald had he bowed him also to his purposes, and, by an infantine animosity between that brother and myself, held us both in a state of mutual hatred which I shuddered to recall. Readily could I now perceive that my charges or my suspicions against Gerald, which, in ordinary circumstances, he might have dispassionately come forward to disprove, had been represented to him by Montreuil in the light of groundless and wilful insults; and thus he had been led to scorn that full and cool explanation which, if it had not elucidated the mystery of my afflictions, would have removed the false suspicion of guilt from himself, and the real guilt of wrath and animosity from me.

The crime of the forged will, and the outrage to the dead and to myself, was a link in his woven guilt which I regarded the least. I looked rather to the black and the consummate craft by which Aubrey had been implicated in that sin; and my indignation became mixed with horror when I saw Montreuil working to that end of fraud by the instigation not only of a guilty and unlawful passion, but of the yet more unnatural and terrific engine of *frenzy*,—of a maniac's despair. Over the peace—the happiness—the honor—the virtue of a whole family, through fraud and through blood, this priest had marched onward to the goal of his icy and heartless ambition, unrelenting and unrepenting; “but not,” I said, as I clenched my hand till the nails met in the flesh, “not forever unchecked and unrequited!”

But in what manner was justice to be obtained? A public court of law? What! drag forward the deep dishonor of my house—the gloomy and convulsive history of my departed brother—his crime and his insanity? What! bring that history, connected as it was with the fate of Isora, before the curious and the insolent gaze of the babbling world? Bare that awful record to the jests, to the scrutiny, the marvel and the pity, of that most coarse of all tribunals—an English court of law? and that most torturing of all exposures—the vulgar comments of an English public? Could I do this? Yea, in the sternness of my soul, I felt that I could submit even to that humiliation, if no other way presented itself by which I could arrive at justice. *Was* there no other way?—at that question conjec-

ture paused—I formed no scheme, or rather, I formed a hundred and rejected them all; my mind settled, at last, into an indistinct, unquestioned, but prophetic, resolution, that, whenever my path crossed Montreuil's, it should be to his destruction. I asked not how, nor when, the blow was to be dealt; I felt only a solemn and exultant certainty that, whether it borrowed the sword of the law, or the weapon of private justice, *mine* should be the hand which brought retribution to the ashes of the dead and the agony of the survivor.

So soon as my mind had subsided into this determination, I suffered my thoughts to dwell upon subjects less sternly agitating. Fondly did I look forward to a meeting with Gerald, and a reconciliation of all our early and most frivolous disputes. As an atonement for the injustice my suspicions had done him, I resolved not to reclaim my inheritance. My fortune was already ample, and all that I cared to possess of the hereditary estates were the ruins of the old house and the copses of the surrounding park; these Gerald would in all likelihood easily yield to me; and with the natural sanguineness of my temperament, I already planned the reconstruction of the ancient building, and the method of that solitary life in which I resolved that the remainder of my years should be spent.

Turning from this train of thought, I recurred to the mysterious and sudden disappearance of Oswald: *that* I was now easily able to account for. There could be no doubt but that Montreuil had (immediately after the murder), as he declared he would, induced Oswald to quit England, and preserve silence, either by bribery or by threats. And when I recalled the impression which the man had made upon me—an impression certainly not favorable to the elevation or the rigid honesty of his mind—I could not but imagine that one or the other of these means Montreuil found far from difficult of success. The delirious fever into which the wounds and the scene of that night had thrown me, and the long interval that consequently elapsed before inquiry was directed to Oswald, gave him every opportunity and indulgence in absenting himself from the country, and it was not improbable that he had accompanied Aubrey to Italy.

Here I paused, in deep acknowledgment of the truth of Aubrey's assertion, that "under similar circumstances, I might perhaps have been equally guilty." My passions had indeed been "intense and fierce as his own"; and there was a dread coincidence in the state of mind into which each of us had been thrown by the event of that night, which made the epoch of a

desolated existence to both of us ; if mine had been but a passing delirium, and his a confirmed and lasting disease of the intellect, the causes of our malady had been widely different. He had been the criminal—I only the sufferer.

Thus as I leant over the deck, and the waves bore me homewards, after so many years and vicissitudes, did the shadows of thought and memory flit across me. How seemingly apart, yet how closely linked, had been the great events in my wandering and wild life. My early acquaintance with Bolingbroke, whom for more than nine years I had not seen, and who, at a superficial glance, would seem to have exercised influence over my public rather than my private life,—how secretly, yet how powerfully had that circumstance led even to the very thoughts which now possessed me, and to the very object on which I was now bound. But for that circumstance, I might not have learnt of the retreat of Don Diego D'Alvarez in his last illness ; I might never have renewed my love to Isora ; and whatever had been her fate, destitution and poverty would have been a less misfortune than her union with me. But for my friendship for Bolingbroke, I might not have visited France, nor gained the favor of the Regent, nor the ill offices of Dubois, nor the protection and kindness of the Czar. I might never have been ambassador at the Court of —, nor met with Bezoni, nor sought an asylum for a spirit sated with pomp and thirsting for truth, at the foot of the Apennines, nor read that history (which, indeed, might then never have occurred), that now rankled at my heart, urging my movements and coloring my desires. Thus, by the finest, but the strongest, meshes, had the thread of my political honors been woven with that of my private afflictions. And thus, even at the licentious festivals of the Regent of France, or the lifeless parade of the Court of —, the dark stream of events had flowed onward beneath my feet, bearing me insensibly to that very spot of time from which I now surveyed the past and looked upon the mist and shadows of the future.

Adverse winds made the little voyage across the Channel a business of four days. On the evening of the last we landed at Dover. Within thirty miles of that town was my mother's retreat ; and I resolved, before I sought a reconciliation with Gerald, or justice against Montreuil, to visit her seclusion. Accordingly, the next day, I repaired to her abode.

What a contrast is there between the lives of human beings ! Considering the beginning and the end of all mortal careers are the same, how wonderfully is the interval varied ! Some, the weeds of the world, dashed from shore to shore—all vicissitude—

enterprise—strife—disquiet ; others, the world's lichens—rooted to some peaceful rock—growing—flourishing—withering on the same spot,—scarce a feeling expressed—scarce a sentiment called forth—scarce a title of the properties of their very nature expanded into action.

There was an air of quiet and stillness in the red quadrangular building, as my carriage stopped at its porch, which struck upon me, like a breathing reproach to those who sought the abode of peace with feelings opposed to the spirit of the place. A small projecting porch was covered with ivy, and thence issued an aged portress in answer to my summons.

“The Countess Devereux,” said she, “is now the superior of this society” (convent they called it not), “and rarely admits any stranger.”

I gave in my claim to admission, and was ushered into a small parlor : all there, too, was still—the brown oak wainscoting—the huge chairs—the few antique portraits—the *uninhabited* aspect of the chamber—all were silently eloquent of quietude—but a quietude comfortless and sombre. At length, my mother appeared, I sprung forward—my childhood was before me—years—care—change were forgotten—I was a boy again—I sprung forward, and was in my mother's embrace ! It was long before, recovering myself, I noted how lifeless and chill was that embrace, but I did so at last, and my enthusiasm withered at once.

We sat down together, and conversed long and uninterruptedly, but our conversation was like that of acquaintances, not the fondest and closest of all relations (for I need scarcely add that I told her not of my meeting with Aubrey, nor undeceived her with respect to the date of his death). Every monastic recluse that I had hitherto seen, even in the most seeming content with retirement, had loved to converse of the exterior world, and had betrayed an interest in its events—for my mother only, worldly objects and interests seemed utterly dead. She expressed little surprise to see me—little surprise at my alteration ; she only said that my mien was improved, and that I reminded her of my father ; she testified no anxiety to hear of my travels or my adventures—she testified even no willingness to speak of herself—she described to me the life of one day, and then said that the history of ten years was told. A close cap confined all the locks for whose rich luxuriance and golden hue she had once been noted—for here they were not the victim of a vow, as in a nunnery they would have been—and her dress was plain, simple, and unadorned : save these alterations of attire, none

were visible in her exterior—the torpor of her life seemed to have paralyzed even time—the bloom yet dwelt in her unwrinkled cheek—the mouth had not fallen—the faultless features were faultless still. But there was a deeper stillness than ever breathing through this frame : it was as if the soul had been lulled to sleep—her mien was lifeless—her voice was lifeless—her gesture was lifeless—the impression she produced was like that of entering some chamber which has not been entered before for a century. She consented to my request to stay with her all the day—a bed was prepared for me, and at sunrise the next morning I was folded once more in the chilling mechanism of her embrace and dismissed on my journey to the metropolis.

CHAPTER VI.

The Retreat of a celebrated Man, and a Visit to a great Poet.

I ARRIVED in town, and drove at once to Gerald's house ; it was not difficult to find it, for in my young day it had been the residence of the Duke of —; and wealthy as I knew was the owner of the Devereux lands, I was somewhat startled at the extent and the magnificence of his palace. To my inexpressible disappointment, I found that Gerald had left London a day or two before my arrival on a visit to a nobleman nearly connected with our family, and residing in the same county as that in which Devereux Court was situated. Since the fire, which had destroyed all of the old house but the one tower which I had considered as peculiarly my own, Gerald, I heard, had always, in visiting his estates, taken up his abode at the mansion of one or other of his neighbors ; and to Lord —'s house I now resolved to repair. My journey was delayed for a day or two, by accidentally seeing at the door of the hotel, to which I drove from Gerald's house, the favorite servant of Lord Bolingbroke. This circumstance revived in me, at once, all my attachment to that personage, and hearing he was at his country house, within a few miles from town, I resolved the next morning to visit him. It was not only that I contemplated with an eager, yet a melancholy interest, an interview with one whose blazing career I had long watched, and whose letters (for during the years we had been parted, he wrote to me often) seemed to testify the same satiety of the triumphs and gauds of ambition which had brought something of wisdom to myself ; it was not only that I wished to commune with that Bolingbroke in retirement whom I had

known the oracle of statesmen, and the pride of courts; nor even that I loved the man, and was eager once more to embrace him; a fiercer and more active motive urged me to visit one whose knowledge of all men, and application of their various utilities, were so remarkable, and who, even in his present peace and retirement, would not improbably be acquainted with the abode of that unquiet and plotting ecclesiastic whom I now panted to discover, and whom Bolingbroke had of old often guided or employed.

When my carriage stopped at the statesman's door, I was informed that Lord Bolingbroke was at his farm. Farm! how oddly did that word sound in my ear, coupled as it was with the name of one so brilliant and so restless. I asked the servant to direct me where I should find him, and, following the directions, I proceeded to the search alone. It was a day towards the close of autumn, bright, soft, clear, and calm as the decline of a vigorous and genial age. I walked slowly through a field robbed of its golden grain, and as I entered another, I saw the object of my search. He had seemingly just given orders to a person in a laborer's dress, who was quitting him; and with downcast eyes he was approaching towards me. I noted how slow and even was the pace which, once stately, yet rapid and irregular, had betrayed the haughty, but wild, character of his mind. He paused often, as if in thought, and I observed that once he stopped longer than usual, and seemed to gaze wistfully on the ground. Afterwards (when I had joined him) we passed that spot, and I remarked, with a secret smile, that it contained one of those little mounds in which that busy and herded tribe of the insect race, which have been held out to man's social state at once as a mockery and a model, held their populous home. There seemed a latent moral in the pause and watch of the disappointed statesman by that mound, which afforded a clue to the nature of his reflections.

He did not see me till I was close before him, and had called him by his name, nor did he at first recognize me, for my garb was foreign, and my upper lip unshaven; and, as I said before, years had strangely altered me: but when he did, he testified all the cordiality I had anticipated. I linked my arm in his, and we walked to and fro for hours, talking of all that had passed since and before our parting, and feeling our hearts warm to each other as we talked.

"The last time I saw you," said he, "how widely did our hopes and objects differ! yours from my own—you seemingly had the vantage-ground, but it was an artificial eminence, and

my level state, though it appeared less tempting, was more secure. I had just been disgraced by a misguided and ungrateful prince. I had already gone into a retirement, where my only honors were proportioned to my fortitude in bearing condemnation—and my only flatterer was the hope of finding a companion and a Mentor in myself. You, my friend, parted with life before you; and you only relinquished the pursuit of Fortune at one court, to meet her advances at another. Nearly ten years have flown since that time—my situation is but little changed—I am returned, it is true, to my native soil, but not to a soil more indulgent to ambition and exertion than the scene of my exile. My sphere of action is still shut from me—*my mind is still banished*.* You return young in years, but full of successes. Have they brought you happiness, Devereux? or have you yet a temper to envy my content?"

"Alas!" said I, "who can bear too close a search beneath the mask and robe? Talk not of me now. It is ungracious for the fortunate to repine—and I reserve whatever may disquiet me within for your future consolation and advice. At present speak to me of yourself—you are happy, then?"

"I am!" said Bolingbroke emphatically. "Life seems to me to possess two treasures—one glittering and precarious, the other of less rich a show, but of more solid value. The one is Power, the other Virtue; and there is the main difference between the two—Power is entrusted to us as a loan ever required again, and with a terrible arrear of interest—Virtue obtained by us as a *boon* which we can only lose through our own folly, when once it is acquired. In my youth I was caught by the former—hence my errors and my misfortunes! In my declining years I have sought the latter; hence my palliatives and my consolation. But you have not seen my home and *all* its attractions," added Bolingbroke, with a smile, which reminded me of his former self. "I will show them to you." And we turned our steps to the house.

As we walked thither, I wondered to find how little melancholy was the change Bolingbroke had undergone. Ten years, which bring man from his prime to his decay, had indeed left their trace upon his stately form, and the still unrivalled beauty of his noble features; but the manner gained all that the form had lost. In his days of more noisy greatness, there had been something artificial and unquiet in the sparkling alternations he had loved to adopt. He had been too fond of changing wis-

* I need scarcely remind the reader that Lord Bolingbroke, though he had received a full pardon, was forbidden to resume his seat in the House of Lords—ED.

dom by a quick turn into wit—too fond of the affectation of bordering the serious with the gay—business with pleasure. If this had not taken from the polish of his manner, it had diminished its dignity and given it the air of being assumed and insincere. Now all was quiet, earnest, and impressive; there was tenderness even in what was melancholy; and if there lingered the affectation of blending the classic character with his own, the character was more noble, and the affectation more unseen. But this manner was only the faint mirror of a mind which, retaining much of its former mould, had been embellished and exalted by adversity, and which, if it banished not its former frailties, had acquired a thousand new virtues to redeem them.

“You see,” said my companion, pointing to the walls of the hall, which we had now entered, “the subject which at present occupies the greater part of my attention. I am meditating how to make the hall most illustrative of its owner’s pursuits. You see the desire of improving, of creating, and of associating the improvement and the creation with ourselves, follows us banished men even to our seclusion. I think of having those walls painted with the implements of husbandry, and through pictures of spades and ploughshares, to express my employments, and testify my content in them.”

“Cincinnatus is a better model than Aristippus, confess it,” said I, smiling. “But if the senators come hither to summon you to power, will you resemble the Roman, not only in being found at your plough, but in your reluctance to leave it, and your eagerness to return?”

“What shall I say to you?” replied Bolingbroke. “Will you play the cynic if I answer *no*? We *should not* boast of despising power, when of use to others, but of being contented to live without it. This is the end of my philosophy! But let me present you to one whom I value more now than I valued power at any time.”

As he said this, Bolingbroke threw open the door of an apartment, and introduced me to a lady with whom he had found that domestic happiness denied him in his first marriage. The niece of Madame de Maintenon, this most charming woman possessed all her aunt’s wit, and far more than all her aunt’s beauty.* She was in weak health; but her vivacity was ex-

* “I am not ashamed to say to you that I admire her more every hour of my life.”—*Letter from Lord Bolingbroke to Swift.*

Bolingbroke loved her to the last; and perhaps it is just to a man so celebrated for his gallantries, to add that this beautiful and accomplished woman seems to have admired and *esteemed* as much as she loved him.—ED.

treme, and her conversation just what should be the conversation of a woman who shines without striving for it.

The business on which I was bound only allowed me to stay two days with Bolingbroke, and this I stated at first, lest he should have dragged me over his farm.

"Well," said my host, after vainly endeavoring to induce me to promise a longer stay, "if you *can* only give us two days, I must write and excuse myself to a great man with whom I was to dine to-day: yet, if it were not so inhospitable, I should like much to carry you with me to his house; for I own that I wish you to see my companions, and to learn that if I still consult the oracles, they are less for the predictions of fortune than as the inspirations of the god."

"Ah!" said Lady Bolingbroke, who spoke in French, "I know whom you allude to. Give him my homage, and assure him, when he next visits us, we will appoint six *dames du palais* to receive and pet him."

Upon this I insisted upon accompanying Bolingbroke to the house of so fortunate a being, and he consented to my wish with feigned reluctance, but evident pleasure.

"And who," said I to Lady Bolingbroke, "is the happy object of so much respect?"

Lady Bolingbroke answered laughing, that nothing was so pleasant as suspense, and that it would be cruel in her to deprive me of it; and we conversed with so much zest, that it was not till Bolingbroke had left the room for some moments, that I observed he was not present. I took the opportunity to remark that I was rejoiced to find him so happy, and with so much cause for happiness.

"He *is* happy, though, at times, he is restless. How, chained to this oar, can he be otherwise?" answered Lady Bolingbroke, with a sigh; "but his friends," she added, "who most enjoy his retirement, must yet lament it. His genius is not wasted here, it is true; where *could* it be wasted? But who does not feel that it is employed in too confined a sphere? And yet—" and I saw a tear start to her eye—"I, at least, ought not to repine. I should lose the best part of my happiness if there was nothing I could console him for."

"Believe me," said I, "I have known Bolingbroke in the zenith of his success; but never knew him so worthy of congratulation as *now*!"

"Is that flattery to him or to me?" said Lady Bolingbroke, smiling archly, for her smiles were quick successors to her tears.

“*Detur digniori!*” answered I; “but you must allow that, though it is a fine thing to have all that the world can give, it is still better to gain something that the world cannot take away!”

“And you are also a Philosopher!” cried Lady Bolingbroke gayly. “Ah, poor me! In my youth my portion was the cloister;* in my later years I am banished to the porch! You have no conception, Monsieur Devereux, what wise faces and profound maxims we have here; especially as all who come to visit my lord think it necessary to quote Tully, and talk of solitude as if it were a heaven! *Les pauvres bons gens!* they seem a little surprised when Henry receives them smilingly—begs them to construe the Latin—gives them good wine, and sends them back to London with faces half the length they were on their arrival. *Mais voici Monsieur le fermier philosophe!*”

And Bolingbroke entering, I took my leave of this lively and interesting lady, and entered his carriage.

As soon as we were seated, he pressed me for my reasons for refusing to prolong my visit. As I thought they would be more opportune after the excursion of the day was over, and as, in truth, I was not eager to relate them, I begged to defer the narration till our return to his house at night, and then I directed the conversation into a new channel.

“My chief companion,” said Bolingbroke, after describing to me his course of life, “is the man you are about to visit; he has his frailties and infirmities—and in saying that, I only imply that he is human—but he is wise, reflective, generous, and affectionate; add these qualities to a dazzling wit, and a genius deep, if not sublime, and what wonder that we forget something of vanity and something of fretfulness—effects, rather of the frame than of the mind; the wonder only is that, with a body the victim to every disease, crippled and imbecile from the cradle, his frailties should not be more numerous, and his care, his thoughts, and attentions not wholly limited to his own complaints—for the sickly are almost of necessity selfish—and that mind must have a vast share of benevolence which can always retain the softness of charity and love for others, when pain and disease constitute the morbid links that perpetually bind it to self. If this great character is my chief companion, my chief correspondent is not less distinguished; in a word, no longer to keep you in suspense, Pope is my companion, and Swift my correspondent.”

* She was brought up at St. Cyr.—Ed.

"You are fortunate—but so also are they. Your letter informed me of Swift's honorable exile in Ireland—how does he bear it?"

"Too feelingly—his disappointments turn his blood to acid. He said, characteristically enough, in one of his letters, that in fishing once when he was a little boy, he felt a great fish at the end of his line, which he drew up almost to the ground, but it dropt in, and the disappointment, he adds, vexes him to this day, and he believes it to be the type of all his future disappointments: * it is wonderful how reluctantly a very active mind sinks into rest."

"Yet, why should retirement be rest? Do you recollect in the first conversation we ever had together, we talked of Cowley? Do you recollect how justly, and even sublimely, he has said, 'Cogitation is that which distinguishes the solitude of a God from that of a wild beast?'"

"It is finely said," answered Bolingbroke, "but Swift was born not for cogitation, but action—for turbulent times, not for calm. He ceases to be great directly he is still; and his bitterness at every vexation is so great that I have often thought, in listening to him, of the Abbé de Cyran, who, attempting to throw nutshells out of the bars of his window, and constantly failing in the attempt, exclaimed in a paroxysm of rage, 'Thus does Providence delight in frustrating my designs!'"

* In this letter Swift adds, "I should be ashamed to say this if you (Lord Bolingbroke) had not a spirit fitter to bear your own misfortunes than I have to think of them"; and this is true. Nothing can be more striking, or more honorable to Lord Bolingbroke, than the contrast between Swift's letters and that nobleman's upon the subject of their mutual disappointments. I especially note the contrast, because it has been so grievously the cant of Lord Bolingbroke's decriers to represent his affection for retirement as hollow, and his resignation in adversity as a boast rather than a fact. Now I will challenge any one *thoroughly* and dispassionately to examine what is left to us of the life of this great man, and after having done so, to select from all modern history an example of one who, in the prime of life and height of ambition, ever passed from a very active and exciting career into retirement and disgrace, and bore the change—long, bitter, and permanent as it was—with a greater and more thoroughly sustained magnanimity than did Lord Bolingbroke. He has been reproached for taking part in political contests in the midst of his praises and "affected enjoyment" of retirement; and this, made matter of reproach, is exactly the subject on which he seems to me the *most* worthy of praise. For, putting aside all motives for action, on the purity of which men are generally incredulous, as a hatred to ill-government (an antipathy wonderfully strong in wise men, and wonderfully weak in fools), the honest impulse of the citizen, and the better and higher sentiment, to which Bolingbroke appeared peculiarly alive, of affection to mankind—putting these utterly aside—it must be owned that resignation is the more noble in proportion as it is the less passive—that retirement is only a morbid selfishness if it prohibit exertions for others; that it is only really dignified and noble when it is the shade whence issue the oracles that are to instruct mankind; and that retirement of this nature is the sole seclusion which a good and wise man will covet or commend. The very philosophy which makes such a man seek the *quiet*, makes him eschew the *inutility* of the hermitage. Very little praiseworthy to me would have seemed Lord Bolingbroke among his haymakers and ploughmen, if among haymakers and ploughmen he had looked with an indifferent eye upon a profligate minister and a venal parliament; very little interest in my eyes would have attached itself to his beans and vetches, had beans and vetches caused him to forget that if he was happier in a farm, he could be more useful in a senate, and made him forego, in the sphere of a bailiff, all care for re-entering that of a legislator.—ED.

“But you are fallen from a far greater height of hope than Swift could ever have attained—you bear this change well, but not, *I hope*, without a struggle.”

“You are right—*not* without a struggle; while corruption thrives, I will not be silent; while bad men govern, I will not be still.”

In conversation of this sort passed the time, till we arrived at Pope's villa.

We found the poet in his study—indued, as some of his pictures represent him, in a long gown and a velvet cap. He received Bolingbroke with great tenderness, and being, as he said, in robusiter health than he had enjoyed for months, he insisted on carrying us to his grotto. I know nothing more common to poets than a pride in what belongs to their houses, and perhaps, to a man not ill-natured, there are few things more pleasant than indulging the little weaknesses of those we admire. We sat down in a small temple made entirely of shells; and whether it was that the Creative Genius gave an undue charm to the place, I know not: but as the murmur of a rill, glassy as the Blandusian fountain, was caught, and re-given from side to side by a perpetual echo, and through an arcade of trees, whose leaves, ever and anon, fell startlingly to the ground beneath the light touch of the autumn air, you saw the sails on the river pass and vanish, like the cares which breathe over the smooth glass of wisdom, but may not linger to dim it, it was not difficult to invest the place, humble as it was, with a classic interest, or to recall the loved retreats of the Roman bards, without smiling too fastidiously at the contrast.

“Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen,
 Within thy airy shell,
 By slow Meander's margin green,
 Or by the violet-embroidered vale,
 Where the lovelorn nightingale
 Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well;
 Sweet Echo, dost thou shun those haunts of yore,
 And in the dim caves of a northern shore
 Delight to dwell!”

“Let the compliment to you, Pope,” said Bolingbroke, “atone for the profanation of weaving three wretched lines of mine with those most musical notes of Milton.”

“Ah,” said Pope, “would that you could give me a fitting inscription for my fount and grotto! The only one I remember is hackneyed, and yet it has spoilt me, I fear, for all others:

“Hujus Nympha loci, sacri custodia fontis
 Dormio dum blandæ sentio murmur aquæ;
 Parce meum; quisquis tanges cava marmora, somnum
 Rumpere; sive bibas, sive lavère, tace.”*

“We cannot hope to match it,” said Bolingbroke, “though you know I value myself on these things. But tell me your news of Gay—is he growing wiser?”

“Not a whit; he is forever a dupe to the *spes credula*; always talking of buying an annuity that he may be independent, and always spending as fast as he earns, that he may appear munificent.”

“Poor Gay! but he is a common example of the improvidence of his tribe, while you are an exception. Yet mark, Devereux, the inconsistency of Pope’s thrift and carefulness: he sends a parcel of fruit to some ladies with this note, ‘Take care of the papers that wrap the apples, and return them safely; they are the only copies I have of one part of the Iliad.’ Thus, you see, our economist saves his paper, and hazards his epic!”

Pope, who is always flattered by an allusion to his negligence of fame, smiled slightly and answered, “What man, alas, ever profits by the lessons of his friends? How many exact rules has our good Dean of St. Patrick laid down for both of us—how angrily still does he chide us for our want of prudence and our love of good living. I intend, in answer to his charges on the latter score, though I vouch, as I well may, for our temperance, to give him the reply of the sage to the foolish courtier—”

“What was that?” asked Bolingbroke.

“Why, the courtier saw the sage picking out the best dishes at table. ‘How,’ said he, with a sneer, ‘are sages such epicures?’—‘Do you think, sir,’ replied the wise man, reaching over the table to help himself, ‘do you think, sir, that the Creator made the good things of this world only for fools?’”

“How the dean will pish and pull his wig when he reads your illustration,” said Bolingbroke, laughing. “We shall never agree in our reasonings on that part of philosophy. Swift loves to go out of his way to find privation or distress,

* Thus very inadequately translated by Pope (see his Letter to Edward Blount, Esq., descriptive of his grotto):

“Nymph of the grot, these sacred springs I keep,
 And to the murmur of these waters sleep:
 Ah, spare my slumbers; gently tread the cave,
 And drink in silence, or in silence lave.”

It is, however, quite impossible to convey to an unlearned reader the exquisite and spirit-like beauty of the Latin verses.—ED.

and has no notion of epicurean wisdom; for my part, I think the use of knowledge is to make us happier. I would compare the mind to the beautiful statue of Love by Praxiteles—when its eyes were bandaged the countenance seemed grave and sad, but the moment you removed the bandage, the most serene and enchanting smile diffused itself over the whole face.”

So passed the morning till the hour of dinner, and this repast was served with an elegance and luxury which the sons of Apollo seldom command.* As the evening closed our conversation fell upon friendship, and the increasing disposition towards it, which comes with increasing years. “Whilst my mind,” said Bolingbroke, “shrinks more and more from the world, and feels in its independence less yearning to external objects, the ideas of friendship return oftener, they busy me, they warm me more. Is it that we grow more tender as the moment of our great separation approaches? or is it that they who are to live together in another state (for friendship exists not but for the good) begin to feel more strongly that divine sympathy which is to be the great bond of their future society?” †

While Bolingbroke was thus speaking, and Pope listened with all the love and reverence which he evidently bore to his friend stamped upon his worn but expressive countenance, I inly said, “Surely the love between minds like these should live and last without the changes that ordinary affections feel! Who would not mourn for the strength of all human ties, if hereafter these are broken, and asperity succeed to friendship, or aversion to esteem? I, a wanderer, without heir to my memory and wealth, shall pass away and my hasty and un-mellowed fame will moulder with my clay; but will the names of those whom I now behold ever fall languidly on the ears of a future race, and will there not forever be some sympathy with their friendship, softer and warmer than admiration for their fame?”

We left our celebrated host about two hours before midnight, and returned to Dawley.

On our road thither I questioned Bolingbroke respecting Montreuil, and I found that, as I had surmised, he was able to give me some information of that arch-schemer. Gerald's money and hereditary influence had procured tacit connivance

* Pope seems to have been rather capricious in this respect; but in general he must be considered open to the sarcasm of displaying the bounteous host to those who did not want a dinner, and the niggard to those who did.—Ed.

† This beautiful sentiment is to be found, with very slight alteration, in a letter from Bolingbroke to Swift.—Ed.

at the Jesuit's residence in England, and Montreuil had for some years led a quiet and unoffending life in close retirement. "Lately, however," said Bolingbroke, "I have learned that the old spirit has revived, and I accidentally heard, three days ago, when conversing with one well informed on state matters, that this most pure administration have discovered some plot or plots with which Montreuil is connected; I believe he will be apprehended in a few days."

"And where lurks he?"

"He was, I heard, last seen in the neighborhood of your brother's property at Devereux Court, and I imagine it probable that he is still in that neighborhood."

This intelligence made me resolve to leave Dawley even earlier than I had intended, and I signified to Lord Bolingbroke my intention of quitting him by sunrise the next morning. He endeavored in vain to combat my resolution. I was too fearful lest Montreuil, hearing of his danger from the state, might baffle my vengeance by seeking some impenetrable asylum, to wish to subject my meeting with him, and with Gerald, whose co-operation I desired, to any unnecessary delay. I took leave of my host therefore that night, and ordered my carriage to be in readiness by the first dawn of morning.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Plot approaches its Dénouement.

ALTHOUGH the details of my last chapter have somewhat retarded the progress of that *dénouement* with which this volume is destined to close, yet I do not think the destined reader will regret lingering over a scene in which, after years of restless enterprise and exile, he beholds the asylum which fortune had prepared for the most extraordinary character with which I have adorned these pages.

It was before daybreak that I commenced my journey. The shutters of the house were as yet closed; the gray mists rising slowly from the earth, and the cattle couched beneath the trees, the cold, but breezeless freshness of the morning, the silence of the unawakened birds, all gave an inexpressible stillness and quiet to the scene. The horses slowly ascended a little eminence, and I looked from the window of the carriage on the peaceful retreat I had left. I sighed as I did so, and a sick sensation, coupled with the thought of Isora, came chill upon

my heart. No man happily placed in this social world can guess the feelings of envy with which a wanderer like me, without tie or home, and for whom the roving eagerness of youth is over, surveys those sheltered spots in which the breast garners up all domestic bonds, its household and holiest delights; the companioned hearth, the smile of infancy, and, dearer than all, the eye that glasses our purest, our tenderest, our most secret thoughts; these,—oh, none who enjoy them know how they for whom they are not have pined and mourned for them!

I had not travelled many hours, when, upon the loneliest part of the road, my carriage, which had borne me without an accident from Rome to London, broke down. The postillions said there was a small inn about a mile from the spot; thither I repaired: a blacksmith was sent for, and I found the accident to the carriage would require several hours to repair. No solitary chaise did the inn afford; but the landlord, who was a freeholder and a huntsman, boasted one valuable and swift horse, which he declared was fit for an emperor or a highwayman. I was too impatient of delay not to grasp at this intelligence. I gave mine host whatever he demanded for the loan of his steed, transferred my pistols to an immense pair of holsters, which adorned a high demipique saddle, wherewith he obliged me, and, within an hour from the date of the accident, recommenced my journey.

The evening closed, as I became aware of the presence of a fellow traveller. He was, like myself, on horseback. He wore a short, dark gray cloak, a long wig of raven hue, and a large hat, which, flapping over his face, conspired, with the increasing darkness, to allow me a very imperfect survey of his features. Twice or thrice he had passed me, and always with some salutation, indicative of a desire for further acquaintance; but my mood is not naturally too much inclined to miscellaneous society, and I was at that time peculiarly covetous of my own companionship. I had, therefore, given but a brief answer to the horseman's courtesy, and had ridden away from him with a very unceremonious abruptness. At length, when he had come up to me for the fourth time, and for the fourth time had accosted me, my ear caught something in the tones of his voice which did not seem to me wholly unfamiliar. I regarded him with more attention than I had as yet done, and replied to him more civilly and at length. Apparently encouraged by this relaxation from my reserve, the man speedily resumed:

“Your horse, sir,” said he, “is a fine animal, but he seems jaded:—you have ridden far to-day, I'll venture to guess.”

"I have, sir; but the town where I shall pass the night is not above four miles distant, I believe."

"Hum—ha!—you sleep at D——, then?" said the horseman inquisitively.

A suspicion came across me—we were then entering a very lonely road, one notoriously infested with highwaymen. My fellow equestrian's company might have some sinister meaning in it. I looked to my holsters, and leisurely taking out one of my pistols, saw to its priming, and returned it to its depository. The horseman noted the motion, and he moved his horse rather uneasily, and I thought timidly, to the other side of the road.

"You travel well armed, sir," said he, 'er a pause.

"It is a necessary precaution, sir," answered I composedly, "in a road one is not familiar with, and with companions one has never had the happiness to meet before."

"Ahem!—ahem!—*Parbleu, Monsieur le Comte*, you allude to me; but I warrant this is not the first time *we* have met."

"Ha!" said I, riding closer to my fellow-traveller, "you know me then—and we *have* met before. I thought I recognized your voice, but I cannot remember when or where I last heard it."

"Oh, Count, I believe it was only by accident that we commenced acquaintanceship, and only by accident, you see, do we now resume it. But I perceive that I intrude on your solitude. Farewell, Count, and a pleasant night at your inn."

"Not so fast, sir," said I, laying firm hand on my companion's shoulder, "I know you now, and I thank Providence that I have found you. Marie Oswald, it is not lightly that I will part with you!"

"With all my heart, sir, with all my heart. But *morbleu, Monsieur le Comte*, do take your hand from my shoulder—I am a nervous man, and your pistols are loaded—and perhaps you are choleric and hasty. I assure you I am far from wishing to part with you abruptly, for I have watched you for the last two days, in order to enjoy the honor of this interview."

"Indeed! your wish will save both of us a world of trouble. I believe you may serve me effectually—if so, you will find me more desirous and more able than ever to show my gratitude."

"Sir, you are too good," quoth Mr. Oswald, with an air far more respectful than he had yet shown me. "Let us make to your inn, and there I shall be most happy to receive your commands." So saying, Marie pushed on his horse, and I urged my own to the same expedition.

"But tell me," said I, as we rode on, "why you have wished

to meet me?—me whom you so cruelly deserted and forsook?”

“Oh, *parbleu*—spare me there! it was not I who deserted you—I was compelled to fly—death—murder—on one side; safety, money, and a snug place in Italy, as a lay-brother of the Institute, on the other! What could I do! You were ill in bed—not likely to recover—not able to protect me from my present peril—in a state that in all probability never would require my services for the future. Oh, Monsieur le Comte, it was not desertion—that is a cruel word—it was self-preservation, and common prudence.”

“Well,” said I, complaisantly, “you apply words better than I applied them. And how long have you been returned to England?”

“Some few weeks, Count, not more. I was in London when you arrived—I heard of that event—I immediately repaired to your hotel—you were gone to my Lord Bolingbroke’s—I followed you thither—you had left Dawley when I arrived there—I learnt your route and followed you. *Parbleu* and *morbleu*, I find you, and you take me for a highwayman!”

“Pardon my mistake: the clearest-sighted men are subject to commit such errors, and the most innocent to suffer by them. So Montreuil *persuaded* you to leave England—did he also persuade you to return?”

“No—I was charged by the Institute with messages to him and others. But we are near the town, Count, let us defer our conversation till then.”

We entered D——, put up our horses, called for an apartment—to which summons Oswald added another for wine—and then the virtuous Marie commenced his explanations. I was deeply anxious to ascertain whether Gerald had ever been made acquainted with the fraud by which he had obtained possession of the estates of Devereux; and I found that, from Desmarais, Oswald had learned all that had occurred to Gerald since Marie had left England. From Oswald’s prolix communication, I ascertained that Gerald was, during the whole of the interval between my uncle’s death and my departure from England, utterly unacquainted with the fraud of the will. He readily believed that my uncle had found good reason for altering his intentions with respect to me; and my law proceedings, and violent conduct towards himself, only excited his indignation, not aroused his suspicions. During this time, he lived entirely in the country, indulging the rural hospitality and the rustic sports which he especially affected, and secretly,

but deeply, involved with Montreuil in political intrigues. All this time the Abbé made no farther use of him than to borrow whatever sums he required for his purposes. Isora's death, and the confused story of the document given me by Oswald, Montreuil had interpreted to Gerald according to the interpretation of the world; viz., he had thrown the suspicion upon Oswald, as a common villain, who had taken advantage of my credulity about the will—introduced himself into the house on that pretence—attempted the robbery of the most valuable articles therein—which, indeed, he had succeeded in abstracting—and who, on my awaking and contesting with him and his accomplice, had, in self-defence, inflicted the wounds which had ended in my delirium, and Isora's death. This part of my tale Montreuil never contradicted, and Gerald believed it to the present day. The affair of 1715 occurred; the government, aware of Gerald's practices, had anticipated his design of joining the rebels—he was imprisoned—no act of overt guilt on his part was proved, or at least brought forward—and the government not being willing, perhaps, to proceed to violent measures against a very young man, and the head of a very powerful house, connected with more than thirty branches of the English hereditary nobility, he received his acquittal just before Sir William Wyndham, and some other suspected tories, received their own.

Prior to the breaking out of that rebellion, and on the eve of Montreuil's departure for Scotland, the priest summoned Desmarais, whom, it will be remembered, I had previously dismissed, and whom Montreuil had since employed in various errands, and informed him that he had obtained, for his services, the same post under Gerald which the Fatalist had filled under me. Soon after the failure of the rebellion, Devereux Court was destroyed by accidental fire; and Montreuil, who had come over in disguise, in order to renew his attacks on my brother's coffers (attacks to which Gerald yielded very sullenly, and with many assurances that he would no more incur the danger of political and seditious projects), now advised Gerald to go up to London, and, in order to avoid the suspicion of the government, to mix freely in the gayeties of the court. Gerald readily consented; for, though internally convinced that the charms of the metropolis were not equal to those of the country, yet he liked change, and Devereux Court being destroyed, he shuddered a little at the idea of rebuilding so enormous a pile. Before Gerald left the old tower (*my tower*), which was alone spared by the flames, and at which he had resided, though

without his household, rather than quit a place where there was such "excellent shooting," Montreuil said to Desmarais, "This ungrateful *seigneur de village* already shows himself the niggard; he must know what *we* know—that is our only sure hold of him—but he must not know it yet,"—and he proceeded to observe that it was for the hot-beds of courtly luxury to mellow and hasten an opportunity for the disclosure. He instructed Desmarais to see that Gerald (whom even a valet, at least one so artful as Desmarais, might easily influence) partook to excess of every pleasure,—at least of every pleasure which a gentleman might, without derogation to his dignity, enjoy. Gerald went to town, and very soon became all that Montreuil desired.

Montreuil came again to England; his great project, Alberoni's project, had failed. Banished France and Spain, and excluded Italy, he was desirous of obtaining an asylum in England, until he could negotiate a return to Paris. For the first of these purposes (the asylum) interest was requisite; for the latter (the negotiation) money was desirable. He came to seek both necessities in Gerald Devereux. Gerald had already arrived at that prosperous state when money is not lightly given away. A dispute arose; and Montreuil raised the veil, and showed the heir on what terms his estates were held.

Rightly Montreuil had read the human heart. So long as Gerald lived in the country, and tasted not the full enjoyments of his great wealth, it would have been highly perilous to have made this disclosure; for, though Gerald had no great love for me, and was bold enough to run any danger, yet he was neither a Desmarais nor a Montreuil. He was that most capricious thing, a man of honor; and at that day, he would instantly have given up the estate to me, and Montreuil and the philosopher to the hangman. But, after two or three years of every luxury that wealth could purchase—after living in those circles, too, where wealth is the highest possible merit, and public opinion, therefore, only honors the rich, fortune became far more valuable, and the conscience far less nice. Living at Devereux Court, Gerald had only £30,000 a year; living in London, he had all that £30,000 a year can purchase; a very great difference this indeed! Honor is a fine bulwark against a small force; but, unbacked by other principle, it is seldom well manned enough to resist a large one. When, therefore, Montreuil showed Gerald that he could lose his estate in an instant—that the world would never give him credit for innocence, when guilt would have conferred on him such advantages—that he would therefore part with all those *et cætera* which, now, in the

very prime of life, made his whole idea of human enjoyments—that he would no longer be the rich, the powerful, the honored, the magnificent, the envied, the idolized lord of thousands, but would sink at once into a younger brother, dependent on the man he most hated for his very subsistence—since his debts would greatly exceed his portion—and an object through life of contemptuous pity, or of covert suspicion—that all this change could happen at a word of Montreuil's, what wonder that he should be staggered,—should hesitate and yield? Montreuil obtained, then, whatever sums he required; and, through Gerald's influence, pecuniary and political, procured from the minister a tacit permission for him to remain in England, under an assumed name, and in close retirement. Since then, Montreuil (though secretly involved in treasonable practices) had appeared to busy himself solely in negotiating a pardon at Paris. Gerald had lived the life of a man who, if he has parted with peace of conscience, will make the best of the bargain, by procuring every kind of pleasure in exchange; and *le petit* Jean Desmarais, useful to both priest and spendthrift; had passed his time very agreeably—laughing at his employers, studying philosophy, and filling his pockets; for I need scarcely add that Gerald forgave him without much difficulty for his share in the forgery. A man, as Oswald shrewdly observed, is seldom inexorable to those crimes by which he has profited. “And where lurks Montreuil now?” I asked; “in the neighborhood of Devereux Court?”

Oswald looked at me with some surprise. “How learned you that, sir? It is true. He lives quietly and privately in the vicinity. The woods around the house, the caves in the beach, and the little isle opposite the castle afforded him in turn an asylum; and the convenience with which correspondence with France can be there carried on makes the scene of his retirement peculiarly adapted to his purposes.”

I now began to question Oswald respecting himself; for I was not warmly inclined to place implicit trust in the services of a man who had before shown himself at once mercenary and timid. There was little cant or disguise about that gentleman; he made few pretences to virtues which he did not possess; and he seemed now, both by wine and familiarity, peculiarly disposed to be frank. It was he who in Italy (among various other and less private commissions) had been appointed by Montreuil to watch over Aubrey; on my brother's death, he had hastened to England, not only to apprise Montreuil of that event, but charged with some especial

orders to him from certain members of the Institute. He had found Montreuil busy, restless, intriguing, even in seclusion, and cheered by a recent promise from Fleuri himself that he should speedily obtain pardon and recall. It was at this part of Oswald's story easy to perceive the causes of his renewed confidence in me. Montreuil, engaged in new plans and schemes, at once complicated and vast, paid but slight attention to the wrecks of his past projects. Aubrey dead—myself abroad—Gerald at his command, he perceived, in our house, no cause for caution or alarm. This apparently rendered him less careful of retaining the venal services of Oswald, than his knowledge of character should have made him; and when that gentleman, then in London, accidentally heard of my sudden arrival in this country, he at once perceived how much more to his interest it would be to serve me than to maintain an ill-remunerated fidelity to Montreuil. In fact, as I have since learned, the priest's discretion was less to blame than I then imagined; for Oswald was of a remarkably imprudent, profligate, and spendthrift turn, and his demands for money were considerably greater than the value of his services; or perhaps, as Montreuil thought, when Aubrey no longer lived, than the consequences of his silence. When, therefore, I spoke seriously to my new ally of my desire of wreaking ultimate justice on the crimes of Montreuil, I found that his zeal was far from being chilled by my determination—nay, the very cowardice of the man made him ferocious; and the moment he resolved to betray Montreuil, his fears of the priest's vengeance made him eager to destroy where he betrayed. I am not addicted to unnecessary procrastination. Of the unexpected evidence I had found I was most eager to avail myself. I saw at once how considerably Oswald's testimony would lessen any difficulty I might have in an explanation with Gerald, as well as in bringing Montreuil to justice; and the former measure seemed to me necessary to ensure or at least expedite the latter. I proposed, therefore, to Oswald that he should immediately accompany me to the house in which Gerald was then a visitor; the honest Marie, conditioning only for another bottle, which he termed a travelling comforter, readily acceded to my wish. I immediately procured a chaise and horses, and in less than two hours from the time we entered the inn, we were on the road to Gerald. What an impulse to the wheel of destiny had the event of that one day given!

At another time I might have gleaned amusement from the shrewd roguery of my companion, but he found me then but a

dull listener. I served him in truth as men of his stamp are ordinarily served ; so soon as I had extracted from him whatever was meet for present use, I favored him with little farther attention. He had exhausted all the communications it was necessary for me to know ; so, in the midst of a long story about Italy, Jesuits, and the wisdom of Marie Oswald, I affected to fall asleep ; my companion soon followed my example in earnest, and left me to meditate undisturbed over all that I had heard, and over the schemes now the most promising of success. I soon taught myself to look with a lenient eye on Gerald's after-connivance in Montreuil's forgery ; and I felt that I owed to my surviving brother so large an arrear of affection for the long injustice I had rendered him, that I was almost pleased to find something set upon the opposite score. All men, perhaps, would rather forgive than be forgiven. I resolved, therefore, to affect ignorance of Gerald's knowledge of the forgery, and even should he confess it, to exert all my art to steal from the confession its shame. From this train of reflection my mind soon directed itself to one far fiercer and more intense ; and I felt my heart pause, as if congealing into marble, when I thought of Montreuil and anticipated justice.

It was nearly noon the following day when we arrived at Lord ——'s house. We found that Gerald had left it the day before for the enjoyment of the field-sports at Devereux Court, and thither we instantly proceeded.

It has often seemed to me that if there be, as certain ancient philosophers fabled, one certain figure pervading all nature, human and universal, it is *the circle*. Round in one vast monotony, one eternal gyration, roll the orbs of space. Thus moves the spirit of creative life, kindling, progressing, maturing, decaying, perishing, reviving and rolling again, and so on forever through the same course ; and thus even would seem to revolve the mysterious mechanism of human events and actions. Age, ere it returns to "the second childishness, the mere oblivion" from which it passes to the grave, returns also to the memories and the thoughts of youth ; its buried loves arise—its past friendships rekindle. The wheels of the tired machine are past the meridian, and the arch through which they now decline has a correspondent likeness to the opposing segment through which they had borne upward in eagerness and triumph. Thus it is, too, that we bear within us an irresistible attraction to our earliest home. Thus it is that we say, "It matters not where our mid-course is run, but we will *die* in the place where we were born ; in the point of space,

whence *began* the circle, there also shall *it end!*" This is the grand orbit through which Mortality passes only once; but the same figure may pervade all through which it moves on its journey to the grave.* Thus one peculiar day of the round year has been to some an era, always coloring life with an event. Thus to others some peculiar place has been the theatre of strange action, influencing all existence whenever in the recurrence of destiny that place has been revisited. Thus was it said by an arch-sorcerer of old, whose labors yet exist, though perhaps at the moment I write there are not three living beings who know of their existence—that there breathes not that man who would not find, did he minutely investigate the events of life, that in some fixed and distinct spot, or hour, or person, there lived, though shrouded and obscure, the pervading demon of his fate; and whenever in their several paths the two circles of being touched, that moment made the unnoticed epoch of coming prosperity or evil. I remember well that this bewildering, yet not unsolemn reflection, or rather fancy, was in my mind, as after the absence of many years I saw myself hastening to the home of my boyhood, and cherishing the fiery hope of there avenging the doom of that love which I had there conceived. Deeply and in silence did I brood over the dark shapes which my thoughts engendered; and I woke not from my reverie till, as the gray of the evening closed around us, we entered the domains of Devereux Court. The road was rough and stony, and the horses moved slowly on. How familiar was everything before me! the old pollards which lay scattered in dense groups on either side, and which had lived on from heir to heir, secure in the little temptation they afforded to cupidity, seemed to greet me with a silent but intelligible welcome. Their leaves fell around us in the autumn air, and the branches as they waved towards me seemed to say, "Thou art returned, and thy change is like our own; the green leaves of *thy* heart have fallen from thee one by one—like us thou survive, but thou art desolate!" The hoarse cry of the rooks gathering to their rest came fraught with the music of young associations on my ear. Many a time in the laughing spring had I lain in these groves watching, in the young brood of those citizens of air, a mark for my childish skill and careless disre-

* I have not assumed the editorial license to omit these incoherent observations, notwithstanding their close approximation to *farçon*, not only because they seem to occur with a sort of dramatic propriety in the winding up of the count's narrative,—the reappearance of Oswald—the return to Devereux Court, and the scene that happens there; but also because they appear to be strikingly characteristic of the vague aspirings, the restless and half-analyzed longings after something "beyond the visible diurnal sphere," which are so intimately blended with the worldlier traits of the Count's peculiar organization of mind. *ED.*

gard of life. We acquire mercy as we acquire thought. I would not *now* have harmed one of those sable creatures for a king's ransom!

As we cleared the more wooded belt of the park, and entered the smooth space, on which the trees stood alone and at rarer intervals, while the red clouds, still tinged with the hues of the departed sun, hovered on the far and upland landscape—like Hope flushing over Futurity—a mellowed, yet rapid murmur, distinct from the more distant dashing of the sea, broke abruptly upon my ear. It was the voice of the brook whose banks had been the dearest haunt of my childhood; and now, as it burst thus suddenly upon me, I longed to be alone, that I might have bowed down my head and wept as if it had been the welcome of a living thing! At once, and as by a word, the hardened lava, the congealed stream of the soul's Etna, was uplifted from my memory, and the bowers and palaces of old, the world of a gone day, lay before me! With how wild an enthusiasm had I apostrophized that stream on the day in which I first resolved to leave its tranquil regions and fragrant margin for the tempest and tumult of the world. On that same eve, too, had Aubrey and I taken sweet counsel together—on that same eve had we sworn to protect, to love, and to cherish one another!—AND NOW!—I saw the very mound on which we had sat—a solitary deer made it his couch, and as the carriage approached, the deer rose, and I then saw that he had been wounded, perhaps in some contest with his tribe, and that he could scarcely stir from the spot. I turned my face away, and the remains of my ancestral house rose gradually in view. That house was indeed changed; a wide and black heap of ruins spread around; the vast hall, with its oaken rafters and huge hearth, was no more—I missed *that*, and I cared not for the rest. The long galleries, the superb chambers, the scenes of revelry or of pomp, were like the court companions who amuse, yet attach us not; but the hall—the old hall—the old hospitable hall—had been as a friend in all seasons, and to all comers, and its mirth had been as open to all as the heart of its last owner! My eyes wandered from the place where it had been, and the tall, lone, gray tower, consecrated to my ill-fated namesake, and in which my own apartments had been situated, rose, like the last of a warrior band, stern, gaunt, and solitary, over the ruins around.

The carriage now passed more rapidly over the neglected road, and wound where the ruins, cleared on either side, permitted access to the tower. In two minutes more I was in the

same chamber with my only surviving brother. Oh, why—why can I not dwell upon that scene—that embrace, that reconciliation?—alas! the wound is not yet scarred over.

I found Gerald, at first, haughty and sullen; he expected my reproaches and defiance—against them he was hardened; he was not prepared for my prayers for our future friendship, and my grief for our past enmity, and he melted at once!

But let me hasten over this. I had well-nigh forgot that at the close of my history I should find one remembrance so endearing, and one pang so keen. Rapidly I sketched to Gerald the ill fate of Aubrey; but lingeringly did I dwell upon Montreuil's organized and most baneful influence over him, and over us all; and I endeavored to arouse in Gerald some sympathy with my own indignation against that villain. I succeeded so far as to make him declare that he was scarcely less desirous of justice than myself; but there was an embarrassment in his tone of which I was at no loss to perceive the cause. To accuse Montreuil publicly of his forgery might ultimately bring to light Gerald's latter knowledge of the fraud. I hastened to say that there was now no necessity to submit to a court of justice a scrutiny into our private, gloomy, and eventful records. No, from Oswald's communications I had learned enough to prove that Bolingbroke had been truly informed, and that Montreuil had still, and within the few last weeks, been deeply involved in schemes of treason—full proof of which could be adduced, far more than sufficient to ensure his death by the public executioner. Upon this charge I proposed at the nearest town (the memorable sea-port of —) to accuse him, and to obtain a warrant for his immediate apprehension—upon this charge I proposed alone to proceed against him, and by it alone to take justice upon his more domestic crimes.

My brother yielded at last his consent to my suggestions. "I understand," said I, "that Montreuil lurks in the neighborhood of these ruins, or in the opposite islet. Know you if he has made his asylum in either at this present time?"

"No, my brother," answered Gerald, "but I have reason to believe that he is in our immediate vicinity, for I received a letter from him three days ago, when at Lord —'s, urging a request that I would give him a meeting here, at my earliest leisure, previous to his leaving England."

"Has he really then obtained permission to return to France?"

"Yes," replied Gerald, "he informed me in this letter that he had just received intelligence of his pardon."

"May it fit him the better," said I, with a stern smile, "for

a more lasting condemnation. But if this be true we have not a moment to lose : a man so habitually vigilant and astute will speedily learn my visit hither, and forfeit even his appointment with you, should he, which is likely enough, entertain any suspicion of our reconciliation with each other—moreover, he may hear that the government have discovered his designs, and may instantly secure the means of flight. Let me, therefore, immediately repair to —, and obtain a warrant against him, as well as officers to assist our search. In the mean while you shall remain here, and detain him, should he visit you :—but where is the accomplice?—let us seize *him* instantly, for I conclude he is with you !”

“What, Desmarais ?” rejoined Gerald. “Yes, he is the only servant, beside the old portress, which these poor ruins will allow me to entertain in the same dwelling with myself : the rest of my suite are left behind at Lord —’s. But Desmarais is not now within ; he went out about two hours ago.”

“Ha !” said I, “in all likelihood to meet the priest—shall we wait his return, and extort some information of Montreuil’s lurking-hole ?”

Before Gerald could answer, we heard a noise without, and presently I distinguished the bland tones of the hypocritical Fatalist, in soft expostulation with the triumphant voice of Mr. Marie Oswald. I hastened out, and discovered that the lay-brother, whom I had left in the chaise, having caught a glimpse of the valet gliding among the ruins, had recognized, seized, and by the help of the postillions, dragged him to the door of the tower. The moment Desmarais saw me, he ceased to struggle : he met my eye with a steady, but not disrespectful, firmness ; he changed not even the habitual hue of his countenance—he remained perfectly still in the hands of his arresters ; and if there was any vestige of his mind discoverable in his sallow features and glittering eye, it was not the sign of fear, or confusion, or even surprise ; but a ready promptness to meet danger, coupled, perhaps, with a little doubt whether to defy or to seek first to diminish it.

Long did I gaze upon him—struggling with internal rage and loathing—the mingled contempt and desire of destruction with which we gaze upon the erect aspect of some small, but venomous and courageous reptile—long did I gaze upon him before I calmed and collected my voice to speak :

“So I have *thee* at last ! First comes the base tool, and that will I first break, before I lop off the guiding hand.”

“So please Monsieur my Lord the Count,” answered Des-

marais, bowing to the ground ; “ the tool is a file, and it would be useless to bite against it.”

“ We will see that,” said I, drawing my sword : “ prepare to die !” and I pointed the blade to his throat with so sudden and menacing a gesture that his eyes closed involuntarily, and the blood left his thin cheek as white as ashes : but he shrank not.

“ If Monsieur,” said he, with a sort of smile, “ *will* kill his poor old, faithful servant, let him strike. Fate is not to be resisted ; and prayers are useless !”

“ Oswald,” said I, “ release your prisoner ; wait here, and keep strict watch. Jean Desmarais, follow me !”

I ascended the stairs, and Desmarais followed. “ Now,” I said, when he was alone with Gerald and myself, “ your days are numbered : you will fall, not by my hand, but by that of the executioner. Not only your forgery, but your robbery, your abetment of murder, are known to me ; your present lord, with an indignation equal to my own, surrenders you to justice. Have you aught to urge, not in defence—for to that I will not listen—but in atonement ? *Can* you now commit any act which will cause me to forego justice on those which you *have* committed ?” Desmarais hesitated. “ Speak,” said I. He raised his eyes to mine with an inquisitive and wistful look.

“ Monsieur,” said the wretch, with his obsequious smile, “ Monsieur has travelled—has shone—has succeeded—Monsieur must have made enemies : let him name them, and his poor old *faithful* servant will do his best to become the humble instrument of their *fate* !”

Gerald drew himself aside, and shuddered. Perhaps till then he had not been fully aware how slyly murder, as well as fraud, can lurk beneath urbane tones and laced ruffles.

“ I have no enemy,” said I, “ but one ; and the hangman will do my office upon him ; but point out to me the exact spot where at this moment he is concealed, and you shall have full leave to quit this country forever. That enemy is Julian Montreuil !”

“ Ah, ah !” said Desmarais musingly, and in a tone very different from that in which he usually spoke ; “ must it be so, indeed ? For twenty years of youth and manhood, I have clung to that man, and woven my destiny with his, because I believed him born under the star which shines on statesmen and on pontiffs. Does dread Necessity now impel me to betray him ?—Him, the only man I ever loved. So—so—so ! Count Devereux, strike me to the core—I will *not* betray Bertrand Collinot !”

“ Mysterious heart of man,” I exclaimed inly, as I gazed upon

the low brow, the malignant eye, the crafty lip of this wretch, who still retained one generous and noble sentiment at the bottom of so base a breast. But if sprung there, it only sprung to wither !

“As thou wilt,” said I ; “remember, death is the alternative. By thy birth-star, Jean Desmarais, I should question whether perfidy be not *better luck* than hanging—but time speeds—farewell ; I shall meet thee on thy day of trial.”

I turned to the door to summon Oswald to his prisoner. Desmarais roused himself from the reverie in which he appeared to have sunk.

“Why do I doubt ?” said he slowly. “Were the alternative his, would he not hang me as he would hang his dog if it went mad and menaced danger ? My very noble and merciful master,” continued the Fatalist, turning to me, and relapsing into his customary manner, “it is enough ! I can refuse nothing to a gentleman who has such insinuating manners. Montreuil *may be* in your power this night ; but that rests solely with me. If I speak not, a few hours will place him irrevocably beyond your reach. If I betray him to you, will Monsieur swear that I shall have my pardon for past *errors* ?”

“On condition of leaving England,” I answered, for slight was my comparative desire of justice against Desmarais ; and since I had agreed with Gerald not to bring our domestic records to the glare of day, justice against Desmarais was not easy of attainment ; while on the other hand, so precarious seemed the chance of discovering Montreuil before he left England, without certain intelligence of his movements, that I was willing to forego any less ardent feeling, for the speedy gratification of that which made the sole surviving passion of my existence.

“Be it so,” rejoined Desmarais ; “there is better wine in France ! And Monsieur, my present master—Monsieur Gerald, will you too pardon your poor Desmarais for his proof of the great attachment he always bore to you ?”

“Away, wretch !” cried Gerald, shrinking back ; “your villainy taints the very air !”

Desmarais lifted his eyes to Heaven, with a look of appealing innocence ; but I was wearied with this odious farce.

“The condition is made,” said I : “remember, it only holds good if Montreuil’s person is placed in our power. Now explain.”

“This night, then,” answered Desmarais “Montreuil proposes to leave England by means of a French privateer, or pirate, if that please you better. Exactly at the hour of twelve,

he will meet some of the sailors upon the seashore, by the Castle Cave ; thence they proceed in boats to the islet, off which the pirate's vessel awaits them. If you would seize Montreuil, you must provide a force adequate to conquer the companions he will meet. The rest is with you ; my part is fulfilled."

"Remember ! I repeat if this be one of thy inventions, thou wilt hang."

"I have said what is true," said Desmarais bitterly ; "and were not life so very pleasant to me, I would sooner have met the rack."

I made no reply ; but summoning Oswald, surrendered Desmarais to his charge. I then held a hasty consultation with Gerald, whose mind, however, obscured by feelings of gloomy humiliation, and stunned perhaps by the sudden and close following order of events, gave me but little assistance in my projects. I observed his feelings with great pain ; but that was no moment for wrestling with them. I saw that I could not depend upon his vigorous co-operation ; and that even if Montreuil sought him, he might want the presence of mind and the energy to detain my enemy. I changed therefore the arrangement we had first proposed.

"I will remain here," said I, "and I will instruct the old portress to admit to me any one who seeks audience with you. Meanwhile, Oswald and yourself, if you will forgive, and grant my request to that purport, will repair to —, and informing the magistrate of our intelligence, procure such armed assistance as may give battle to the pirates, should that be necessary, and succeed in securing Montreuil ; this assistance may be indispensable ; at all events, it will be prudent to secure it ; perhaps for Oswald alone the magistrates would not use that zeal and expedition, which a word of *yours* can command."

"Of mine," said Gerald, "say rather of yours ; you are the lord of these broad lands !"

"Never, my dearest brother, shall they pass to me from their present owner ; but let us hasten now to execute justice, we will talk afterwards of friendship."

I then sought Oswald, who, if a physical coward, was morally a ready, bustling, and prompt man ; and I felt that I could rely more upon him than I could at that moment upon Gerald : I released him therefore of his charge, and made Desmarais a close prisoner, in the inner apartment of the tower ; I then gave Oswald the most earnest injunctions to procure the assistance we might require, and to return with it as expeditiously as possible ; and, cheered by the warmth and decision of his

answer, I saw him depart with Gerald, and felt my heart beat high with the anticipation of midnight and retribution.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Catastrophe.

IT happened, unfortunately, that the mission to — was indispensable. The slender accommodation of the tower forbade Gerald the use of his customary attendants, and the neighboring villagers were too few in number, and too ill provided with weapons, to encounter men cradled in the very lap of danger; moreover, it was requisite, above all things, that no rumor or suspicion of our intended project should obtain wind, and, by reaching Montreuil's ears, give him some safer opportunity of escape. I had no doubt of the sincerity of the Fatalist's communication, and if I had, the subsequent conversation I held with him, when Gerald and Oswald were gone, would have been sufficient to remove it. He was evidently deeply stung by the reflection of his own treachery, and singularly enough, with Montreuil seemed to perish all his worldly hopes and aspirations. Desmarais, I found, was a man of much higher ambition than I had imagined, and he had linked himself closely to Montreuil, because, from the genius and the resolution of the priest, he had drawn the most sanguine auguries of his future power. As the night advanced, he grew visibly anxious, and, having fully satisfied myself that I might count indisputably upon his intelligence, I once more left him to his meditations, and, alone in the outer chamber, I collected myself for the coming event. I had fully hoped that Montreuil would have repaired to the tower in search of Gerald, and this was the strongest reason which had induced me to remain behind; but time waned, he came not, and at length it grew so late that I began to tremble lest the assistance from — should not arrive in time.

It struck the first quarter after eleven; in less than an hour my enemy would be either in my power, or beyond its reach; still Gerald and our allies came not—my suspense grew intolerable, my pulse raged with fever; I could not stay for two seconds in the same spot; a hundred times had I drawn my sword, and looked eagerly along its bright blade. "Once," thought I, as I looked, "thou didst cross the blade of my mortal foe, and to my danger, rather than victory: years have

brought skill to the hands which then guided thee, and in the red path of battle thou hast never waved in vain. Be stained but once more with human blood, and I will prize every drop of that blood beyond all the triumphs thou hast brought me!" Yes, it had been with a fiery and intense delight that I had learned that Montreuil would have companions to his flight in lawless and hardened men, who would never yield him a prisoner without striking for his rescue; and I knew enough of the courageous and proud temper of my proposed victim to feel assured that, priest as he was, he would not hesitate to avail himself of the weapons of his confederates, or to aid them with his own. Then would it be lawful to oppose violence to his resistance, and with my own hand to deal the death-blow of retribution. Still as these thoughts flashed over me, my heart grew harder, and my blood rolled more burningly through my veins. "They come not, Gerald returns not," I said, as my eye dwelt on the clock, and saw the minutes creep one after the other—"it matters not—HE at last shall not escape!—were he girt by a million, I would single him from the herd; one stroke of this right hand is all that I ask of life, then let them avenge him if they will." Thus resolved, and despairing at last of the return of Gerald, I left the tower, locked the outer door, as a still further security against my prisoner's escape, and repaired with silent, but swift, strides to the beach by the Castle Cave. It wanted about half an hour to midnight; the night was still and breathless, a dim mist spread from sea to sky, through which the stars gleamed forth heavily, and at distant intervals. The moon was abroad, but the vapors that surrounded her gave a watery and sicklied dulness to her light, and wherever in the niches and hollows of the cliff, the shadows fell, all was utterly dark, and unbroken by the smallest ray; only along the near waves of the sea, and the whiter parts of the level sand were objects easily discernible. I strode to and fro, for a few minutes, before the Castle Cave; I saw no one, and I seated myself in stern vigilance upon a stone, in a worn recess of the rock, and close by the mouth of the Castle Cave. The spot where I sat was wrapt in total darkness, and I felt assured that I might wait my own time for disclosing myself. I had not been many minutes at my place of watch before I saw the figure of a man approach from the left; he moved with rapid steps, and once when he passed along a place where the wan light of the skies was less obscured I saw enough of his form and air to recognize Montreuil. He neared the cave—he paused—he was within a few paces of

me—I was about to rise, when another figure suddenly glided from the mouth of the cave itself.

“Ha!” cried the latter, “it is Bertrand Collinot—Fate be lauded!”

Had a voice from the grave struck my ear, it would have scarcely amazed me more than which I now heard. Could I believe my senses? the voice was that of Desmarais, whom I left locked within the inner chamber of the tower. “Fly,” he resumed, “fly instantly; you have not a moment to lose—already the stern Morton waits thee—already the hounds of justice are on thy track; tarry not for the pirates, but begone at once.”

“You rave, man! What mean you? the boats will be here immediately. While you yet speak methinks I can descry them on the sea. Something of this I dreaded when, some hours ago, I caught a glimpse of Gerald on the road to —. I saw not the face of his companion, but I would not trust myself in the tower—yet I must await the boats—flight is indeed requisite, but *they* make the only means by which flight is safe!”

“Pray, then, thou who believest, pray that they may come soon, or thou diest—and I with thee! Morton is returned—is reconciled to his weak brother. Gerald and Oswald are away to —, for men to seize and drag thee to a public death. I was arrested—threatened; but one way to avoid prison and cord was shown me. Curse me, Bertrand, for I embraced it. I told them thou wouldst fly to-night, and with whom. They locked me in the inner chamber of the tower—Morton kept guard without. At length I heard him leave the room—I heard him descend the stairs, and lock the gate of the tower. Ha! ha! little dreamt he of the wit of Jean Desmarais. *Thy* friend must scorn bolt and bar, Bertrand Collinot. They had not searched me—I used my instruments—thou knowest that with those instruments I could glide through stone walls!—I opened the door—I was in the outer room—I lifted the trap-door which old Sir William had boarded over, and which thou hadst so artfully and imperceptibly replaced, when thou wantedst secret intercourse with thy pupils—I sped along the passage—came to the iron door—touched the spring thou hadst inserted in the plate which the old knight had placed over the keyhole—and have come to repair my coward treachery—to save and to fly with thee. But, while I speak, we tread on a precipice. Morton has left the house, and is even now, perhaps, in search of thee.”

“Ha! I care not if he be,” said Montreuil, in a low, but haughty tone. “Priest though I am, I have not assumed the garb without assuming also the weapon of the layman. Even now I have my hand upon the same sword which shone under the banners of Mar; and which once, but for my foolish mercy, would have rid me forever of this private foe.”

“Unsheath it now, Julian Montreuil!” said I, coming from my retreat, and confronting the pair.

Montreuil recoiled several paces. At that instant a shot boomed along the waters.

“Haste, haste,” cried Desmarais, hurrying to the waves, as a boat, now winding the cliff, became darkly visible; “haste, Bertrand, here are Bonjean and his men—but they are pursued!”

Once did Montreuil turn as if to fly, but my sword was at his breast, and, stamping fiercely on the ground, he drew his rapier and parried and returned my assault; but he retreated rapidly towards the water while he struck; and wild and loud came the voices from the boat, which now touched the shore.

“Come—come—come—the officers are upon us; we can wait not a moment!” and Montreuil, as he heard the cries, mingled with oaths and curses, yet quickened his pace towards the quarter whence they came. His steps were tracked by his blood—twice had my sword passed through his flesh; but twice had it failed my vengeance, and avoided a mortal part. A second boat, filled also with the pirates, followed the first; but then another and a larger vessel bore black and fast over the water—the rush and cry of men were heard on land—again and nearer a shot broke over the heavy air—another and another—a continued fire. The strand was now crowded with the officers of justice. The vessel beyond forbade escape to the opposite islet. There was no hope for the pirates but in contest, or in dispersion among the cliffs or woods on the shore. They formed their resolution at once, and stood prepared and firm, partly on their boats, partly on the beach around them. Though the officers were far more numerous, the strife—fierce, desperate, and hand to hand—seemed equally sustained. Montreuil, as he retreated before me, bore back into the general *mêlée*, and, as the press thickened, we were for some moments separated. It was at this time that I caught a glimpse of Gerald; he seemed also then to espy me, and made eagerly towards me. Suddenly he was snatched from my view. The fray relaxed; the officers, evidently worsted, retreated

towards the land, and the pirates appeared once more to entertain the hope of making their escape by water. Probably they thought that the darkness of the night might enable them to baffle the pursuit of the adverse vessel, which now lay expectant and passive on the wave. However this be, they made simultaneously to their boats, and among their numbers I descried Montreuil. I set my teeth with a calm and prophetic wrath. But three strokes did my good blade make through that throng before I was by his side; he had at that instant his hold upon the boat's edge, and he stood knee-deep in the dashing waters. I laid my grasp upon his shoulder, and my cheek touched his own as I hissed in his ear, "I am with thee yet!" He turned fiercely—he strove, but he strove in vain, to shake off my grasp. The boat pushed away, and his last hope of escape was over. At this moment the moon broke away from the mist, and we saw each other plainly, and face to face. There was a ghastly but set despair in Montreuil's lofty and proud countenance, which changed gradually to a fiercer aspect as he met my gaze. Once more, foot to foot and hand to hand, we engaged; the increased light of the skies rendered the contest more that of skill than it had hitherto been, and Montreuil seemed to collect all his energies, and to fight with a steadier and a cooler determination. Nevertheless the combat was short. Once my antagonist had the imprudence to raise his arm and expose his body to my thrust: his sword grazed my cheek—I shall bear the scar to my grave—mine passed twice through his breast, and he fell, bathed in his blood, at my feet.

"Lift him!" I said, to the men who now crowded round. They did so, and he unclosed his eyes and glared upon me as the death-pang convulsed his features, and gathered in foam to his lips. But his thoughts were not upon his destroyer, nor upon the wrongs he had committed, nor upon any solitary being in the linked society which he had injured.

"Order of Jesus," he muttered, "had I but lived three months longer, I—"

So died Julian Montreuil.

CONCLUSION.

MONTREUIL was not the only victim in the brief combat of that night; several of the pirates and their pursuers perished, and among the bodies we found Gerald. He had been pierced by a shot through the brain, and was perfectly lifeless when his body was discovered. By a sort of retribution, it seems

that my unhappy brother received his death-wound from a shot fired (probably at random) by Desmarais; and thus the instrument of the fraud he had tacitly subscribed to became the minister of his death. Nay, the retribution seemed even to extend to the very method by which Desmarais had escaped; and, as the reader has perceived, the subterranean communication which had been secretly reopened to deceive my uncle, made the path which had guided Gerald's murderer to the scene which afterwards ensued. The delay of the officers had been owing to private intelligence, previously received by the magistrate to whom Gerald had applied, of the number and force of the pirates, and his waiting in consequence for a military reinforcement to the party to be despatched against them. Those of the pirates who escaped the conflict escaped also the pursuit of the hostile vessel; they reached the islet and gained their captain's ship. A few shots between the two vessels were idly exchanged, and the illicit adventurers reached the French shore in safety; with them escaped Desmarais, and of him, from that hour to this, I have heard nothing—so capriciously plays Time with villains!

Marie Oswald has lately taken unto himself a noted inn on the North Road, a place eminently calculated for the display of his various talents; he has also taken unto himself a WIFE, of whose tongue and temper he has been known already to complain with no Socratic meekness; and we may therefore opine that his misdeeds have not altogether escaped their fitting share of condemnation.

Succeeding at once, by the death of my poor brother, to the DEVEREUX estates, I am still employed in rebuilding, on a yet more costly scale, my ancestral mansion. So eager and impatient is my desire for the completion of my undertaking, that I allow rest neither by night or day, and half the work will be done by torchlight. With the success of this project terminates my last scheme of Ambition.

Here, then, at the age of thirty-four, I conclude the history of my life. Whether in the star which, as I now write, shines in upon me, and which a romance, still unsubdued, has often dreamed to be the bright prophet of my fate, something of future adventure, suffering, or excitement is yet predestined to me; or whether life will muse itself away in the solitudes which surround the home of my past childhood and the scene of my present retreat, creates within me but slight food for anticipation or conjecture. I have exhausted the sources of those feelings which flow, whether through the channels of anxiety or

of hope, towards the future ; and the restlessness of my manhood, having attained its last object, has done the labor of time and bequeathed to me the indifference of age.

If love exists for me no longer, I know well that the memory of that which has been is to me far more than a living love is to others ; and perhaps there is no passion so full of tender, of soft, and of hallowing associations as the love which is stamped by death. If I have borne much, and my spirit has worked out its earthly end in travail and in tears, yet I would not forego the lessons which my life has bequeathed me, even though they be deeply blended with sadness and regret. No ! were I asked what best dignifies the present, and consecrates the past ; what enables us alone to draw a just moral from the tale of life ; what sheds the purest light upon our reason ; what gives the firmest strength to our religion ; and, whether our remaining years pass in seclusion or in action, is best fitted to soften the heart of man, and to elevate the soul to God, I would answer, with Lassus, it is "EXPERIENCE !"

THE END.

•

The following information was obtained from a review of the files of the Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director, regarding the activities of the [redacted] in the [redacted] area during the period [redacted] to [redacted].

It is noted that [redacted] was active in the [redacted] area during the period [redacted] to [redacted]. [redacted] was active in the [redacted] area during the period [redacted] to [redacted]. [redacted] was active in the [redacted] area during the period [redacted] to [redacted].

The following information was obtained from a review of the files of the Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director, regarding the activities of the [redacted] in the [redacted] area during the period [redacted] to [redacted].

It is noted that [redacted] was active in the [redacted] area during the period [redacted] to [redacted]. [redacted] was active in the [redacted] area during the period [redacted] to [redacted]. [redacted] was active in the [redacted] area during the period [redacted] to [redacted].

The following information was obtained from a review of the files of the Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director, regarding the activities of the [redacted] in the [redacted] area during the period [redacted] to [redacted].

It is noted that [redacted] was active in the [redacted] area during the period [redacted] to [redacted]. [redacted] was active in the [redacted] area during the period [redacted] to [redacted]. [redacted] was active in the [redacted] area during the period [redacted] to [redacted].

THE DISOWNED

THE BROWN

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

IN this edition of a work composed in early youth, I have not attempted to remove those faults of construction which may be sufficiently apparent in the plot: but which could not indeed be thoroughly rectified without re-writing the whole work. I can only hope that with the defects of inexperience, may be found some of the merits of frank and artless enthusiasm. I have, however, lightened the narrative of certain episodic and irrelevant passages, and relieved the general style of some boyish extravagances of diction. At the time this work was written I was deeply engaged in the study of metaphysics and ethics—and out of that study grew the character of Algernon Mordaunt. He is represented as a type of the Heroism of Christian Philosophy—an union of love and knowledge placed in the midst of sorrow, and laboring on through the pilgrimage of life, strong in the fortitude that comes from belief in heaven

E. B. L.

KNEBORTH, May 5, 1832.

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA

The history of the United States is a story of a young nation that grew from a small group of colonies on the eastern coast of North America. In 1776, the thirteen colonies declared their independence from Great Britain, and the United States was born. The new nation faced many challenges, including a long and difficult war with Britain from 1775 to 1783. Despite these hardships, the United States emerged as a free and independent nation. The Constitution was written in 1787, and the Bill of Rights was added in 1791. The United States then went on to expand its territory westward, and its population grew rapidly. In 1861, the Civil War broke out, and the United States fought for four years to preserve its Union. The war ended in 1865, and the United States emerged as a more unified and powerful nation. The United States has since become a world leader in many areas, including science, technology, and culture. Today, the United States is a diverse and vibrant nation, and its history continues to shape the world.

1776

1776-1783

THE DISOWNED.

CHAPTER I.

“I’ll tell you a story if you please to attend.”—*Limbo*, by G. KNIGHT.

IT was the evening of a soft, warm day in the May of 17—. The sun had already set, and the twilight was gathering slowly over the large, still masses of wood which lay on either side of one of those green lanes so peculiar to England. Here and there, the outline of the trees irregularly shrunk back from the road, leaving broad patches of waste land covered with fern—and the yellow blossoms of the dwarf furze, and, at more distant intervals, thick clusters of rushes, from which came the small hum of gnats—those “evening revellers”—alternately rising and sinking in the customary manner of their unknown sports—till, as the shadows grew darker and darker, their thin and airy shapes were no longer distinguishable, and no solitary token of life or motion broke the voiceless monotony of the surrounding woods.

The first sound which invaded the silence came from the light, quick footsteps of a person, whose youth betrayed itself in its elastic and unmeasured tread, and in the gay, free carol, which broke out by fits and starts upon the gentle stillness of the evening.

There was something rather indicative of poetical taste than musical science in the selection of this vesper hymn, which always commenced with—

“’Tis merry, ’tis merry, in good green wood,”

and never proceeded a syllable farther than the end of the second line,

“When birds are about and singing”;

from the last word of which, after a brief pause, it invariably started forth into joyous “iteration.”

Presently a heavier, yet still more rapid, step than that of the youth was heard behind; and, as it overtook the latter, a loud, clear, good-humored voice gave the salutation of the evening. The tone in which this courtesy was returned was frank, distinct, and peculiarly harmonious.

"Good evening, my friend. How far is it to W——? I hope I am not out of the direct road?"

"To W——, sir?" said the man, touching his hat, as he perceived, in spite of the dusk, something in the air and voice of his new acquaintance which called for a greater degree of respect than he was at first disposed to accord to a pedestrian traveller—"To W——, sir? why, you will not surely go there to-night: it is more than eight miles distant, and the roads none of the best?"

"Now, a curse on all rogues!" quoth the youth with a serious sort of vivacity. "Why, the miller, at the foot of the hill, assured me I should be at my journey's end in less than an hour."

"He may have said right, sir," returned the man, "yet you will not reach W—— in twice that time."

"How do you mean?" said the younger stranger.

"Why, that you may for once force a miller to speak truth in spite of himself, and make a public house, about three miles hence, the end of your day's journey."

"Thank you for the hint," said the youth. "Does the house you speak of lie on the road-side?"

"No, sir: the lane branches off about two miles hence, and you must then turn to the right: but *till* then, our way is the same, and if you would not prefer your own company to mine, we can trudge on together."

"With all my heart," rejoined the younger stranger; "and not the less willingly from the brisk pace you walk. I thought I had few equals in pedestrianism; but it should not be for a small wager that I would undertake to keep up with you."

"Perhaps, sir," said the man laughing, "I have had, in the course of my life, a better usage and a longer experience of my heels than you have."

Somewhat startled by a speech of so equivocal a meaning, the youth, for the first time, turned round to examine, as well as the increasing darkness would permit, the size and appearance of his companion. He was not perhaps too well satisfied with his survey. His fellow pedestrian was about six feet high, and of a correspondent girth of limb and frame, which would

have made him fearful odds in any encounter where bodily strength was the best means of conquest. Notwithstanding the mildness of the weather, he was closely buttoned in a rough great-coat, which was well calculated to give all due effect to the athletic proportions of the wearer.

There was a pause of some moments.

"This is but a wild, savage sort of scene for England, sir, in this day of new-fashioned ploughs and farming improvements," said the tall stranger, looking round at the ragged wastes, and grim woods, which lay steeped in the shade beside and before them.

"True," answered the youth; "and in a few years agricultural innovation will scarcely leave, even in these wastes, a single furze-blossom for the bee, or a tuft of greensward for the grasshopper; but, however, unpleasant the change may be for us foot-travellers, we must not repine at what they tell us is so sure a witness of the prosperity of the country."

"*They* tell us! *who* tell us?" exclaimed the stranger, with great vivacity. "Is it the puny and spiritless artisan, or the debased and crippled slave of the counter and the till, or the sallow speculator on morals, who would mete us out our liberty—our happiness—our very feelings, by the yard, and inch, and fraction? No, no, let *them* follow what the books and precepts of their own wisdom teach them; let them cultivate more highly the lands they have already parcelled out by dykes and fences, and leave, though at scanty intervals, some green patches of unpolluted land for the poor man's beast, and the free man's foot."

"You are an enthusiast on this subject," said the younger traveller, not a little surprised at the tone and words of the last speech; "and if I were not just about to commence the world with a firm persuasion that enthusiasm on any matter is a great obstacle to success, I could be as warm, though not so eloquent, as yourself."

"Ah, sir," said the stranger, sinking into a more natural and careless tone, "I have a better right than I imagine you can claim to repine or even to inveigh against the boundaries which are day by day, and hour by hour, encroaching upon what I have learned to look upon as my own territory. You were, just before I joined you, singing an old song; I honor you for your taste: and no offence, sir, but a sort of fellowship in feeling made me take the liberty to accost you. I am no very great scholar in other things; but I owe my present circumstances of life solely to my fondness for those old songs and quaint

madrigals. And I believe no person can better apply to himself Will Shakspeare's invitation :—

“ ‘ Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither ;
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather. ’ ”

Relieved from his former fear, but with increased curiosity at this quotation, which was half said, half sung, in a tone which seemed to evince a hearty relish for the sense of the words, the youth replied :

“ Truly, I did not expect to meet among the travellers of this wild country with so well stored a memory. And, indeed, I should have imagined that the only persons to whom your verses could exactly have applied were those honorable vagrants from the Nile, whom in vulgar language we term gypsies.”

“ Precisely so, sir,” answered the tall stranger indifferently ; “ precisely so. It is to that ancient body that I belong.”

“ The devil you do ? ” quoth the youth, in unsophisticated surprise ; “ the progress of education, is indeed, astonishing ! ”

“ Why,” answered the stranger, laughing, “ to tell you the truth, sir, I am a gypsy by inclination, not birth. The illustrious Bamfyde Moore Carew is not the only example of one of gentle blood and honorable education whom the fleshpots of Egypt have seduced.”

“ I congratulate myself,” quoth the youth, in a tone that might have been in jest, “ upon becoming acquainted with a character at once so respectable and so novel ; and, to return your quotation in the way of a compliment, I cry out with the most fashionable author of Elizabeth's days—

‘ O for a bowl of fat Canary,
Rich Palermo—sparkling Sherry, ’

in order to drink to our better acquaintance.”

“ Thank you sir,—thank you,” cried the strange gypsy, seemingly delighted with the spirit with which his young acquaintance appeared to enter into his character and his quotation from a class of authors at that time much less known and appreciated than at present ; “ and if you have seen already enough of the world to take up with ale when neither Canary, Palermo, nor Sherry are forthcoming, I will promise, at least, to pledge you

in large draughts of that homely beverage. What say you to passing a night with us? our tents are yet more at hand than the public-house of which I spoke to you."

The young man hesitated a moment, then replied—

"I will answer you frankly, my friend, even though I may find cause to repent my confidence. I have a few guineas about me, which, though not a large sum, are *my all*. Now, however ancient and honorable your fraternity may be, they labor under a sad confusion, I fear, in their ideas of *meum* and *tuum*."

"Faith, sir, I believe you are right; and were you some years older, I think you would not have favored me with the same disclosure you have done now; but you may be quite easy on that score. If you were made of gold, the rascals would not filch off the corner of your garment as long as you were under my protection. Does this assurance satisfy you?"

"Perfectly," said the youth: "and now how far are we from your encampment? I assure you I am all eagerness to be among a set of which I have witnessed such a specimen."

"Nay, nay," returned the gypsy, "you must not judge of all my brethren by me: I confess that they are but a rough tribe. However, I love them dearly: and am only the more inclined to think them honest to each other, because they are rogues to all the rest of the world."

By this time, our travellers had advanced nearly two miles since they had commenced companionship: and at a turn in the lane, about three hundred yards further on, they caught a glimpse of a distant fire burning brightly through the dim trees. They quickened their pace, and striking a little out of their path into a common, soon approached two tents, the Arab homes of the vagrant and singular people with whom the gypsy claimed brotherhood and alliance.

CHAPTER II.

"Here we securely live and eat
The cream of meat;
And keep eternal fires
By which we sit and *do divine*."

HERRICK—*Ode to Sir Clipseby Crew.*

AROUND a fire which blazed and crackled beneath the large seething pot, that seemed an emblem of the mystery, and a

promise of the good cheer, which are the supposed characteristics of the gypsy race, were grouped seven or eight persons, upon whose swarthy and strong countenances the irregular and fitful flame cast a picturesque and not unbecoming glow. All of these, with the exception of an old crone who was tending the pot, and a little boy who was feeding the fire with sundry fragments of stolen wood, started to their feet upon the entrance of the stranger.

"What ho, my bob cuffins," cried the gypsy guide, "I have brought you a gentry cove, to whom you will show all proper respect; and hark ye, my maunders, if ye dare beg, borrow, or steal a single croker—ay—but a bawbee of him, I'll—but ye know me." The gypsy stopped abruptly, and turned an eye, in which menace vainly struggled with good-humor, upon each of his brethren, as they submissively bowed to him and his *protégé*, and poured forth a profusion of promises, to which their admonitor did not even condescend to listen. He threw off his great-coat, doubled it down by the best place near the fire, and made the youth forthwith possess himself of the seat it afforded. He then lifted the cover of the mysterious caldron.

"Well, Mort," cried he to the old woman, as he bent wistfully down, "what have we here?"

"Two ducks, three chickens, and a rabbit, with some potatoes," growled the old hag, who claimed the usual privilege of her culinary office, to be as ill-tempered as she pleased.

"Good!" said the gypsy; "and now, Mim, my cull, go to the other tent, and ask its inhabitants, in my name, to come here and sup; bid them bring *their* caldron to eke out ours—I'll find the lush."

With these words (which Mim, a short, swarthy member of the gang, with a countenance too astute to be pleasing, instantly started forth to obey) the gypsy stretched himself at full length by the youth's side, and began reminding him, with some jocularly, and at some length, of his promise to drink to their better acquaintance.

Something there was in the scene, the fire, the caldron, the intent figure and withered countenance of the old woman, the grouping of the other forms, the rude but not unpicturesque tent, the dark, still woods on either side, with the deep and cloudless skies above, as the stars broke forth one by one upon the silent air, which (to use the orthodox phrase of the novelist) would not have been wholly unworthy the bold pencil of *Salvator* himself.

The youth eyed, with that involuntary respect which per-

sonal advantages always command, the large, yet symmetrical proportions of his wild companion; nor was the face which belonged to that frame much less deserving of attention. Though not handsome, it was both shrewd and prepossessing in its expression; the forehead was prominent, the brows overhung the eyes, which were large, dark, and, unlike those of the tribe in general, rather calm than brilliant; the complexion, though sunburnt, was not swarthy, and the face was carefully and cleanly shaved, so as to give all due advantage of contrast to the brown luxuriant locks which fell, rather in flakes than curls, on either side of the healthful and manly cheeks. In age, he was about thirty-five, and, though his air and mien were assuredly not lofty, nor aristocratic, yet they were strikingly above the bearing of his vagabond companions: those companions were in all respects of the ordinary race of gipsies; the cunning and flashing eye, the raven locks, the dazzling teeth, the bronzed color, and the low, slight, active form, were as strongly their distinguishing characteristics as the tokens of all their tribe.

But to these, the appearance of the youth presented a striking and beautiful contrast.

He had only just passed the stage of boyhood, perhaps he might have seen eighteen summers, probably not so many. He had, in imitation of his companion, and perhaps from mistaken courtesy to his new society, doffed his hat; and the attitude which he had chosen fully developed the noble and intellectual turn of his head and throat. His hair, as yet preserved from the disfiguring fashions of the day, was of a deep auburn, which was rapidly becoming of a more chestnut hue, and curled in short close curls from the nape of the neck to the commencement of a forehead singularly white and high. His brows finely and lightly penciled, and his long lashes of the darkest dye, gave a deeper and perhaps softer shade than they otherwise would have worn, to eyes quick and observant in their expression, and of a light hazel in their color. His cheek was very fair, and the red light of the fire cast an artificial tint of increased glow upon a complexion that had naturally rather bloom than color; while a dark riding-frock set off in their full beauty the fine outline of his chest, and the slender symmetry of his frame.

But it was neither his features, nor his form, eminently handsome as they were, which gave the principal charm to the young stranger's appearance—it was the strikingly bold, buoyant, frank, and almost joyous expression which presided over

all. *There* seemed to dwell the first glow and life of youth, undimmed by a single fear, and un baffled in a single hope. *There* were the elastic spring, the inexhaustible wealth of energies, which defied, in their exulting pride, the heaviness of sorrow and the harassments of time. It was a face that, while it filled you with some melancholy foreboding of the changes and chances which must, in the inevitable course of fate, cloud the openness of the unwrinkled brow, and soberize the fire of the daring and restless eye, instilled also within you some assurance of triumph, and some omen of success: a vague but powerful sympathy with the adventurous and cheerful spirit, which appeared literally to speak in its expression. It was a face you might imagine in one born under a prosperous star, and you felt, as you gazed, a confidence in that bright countenance, which, like the shield of the British Prince,* seemed possessed with a spell to charm into impotence the evil spirits who menaced its possessor.

"Well, sir," said his friend, the gypsy, who had in his turn been surveying with admiration the sinewy and agile frame of his young guest, "well, sir, how fares your appetite? Old Dame Bingo will be mortally offended if you do not do ample justice to her good cheer."

"If so," answered our traveller, who, young as he was, had learnt already the grand secret of making, in every situation, a female friend, "if so, I shall be likely to offend her still more."

"And how, my pretty master?" said the old crone, with an iron smile.

"Why I shall be bold enough to reconcile matters with a kiss, Mrs. Bingo," answered the youth.

"Ha! ha!" shouted the tall gypsy; "it is many a long day since my old Mort slapped a gallant's face for such an affront. But here come our messmates. Good evening, my mumpers—make your bows to this gentleman, who has come to bowse with us to-night. 'Gad, we'll show him that old ale's none the worse for keeping company with the moon's darlings.—Come, sit down, sit down. Where's the cloth, ye ill-mannered loons, and the knives and platters? Have we no holiday customs for strangers, think ye?—Mim, my cove, off to *my* caravan—bring out the knives, and all other rattletraps; and harkye, my cuffin, this small key opens the inner hole, where you will find two barrels; bring one of them. I'll warrant it of the best, for the brewer himself drank some of the same sort but two hours before I *nimm'd* them. Come, stump, my cull, make yourself

* Prince Arthur.—See *The Fairy Queen*.

wings. Ho, Dame Bingo, is not that pot of thine seething yet?—Ah, my young gentleman, you commence betimes; so much the better; if love's a summer's day, we all know how early a summer morning begins," added the jovial Egyptian, in a lower voice (feeling perhaps that he was only understood by himself), as he gazed complacently on the youth, who, with that happy facility of making himself everywhere at home, so uncommon to his countrymen, was already paying compliments, suited to their understanding, to two fair daughters of the tribe, who had entered with the newcomers. Yet had he too much craft or delicacy, call it which you will, to continue his addresses to that limit where ridicule or jealousy, from the male part of the assemblage, might commence; on the contrary, he soon turned to the men, and addressed them with a familiarity so frank, and so suited to their taste, that he grew no less rapidly in their favor than he had already done in that of the women, and when the contents of the two caldrons were at length set upon the coarse, but clean, cloth, which, in honor of his arrival, covered the sod, it was in the midst of a loud and universal peal of laughter, which some broad witticism of the young stranger had produced, that the party sat down to their repast.

Bright were the eyes and sleek the tresses of the damsel who placed herself by the side of the stranger, and many were the alluring glances and insinuated compliments which replied to his open admiration and profuse flattery; but still there was nothing exclusive in his attentions; perhaps an ignorance of the customs of his entertainers, and a consequent discreet fear of offending them, restrained him; or perhaps he found ample food for occupation in the plentiful dainties which his host heaped before him.

"Now tell me," said the gypsy chief (for chief he appeared to be), "if we lead not a merrier life than you dreamt of? or would you have us change our coarse fare and our simple tents, our vigorous limbs and free hearts, for the meagre board, the monotonous chamber, the diseased frame, and the toiling, careful, and withered spirit of some miserable mechanic?"

"Change!" cried the youth, with an earnestness which, if affected, was an exquisite counterfeit—"By Heaven, I would change with you myself."

"Bravo, my fine cove!" cried the host, and all the gang echoed their sympathy with his applause.

The youth continued; "Meat, and that plentiful; ale, and

that strong ; women, and those pretty ones ; what can man desire more ! ”

“ Ay,” cried the host, “ and all for nothing,—no not even a tax ; who else in this kingdom can say that ? Come, Mim, push round the ale.”

And the ale *was* pushed round, and if coarse the merriment, loud at least was the laugh that rung ever and anon from the old tent ; and though, at moments, something in the guest’s eye and lip might have seemed, to a very shrewd observer, a little wandering and absent, yet, upon the whole, he was almost as much at ease as the rest, and if he was not quite as talkative, he was to the full as noisy.

By degrees, as the hour grew later, and the barrel less heavy, the conversation changed into one universal clatter. Some told their feats in beggary ; others their achievements in theft ; not a viand they had fed on but had its appropriate legend ; even the old rabbit, which had been as tough as old rabbit can well be, had not been honestly taken from his burrow ; no less a person than Mim himself had purloined it from a widow’s footman, who was carrying it to an old maid from her nephew the Squire.

“ Silence,” cried the host, who loved talking as well as the rest, and who, for the last ten minutes, had been vainly endeavoring to obtain attention. “ Silence ! my maunders, it’s late, and we shall have the queer cuffs* upon us if we keep it up much longer. What, ho, Mim, are you still gabbling at the foot of the table, when your betters are talking ? As sure as my name’s King Cole, I’ll choke you with your own rabbit skin, if you don’t hush your prating cheat—nay, never look so abashed—if you *will* make a noise, come forward, and sing us a gypsy song. You see, my young sir (turning to his guest), that we are not without our pretensions to the fine arts.”

At this order, Mim started forth, and taking his station at the right hand of the *soi-disant* King Cole, began the following song, the chorus of which was chaunted in full diapason by the whole group, with the additional force of emphasis that knives, feet, and fists could bestow.

THE GYPSY’S SONG.

The king to his hall, and the steed to his stall,
 And the cit to his bilking board ;
 But we are not bound to an acre of ground,
 For our home is the houseless sward.

* Magistrates.

We sow not, nor toil ; yet we glean from the soil
 As much as its reapers do ;
 And wherever we rove, we feed on the cove
 Who gibes at the mumping crew.

CHORUS—So the king to his hall, etc.

We care not a straw for the limbs of the law,
 Nor a fig for the *cuffin queer* ;
 While Hodge and his neighbor shall lavish and labor,
 Our tent is as sure of its cheer.

CHORUS—So the king to his hall, etc.

The worst have an awe of the *harman's* * claw,
 And the best will avoid the *trap* ; †
 But our wealth is as free of the bailiff's *see*,
 As our necks of the twisting *crap*. ‡

CHORUS—So the king to his hall, etc.

They say it is sweet to win the meat
 For the which one has sorely wrought ;
 But I never could find that we lack'd the mind
 For the food that has cost us nought !

CHORUS—So the king to his hall, etc.

And when we have ceased from our fearless feast,
 Why, our *jigger* § will need no bars ;
 Our sentry shall be on the owl's tree,
 And our lamps the glorious stars.

CHORUS.

So the king to his hall, and the steed to his stall,
 And the cit to his bilking board ;
 But we are not bound to an acre of ground,
 For our home is the houseless sward.

Rude as was this lawless stave, the spirit with which it was sung atoned to the young stranger for its obscurity and quaintness ; as for his host, that curious personage took a lusty and prominent part in the chorus—nor did the old woods refuse their share of the burden, but sent back a merry echo to the chief's deep voice, and the harsher notes of his jovial brethren.

When the glee had ceased, King Cole rose, the whole band followed his example, the cloth was cleared in a trice, the barrel—oh ! what a falling off was there !—was rolled into a corner of the tent, and the crew to whom the awning belonged began to settle themselves to rest ; while those who owned the other encampment marched forth, with King Cole at their head. Leaning with no light weight upon his guest's arm, the lover of ancient minstrelsy poured into the youth's ear a strain of eulogy,

* Constable. † Bailiff. ‡ Gallows. § Door.

rather eloquent than coherent, upon the scene they had just witnessed.

“What,” cried his majesty, in an enthusiastic tone, “what can be so truly regal as our state? Can any man control us? Are we not above all laws? Are we not the most despotic of kings? Nay, more than the kings of earth—are we not the kings of Fairy-land itself? Do we not realize the golden dreams of the old rhyimers—luxurious dogs that they were? Who would not cry out:

“Blest silent groves! O may ye be
For ever Mirth’s best nursery!
May pure Contents
For ever pitch *their tents*

Upon these downs, these meads, these rocks, these mountains.”

Uttering this notable extract from the thrice-honored Sir Henry Wotton, King Cole turned abruptly from the common, entered the wood which skirted it, and only attended by his guest, and his minister Mim, came suddenly, by an unexpected and picturesque opening in the trees, upon one of those itinerant vehicles termed caravans; he ascended the few steps which led to the entrance, opened the door, and was instantly in the arms of a pretty and young woman. On seeing our hero (for such we fear the youth is likely to become), she drew back with a blush not often found upon regal cheeks.

“Pooh,” said King Cole, half tauntingly, half fondly, “pooh, Lucy, blushes are garden flowers, and ought never to be found wild in the woods”: then changing his tone, he said, “Come, put some fresh straw in the corner, this stranger honors our palace to-night.—Mim unload thyself of our royal treasures—watch without, and vanish from within!”

Depositing on his majesty’s floor the appurtenances of the regal supper-table, Mim made his respectful adieus, and disappeared; meanwhile the Queen scattered some fresh straw over a mattress in the narrow chamber, and, laying over all a sheet of singularly snowy hue, made her guest some apology for the badness of his lodging; this King Cole interrupted, by a most elaborately noisy yawn, and a declaration of extreme sleepiness. “Now, Lucy, let us leave the gentleman to what he will like better than soft words, even from a queen. Good-night, sir, we shall be stirring at daybreak”; and, with this farewell, King Cole took the lady’s arm, and retired with her into an inner compartment of the caravan.

Left to himself, our hero looked round with surprise at the exceeding neatness which reigned over the whole apartment.

But what chiefly engrossed the attention of one to whose early habits books had always been treasures, were several volumes, ranged in comely shelves, fenced with wire-work, on either side of the fireplace. "Courage," thought he, as he stretched himself on his humble couch, "my adventures have commenced well; a gipsy tent, to be sure, is nothing very new, but a gipsy who quotes poetry, and enjoys a modest wife, speaks better than books do for the improvement of the world!"

CHAPTER III.

"Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
Than that of painted pomp!"—*As You Like It.*

THE sun broke cheerfully through the small lattice of the caravan, as the youth opened his eyes, and saw the good-humored countenance of his gipsy host bending over him complacently.

"You slept so soundly, sir, that I did not like to disturb you; but my good wife only waits your rising to have all ready for breakfast."

"It were a thousand pities," cried the guest, leaping from his bed, "that so pretty a face should look cross on my account, so I will not keep her waiting an instant."

The gipsy smiled, as he answered, "I require no professional help from the devil, sir, to foretell your fortune."

"No!—and what is it?"

"Honor, reputation, success, all that are ever won by a soft tongue, if it be backed by a bold heart."

Bright and keen was the flash which shot over the countenance of the one for whom this prediction was made, as he listened to it with a fondness for which his reason rebuked him. He turned aside with a sigh, which did not escape the gipsy, and bathed his face in the water which the provident hand of the good woman had set out for his lavations.

"Well," said the host, when the youth had finished his brief toilet, "suppose we breathe the fresh air, while Lucy smooths your bed, and prepares the breakfast."

"With all my heart," replied the youth, and they descended the steps which led into the wood. It was a beautiful, fresh morning, the air was like a draught from a Spirit's fountain, and filled the heart with new youth, and the blood with a rapturous delight; the leaves—the green, green leaves of spring—

were quivering on the trees; among which the happy birds fluttered and breathed the gladness of their souls in song. While the dewdrops that

“strewed
A baptism o'er the flowers”

gave back, in their million mirrors, the reflected smiles of the cloudless and rejoicing sun.

“Nature,” said the gypsy, “has bestowed on her children a gorgeous present in such a morning.”

“True,” said the youth; “and you, of us two, perhaps, only deserve it: as for me, when I think of the long road of dust, heat, and toil, that lies before me, I could almost wish to stop her and ask an admission into the gypsy’s tents.”

“You could not do a wiser thing!” said the gypsy gravely.

“But fate leaves me no choice,” continued the youth, as seriously as if he were in earnest; “and I must quit you immediately after I have a second time tasted of your hospitable fare.”

“If it must be so,” answered the gypsy, “I will see you at least a mile or two on your road.” The youth thanked him for a promise which his curiosity made acceptable, and they turned once more to the caravan.

The meal, however obtained, met with as much honor as it could possibly have received from the farmer from whom its materials were borrowed.

It was not without complacency that the worthy pair beheld the notice their guest lavished upon a fair, curly-headed boy of about three years old, the sole child and idol of the gypsy potentates. But they did not perceive, when the youth rose to depart, that he slipped into the folds of the child’s dress a ring of some value, the only one he possessed.

“And now,” said he, after having thanked his entertainers for their hospitality, “I must say good by to your flock, and set out upon my day’s journey.”

Lucy, despite her bashfulness, shook hands with her handsome guest, and the latter accompanied by the gypsy chief, strolled down to the encampments.

Open and free was his parting farewell to the inmates of the two tents, and liberal was the hand which showered upon all—especially on the damsel who had been his Thais of the evening feast—the silver coins which made no inconsiderable portion of his present property.

It was amidst the oracular wishes and favorable predictions

of the whole crew, that he recommenced his journey with the gypsy chief.

When the tents were fairly out of sight, and not till then, King Cole broke the silence which had as yet subsisted between them.

"I suppose, my young gentleman, that you expect to meet some of your friends or relations at W——? I know not what they will say when they hear where you have spent the night."

"Indeed!" said the youth; "whoever hears my adventures, relation or not, will be delighted with my description; but in sober earnest, I expect to find no one at W—— more my friend than a surly innkeeper, unless it be his dog."

"Why, they surely do not suffer a stripling of your youth and evident quality to wander alone!" cried King Cole, in undisguised surprise.

The young traveller made no prompt answer, but bent down as if to pluck a wild flower which grew by the roadside: after a pause, he said:

"Nay, Master Cole, you must not set me the example of playing the inquisitor, or you cannot guess how troublesome I shall be. To tell you truth, I am dying with curiosity to know something more about you than you may be disposed to tell me: you have already confessed that, however boon companions your gypsies may be, it is not among gypsies that you were born and bred."

King Cole laughed: perhaps he was not ill pleased by the curiosity of his guest, nor by the opportunity it afforded him of being his own hero.

"My story, sir," said he, "would be soon told, if you thought it worth the hearing, nor does it contain anything which should prevent my telling it."

"If so," quoth the youth, "I shall conceive your satisfying my request a still greater favor than those you have already bestowed upon me."

The gypsy relaxed his pace into an indolent saunter, as he commenced:

"The first scene that I remember was similar to that which you witnessed last night. The savage tent, and the green moor—the faggot blaze—the eternal pot, with its hissing note of preparation—the old dame who tended it, and the ragged urchins who learnt from its contents the first reward of theft, and the earliest temptation to it—all these are blended into agreeable confusion as the primal impressions of my childhood. The woman who nurtured me as my mother was rather capri-

cious than kind, and my infancy passed away, like that of more favored scions of fortune, in alternate chastisement and caresses. In good truth, Kinching Meg had the shrillest voice and the heaviest hand of the whole crew, and I cannot complain of injustice, since she treated me no worse than the rest. Notwithstanding the irregularity of my education, I grew up strong and healthy, and my reputed mother had taught me so much fear for herself that she left me none for anything else; accordingly, I became bold, reckless, and adventurous, and at the age of thirteen was as thorough a reprobate as the tribe could desire. At that time a singular change befell me: we (that is my mother and myself) were begging not many miles hence, at the door of a rich man's house, in which the mistress lay on her death-bed. That mistress was my *real* mother, from whom Meg had stolen me in my first year of existence. Whether it was through the fear of conscience, or the hope of reward, no sooner had Meg learnt the dangerous state of my poor mother, the constant grief which they said been the sole, though slow, cause of her disease, and the large sums which had been repeatedly offered for my recovery; no sooner, I say, did Meg ascertain all these particulars, than she fought her way up to the sick chamber, fell on her knees before the bed, owned her crime, and produced myself. Various little proofs of time, place, circumstance; the clothing I had worn when stolen, and which was still preserved, joined to the striking likeness I bore to both my parents, especially to my father, silenced all doubt and incredulity; I was welcomed home with a joy which it is in vain to describe. My return seemed to recall my mother from the grave; she lingered on for many months longer than her physicians thought it possible, and when she died, her last words commended me to my father's protection.

"My surviving parent needed no such request. He lavished upon me all that superfluity of fondness and food, of which those good people who are resolved to spoil their children are so prodigal. He could not bear the idea of sending me to school; accordingly he took a tutor for me, a simple-hearted, gentle, kind man who possessed a vast store of learning, rather curious than useful. He was a tolerable, and at least an enthusiastic, antiquarian—a more than tolerable poetaster; and he had a prodigious budget full of old ballads and songs, which *he* loved better to teach and *I* to learn, than all the 'Latin, Greek, geography, astronomy, and the use of the globes,' which my poor father had so sedulously bargained for.

"Accordingly, I became exceedingly well-informed in all the

'precious conceits' and 'golden garlands' of our British ancients, and continued exceedingly ignorant of everything else, save and except a few of the most fashionable novels of the day, and the contents of six lying volumes of voyages and travels, which flattered both my appetite for the wonderful and my love of the adventurous. My studies, such as they were, were not by any means suited to curb or direct the vagrant tastes my childhood had acquired: on the contrary, the old poets, with their luxurious description of the 'green wood,' and the forest life; the fashionable novelists, with their spirited accounts of the wanderings of some fortunate rogue, and the ingenious travellers, with their wild fables, so dear to the imagination of every boy, only fomented within me a strong though secret regret at my change of life, and a restless disgust to the tame home and bounded roamings to which I was condemned. When I was about seventeen, my father sold his property (which he had become possessed of in right of my mother), and transferred the purchase-money to the security of the funds. Shortly afterwards he died; the bulk of his fortune became mine; the remainder was settled upon a sister, many years older than myself, who, in consequence of her marriage and residence in a remote part of Wales, I had never yet seen.

"Now, then, I was perfectly free and unfettered; my guardian lived in Scotland, and left me entirely to the guidance of my tutor, who was both too simple and too indolent to resist my inclinations. I went to London, became acquainted with a set of most royal scamps, frequented the theaters, and the taverns, the various resorts which constitute the gayeties of a blood just above the middle class, and was one of the noisiest and wildest 'blades' that ever heard 'the chimes by midnight,' and the magistrate's lecture for matins. I was a sort of leader among the jolly dogs I consorted with. My earlier education gave a raciness and nature to my delineations of 'life,' which delighted them. But somehow or other I grew wearied of this sort of existence. About a year after I was of age, my fortune was more than three parts spent; I fell ill with drinking, and grew dull with remorse; need I add that my comrades left me to myself? A fit of the spleen, especially if accompanied with duns, makes one wofully misanthropic; so, when I recovered from my illness, I set out on a tour through Great Britain and France—alone, and principally on foot. Oh, the rapture of shaking off the half friends and cold formalities of society, and finding oneself all unfettered, with no companion but nature, no guide but youth, and no flatterer but hope!

“ Well, my young friend, I travelled for two years, and saw, even in that short time, enough of this busy world to weary and disgust me with its ordinary customs. I was not made to be polite, still less to be ambitious. I sighed after the coarse comrades and the free tents of my first associates, and a thousand remembrances of the gipsy wanderings, steeped in all the green and exhilarating colors of childhood, perpetually haunted my mind. On my return from my wanderings, I found a letter from my sister, who, having become a widow, had left Wales, and had now fixed her residence in a well-visited watering-place in the west of England. I had never yet seen her, and her letter was a fine, lady-like sort of epistle, with a great deal of romance and a very little sense, written in an extremely pretty hand, and ending with a quotation from Pope. (I never could endure Pope, nor indeed any of the poets of the days of Anne and her successors.) It was a beautiful season of the year; I had been inured to pedestrian excursions, so I set off on foot to see my nearest-surviving relative. On the way, I fell in (though on a very different spot) with the very encampment you saw last night. By Heavens, that was a merry meeting to me; I joined, and journeyed with them for several days—never do I remember a happier time. Then, after many years of bondage and stiffness, and accordance with the world, I found myself at ease, like a released bird; with what zest did I join in the rude jokes and the knavish tricks, the stolen feasts and the roofless nights of those careless vagabonds.

“ I left my fellow-travellers at the entrance of the town where my sister lived. Now came the contrast. Somewhat hot, rather coarsely clad, and covered with the dust of a long summer's day, I was ushered into a little drawing-room, eighteen feet by twelve, as I was afterward somewhat pompously informed. A flaunting carpet, green, red and yellow, covered the floor. A full-length picture of a thin woman, looking most agreeably ill-tempered, stared down at me from the chimney-piece; three stuffed birds—how emblematic of domestic life!—stood stiff and imprisoned, even after death, in a glass cage. A fire-screen, and a bright fireplace; chairs covered with holland, to preserve them from the atmosphere; and long mirrors, wrapped as to the framework, in yellow muslin, to keep off the flies, finish the panorama of this watering-place mansion. The door opened—silks rustled—voice shrieked ‘My Brother!’ and a figure—a thin figure—the original of the picture over the chimney-piece—rushed in.”

“ I can well fancy her joy,” said the youth,

“You can do no such thing, begging your pardon, sir,” resumed King Cole. “She had no joy at all: she was exceedingly surprised and disappointed. In spite of my early adventures, I had nothing picturesque or romantic about me at all. I was very thirsty, and I called for beer; I was very tired, and I lay down on the sofa; I wore thick shoes, and small buckles; and my clothes were made, God knows where, and were certainly put on God knows how. My sister was miserably ashamed of me; she had not even the manners to disguise it. In a higher rank of life than that which she held, she would have suffered far less mortification; for I fancy great people pay but little *real* attention to externals. Even if a man of rank is vulgar, it makes no difference in the orbit in which he moves; but your ‘genteel gentlewomen’ are so terribly dependent upon what Mrs. Tomkins will say—so very uneasy about their relations, and the opinion they are held in—and, above all, so made up of appearances and clothes—so undone if they do not eat, drink, and talk *à-la-mode*, that I can fancy no shame like that of my poor sister at having found, and *being found with*, a vulgar brother.

“I saw how unwelcome I was, and I did not punish myself by a long visit. I left her house, and returned toward London. On my road, I again met with my gypsy friends; the warmth of their welcome enchanted me—you may guess the rest. I stayed with them so long that I could not bear to leave them; I re-entered their crew: I am one among them. Not that I have become altogether and solely of the tribe: I still leave them whenever the whim seizes me, and repair to the great cities and thoroughfares of man. There I am soon driven back again to my favorite and fresh fields, as a reed upon a wild stream is dashed back upon the green rushes from which it has been torn. You perceive that I have many comforts and distinctions above the rest; for, alas, sir, there is no society, however free and democratic, where wealth will not create an aristocracy; the remnant of my fortune provides me with my unostentatious equipage, and the few luxuries it contains; it repays secretly to the poor what my fellow-vagrants occasionally filch from them; it allows me to curb among the crew all the grosser and heavier offences against the law to which want might otherwise compel them; and it serves to keep up that sway and ascendancy which my superior education and fluent spirits enabled me at first to attain. Though not *legally* their king, I assume that title over the few encampments with which I am accustomed to travel, and you perceive that I have given my

simple name both to the jocular and kingly dignity of which the old song will often remind you. My story is done."

"Not quite," said his companion: "your wife? How came you by that blessing?"

"Ah! thereby hangs a pretty and a love-sick tale, which would not sound ill in an ancient ballad; but I will content myself with briefly sketching it. Lucy is the daughter of a gentleman farmer; about four years ago I fell in love with her. I wooed her clandestinely, and at last I owned I was a gypsy; I did not add my birth nor fortune—no, I was full of the romance of the Nut-brown Maid's lover, and attempted a trial of woman's affection, which even in these days was not disappointed. Still her father would not consent to our marriage, till very luckily things went bad with him; corn, crops, cattle—the deuce was in them all; an execution was in his house, and a writ out against his person. I settled these matters for him, and in return received a father-in-law's blessing, and we are now the best friends in the world. Poor Lucy is perfectly reconciled to her caravan, and her wandering husband, and has never, I believe, once repented the day on which she became the gypsy's wife!"

"I thank you heartily for your history," said the youth, who had listened very attentively to this detail; "and though my happiness and pursuits are centred in that world which you despise, yet I confess that I feel a sensation very like envy at your singular choice; and I would not dare to ask of my heart whether that choice is not happier, as it is certainly more philosophical, than mine."

They had now reached a part of the road where the country assumed a totally different character; the woods and moors were no longer visible, but a broad and somewhat bleak extent of country lay before them. Here and there only a few solitary trees broke the uniformity of the wide fields and scanty hedge-rows, and at distant intervals the thin spires of the scattered churches rose like the prayers, of which they were the symbols, to mingle themselves with heaven.

The gypsy paused: "I will accompany you," said he, "no farther: your way lies straight onwards, and you will reach W—— before noon; farewell, and may God watch over you!"

"Farewell!" said the youth warmly pressing the hand which was extended to him. "If we ever meet again, it will probably solve a curious riddle, viz., whether *you* are not disgusted with the caravan, and *I* with the world!"

"The latter is more likely than the former," said the gypsy,

“for one stands a much greater chance of being disgusted with others than with oneself; so changing a little the old lines, I will wish you adieu after my own fashion, viz., in verse :

‘Go, set thy heart on winged wealth,
Or unto honor’s towers aspire :
But give me freedom and my health,
And there’s the sum of my desire !’ ”

CHAPTER IV.

The letter, Madam—have you none for me?—*The Rendezvous.*
Provide surgeons.—*The Lover’s Progress.*

OUR solitary traveller pursued his way with the light step, and gay spirits, of youth and health.

“Turn gypsy, indeed !” he said, talking to himself ; “there is something better in store for me than that. Ay, I have all the world before me where to choose—not my place of rest. No, many a long year will pass away ere any place of rest will be my choice ! I wonder whether I shall find the letter at W—— ; *the* letter, the last letter I shall ever have from home : but it is no home to me now ; and I—I, insulted, reviled, trampled upon, without even a name !—Well, well, I will earn a still fairer one than that of my forefathers. They shall be proud to own me yet.” And with these words the speaker broke off abruptly, with a swelling chest and a flashing eye ; and as, an unknown and friendless adventurer, he gazed on the expanded and silent country around him, he felt, like Castruccio Castrucani, that he could stretch his hands to the east and to the west, and exclaim, “Oh, that my power kept pace with my spirit, then should it grasp the corners of the earth.”

The road wound at last from the champaign country, through which it had for some miles extended itself, into a narrow lane, girded on either side by a dead fence. As the youth entered this lane, he was somewhat startled by the abrupt appearance of a horseman, whose steed leaped the hedge so close to our hero as almost to endanger his safety. The rider, a gentleman of about five-and-twenty, pulled up, and in a tone of great courtesy, apologized for his inadvertency ; the apology was readily admitted, and the horseman rode onwards in the direction of W——.

Trifling as this incident was, the air and mien of the stranger were sufficient to arrest, irresistibly, the thoughts of the young

traveller ; and before they had flowed into a fresh channel he found himself in the town, and at the door of the inn to which his expedition was bound. He entered the bar ; a buxom landlady and a still more buxom daughter, were presiding over the spirits of the place.

“ You have some boxes and a letter for me, I believe,” said the young gentleman to the comely hostess.

“ To *you*, sir ! the name, if you please ? ”

“ To—to—to C—L—,” said the youth ; “ the initials C. L., to be left till called for.”

“ Yes, sir, we *have* some luggage—came last night by the van,—and a letter besides, sir, to C. L. also.”

The daughter lifted her large dark eyes at the handsome stranger, and felt a wonderful curiosity to know what the letter to C. L. could possibly be about ; meanwhile mine hostess, raising her hand to a shelf on which stood an Indian slop-basin, the great ornament of the bar at the Golden Fleece, brought from its cavity a well-folded and well-sealed epistle.

“ That is it,” cried the youth ; “ show me a private room instantly.”

“ What *can* he want a private room for ? ” thought the landlady’s daughter.

“ Show the gentleman to the Griffin, No. 4, John Merrylack,” said the landlady herself.

With an impatient step the owner of the letter followed a slipshod and marvellously unwashed waiter into No. 4—a small, square asylum for town travellers, country yeomen, and “ single gentlemen ” ; presenting on the one side, an admirable engraving of the Marquis of Granby, and on the other an equally delightful view of the stable yard.

Mr. C. L. flung himself on a chair (there *were* only four chairs in No. 4), watched the waiter out of the room, seized his letter, broke open the seal, and read—yea, reader, *you* shall read it too—as follows :

“ Inclosed is the sum to which you are entitled ; remember, that it is all which you can ever claim at my hands ; remember, also, that *you* have made the choice which, now, nothing can persuade me to alter. Be the name you have so long iniquitously borne henceforth and always forgotten ; upon that condition you may yet hope, from my generosity, the future assistance which you *must* want, but which you could not ask from my affection. Equally, by my heart and my reason, you are for ever DISOWNED.”

The letter fell from the reader's hands. He took up the enclosure; it was an order payable in London for £1000; to him it seemed like the rental of the Indies.

"Be it so!" he said aloud, and slowly; "be it so! With this will I carve my way; many a name in history was built upon a worse foundation!"

With these words he carefully put up the money, re-read the brief note which enclosed it, tore the latter into pieces, and then, going towards the aforesaid view of the stable-yard, threw open the window and leant out, apparently in earnest admiration of two pigs, which marched, gruntingly, towards him, one goat regaling himself upon a cabbage, and a broken-winded, emaciated horse, which having just been, what the ostler called, "rubbed down," was just going to be, what the ostler called, "fed."

While engaged in this interesting survey, the clatter of hoofs was suddenly heard upon the rough pavement—a bell rang—a dog barked—the pigs grunted—the ostler ran out, and the stranger, whom our hero had before met on the road, trotted into the yard.

It was evident from the obsequiousness of the attendants, that the horseman was a personage of no mean importance; and indeed there was something singularly distinguished and high-bred in his air and carriage.

"Who *can* that be?" said the youth, as the horseman, having dismounted, turned towards the door of the inn: the question was readily answered—"There goes pride and poverty!" said the ostler—"Here comes Squire Mordaunt!" said the landlady.

At the further end of the stable-yard, through a narrow gate, the youth caught a glimpse of the green sward and springing flowers of a small garden. Wearied with the sameness of No. 4, rather than with his journey, he sauntered towards the said gate, and, seating himself in a small arbor within the garden, surrendered himself to reflection.

The result of this self-conference was a determination to leave the Golden Fleece by the earliest conveyance which went to that great object and emporium of all his plans and thoughts, London. As, full of this resolution, and buried in the dream which it conjured up, he was returning with downcast eyes and unheeding steps through the stable-yard, to the delights of No. 4, he was suddenly accosted by a loud and alarmed voice:

"For God's sake, sir, look out, or—"

The sentence was broken off, the intended warning came too late, our hero staggered back a few steps, and fell, stunned and motionless, against the stable door. Unconsciously he had

passed just behind the heels of the stranger's horse, which, being by no means in good humor with the clumsy manœuvres of his *Shampooer*, the ostler, had taken advantage of the opportunity presented to him of working off his irritability, and had consequently inflicted a severe kick upon the right shoulder of Mr. C. L.

The stranger, honored by the landlady with the name and title of Squire Mordaunt was in the yard at the moment. He hastened towards the sufferer, who, as yet, was scarcely sensible, and led him into the house. The surgeon of the village was sent for, and appeared. This disciple of Galen, commonly known by the name of Jeremiah Bossolton, was a gentleman considerably more inclined to breadth than length. He was exactly five feet one inch in height, but thick and solid as a milestone ; a wig of modern cut, carefully curled and powdered, gave somewhat of a modish, and therefore unseemly, grace, to a solemn eye ; a mouth drawn down at the corners ; a nose that had something in it exceedingly consequential ; eyebrows sage and shaggy ; ears large and fiery ; and a chin that would have done honor to a mandarin. Now Mr. Jeremiah Bossolton had a certain peculiarity of speech to which I fear I shall find it difficult to do justice. Nature had impressed upon his mind a prodigious love of the grandiloquent ; Mr. Bossolton, therefore disdained the exact language of the vulgar, and built unto himself a lofty fabric of words in which his sense managed very frequently to lose itself. Moreover, upon beginning a sentence of peculiar dignity, Mr. Bossolton was, it must be confessed, sometimes at a loss to conclude it in a period worthy of the commencement ; and this caprice of nature, which had endowed him with more words than thoughts (necessity is, indeed, the mother of invention), drove him into a very ingenious method of remedying the deficiency ; this was simply the plan of repeating the sense by inverting the sentence.

"How long a period of time," said Mr. Bossolton, "has elapsed since this deeply-to-be-regretted and seriously-to-be-investigated accident occurred?"

"Not many minutes," said Mordaunt : "make no further delay, I beseech you, but examine the arm ; it is not broken, I trust?"

"In this world, Mr. Mordaunt," said the practitioner, bowing very low, for the person he addressed was of the most ancient lineage in the county, "in this world, Mr. Mordaunt, even at the earliest period of civilization, delay in matters of judgment has ever been considered of such vital importance, and—and

such important vitality, that we find it inculcated in the proverbs of the Greeks, and the sayings of the Chaldeans, as a principle of the most expedient utility, and—and—the most useful expediency !”

“Mr. Bossolton,” said Mordaunt, in a tone of remarkable and even artificial softness and civility, “have the kindness *immediately* to examine this gentleman’s bruises.”

Mr. Bossolton looked up to the calm but haughty face of the speaker, and, without a moment’s hesitation, proceeded to handle the arm, which was already stripped for his survey.

“It frequently occurs,” said Mr. Bossolton, “in the course of my profession, that the forcible, sudden, and vehement application of any hard substance, like the hoof of a quadruped, to the soft, tender, and carniferous parts of the human frame, such as the arm, occasions a pain, a pang, I should rather say, of the intensest acuteness, and—and of the acutest intensity.”

“Pray, Mr. Bossolton, is the bone broken?” asked Mordaunt.

By this time the patient who had been hitherto in that languor which extreme pain always produces at first, especially on young frames, was sufficiently recovered to mark and reply to the kind solicitude of the last speaker: “I thank you sir,” said he with a smile, “for your anxiety, but I feel that the bone is *not* broken, the muscles are a little hurt—that is all.”

“Young gentleman,” said Mr. Bossolton, “you must permit me to say that they who have all their lives been employed in the pursuit, and the investigation, and the analysis of certain studies, are, in general, better acquainted with those studies than they who have neither given them any importance of consideration;—nor—nor any consideration of importance. Establishing this as my hypothesis, I shall now proceed to—”

“Apply immediate remedies, if you please, Mr. Bossolton,” interrupted Mr. Mordaunt, in that sweet and honied tone which somehow or other always silenced even the garrulous practitioner.

Driven into taciturnity, Mr. Bossolton again inspected the arm, and proceeded to urge the application of liniments and bandages, which he promised to prepare with the most solicitudinous dispatch, and the most dispatchful solicitude.

CHAPTER V.

"Your name, Sir!

Ha! my name, you say—my name?

'Tis well—my name—is—nay, I must consider."—*Pedrillo.*

THIS accident occasioned a delay of some days in the plans of the young gentleman, for whom we trust, very soon, both for our own convenience, and that of our reader, to find a fitting appellation.

Mr. Mordaunt, after seeing every attention paid to him, both surgical and hospitable, took his departure with a promise to call the next day; leaving behind him a strong impression of curiosity and interest to serve our hero as some mental occupation until his return. The bonny landlady came up in a new cap, with blue ribbons, in the course of the evening, to pay a visit of inquiry to the handsome patient, who was removed from the Griffin, No. 4, to the Dragon, No. 8—a room whose merits were exactly in proportion to its number,—viz, twice as great as those of No. 4.

"Well, sir," said Mrs. Taptape, with a courtesy, "I trust you find yourself better."

"At *this* moment I do," said the gallant youth, with a significant air.

"Hem," quoth the landlady.

A pause ensued. In spite of the compliment, a certain suspicion suddenly darted across the mind of the hostess. Strong as are the prepossessions of the sex, those of the profession are much stronger.

"Honest folk," thought the landlady, "don't travel with their initials only; the last 'Whitehall Evening,' was full of shocking accounts of swindlers and cheats; and I gave nine pounds odd shillings for the silver tea-pot John has brought him up—as if the delf one was not good enough for a foot-traveller!"

Pursuing these ideas, Mrs. Taptape, looking bashfully down, said:

"By-the-by, sir, Mr. Bossolton asked me what name he should put down in his book for the medicines; what would you please me to say, sir?"

"Mr. who?" said the youth, elevating his eyebrows.

"Mr. Bossolton, sir, the apothecary."

"Oh! Bossolton! very odd name that—not near so pretty as—dear me, what a beautiful cap that is of yours!" said the young gentleman.

"Lord, sir, do you think so? the ribbon *is* pretty enough; but—but, as I was saying, what name shall I tell Mr. Bossolton to put in his book?" This, thought Mrs. Taptape, is coming to the point.

"Well," said the youth slowly, and as if in a profound reverie, "well Bossolton is certainly the most singular name I ever heard; he does right to put it in a book—it is quite a curiosity! is he clever?"

"Very, sir," said the landlady, somewhat sharply; "but it is *your* name, not *his* that he wishes to put into his book."

"Mine!" said the youth—who appeared to have been seeking to gain time in order to answer a query which most men find requires very little deliberation—"Mine, you say; *my* name is Linden—Clarence Linden—you understand!"

"What a pretty name!" thought the landlady's daughter, who was listening at the keyhole; "but how *could* he admire that odious cap of *Ma's!*"

"And, now, landlady, I wish you would send up my boxes; and get me a newspaper, if you please."

"Yes, sir," said the landlady, and she rose to retire.

"I do not think," said the youth to himself, "that I could have hit on a prettier name—and so novel a one too!—Clarence Linden—why, if I were that pretty girl at the bar I could fall in love with the very words. Shakespeare was quite wrong when he said:

"'A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.'

A rose by *any* name would not smell as sweet; if a rose's name was Jeremiah Bossolton, for instance, it would not, to my nerves, at least, smell of anything but an apothecary's shop!"

When Mordaunt called the next morning, he found Clarence much better, and carelessly turning over various books, part of the contents of the luggage superscribed C. L. A book of whatever description was among the few companions for whom Mordaunt had neither fastidiousness nor reserve; and the sympathy of taste between him and the sufferer gave rise to a conversation less cold and commonplace than it might otherwise have been. And when Mordaunt, after a stay of some length, rose to depart, he pressed Linden to return his visit before he left that part of the country; his place he added, was only about five miles distant from W—. Linden, greatly interested in his visitor, was not slow in accepting the invita-

tion, and, perhaps, for the first time in his life, Mordaunt was shaking hands with a stranger he had only known two days.

CHAPTER VI.

“ While yet a child, and long before his time
He had perceived the presence and the power
Of greatness.

* * * * *

But eagerly he read, and read again.

* * * * *

Yet still uppermost
Nature was at his heart, as if he felt,
Though yet he knew not how, a wasting power
In all things that from her sweet influence
Might seek to wean him. Therefore with her hues,
Her forms, and with the spirit of her forms,
He clothed the nakedness of austere truth.”

WORDSWORTH.

ALGERNON MORDAUNT was the last son of an old and honorable race, which had centuries back numbered princes in its line. His parents had had many children, but all (save Algernon, the youngest) died in their infancy. His mother perished in giving him birth. Constitutional infirmity, and the care of mercenary nurses, contributed to render Algernon a weakly and delicate child; hence came a taste for loneliness and a passion for study; and from these sprung, on the one hand, the fastidiousness and reserve, which render us apparently unamiable, and, on the other, the loftiness of spirit and the kindness of heart, which are the best and earliest gifts of literature, and more than counterbalance our deficiencies in the “minor morals” due to society by their tendency to increase our attention to the greater ones belonging to mankind. Mr. Mordaunt was a man of luxurious habits and gambling propensities; wedded to London, he left the house of his ancestors to moulder into desertion and decay; but to this home, Algernon was constantly consigned during his vacations from school; and its solitude and cheerlessness gave to a disposition naturally melancholy and thoughtful, those colors which subsequent events were calculated to deepen, not efface.

Truth obliges us to state, despite our partiality to Mordaunt, that, when he left his school, after a residence of six years, it was with the bitter distinction of having been the most unpopular boy in it. Why, nobody could exactly explain, for his

severest enemies could not accuse him of ill nature, cowardice, or avarice, and these make the three capital offences of a school-boy ; but Algernon Mordaunt had already acquired the knowledge of himself, and could explain the cause, though with a bitter and swelling heart. His ill health, his long residence at home, his unfriended and almost orphan situation, his early habits of solitude and reserve, all these, so calculated to make the spirit shrink within itself, made him, on his entrance at school, if not unsocial, *appear* so : this was the primary reason of his unpopularity ; the second was that he perceived, for he was sensitive (and consequently acute) to the extreme, the misfortune of his manner, and in his wish to rectify it, it became doubly unprepossessing ; to reserve, it now added embarrassment, to coldness gloom ; and the pain he felt in addressing or being addressed by another, was naturally and necessarily reciprocal, for the effects of sympathy are nowhere so wonderful yet so invisible, as in the manners.

By degrees he shunned the intercourse which had for him nothing but distress, and his volatile acquaintances were perhaps the first to set him the example. Often in his solitary walks he stopped afar off to gaze upon the sports, which none ever solicited him to share ; and as the shout of laughter and of happy hearts came, peal after peal, upon his ear, he turned enviously, yet not malignantly, away, with tears which not all his pride could curb, and muttered to himself, " And these, these hate me ! "

There are two feelings common to all high or affectionate natures, that of extreme susceptibility to opinion, and that of extreme bitterness at its injustice. These feelings were Mordaunt's ; but the keen edge which one blow injures, the repetition blunts : and by little and little, Algernon became not only accustomed, but, as he persuaded himself, indifferent, to his want of popularity ; his step grew more lofty, and his address more collected, and that which was once diffidence gradually hardened into pride.

His residence at the university was neither without honor nor profit. A college life was then, as now, either the most retired or the most social of all others ; we need scarcely say which it was to Mordaunt, but his was the age when solitude is desirable, and when the closet forms the mind better than the world. Driven upon itself, his intellect became inquiring, and its resources profound ; admitted to their inmost recesses, he revelled among the treasures of ancient lore, and in his dreams of the Nymph and Naiad, or his researches after truth in the deep

wells of the Stagyrite or the golden fountains of Plato, he forgot the loneliness of his lot, and exhausted the hoarded enthusiasm of his soul.

But his mind, rather thoughtful than imaginative, found no idol like "Divine Philosophy." It delighted to plunge itself into the mazes of metaphysical investigation—to trace the springs of the intellect—to connect the arcana of the universe—to descend into the darkest caverns, or to wind through the minutest mysteries of nature, and rise, step by step, to that arduous elevation on which Thought stands dizzy and confused, looking beneath upon a clouded earth, and above, upon an unfathomable heaven.

Rarely wandering from his chamber, known personally to few, and intimately by none, Algernon yet left behind him at the university the most remarkable reputation of his day. He had obtained some of the highest of academical honors, and by that proverbial process of vulgar minds which ever frames the magnificent from the unknown,—the seclusion in which he lived, and the recondite nature of his favorite pursuits, attached to his name a still greater celebrity and interest than all the orthodox and regular dignities he had acquired. There are few men who do not console themselves for not being generally loved, if they can reasonably hope that they are generally esteemed. Mordaunt had now grown reconciled to himself and to his kind. He had opened to his interest a world in his own breast, and it consoled him for his mortification in the world without. But, better than this, his habits as well as studies had strengthened the principles and confirmed the nobility of his mind. He was not, it is true, more kind, more benevolent, more upright than before; but those virtues now emanated from principle—not emotion: and principle to the mind is what a free constitution is to a people: without that principle, or that free constitution, the one may be for the moment as good—the other as happy, but we cannot tell how long the goodness and the happiness will continue.

On leaving the university, his father sent for him to London. He stayed there a short time, and mingled partially in its festivities; but the pleasures of English dissipation have for a century been the same, heartless without gayety, and dull without refinement. Nor could Mordaunt, the most fastidious yet warm-hearted of human beings, reconcile either his tastes or his affections to the cold insipidities of patrician society. His father's habits and evident distresses deepened his disgust to his situation; for the habits were incurable, and the distresses

increasing ; and nothing but a circumstance, which Mordaunt did not then understand, prevented the final sale of an estate, already little better than a pompous incumbrance.

It was therefore with the half-painful, half-pleasurable sensation, with which we avoid contemplating a ruin we cannot prevent, that Mordaunt set out upon that continental tour deemed then so necessary a part of education. His father, on taking leave of him, seemed deeply affected. "Go my son," said he, "may God bless you, and not punish me too severely. I have wronged you deeply, and I cannot bear to look upon your face."

To these words Algernon attached a general, but they cloaked a peculiar, meaning : in three years he returned to England—his father had been dead some months, and the signification of his parting address was already deciphered—but of this hereafter.

In his travels, Mordaunt encountered an Englishman, whose name I will not yet mention ; a person of great reputed wealth—a merchant, yet a man of pleasure—a voluptuary in life, yet a saint in reputation—or, to abstain from the antithetical analysis of a character, which will not be corporeally presented to the reader, till our tale is considerably advanced—one who drew from nature a singular combination of shrewd, but false conclusions, and a peculiar philosophy destined hereafter to contrast the colors, and prove the practical utility, of that which was espoused by Mordaunt.

There can be no education in which the lessons of the world do not form a share. Experience, in expanding Algernon's powers, had ripened his virtues. Nor had the years which had converted knowledge into wisdom failed in imparting polish to refinement. His person had acquired a greater grace, and his manners an easier dignity than before. His noble and generous mind had worked its impress upon his features and his mien ; and those who could overcome the first coldness and shrinking hauteur of his address found it required no minute examination to discover the real expression of the eloquent eye and the kindling lip.

He had not been long returned, before he found two enemies to his tranquillity—the one was love, the other appeared in the more formidable guise of a claimant to his estate. Before Algernon was aware of the nature of the latter, he went to consult with his lawyer.

"If the claim be just, I shall not, of course, proceed to law," said Mordaunt.

“ But without the estate, sir, you have nothing ! ”

“ True,” said Algernon, calmly.

But the claim was not just, and to law he went.

In this law-suit, however, he had one assistant, in an old relation, who had seen, indeed, but very little of him, but who compassionated his circumstances, and above all hated his opponent. This relation was rich and childless ; and there were not wanting those who predicted that his money would ultimately discharge the mortgages, and repair the house, of the young representative of the Mordaunt honors. But the old kinsman was obstinate—self-willed—and under the absolute dominion of patrician pride ; and it was by no means improbable that the independence of Mordaunt’s character would soon create a disunion between them, by clashing against the peculiarities of his relation’s temper.

It was a clear and sunny morning when Linden, tolerably recovered of his hurt, set out upon a sober and aged pony which after some natural pangs of shame, he had hired of his landlord, to Mordaunt Court.

Mordaunt’s house was situated in the midst of a wild and extensive park, surrounded with woods, and interspersed with trees of the stateliest growth, now scattered into irregular groups, now marshalled into sweeping avenues ; while ever and anon, Linden caught glimpses of a rapid and brawling rivulet, which, in many a slight but sounding waterfall, gave a music strange and spirit-like to the thick copses and forest glades through which it went exulting on its way. The deer lay half concealed by the fern among which they crouched, turning their stately crests towards the stranger, but not stirring from their rest ; while from the summit of beeches which would have shamed the pavilion of Tityrus, the rooks—those monks of the feathered people—were loud in their confused, but not displeasing, confabulations.

As Linden approached the house, he was struck with the melancholy air of desolation which spread over and around it : fragments of stone, above which clomb the rank weed, insolently proclaiming the triumph of nature’s meanest offspring over the wrecks of art ; a moat dried up, a railing once of massy gilding, intended to fence a lofty terrace on the right from the incursions of the deer, but which, shattered and decayed, now seemed to ask, with the satirist :

“ To what end did our lavish ancestors,
Erect of old these stately piles of ours ? ”

—a chapel on the left, perfectly in ruins,—all appeared strikingly to denote that time had outstript fortune, and that the years, which alike hallow and destroy, had broken the consequence, in deepening the antiquity, of the House of Mordaunt.

The building itself agreed but too well with the tokens of decay around it; most of the windows were shut up, and the shutters of dark oak, richly gilt, contrasted forcibly with the shattered panes and mouldered framing of the glass. It was a house of irregular architecture. Originally built in the fifteenth century, it had received its last improvement, with the most lavish expense, during the reign of Anne; and it united the Gallic magnificence of the latter period with the strength and grandeur of the former; it was in a great part overgrown with ivy, and where that insidious ornament had not reached, the signs of decay, and even ruin, were fully visible. The sun itself, bright and cheering as it shone over nature, making the green sod glow like emeralds, and the rivulet flash in its beam, like one of those streams of real light imagined by Swedenborg in his visions of heaven, and clothing tree and fell, brake and hillock, with the lavish hues of infant summer,—the sun itself only made more desolate, because more conspicuous, the venerable fabric which the youthful traveller frequently paused more accurately to survey, and its laughing and sportive beams playing over chink and crevice seemed almost as insolent and untimorous as the mirth of the young, mocking the silent grief of some gray-headed and solitary mourner.

Clarence had now reached the porch, and the sound of the shrill bell he touched rung with a strange note throughout the general stillness of the place. A single servant appeared, and ushered Clarence through a screen hall, hung round with relics of armor, and ornamented on the side opposite the music gallery with a solitary picture of gigantic size, exhibiting the full length of the gaunt person and sable steed of that Sir Piers de Mordaunt who had so signalized himself in the field in which Henry of Richmond changed his coronet for a crown. Through this hall Clarence was led to a small chamber clothed with uncouth and tattered arras, in which, seemingly immersed in papers, he found the owner of the domain.

“Your studies,” said Linden, after the salutations of the day, “seem to harmonize with the venerable antiquity of your home”; and he pointed to the crabbed characters and faded ink of the papers on the table.

“So they ought,” answered Mordaunt, with a faint smile; “for they are called from their quiet archives in order to sup

port my struggle for that home. But I fear the struggle is in vain, and that the quibbles of law will transfer into other hands a possession I am foolish enough to value the more from my inability to maintain it."

Something of this Clarence had before learnt from the communicative gossip of his landlady ; and less desirous of satisfying his curiosity than to lead the conversation from a topic which he felt must be so unwelcome to Mordaunt, he expressed a wish to see the state apartments of the house. With something of shame at the neglect they had necessarily experienced, and something of pride at the splendor which no neglect could efface, Mordaunt yielded to the request, and led the way up a staircase of black oak, the walls and ceiling of which were covered with frescos of Italian art, to a suite of apartments in which time and dust seemed the only tenants. Lingeringly did Clarence gaze upon the rich velvet, the costly mirrors, the motley paintings of a hundred ancestors, and the antique cabinets, containing, among the most hoarded relics of the Mordaunt race, curiosities which the hereditary enthusiasm of a line of cavaliers had treasured as the most sacred of heirlooms, and which even to the philosophical mind of Mordaunt possessed a value he did not seek too minutely to analyze. Here was the goblet from which the first prince of Tudor had drunk after the field of Bosworth. Here the ring with which the chivalrous Francis the First had rewarded a signal feat of that famous Robert de Mordaunt, who, as a poor but adventurous cadet of the house, had brought to the "first gentleman of France" the assistance of his sword. Here was the glove which Sir Walter had received from the royal hand of Elizabeth, and worn in the lists upon a crest which the lance of no antagonist in that knightly court could abase. And here more sacred than all, because connected with the memory of misfortune, was a small box of silver which the last king of a fated line had placed in the hands of the gray-headed descendant of that Sir Walter after the battle of the Boyne, saying, "Keep this, Sir Everard Mordaunt, for the sake of one who has purchased the luxury of gratitude at the price of a throne !"

As Clarence glanced from these relics to the figure of Mordaunt, who stood at a little distance leaning against the window with arms folded on his breast, and with eyes abstractedly wandering over the noble woods and extended park, which spread below, he could not but feel that if birth had indeed the power of setting its seal upon the form, it was never more conspicuous than in the broad front and lofty air of the last

descendant of the race by whose memorials he was surrounded. Touched by the fallen fortunes of Mordaunt, and interested by the uncertainty which the chances of law threw over his future fate, Clarence could not resist exclaiming with some warmth and abruptness :

“And by what subterfuge or cavil does the present claimant of these estates hope to dislodge their rightful possessor?”

“Why,” answered Mordaunt, “it is a long story in detail, but briefly told in epitome. My father was a man whose habits greatly exceeded his fortune, and a few months after his death Mr. Vavasour, a distant relation, produced a paper by which it appeared that my father had, for a certain sum of ready money, disposed of his estates to this Mr. Vavasour, upon condition that they should not be claimed, nor the treaty divulged, till after his death ; the reason for this proviso seems to have been the shame my father felt for his exchange, and his fear of the censures of that world to which he was always devoted.”

“But how unjust to you !” said Clarence.

“Not so much so as it seems,” said Mordaunt deprecatingly ; “for I was then but a sickly boy, and according to the physicians, and I sincerely believe according also to my poor father’s belief, almost certain of a premature death. In that case Vavasour would have been the nearest heir ; and this expectancy, by the by, joined to the mortgages on the property, made the sum given ridiculously disproportioned to the value of the estate. I must confess that the news came upon me like a thunderbolt. I should have yielded up possession immediately, but was informed by my lawyers that my father had no legal right to dispose of the property ; the discussion of that right forms the ground of the present lawsuit. But,” continued Mordaunt proudly, yet mournfully, “I am prepared for the worst ; if, indeed, I should call that the worst which can affect neither intellect, nor health, nor character, nor conscience.”

Clarence was silent, and Mordaunt, after a brief pause, once more resumed his guidance. Their tour ended in a large library filled with books, and this, Mordaunt informed his guest was his chosen sitting-room.

An old carved table was covered with works which for the most part possessed for the young mind of Clarence, more accustomed to imagine than reflect, but a very feeble attraction ; on looking over them he, however, found half hid by a huge folio of Hobbes, and another of Locke, a volume of Milton’s poems ; this paved the way to a conversation, in which both

had an equal interest, for both were enthusiastic in the character and genius of that wonderful man for whom "the divine and solemn countenance of Freedom" was dearer than the light of day, and whose solitary spell, accomplishing what the whole family of earth once vainly began upon the plain of Shinar, has built of materials more imperishable than "slime and brick," "a city and a tower whose summit *has* reached to heaven."

It was with mutual satisfaction that Mordaunt and his guest continued their commune, till the hour of dinner was announced to them by a bell, which formerly intended as an alarm, now served the peaceful purpose of a more agreeable summons.

The same servant who had admitted Clarence ushered them through the great hall into the dining-room, and was their solitary attendant during their repast.

The temper of Mordaunt was essentially grave and earnest, and his conversation almost invariably took the tone of his mind; this made their conference turn upon less minute and commonplace topics than one between such new acquaintances, especially of different ages, usually does.

"You will positively go to London to-morrow, then?" said Mordaunt, as the servant, removing the appurtenances of dinner, left them alone.

"Positively," answered Clarence. "I go there to carve my own fortunes, and, to say truth, I am impatient to begin."

Mordaunt looked earnestly at the frank face of the speaker, and wondered that one so young, so well educated, and, from his air and manner, evidently of gentle blood, should appear so utterly thrown upon his own resources.

"I wish you success," said he, after a pause; "and it is a noble part of the organization of this world, that by increasing those riches which are beyond fortune, we do in general take the surest method of obtaining those which are in its reach."

Clarence looked inquiringly at Mordaunt, who perceiving it, continued, "I see that I should explain myself further. I will do so by using the thoughts of a mind not the least beautiful and accomplished which this country has produced. 'Of all which belongs to us,' said Bolingbroke, 'the least valuable parts can alone fall under the will of others. *Whatever is best is safest*; lies out of the reach of human power; can neither be given nor taken away. Such is this great and beautiful work of nature, the world. Such is the mind of man, which contemplates and admires the world whereof it makes the noblest part. These are inseparably ours, and as long as we remain in one we shall enjoy the other.'"

“Beautiful, indeed!” exclaimed Clarence, with the enthusiasm of a young and pure heart, to which every loftier sentiment is always beautiful.

“And true as beautiful!” said Mordaunt. “Nor is this all, for the mind can even dispense with that world, ‘of which it forms a part,’ if we can create within it a world still more inaccessible to chance. But (and I now return to and explain my former observation) the means by which we can effect this *peculiar* world can be rendered equally subservient to our advancement and prosperity in that which we share in common with our race; for the riches, which by the aid of wisdom we heap up in the storehouses of the mind, are, though not the only, the most customary coin by which external prosperity is bought. So that the philosophy, which can alone give independence to ourselves, becomes, under the name of honesty, the best policy in commerce with our kind.”

In conversation of this nature, which the sincerity and lofty enthusiasm of Mordaunt rendered interesting to Clarence, despite the distaste to the serious so ordinary to youth, the hours passed on, till the increasing evening warned Linden to depart.

“Adieu!” said he to Mordaunt. “I know not when we shall meet again, but if we ever do, I will make it my boast, whether in prosperity or misfortune, not to have forgotten the pleasure I have this day enjoyed!”

Returning his guest’s farewell with a warmth unusual to his manner, Mordaunt followed him to the door, and saw him depart.

Fate ordained that they should pursue, in very different paths, their several destinies; nor did it afford them an opportunity of meeting again, till years and events had severely tried the virtue of one, and materially altered the prospects of the other.

The next morning Clarence Linden was on his road to London.

CHAPTER VII.

“Upon my word,” cries Jones, “thou art a very odd fellow, and I like thy humor extremely.”—FIELDING.

THE rumbling and jolting vehicle, which conveyed Clarence to the metropolis, stopped at the door of a tavern in Holborn. Linden was ushered into a close coffee-room, and presented

with a bill of fare. While he was deliberating between the respective merits of mutton chops and beef-steaks, a man with a brown coat, brown breeches, and a brown wig walked into the room; he cast a curious glance at Clarence, and then turned to the waiter.

"A pair of slippers!"

"Yes, sir," and the waiter disappeared.

"I suppose," said the brown gentleman to Clarence, "I suppose, sir, you are the gentleman just come to town?"

"You are right, sir," said Clarence.

"Very well, very well, indeed," resumed the stranger, musingly. "I took the liberty of looking at your boxes in the passage; I knew a lady, sir, a relation of yours, I think."

"Sir!" exclaimed Linden, coloring violently.

"At least I suppose, for her name was just the same as yours, only, at least, one letter difference between them: yours is *Linden*, I see, sir; hers was *Minden*. Am I right in my conjecture, that you are related to her?"

"Sir," answered Clarence gravely, "notwithstanding the similarity of our names, we are not related."

"Very extraordinary," replied the stranger.

"Very," repeated Linden.

"I had the honor, sir," said the brown gentleman, "to make Mrs. Minden many presents of value, and I should have been very happy to have obliged you in the same manner, had you been any way connected with that worthy gentlewoman."

"You are very kind," said Linden, "you are very kind; and since such were your intentions, I believe I *must* have been connected with Mrs. Minden. At all events, as you justly observe, there is only the difference of a letter between our names; a discrepancy too slight, I am sure, to alter your benevolent intentions."

Here the waiter returned with the slippers.

The stranger slowly unbuttoned his gaiters. "Sir," said he to Linden, "we will renew our conversation presently."

No sooner had the generous friend of Mrs. Minden deposited his feet into their easy tenements, than he quitted the room.

"Pray," said Linden to the waiter, when he had ordered his simple repast, "who is that gentleman in brown?"

"*Mr. Brown*," replied the waiter.

"And who, or what is Mr. Brown?" asked our hero.

Before the waiter could reply, Mr. Brown returned, with a large bandbox, carefully enveloped in a blue handkerchief.

"You come from ——, sir?" said Mr. Brown, quietly seating himself at the same table as Linden.

"No, sir, I do not."

"From ——, then?"

"No, sir!—from W——."

"W——?—ay—well, I knew a lady with a name very like W—— (the late Lady Waddilove), extremely well. I made her some valuable presents—her ladyship was very sensible of it."

"I don't doubt it, sir," replied Clarence; "such instances of general beneficence rarely occur!"

"I have some magnificent relics of her ladyship in this box," returned Mr. Brown.

"Really! then she was no less generous than yourself, I presume?"

"Yes, her ladyship *was* remarkably generous. About a week before she died (the late Lady Waddilove was quite sensible of her danger), she called me to her—"Brown," said she, 'you are a good creature; I have had my most valuable things from you. I am not ungrateful; I will leave you—*my maid!* She is as clever as you are, and as good.' I took the hint, sir, and married. It was an excellent bargain. My wife is a charming woman; she entirely fitted up Mrs. Minden's wardrobe, and I furnished the house. Mrs. Minden was greatly indebted to us."

"Heaven help me!" thought Clarence, "the man is certainly mad."

The waiter entered with the dinner; and Mr. Brown, who seemed to have a delicate aversion to any conversation in the presence of the Ganymede of the Holborn tavern, immediately ceased his communications; meanwhile, Clarence took the opportunity to survey him more minutely than he had hitherto done.

His new acquaintance was in age about forty-eight; in stature, rather under the middle height; and thin, dried, withered, yet muscular withal, like a man who, in stinting his stomach for the sake of economy, does not the less enjoy the power of undergoing any fatigue or exertion that an object of adequate importance may demand. We have said already that he was attired, like twilight, "in a suit of sober brown"; and there was a formality, a precision, and a cat-like sort of cleanliness in his garb, which savored strongly of the respectable coxcombrity of the counting-house. His face was lean, it is true, but not emaciated; and his complexion, sallow and adust, harmonized well with the colors of his clothing. An eye of the darkest hazel, sharp, shrewd, and flashing at times, especially at the mention of the

euphonious name of Lady Waddilove—a name frequently upon the lips of the inheritor of her Abigail—with a fire that might be called brilliant, was of that modest species which can seldom encounter the straightforward glance of another; on the contrary, it seemed restlessly uneasy in any settled place, and wandered from ceiling to floor, and corner to corner, with an inquisitive though apparently careless glance, as if seeking for something to admire or haply to appropriate; it also seemed to be the special care of Mr. Brown to veil, as far as he was able, the vivacity of his looks beneath an expression of open and unheeding good nature, an expression strangely enough contrasting with the closeness and sagacity which nature had indelibly stamped upon features pointed, aquiline, and impressed with a strong mixture of the Judaical physiognomy. The manner and bearing of this gentleman partook of the same undecided character as his countenance; they seemed to be struggling between civility and importance; a real eagerness to make the acquaintance of the person he addressed, and an assumed recklessness of the advantages which that acquaintance could bestow; it was like the behavior of a man who is desirous of having the best possible motives imputed to him, but is fearful lest that desire should not be utterly fulfilled. At the first glance you would have pledged yourself for his respectability; at the second, you would have half suspected him to be a rogue; and, after you had been half an hour in his company, you would confess yourself in the obscurest doubt which was the better guess, the first or the last.

“Waiter!” said Mr. Brown, looking enviously at the viands upon which Linden, having satisfied his curiosity, was now, with all the appetite of youth, regaling himself.

“Waiter!”

“Yes, sir!”

“Bring me a sandwich—and—and, waiter, see that I have plenty of—plenty of——”

“What, sir?”

“Plenty of mustard, waiter.”

“Mustard” (and here Mr. Brown addressed himself to Clarence) “is a very wonderful assistance to the digestion. By the by, sir, if you want any curiously fine mustard, I can procure you some pots quite capital—a great favor, though—they were smuggled from France, especially for the use of the late Lady Waddilove.”

“Thank you,” said Linden dryly; “I shall be very happy to accept anything you may wish to offer me”

Mr. Brown took a pocket-book from his pouch. "Six pots of mustard, sir—shall I say six?"

"As many as you please," replied Clarence; and Mr. Brown wrote down "Six pots of French mustard."

"You are a very young gentleman, sir," said Mr. Brown, "probably intended for some profession—I don't mean to be impertinent, but if I can be of any assistance—"

"You can, sir," replied Linden, "and immediately—have the kindness to ring the bell."

Mr. Brown, with a grave smile, did as he was desired; the waiter re-entered, and receiving a whispered order from Clarence, again disappeared.

"What profession did you say, sir?" renewed Mr. Brown artfully.

"None!" replied Linden.

"Oh, very well—very well indeed. Then as an idle, independent gentleman, you will of course be a bit of a beau—want some shirts, possibly—fine cravats, too—gentlemen wear a particular pattern now—gloves, gold, or shall I say *gilt* chain, watch and seals, a ring or two, and a snuff-box?"

"Sir, you are vastly obliging," said Clarence, in undisguised surprise.

"Not at all, I would do any thing for a relation of Mrs. Minden." The waiter re-entered; "Sir," said he to Linden, "your room is quite ready."

"I am glad to hear it," said Clarence, rising. "Mr. Brown, I have the honor of wishing you a good evening."

"Stay, sir—stay; you have not looked into these things belonging to the late Lady Waddilove."

"Another time," said Clarence, hastily.

"To-morrow, at ten o'clock," muttered Mr. Brown.

"I am exceedingly glad I have got rid of that fellow," said Linden to himself, as he stretched his limbs in his easy-chair, and drank off the last glass of his pint of port. "If I have not already seen, I have already guessed enough of the world, to know that you are to look to your pockets when a man offers you a present; they who 'give,' also 'take away.' So here I am in London, with an order for £1000 in my purse, the wisdom of Dr. Latinus in my head, and the health of eighteen in my veins; will it not be my own fault if I do not both *enjoy* and *make* myself—"

And then, yielding to meditations of future success, partaking strongly of the inexperienced and sanguine temperament of the soliloquist, Clarence passed the hours, till his pillow sum-

moned him to dreams no less ardent, and perhaps no less unreal.

CHAPTER VIII.

Oh, how I long to be employed.—*Every Man in his Humor.*

CLARENCE was sitting the next morning over the very unsatisfactory breakfast which tea made out of broomsticks, and cream out of chalk (adulteration thrived even in 17—), afforded, when the waiter threw open the door, and announced Mr. Brown.

“Just in time, sir, you perceive,” said Mr. Brown; “I am punctuality itself: exactly a quarter of a minute to ten. I have brought you the pots of French mustard, and I have some very valuable articles which you *must* want, besides.”

“Thank you, sir,” said Linden, not well knowing what to say; and Mr. Brown, untying a silk handkerchief, produced three shirts, two pots of pomatum, a tobacco canister, with a German pipe, four pair of silk stockings, two gold seals, three rings, and a stuffed parrot!

“Beautiful articles these, sir,” said Mr. Brown, with a snuffle “of inward sweetness long drawn out,” and expressive of great admiration of his offered treasures; “beautiful articles, sir, ar’n’t they?”

“Very, the parrot in particular,” said Clarence.

“Yes, sir,” returned Mr. Brown, “the parrot is indeed quite a jewel; it belonged to the late Lady Waddilove; I offer it to you with considerable regret, for—”

“Oh!” interrupted Clarence “pray do not rob yourself of such a jewel, it really is of no use to me.”

“I know that, sir—I know that,” replied Mr. Brown; “but it will be of use to your friends; it will be inestimable to any old aunt, sir, any maiden lady living at Hackney, any curious elderly gentleman fond of a nick-nack. I knew you would know some one to send it to as a present, even though you should not want it yourself.”

“Bless me!” thought Linden, “was there ever such generosity! Not content with providing for my wants, he extends his liberality even to any possible relations I may possess!”

Mr. Brown now re-tied “the beautiful articles” in his handkerchief. “Shall I leave them, sir?” said he.

“Why, really,” said Clarence, “I thought yesterday that you were in jest; but you must be aware that I cannot accept pres-

ents from any gentleman so much—so much a stranger to me as you are.”

“No, sir, I *am* aware of that,” replied Mr. Brown; “and in order to remove the unpleasantness of such a feeling, sir, on your part—merely in order to do that, I assure you with no other view, sir, in the world—I have just noted down the articles on this piece of paper; but, as you will perceive, at a price so low, as still to make them actually presents in everything but the name. Oh, sir, I perfectly understand your delicacy, and would not, for the world, violate it.”

So saying, Mr. Brown put a paper into Linden’s hands the substance of which a very little more experience of the world would have enabled Clarence to foresee: it ran thus:

CLARENCE LINDEN, ESQ., DR.

TO MR. MORRIS BROWN.

To Six Pots of French Mustard,	£ 1 4 0
To Three Superfine Holland Shirts, with Cambric Bosoms, complete,	4 1 0
To Two Pots of Superior French Pomatum,	0 10 0
To a Tobacco Canister of enamelled Tin, with a finely executed head of the Pretender: slight flaw in the same.	0 12 6
To a German Pipe, second hand, as good as new, belonging to the late Lady Waddilove.	1 18 0
To Four Pair of Black Silk Hose, ditto, belonging to her Ladyship’s husband.	2 8 0
To two superfine Embossed Gold Watch Seals, with a Classical Motto and Device to each, <i>viz.</i> , Mouse Trap and “Prenez Garde,” to one, and “Who the devil can this be from?”* to the other	1 1 0
To a remarkably fine Antique Ring, having the head of a Monkey.	0 16 6
A ditto, with blue stones.	0 12 6
A ditto, with green ditto	0 12 6
A stuffed green parrot, a remarkable favorite of the late Lady W.	2 2 0
Sum Total	15 18 0
Deduction for Ready Money	0 13 6
	15 4 6
Mr. Brown’s profits for Brokerage.	1 10 0
Sum Total	£16 14 6

Received of Clarence Linden, Esq., this day of 17—.

It would have been no unamusing study to watch the expression of Clarence’s face as it lengthened over each article until

* One would not have thought these ingenious devices had been of so ancient a date as the year 17—.

he had reached the final conclusion. He then carefully folded up the paper, restored it to Mr. Brown, with a low bow, and said, "Excuse me, sir, I will not take advantage of your generosity; keep your parrot and other treasures for some more worthy person. I cannot accept of what you are pleased to term your very valuable *presents!*"

"Oh, very well, very well," said Mr. Brown, pocketing the paper, and seeming perfectly unconcerned at the termination of his proposals; "perhaps I can serve you in some other way?"

"In none, I thank you," replied Linden.

"Just consider, sir!—you will want lodgings: I can find them for you, cheaper than you can yourself; or perhaps you would prefer going into a nice, quiet, genteel family, where you can have both board and lodging, and be treated in every way as the pet child of the master?"

A thought crossed Linden's mind. He was going to stay in town some time; he was ignorant of its ways; he had neither friends nor relations, at least none whom he could visit and consult; moreover, hotels, he knew, were expensive; lodgings, though cheaper, might, if tolerably comfortable, greatly exceed the sum prudence would allow him to expend; would not this plan proposed by Mr. Brown, of going into a "nice, quiet, genteel family," be the most advisable one he could adopt? The generous benefactor of the late and ever-to-be-remembered Lady Waddilove perceived his advantage, and, making the most of Clarence's hesitation, continued—

"I know of a charming little abode, sir, situated in the suburbs of London, quite *rus in urbe*, as the scholars say; you can have a delightful little back parlor, looking out upon the garden, and all to yourself I dare say."

"And pray, Mr. Brown," interrupted Linden, "what price do you think would be demanded for such enviable accommodation?—If you offer me them as '*a present,*' I shall have nothing to say to them."

"Oh, sir," answered Mr. Brown, "the price will be a trifle—a mere trifle; but I will inquire, and let you know the exact sum in the course of the day—all they want is a respectable, gentlemanlike lodger; and I am sure so near a relation of Mrs. Minden will, upon my recommendation, be received with avidity. Then you wont have any of these valuable articles, sir? You'll repent it, sir—take my word for it—hem!"

"Since," replied Clarence drily, "your word appears of so much more value than your articles, pardon me if I prefer taking the former instead of the latter."

Mr. Brown forced a smile. "Well, sir, very well, very well, indeed. You will not go out before two o'clock? and at that time I shall call upon you respecting the commission you have favored me with."

"I will await you," said Clarence; and he bowed Mr. Brown out of the room.

"Now, really," said Linden to himself, as he paced the narrow limits of his apartment, "I do not see what better plan I can pursue—but let me well consider what is my ultimate object. A high step in the world's ladder!—how is this to be obtained? First, by the regular method of professions; but what profession should I adopt? The church is incompatible with my object—the army and navy with my means. Next come the irregular methods of adventure and enterprise—such as marriage with a fortune"—here he paused and looked at the glass—"the speculation of a political pamphlet, or an ode to the minister—attendance on some dying miser of my own name, without a relation in the world—or, in short, any other mode of making money that may decently offer itself. Now, situated as I am, without a friend in this great city, I might as well purchase my experience at as cheap a rate and in as brief a time as possible, nor do I see any plan of doing so more promising than that proposed by Mr. Brown."

These and such like reflections, joined to the inspiring pages of the "Newgate Calendar," and "The Covent Garden Magazine," two works which Clarence dragged from their concealment under a black tea-tray, afforded him ample occupation till the hour of two, punctual to which time Mr. Morris Brown returned.

"Well, sir," said Clarence, "what is your report?"

The friend of the late Lady W. wiped his brow and gave three long sighs before he replied: "A long walk, sir—a very long walk I have had; but I have succeeded. No thanks, sir—no thanks—the lady, a most charming, delightful, amiable woman, will receive you with pleasure—you will have the use of a back parlor (as I said) all the morning, and a beautiful little bedroom entirely to yourself—think of that, sir. You will have an egg for breakfast, and you will dine with the family at three o'clock; quite fashionable hours you see, sir."

"And the terms?" said Linden impatiently.

"Why, sir," replied Mr. Brown, "the lady was too genteel to talk to me about them—you had better walk with me to her house and see if you cannot yourself agree with her."

"I will," said Clarence. "Will you wait here till I have dressed?"

Mr. Brown bowed his assent.

"I might as well," thought Clarence, as he ascended to his bedroom, "inquire into the character of this gentleman, to whose good offices I am so rashly entrusting myself." He rang his bell—the chambermaid appeared, and was dismissed for the waiter. The character was soon asked, and soon given. For our reader's sake, we will somewhat enlarge upon it.

Mr. Morris Brown originally came into the world with the simple appellation of Moses, a name which his father—honest man—had, as the Minorities can still testify, honorably borne before him. Scarcely, however, had the little Moses attained the age of five, when his father, for causes best known to himself, became a Christian. Somehow or other there is a most potent connection between the purse and the conscience, and accordingly the blessings of heaven descended in golden showers upon the proselyte. "I shall die worth a plum," said Moses the elder (who had taken unto himself the Christian cognomen of Brown); "I shall die worth a plum," repeated he, as he went one fine morning to speculate at the Exchange. A change of news, sharp and unexpected as a change of wind, lowered the stocks and blighted the plum. Mr. Brown was in the Gazette that week, and his wife in weeds for him the next. He left behind him, besides the said wife, several debts and his son Moses. Beggared by the former, our widow took a small shop in Wardour Street to support the latter. Patient, but enterprising—cautious of risking pounds, indefatigable in raising pence—the little Moses inherited the propensities of his Hebrew ancestors; and, though not so capable as his immediate progenitor of making a fortune, he was at least far less likely to lose one. In spite, however, of all the industry, both of mother and son, the gains of the shop were but scanty; to increase them capital was required, and all Mr. Moses Brown's capital lay in his brain. "It is a bad foundation," said the mother, with a sigh. "Not at all!" said the son, and, leaving the shop, he turned broker. Now a broker is a man who makes an income out of other people's funds—a gleaner of stray extravagances; and by doing the public the honor of living upon them, may fairly be termed a little sort of state minister in his way. What with haunting sales, hawking china, selling the curiosities of one old lady, and purchasing the same for another, Mr. Brown managed to enjoy a very comfortable existence. Great pains and small gains will at last

invert their antitheses, and make little trouble and great profit; so that by the time Mr. Brown had attained his fortieth year, the petty shop had become a large warehouse; and, if the worthy Moses, now christianized into Morris, was not so sanguine as his father in the gathering of plums, he had been at least as fortunate in the collecting of windfalls. To say truth, the Abigail of the defunct Lady Waddilove had been no unprofitable helpmate to our broker. As ingenious as benevolent, she was the owner of certain rooms of great resort in the neighborhood of St. James's—rooms where caps and appointments were made better than any place else, and where credit was given, and character lost, upon terms equally advantageous to the accommodating Mrs. Brown.

Meanwhile her husband, continuing through liking what he had begun through necessity, slackened not his industry in augmenting his fortune; on the contrary, small profits were but a keener incentive to large ones—as the glutton only sharpened by luncheon his appetite for dinner. Still was Mr. Brown the very Alcibiades of brokers—the universal genius—suiting every man to his humor. Business, of whatever description, from the purchase of a borough to that of a brooch, was alike the object of Mr. Brown's most zealous pursuit; taverns, where country cousins put up—rustic habitations, where ancient maidens resided—auction, or barter—city, or hamlet—all were the same to that enterprising spirit, which made out of every acquaintance—a commission! Sagacious and acute, Mr. Brown perceived the value of eccentricity in covering design, and found, by experience, that whatever can be laughed at as odd will be gravely considered as harmless. Several of the broker's peculiarities were, therefore, more artificial than natural; and many were the sly bargains which he smuggled into effect under the comfortable cloak of singularity. No wonder, then, that the crafty Morris grew gradually in repute as a person of infinite utility and excellent qualifications; or that the penetrating friends of his deceased sire bowed to the thriving itinerant, with a respect which they denied to many in loftier professions and more general esteem.

CHAPTER IX.

"Trust me you have an exceeding fine lodging here—very neat and private."—BEN JONSON.

IT was a tolerably long walk to the abode of which the worthy broker spoke in such high terms of commendation. At length, at the suburbs towards Paddington, Mr. Brown stopped at a very small house : it stood rather retired from its surrounding neighbors, which were of a loftier and more pretending aspect than itself, and, in its awkward shape and pitiful bashfulness, looked exceedingly like a school-boy finding himself for the first time in a *grown-up* party, and shrinking with all possible expedition into the obscurest corner he can discover. Passing through a sort of a garden, in which a spot of grass lay in the embraces of a stripe of gravel, Mr. Brown knocked upon a very bright knocker at a very new door. The latter was opened, and a foot-boy appeared.

"Is Mrs. Copperas within?" asked the broker.

"Yees, sir," said the boy.

"Show this gentleman and myself upstairs," resumed Brown.

"Yees," reiterated the lackey.

Up a singularly narrow staircase, into a singularly diminutive drawing-room, Clarence and his guide were ushered. There, seated on a little chair by a little work-table with one foot on a little stool and one hand on a little book, was a little—very little lady.

"This is the young gentleman," said Mr. Brown ; and Clarence bowed low, in token of the introduction.

The lady returned the salutation with an affected bend, and said, in a mincing and grotesquely subdued tone—"You are desirous, sir, of entering into the bosom of my family. We possess accommodations of a most elegant description ; accustomed to the genteelest circles—enjoying the pure breezes of the High-gate hills—and presenting to any guest we may receive the attractions of a home rather than a lodging, you will find our retreat no less eligible than unique. You are, I presume, sir, in some profession—some city avocation—or—or trade?"

"I have the misfortune," said he, smiling, "to belong to no profession."

The lady looked hard at the speaker, and then at the broker. With certain people, to belong to no profession is to be of no respectability.

“The most unexceptionable references will be given—and *required*,” resumed Mrs. Copperas.

“Certainly,” said Mr. Brown, “certainly, the gentleman is a relation of Mrs. Minden, a *very* old customer of mine.”

“In that case,” said Mrs. Copperas, “the affair is settled”: and rising, she rung the bell, and ordered the footboy, whom she addressed by the grandiloquent name of *de Warens*, to show the gentleman the apartments. While Clarence was occupied in surveying the luxuries of a box at the top of the house, called a bed-chamber, which seemed just large and just hot enough for a chrysalis, and a corresponding box below, termed the back parlor, which would certainly *not* have been large enough for the said chrysalis, when turned into a butterfly, Mr. Morris Brown, after duly expatiating on the merits of Clarence, proceeded to speak of the terms; these were soon settled, for Clarence was yielding; and the lady not above three times as extortionate as she ought to have been.

Before Linden left the house, the bargain was concluded. That night his trunks were removed to his new abode, and having with incredible difficulty been squeezed into the bed-room, Clarence surveyed them with the same astonishment with which the virtuoso beheld the flies in amber:

“Not that the things were either rich or rare,
He wonder’d how the devil they got there!”

CHAPTER X.

“Such scenes had tempered with a pensive grace,
The maiden lustre of that faultless face;
Had hung a sad and dream-like spell upon
The gliding music of her silver tone,
And shaded the soft soul which loved to lie
In the deep pathos of that volumed eye.”—*O’Neill, or the Rebel.*

“The love thus kindled between them was of no common or calculating nature; it was vigorous and delicious, and at times so suddenly intense as to appear to their young hearts for a moment or so, with almost an awful character.”—*Inesilla.*

THE reader will figure to himself a small chamber, in a remote wing of a large and noble mansion—the walls were covered with sketches, whose extreme delicacy of outline and coloring betrayed the sex of the artist; a few shelves filled with books supported vases of flowers. A harp stood neglected at the

farther end of the room, and just above hung the slender prison of one of those golden wanderers from the Canary Isles, which bear to our colder land some of the gentlest music of their skies and zephyrs. The window, reaching to the ground, was open, and looked through the clusters of jessamine and honeysuckle which surrounded the low verandah beyond, upon thick and frequent copses of blossoming shrubs, redolent of spring, and sparkling in the sunny tears of a May shower, which had only just wept itself away. Embosomed in these little groves lay plots of flowers, girdled with turf as green as ever wooed the nightly dances of the fairies ; and afar off, through one artful opening, the eye caught the glittering wanderings of water, on whose light and smiles the universal happiness of the young year seemed reflected.

But in that chamber, heedless of all around, and cold to the joy with which everything else, equally youthful, beautiful, and innocent, seemed breathing and inspired, sat a very young and lovely female. Her cheek leant upon her hand, and large tears flowed fast and burningly over the small and delicate fingers. The comb that had confined her tresses lay at her feet, and the high dress which concealed her swelling breast had been loosened, to give vent to the suffocating and indignant throbbings which had rebelled against its cincture—all appeared, to announce that bitterness of grief when the mind, as it were, wreaks its scorn upon the body in its contempt for external seemings, and to proclaim that the present more subdued and softened sorrow had only succeeded to a burst far less quiet and uncontrolled. Woe to those who eat the bread of dependence—their tears are wrung from the inmost sources of the heart.

Isabel St. Leger was the only child of a captain in the army, who died in her infancy ; her mother had survived him but a few months ; and to the reluctant care and cold affections of a distant and wealthy relation of the same name, the warm-hearted and penniless orphan was consigned. Major-General Cornelius St. Leger, whose riches had been purchased in India at the price of his constitution, was of a temper as hot as his curries, and he wreaked it the more unsparingly on his ward, because the superior ill-temper of his maiden sister had prevented his giving vent to it upon her. That sister, Miss Diana St. Leger, was a meagre gentlewoman of about six feet high, with a loud voice and commanding aspect. Long in awe of her brother, she rejoiced at heart to find some one whom she had such right and reason to make in awe of herself ; and from the age of four to that of seventeen, Isabel suffered every insult and every

degradation which could be inflicted upon her by the tyranny of her two protectors. Her spirit, however, was far from being broken by the rude shocks it received ; on the contrary, her mind, gentleness itself to the kind, rose indignantly against the unjust. It was true that the sense of wrong did not break forth audibly : for, though susceptible, Isabel was meek, and her pride was concealed by the outward softness and feminacy of her temper ; but she stole away from those who had wounded her heart, or trampled upon its feelings, and nourished with secret, but passionate, tears the memory of the harshness or injustice she had endured. Yet she was not vindictive—her resentment was a noble not a debasing feeling ; once, when she was yet a child, Miss Diana was attacked with a fever of the most malignant and infectious kind ; her brother loved himself far too well to risk his safety by attending her ; the servants were too happy to wreak their hatred under the pretence of obeying their fears ; they consequently followed the example of their master ; and Miss Diana St. Leger might have gone down to her ancestors “unwept, unhonored, and unsung,” if Isabel had not volunteered and enforced her attendance. Hour after hour her fairy form flitted around the sick chamber, or sat mute and breathless by the feverish bed ; she had neither fear for contagion nor bitterness for past oppression ; everything vanished beneath the one hope of serving, the one gratification of feeling herself, in the wide waste of creation, not utterly without use, as she had been hitherto without friends.

Miss St. Leger recovered. “For your recovery, in the first place,” said the doctor, “you will thank Heaven ; in the second you will thank your young relation,” and for several days the convalescent did overwhelm the happy Isabel with her praises and caresses. But this change did not last long : the chaste Diana had been too spoiled by the prosperity of many years, for the sickness of a single month to effect much good in her disposition. Her old habits were soon resumed ; and though it is probable that her *heart* was in reality softened towards the poor Isabel, that softening by no means extended to her temper. In truth, the brother and sister were not without affection for one so beautiful and good, but they had been torturing slaves all their lives, and their affection was, and could be, but that of a task-master or a planter.

But Isabel was the only relation who ever appeared within their walls, and among the guests, with whom the luxurious mansion was crowded, she passed no less for the heiress than the dependant ; to her, therefore, was offered the homage of

many lips and hearts, and if her pride was perpetually galled, and her feelings insulted in private, her vanity (had that equalled her pride, and her feelings, in its susceptibility) would in no slight measure have recompensed her in public. Unhappily, however, her vanity was the least prominent quality she possessed; and the compliments of mercenary adulation were not more rejected by her heart than despised by her understanding. Yet did she bear within her a deep fund of buried tenderness, and a mine of girlish and enthusiastic romance; dangerous gifts to one so situated, which, while they gave to her secret moments of solitude a powerful, but vague attraction, probably only prepared for her future years the snare which might betray them into error, or the delusion which would color them with regret.

Among those whom the ostentatious hospitality of General St. Leger attracted to his house, was one of very different character and pretensions to the rest. Formed to be unpopular with the generality of men, the very qualities that made him so were those which principally fascinate the higher description of women of ancient birth, which rendered still more displeasing the pride and coldness of his mien; of talents peculiarly framed to attract interest as well as esteem; of a deep and somewhat morbid melancholy, which, while it turned from ordinary ties, inclined yearningly towards passionate affections; of a temper, where romance was only concealed from the many, to become more seductive to the few; unsocial, but benevolent; disliked, but respected; of the austere demeanor, but of passions the most fervid, though the most carefully concealed,—this man united within himself all that repels the common mass of his species, and all that irresistibly wins and fascinates the rare and romantic few. To these qualities were added a carriage and bearing of that high and commanding order, which men mistake for arrogance and pretension, and women overrate in proportion to its contrast to their own. Something of mystery there was in the commencement of the deep and eventful love which took place between this person and Isabel, which I have never been able to learn: whatever it was, it seemed to expedite and heighten the ordinary progress of love; and when in the dim twilight, beneath the first melancholy smile of the earliest star, their hearts opened audibly to each other, that confession had been made silently long since, and registered in the inmost recesses of the soul.

But their passion, which began in prosperity, was soon darkened. Whether he took offence at the haughtiness of

Isabel's lover, or whether he desired to retain about him an object which he could torment and tyrannize over, no sooner did the General discover the attachment of his young relation, than he peremptorily forbade its indulgence, and assumed so insolent and overbearing an air towards the lover, that the latter felt he could no longer repeat his visits to, or even continue his acquaintance with, the nabob.

To add to these adverse circumstances, a relation of the lover, from whom his expectations had been large, was so enraged, not only at the insult his cousin had received, but at the very idea of his forming an alliance with one in so dependent a situation, and connected with such new blood, as Isabel St. Leger, that, with that arrogance which relations, however distant, think themselves authorized to assume, he enjoined his cousin, upon pain of forfeiture of favor and fortune, to renounce all idea of so disparaging an alliance. The one thus addressed was not of a temper patiently to submit to such threats; he answered them with disdain, and the breach, so dangerous to his pecuniary interest, was already begun.

So far had the history of our lover proceeded at the time in which we have introduced Isabel to the reader, and described to him the chamber to which, in all her troubles and humiliations, she was accustomed to fly, as to a sad, but still unviolated, sanctuary of retreat.

The quiet of this asylum was first broken by a slight rustling among the leaves; but Isabel's back was turned towards the window, and in the engrossment of her feelings she heard it not. The thick copse that darkened the left side of the verandah was pierced, and a man passed within the covered space, and stood still and silent before the window, intently gazing upon the figure which (though the face was turned from him) betrayed in its proportions that beauty which, in his eyes, had neither an equal nor a fault.

The figure of the stranger, though not very tall, was above the ordinary height, and gracefully, rather than robustly, formed. He was dressed in the darkest colors and the simplest fashion, which rendered yet more striking the nobleness of his mien, as well as the clear and almost delicate paleness of his complexion; his features were finely and accurately formed; and had not ill health, long travel, or severe thought deepened too much the lines of the countenance, and sharpened its contour, the classic perfection of those features would have rendered him undeniably and even eminently handsome: as it was, the paleness and the somewhat worn character of his face, joined to an expres-

sion, at first glance, rather haughty and repellent, made him lose in physical what he certainly gained in intellectual beauty. His eyes were large, deep, and melancholy, and had the hat which now hung over his brow been removed, it would have displayed a forehead of remarkable boldness and power.

Altogether the face was cast in a rare and intellectual mould, and, if wanting in those more luxuriant attractions common to the age of the stranger, who could scarcely have attained his twenty-sixth year, it betokened, at least, that predominance of mind over body, which, in some eyes, is the most requisite characteristic of masculine beauty.

With a soft and noiseless step, the stranger moved from his station, without the window, and, entering the room, stole towards the spot on which Isabel was sitting. He leant over her chair, and his eye rested upon his own picture, and a letter in his own writing, over which the tears of the young orphan flowed fast.

A moment more of agitated happiness for one—of unconscious and continued sadness for the other—

“’Tis past—her lover’s at her feet.”

And what indeed “was to them the world beside, with all its changes of time and tide?” Joy—hope—all blissful and bright sensations, lay mingled like meeting waters, in one sunny stream of heartfelt and unfathomable enjoyment—but this passed away, and the remembrance of bitterness and evil succeeded.

“Oh, Algernon!” said Isabel, in a low voice, “is this your promise?”

“Believe me,” said Mordaunt, for it was indeed he, “I struggled long with my feelings, but in vain; and for both our sakes, I rejoice at the conquest they obtained. I listened only to a deceitful delusion when I imagined I was obeying the dictates of reason. Ah, dearest, why should we part for the sake of dubious and distant evils, when the misery of absence is the most certain, the most unceasing evil we can endure?”

“For your sake, and therefore for mine!” interrupted Isabel, struggling with her tears. “I am a beggar and an outcast. You must not link your fate with mine. I could bear, Heaven knows how willingly, poverty and all its evils *for* you and *with* you; but I cannot *bring* them upon you.”

“Nor will you,” said Mordaunt passionately, as he covered the hand he held with his burning kisses. “Have I not enough for both of us? It is my love, not poverty, that I beseech you to share.”

“No! Algernon, you cannot deceive me: your own estate will be torn from you by the law: if you marry me, your cousin will not assist you: I, you know too well, can command nothing; and I shall see you, for whom in my fond and bright dreams I have presaged everything great and exalted, buried in an obscurity from which your talents can never rise, and suffering the pangs of poverty, and dependence, and humiliation like my own—and—and—I—should be the wretch who caused you all. Never, Algernon, never!—I love you too—too well!”

But the effort which wrung forth the determination of the tone in which these words were uttered was too violent to endure; and, as the full desolation of her despair crowded fast and dark upon the orphan's mind, she sank back upon her chair in very sickness of soul, nor heeded, in her unconscious misery, that her hand was yet clasped by her lover, and that her head drooped upon his bosom.

“Isabel,” he said, in a low, sweet tone, which to her ear seemed the concentration of all earthly music—“Isabel—look up—my own—my beloved—look up and hear me. Perhaps you say truly when you tell me that the possessions of my house shall melt away from me, and that my relation will not offer to me the precarious bounty which, even if he did offer, I would reject; but, dearest, are there not a thousand paths open to me—the law—the state—the army?—you are silent, Isabel—speak!”

Isabel did not reply, but the soft eyes which rested upon his told, in their despondency, how little her reason was satisfied by the arguments he urged.

“Besides,” he continued, “we know not yet whether the law may not decide in my favor—at all events, years may pass before the judgment is given—those years make the prime and verdure of our lives—let us not waste them in mourning over blighted hopes and severed hearts—let us snatch what happiness is yet in our power, nor anticipate, while the heavens are still bright above us, the burden of the thunder or the cloud.”

Isabel was one of the least selfish and most devoted of human beings, yet she must be forgiven if at that moment her resolution faltered, and the overpowering thought of being in reality *his* forever flashed upon her mind. It passed from her the moment it was formed, and rising from a situation in which the touch of that dear hand, and the breath of those wooing lips endangered the virtue, and weakened the strength, of her resolves, she withdrew herself from his grasp, and while she averted

her eyes, which dared not encounter his, she said in a low but firm voice:

"It is in vain, Algernon; it is in vain. I can be to you nothing but a blight or burthen, nothing but a source of privation and anguish. Think you that I *will* be this?—no, I will not darken your fair hopes, and impede your reasonable ambition. Go (and here her voice faltered for a moment, but soon recovered its tone), go Algernon, *dear* Algernon; and, if my foolish heart will not ask you to think of me no more, I can at least implore you to think of me only as one who would die rather than cost you a moment of that poverty and debasement, the bitterness of which she has felt herself, and who, for that very reason, tears herself away from you forever."

"Stay, Isabel, stay!" cried Mordaunt, as he caught hold of her robe, "give me but one word more, and you shall leave me. Say that if I can create for myself a new source of independence; if I can carve out a road where the ambition you erroneously impute to me can be gratified, as well as the more moderate wishes our station has made natural to us to form—say that if I do this I may permit myself to hope—say, that *when* I have done it, I may claim you as my own!"

Isabel paused, and turned once more her face towards his own. Her lips moved, and though the words died within her heart, yet Mordaunt read well their import in the blushing cheek and the heaving bosom, and the lips which one ray of hope and comfort was sufficient to kindle into smiles. He gazed, and all obstacles, all difficulties, disappeared; the gulf of time seemed past, and he felt as if already he had earned and won his reward.

He approached her yet nearer; one kiss on those lips, one pressure of that thrilling hand, one long, last embrace of that shrinking and trembling form—and then, as the door closed upon his view, he felt that the sunshine of nature had passed away, and that in the midst of the laughing and peopled earth *he* stood in darkness and alone.

CHAPTER XI.

"He who would know mankind must be at home with all men."—STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

WE left Clarence safely deposited in his little lodgings. Whether from the heat of his apartments or the restlessness a migration of beds produces in certain constitutions, his slumbers on the first night of his arrival were disturbed and brief.

He rose early and descended to the parlor; Mr. de Warens, the nobly appellated foot-boy, was laying the breakfast cloth. From three painted shelves which constituted the library of "Copperas Bower," as its owners gracefully called their habitation, Clarence took down a book very prettily bound; it was "Poems by a Nobleman." No sooner had he read two pages than he did exactly what the reader would have done, and restored the volume respectfully to its place. He then drew his chair towards the window, and wistfully eyed sundry ancient nursery maids, who were leading their infant charges to the "fresh fields, and pastures new," of what is now the Regent's Park.

In about an hour, Mrs. Copperas descended, and mutual compliments were exchanged; to her succeeded Mr. Copperas, who was well scolded for his laziness: and to them, Master Adolphus Copperas, who was also chidingly termed a naughty darling, for the same offence. Now then Mrs. Copperas prepared the tea, which she did in the approved method, adopted by all ladies to whom economy is dearer than renown—viz., the least possible quantity of the *soi-disant* Chinese plant was first sprinkled by the least possible quantity of hot water! after this mixture had become as black and as bitter as it could possibly be, without any adjunct from the apothecary's skill, it was suddenly drenched with a copious diffusion, and as suddenly poured forth, weak, washy, and abominable, into four cups, severally appertaining unto the four partakers of the matutinal nectar.

Then the conversation began to flow. Mrs. Copperas was a fine lady, and a sentimentalist—very observant of the little niceties of phrase and manner. Mr. Copperas was a stock-jobber, and a wit, loved a good hit in each capacity, was very round, very short, and very much like a John Dory, and saw in the features and mind of the little Copperas, the exact representative of himself.

"Adolphus, my love," said Mrs. Copperas, "mind what I told you and sit upright. Mr. Linden, will you allow me to cut you a *leettle* piece of this roll?"

"Thank you," said Clarence, "I will trouble you rather for the whole of it."

Conceive Mrs. Copperas's dismay! from that moment she saw herself eaten out of house and home; besides, as she afterwards observed to her friend Miss Barbara York, the "vulgarity of such an amazing appetite!"

"Any commands in the city, Mr. Linden?" asked the husband: "a coach will pass by our door in a few minutes—must

be on 'Change in half an hour. Come, my love, another cup of tea—make haste—I have scarcely a moment to take *my fare* for the inside, before coachee takes *his* for the outside. Ha! ha! ha! Mr. Linden."

"Lord, Mr. Copperas," said his helpmate, "how can you be so silly? setting such an example to your son, too—never mind him, Adolphus, my love—fie, child, a'n't you ashamed of yourself?—never put the spoon in your cup till you have done tea: I must really send you to school, to learn manners.—We have a very pretty little collection of books here Mr. Linden, if you would like to read an hour or two after breakfast—child, take your hands out of your pockets—all the best English classics, I believe—Telemachus, and Young's Night Thoughts, and Joseph Andrews, and the Spectator, and Pope's Iliad, and Creech's Lucretius; but you will look over them yourself! This is Liberty Hall, as well as Copperas Bower, Mr. Linden!"

"Well, my love," said the stock-jobber, "I believe I must be off. Here Tom—Tom—(Mr. de Warens had just entered the room with some more hot water, to weaken still farther "the poor remains of what was once"—the tea!)—Tom, just run out and stop the coach, it will be by in five minutes."

"Have not I prayed, and besought you, many and many a time, Mr. Copperas," said the lady, rebukingly, "not to call De Warens by his Christian name? Don't you know, that all people in genteel life, who only keep one servant, invariably call him by his surname, as if he were the butler, you know?"

"Now, that is too good, my love," said Copperas. "I will call poor Tom by any surname you please, but I really can't pass him off for a butler! Ha—ha—ha—you must excuse me there, my love!"

"And pray, why not, Mr. Copperas! I have known many a butler bungle more at a cork than he does; and pray tell me, who did you ever see wait better at dinner?"

"He wait at dinner, my love! it is not he who waits."

"Who then, Mr. Copperas?"

"Why *we*, my love—it's we who wait for dinner—but that's the cook's fault, not his."

"Pshaw, Mr. Copperas—Adolphus, my love, sit upright, darling."

Here De Warens cried from the bottom of the stairs:

"Measter, the coach be coming up."

"There won't be room for it to turn then," said the facetious Mr. Copperas, looking round the apartment, as if he took the words literally.

"What coach is it, boy?"

Now that was not the age in which coaches scoured the city every half-hour, and Mr. Copperas knew the name of the coach, as well as he knew his own.

"It be the Swallow coach, sir."

"Oh, very well: then since I have swallowed in the roll, I will now roll in the Swallow—ha—ha—ha! Good-bye, Mr. Linden."

No sooner had the witty stock-jobber left the room, than Mrs. Copperas seemed to expand into a new existence. "My husband, sir," said she, apologetically, "is *so* odd, but he's an excellent sterling character; and that, you know, Mr. Linden, tells more in the bosom of a family than all the shining qualities which captivate the imagination. I am sure, Mr. Linden, that the moralist is right in admonishing us to prefer the gold to the tinsel. I have now been married some years, and every year seems happier than the last; but then, Mr. Linden, it is such a pleasure to contemplate the growing graces of the sweet pledge of our mutual love—Adolphus, my dear, keep your feet still, and take your hands out of your pockets!"

A short pause ensued.

"We see a great deal of company," said Mrs. Copperas pompously, "and of the very best description. Sometimes we are favored by the society of the great Mr. Talbot, a gentleman of immense fortune, and quite the courtier: he is, it is true, a little eccentric in his dress; but then he was a celebrated beau in his young days. He is our next neighbor; you can see his house out of the window, just across the garden—there! We have also, sometimes, our humble board graced by a very elegant friend of mine, Miss Barbara York, a lady of very high connections, her first cousin was a lord mayor—Adolphus, my dear, what are you about?—Well, Mr. Linden, you will find your retreat quite undisturbed; I must go about the household affairs; not that I do anything more than superintend, you know, sir; but I think no lady should be above consulting her husband's interests—that's what I call true old English conjugal affection.—Come Adolphus, my dear."

And Clarence was now alone. "I fear," thought he, "that I shall get on very indifferently with these people. But it will not do for me to be misanthropical, and (as Dr. Latinas was wont to say) the great merit of philosophy, when we cannot *command* circumstances, is to *reconcile* us to them."

CHAPTER XII.

“A retired beau is one of the most instructive spectacles in the world.”
—STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

It was quite true that Mrs. Copperas saw a great deal of company, for at a certain charge, upon certain days, any individual might have the honor of sharing her family repast; and many, of various callings, though chiefly in commercial life, met at her miscellaneous board. Clarence must, indeed, have been difficult to please, or obtuse of observation, if, in the variety of her guests, he had not found something either to interest or amuse him. Heavens! what a motley group were accustomed, twice in the week, to assemble there! the little dining parlor seemed a human oven; and it must be owned that Clarence was no slight magnet of attraction to the female part of the guests. Mrs. Copperas's bosom friend in especial, the accomplished Miss Barbara York, darted the most tender glances on the handsome young stranger; but whether or not a nose remarkably prominent and long prevented the glances from taking full effect, it is certain that Clarence seldom repaid them with that affectionate ardor which Miss Barbara York had ventured to anticipate. The only persons indeed for whom he felt any sympathetic attraction, were of the same sex as himself. The one was Mr. Talbot, the old gentleman whom Mrs. Copperas had described as the perfect courtier; the other, a young artist of the name of Warner. Talbot, to Clarence's great astonishment (for Mrs. Copperas's eulogy had prepared him for something eminently displeasing), was a man of birth, fortune, and manners peculiarly graceful and attractive. It is true, however, that, despite of his vicinity, and Mrs. Copperas's urgent solicitations, he very seldom honored her with his company, and he always cautiously sent over his servant in the morning to inquire the names and number of her expected guests: nor was he ever known to share the plenteous board of the stock-jobber's lady whenever any other partaker of its dainties, save Clarence and the young artist, were present. The latter, the old gentleman really liked: and as, for one truly well born, and well bred, there is no vulgarity except in the mind, the slender means, obscure birth, and struggling profession of Warner were circumstances which, as they increased the merit of a gentle manner and a fine mind, spoke rather in his favor than the reverse. Mr. Talbot was greatly struck by Clarence Linden's conversation and appearance; and, indeed,

there was in Talbot's tastes so strong a bias to aristocratic externals, that Clarence's air alone would have been sufficient to win the good graces of a man who had, perhaps, more than most courtiers of his time, cultivated the arts of manner and the secrets of address.

"You will call upon me soon?" said he to Clarence, when, after dining one day with the Copperases and their inmate, he rose to return home. And Clarence, delighted with the urbanity and liveliness of his new acquaintance, readily promised that he would.

Accordingly, the next day, Clarence called upon Mr. Talbot. The house, as Mrs. Copperas had before said, adjoined her own, and was only separated from it by a garden. It was a dull mansion of brick, which had disdained the frippery of paint and white-washing and had indeed been built many years previously to the erection of the modern habitations which surrounded it. It was, therefore, as a consequence of this priority of birth, more sombre than the rest, and had a peculiarly forlorn and solitary look. As Clarence approached the door, he was struck with the size of the house—it was of very considerable extent, and in the more favorable situations of London would have passed for a very desirable and spacious tenement. An old man, whose accurate precision of dress bespoke the tastes of the master, opened the door, and after ushering Clarence through two long, and, to his surprise, almost splendidly furnished rooms, led him into a third, where, seated at a small writing-table, he found Mr. Talbot. That person, one whom Clarence then little thought would hereafter exercise no small influence over his fate, was of a figure and countenance well worthy the notice of a description.

His own hair, quite white, was carefully and artificially curled, and gave a Grecian cast to features whose original delicacy and exact, though small proportions, not even age could destroy. His eyes were large, black, and sparkled with almost youthful vivacity; and his mouth, which was the best feature he possessed, developed teeth white and even as rows of ivory. Though small and somewhat too slender in the proportions of his figure, nothing could exceed the ease and the grace of his motions and air; and his dress, though singularly rich in its materials, eccentric in its fashion, and, from its evident study, unseemly to his years, served nevertheless to render rather venerable than ridiculous a mien which could almost have carried off any absurdity, and which the fashion of the garb peculiarly became. The *tout ensemble* was certainly that of a man who was still vain of his

exterior, and conscious of its effect ; and it was as certainly impossible to converse with Mr. Talbot for five minutes, without merging every less respectful impression in the magical fascination of his manner.

“ I thank you, Mr. Linden,” said Talbot, rising, “ for your accepting so readily an old man’s invitation. If I have felt pleasure in discovering that we were to be neighbors, you may judge what that pleasure is to-day at finding you my visitor.”

Clarence, who, to do him justice, was always ready at returning a fine speech, replied in a similar strain, and the conversation flowed on agreeably enough. There was more than a moderate collection of books in the room, and this circumstance led Clarence to allude to literary subjects ; these Mr. Talbot took up with avidity, and touched with a light but graceful criticism upon many of the then modern, and some of the older, writers. He seemed delighted to find himself understood and appreciated by Clarence, and every moment of Linden’s visit served to ripen their acquaintance into intimacy. At length they talked upon Copperas Bower and its inmates.

“ You will find your host and hostess,” said the old gentleman, “ certainly of a different order from the persons with whom it is easy to see you have associated ; but, at your happy age, a year or two may be very well thrown away upon observing the manners and customs of those whom, in later life, you may often be called upon to conciliate, or perhaps to control. That man will never be a perfect gentleman who lives only with gentlemen. To be a man of the world, we must view that world in every grade, and in every perspective. In short, the most practical art of wisdom, is that which extracts from things the very quality they least appear to possess ; and the actor in the world, like the actor on the stage, should find ‘ a basket-hilted sword very convenient to carry milk in.’ * As for me, I have survived my relations and friends. I cannot keep late hours, nor adhere to the unhealthy customs of good society ; nor do I think that, to a man of my age and habits, any remuneration would adequately repay the sacrifice of health or comfort. I am, therefore, well content to sink into a hermitage in an obscure corner of this great town, and only occasionally to revive my ‘ past remembrances of higher state,’ by admitting a few old acquaintances to drink my bachelor’s tea and talk over the news of the day. Hence, you see, Mr. Linden, I pick up two or three novel anecdotes of state and scandal, and maintain my importance at Copperas Bower, by retailing them second hand. Now that you are one of the inmates of that

* See the witty inventory of a player’s goods in the Tatler.

abode; I shall be more frequently its guest. By-the-by, I will let you into a secret: know that I am somewhat a lover of the marvellous, and like to indulge a little embellishing exaggeration in any place where there is no chance of finding me out. Mind, therefore, my dear Mr. Linden, that you take no ungenerous advantage of this confession; but suffer me, now and then, to tell my stories my own way, even when you think truth would require me to tell them in another."

"Certainly," said Clarence, laughing; "let us make an agreement: you shall tell your stories as you please, if you will grant me the same liberty in paying my compliments: and if I laugh aloud at the stories, you shall promise me not to laugh aloud at the compliments."

"It is a bond," said Talbot; "and a very fit exchange of service it is. It will be a problem in human nature to see who has the best of it: you shall pay your court by flattering the people present, and I mine, by abusing those absent. Now, in spite of your youth and curling locks, I will wager that I succeed the best; for in vanity there is so great a mixture of envy that no compliment is like a judicious abuse—to enchant your acquaintance, ridicule his friends."

"Ah, sir," said Clarence, "this opinion of yours is, I trust, a little in the French school, where brilliancy is more studied than truth, and where an ill opinion of our species always has the merit of passing for profound."

Talbot smiled, and shook his head. "My dear young friend," said he, "it is quite right that you, who are coming into the world, should think well of it; and it is also quite right that I, who am going out of it, should console myself by trying to despise it. However, let me tell you, my young friend, that he whose opinion of mankind is not too elevated will always be the most benevolent, because the most indulgent, to those errors incidental to human imperfection: to place our nature in too flattering a view is only to court disappointment, and end in misanthropy. The man who sets out with expecting to find all his fellow-creatures heroes of virtue, will conclude by condemning them as monsters of vice; and, on the contrary, the least exacting judge of actions will be the most lenient. If God, in his own perfection, did not see so many frailties in us, think you he would be so gracious to our virtues?"

"And yet," said Clarence, "we remark, every day, examples of the highest excellence."

"Yes," replied Talbot, "of the *highest*, but not of the most *constant*, excellence. He knows very little of the human heart

who imagines we cannot do a good action ; but, alas ! he knows still less of it who supposes we can be always doing good actions. In exactly the same ratio we see every day the greatest crimes are committed ; but we find no wretch so depraved as to be always committing crimes. Man cannot be perfect even in guilt."

In this manner Talbot and his young visitor conversed, till Clarence, after a stay of unwarrantable length, rose to depart.

"Well," said Talbot, "if we now rightly understand each other, we shall be the best friends in the world. As we shall expect great things from each other sometimes, we will have no scruple in exacting a heroic sacrifice every now and then ; for instance—I will ask you to punish yourself by an occasional *tête-à-tête* with an ancient gentleman ; and, as we can also, by the same reasoning, pardon great faults in each other, if they are not often committed, so I will forgive you, with all my heart, whenever you refuse my invitations, if you do not refuse them often. And now farewell till we meet again."

It seemed singular, and almost unnatural to Linden, that a man like Talbot, of birth, fortune, and great fastidiousness of taste and temper, should have formed any sort of acquaintance, however slight and distant, with the facetious stock-jobber and his wife ; but the fact is easily explained by a reference to the vanity which we shall see hereafter made the ruling passion of Talbot's nature. This vanity, which, branching forth into a thousand eccentricities, displayed itself in the singularity of his dress, the studied yet graceful warmth of his manner, his attention to the minutiae of life, his desire, craving and insatiate, to receive from every one, however insignificant, his *obolum* of admiration—this vanity, once flattered by the obsequious homage it obtained from the wonder and reverence of the Copperases, reconciled his taste to the disgust it so frequently and necessarily conceived ; and, having in great measure resigned his former acquaintance, and wholly outlived his friends, he was contented to purchase the applause which had become to him a necessary of life, at the humble market more immediately at his command.

There is no dilemma in which Vanity cannot find an expedient to develop its form—no stream of circumstances in which its buoyant and light nature will not rise to float upon the surface. And its ingenuity is as fertile as that of the player who (his wardrobe allowing him no other method of playing the fop) could still exhibit the prevalent passion for distinction by wearing stockings of different colors.

CHAPTER XIII.

“Who dares
Interpret then my life for me, as 'twere
One of the undistinguishable many?”—COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein*.

THE first time Clarence had observed the young artist, he had taken a deep interest in his appearance. Pale, thin, undersized, and slightly deformed, the sanctifying mind still shed over the humble frame a spell more powerful than beauty. Absent in manner, melancholy in air, and never conversing except upon subjects upon which his imagination was excited, there was yet a gentleness about him which could not fail to conciliate and prepossess; nor did Clarence omit any opportunity to soften his reserve, and wind himself into his more intimate acquaintance. Warner, the only support of an aged and infirm grandmother (who had survived her immediate children), was distantly related to Mrs Copperas; and that lady extended to him, with ostentatious benevolence, her favor and support. It is true, that she did not impoverish the young Adolphus to enrich her kinsman, but she allowed him a seat at her hospitable board, whenever it was not otherwise filled; and all that she demanded in return was a picture of herself, another of Mr. Copperas, a third of Master Adolphus, a fourth of the black cat, and from time to time sundry other lesser productions of his genius, of which, through the agency of Mr. Brown, she secretly disposed at a price that sufficiently remunerated her for whatever havoc the slender appetite of the young painter was able to effect.

By this arrangement, Clarence had many opportunities of gaining that intimacy with Warner which had become to him an object; and though the painter, constitutionally diffident and shy, was at first averse to, and even awed by, the ease, boldness, fluent speech, and confident address of a man much younger than himself, yet at last he could not resist the being decoyed into familiarity; and the youthful pair gradually advanced from companionship into friendship. There was a striking contrast between the two; Clarence was bold and frank, Warner close and timid. Both had superior abilities—but the abilities of Clarence were for action, those of Warner for art: both were ambitious, but the ambition of Clarence was that of circumstances rather than character; compelled to carve his own fortunes without sympathy or aid, he braced his mind to the effort, though naturally too gay for the austerity, and too gen-

ial for the selfishness of ambition. But the very essence of Warner's nature was the feverish desire of fame; it poured through his veins like lava; it preyed as a worm upon his cheek; it corroded his natural sleep; it blackened the color of his thoughts; it shut out, as with an impenetrable wall, the wholesome energies and enjoyments and objects of living men; and, taking from him all the vividness of the present, all the tenderness of the past, constrained his heart to dwell forever and forever amidst the dim and shadowy chimeras of a future he was fated never to enjoy.

But these differences of character, so far from disturbing, rather cemented their friendship; and while Warner (notwithstanding his advantage of age) paid involuntary deference to the stronger character of Clarence, he, in his turn, derived that species of pleasure by which he was most gratified, from the affectionate and unenvious interest Clarence took in his speculations of future distinction, and the unwearied admiration with which he would sit by his side, and watch the colors start from the canvas, beneath the real, though uncultured, genius of the youthful painter. Hitherto, Warner had bounded his attempts to some of the lesser efforts of the art; he had now yielded to the urgent enthusiasm of his nature, and conceived the plan of an historical picture. Oh! what sleepless nights, what struggles of the teeming fancy with the dense brain, what labors of the untiring thought, wearing and intense as disease itself, did it cost the ambitious artist to work out in the stillness of his soul, and from its confused and conflicting images, the design of this long meditated and idolized performance. But when it *was* designed; when shape upon shape grew and swelled, and glowed from the darkness of previous thought upon the painter's mind; when, shutting his eyes in the very credulity of delight, the whole work arose before him, glossy with its fresh hues, bright, completed, faultless, arrayed, as it were, and decked out for immortality—oh! then what a full and gushing moment of rapture broke like a released stream upon his soul! What a recompense for wasted years, health, and hope! What a coronal to the visions and transports of Genius; brief, it is true, but how steeped in the very halo of a light that might well be deemed the glory of heaven!

But the vision fades, the gorgeous shapes sweep on into darkness, and, waking from his reverie, the artist sees before him only the dull walls of his narrow chamber; the canvas stretched a blank upon its frame; the works, maimed, crude, unfinished, of an inexperienced hand, lying idly around; and

feels himself—*himself*, but one moment before the creator of a world of wonders, the master spirit of shapes glorious and majestic beyond the shapes of men—dashed down from his momentary height, and despoiled both of his sorcery and his throne.

It was just in such a moment that Warner, starting up, saw Linden (who had silently entered his room) standing motionless before him.

“Oh, Linden!” said the artist, “I have had so superb a dream—a dream which, though I have before snatched some such vision by fits and glimpses, I never beheld so realized, so perfect as now; and—but you shall see, you shall judge for yourself; I will sketch out the design for you”; and with a piece of chalk, and a rapid hand, Warner conveyed to Linden the outline of his conception. His young friend was eager in his praise and his predictions of renown, and Warner listened to him with a fondness, which spread over his pale cheek a richer flush than lover ever caught from the whispers of his beloved.

“Yes,” said he, as he rose, and his sunken and small eye flashed out with a feverish brightness, “yes, if my hand does not fail my thought, it shall rival even—” Here the young painter stopped short, abashed at that indiscretion of enthusiasm about to utter to another the hoarded vanities hitherto locked in his heart of hearts as a sealed secret, almost from himself.

“But come,” said Clarence affectionately, “your hand is feverish and dry, and of late you have seemed more languid than you were wont—come, Warner, you want exercise: it is a beautiful evening, and you shall explain your picture still farther to me as we walk.”

Accustomed to yield to Clarence, Warner mechanically and abstractedly obeyed; they walked out into the open streets.

“Look around us,” said Warner, pausing, “look among this toiling, and busy, and sordid mass of beings, who claim with us the fellowship of clay. The poor labor, the rich feast; the only distinction between them is that of the insect and the brute; like them they fulfil the same end, and share the same oblivion; they die, a new race springs up, and the very grass upon their graves fades not so soon as their memory. Who, that is conscious of a higher nature, would not pine and fret himself away to be confounded with these? Who would not burn, and sicken, and parch, with a delirious longing to divorce himself from so vile a herd? What have their petty pleasures, and

their mean aims to atone for the abasement of grinding down our spirits to their level? Is not the distinction from their blended and common name a sufficient recompense for all that ambition suffers or foregoes? Oh, for one brief hour (I ask no more) of living honor, one feeling of conscious, unfearing certainty, that Fame has conquered Death; and then for this humble and impotent clay, this drag on the spirit which it does not assist but fetter, this wretched machine of pains and aches, and feverish throbbings, and vexed inquietudes, why, let the worms consume it, and the grave hide—for Fame there is *no* grave."

At that moment one of those unfortunate women, who earn their polluted sustenance by becoming the hypocrites of passion, abruptly accosted them.

"Miserable wretch!" said Warner loathingly, as he pushed her aside; but Clarence, with a kindlier feeling, noticed that her haggard cheek was wet with tears, and that her frame, weak and trembling, could scarcely support itself; he, therefore, with that promptitude of charity, which gives ere it discriminates, put some pecuniary assistance in her hand, and joined his comrade.

"You would not have spoken so tauntingly to the poor girl had you remarked her distress," said Clarence.

"And why," said Warner mournfully, "why be so cruel as to prolong, even for a few hours, an existence which mercy would only seek to bring nearer to the tomb? That unfortunate is but one of the herd, one of the victims to pleasures which debase by their progress, and ruin by their end. Yet perhaps she is not worse than the usual followers of love; of love—that passion the most worshipped, yet the least divine,—selfish and exacting,—drawing its aliment from destruction, and its very nature from tears."

"Nay," said Clarence, "you confound the two loves, the Eros and the Anteros, gods whom my good tutor was wont so sedulously to distinguish: you surely do not inveigh thus against *all* love?"

"I cry you mercy," said Warner, with something of sarcasm in his pensiveness of tone. "We must not dispute, so I will hold my peace; but make love all you will, what are the false smiles of a lip which a few years can blight as an autumn leaf? what the homage of a heart as feeble and mortal as your own? Why, I with a few strokes of a little hair, and an idle mixture of worthless colors, will create a beauty in whose mouth there shall be no hollowness—in whose lip there shall be no fading—

there, in your admiration you shall have no need of flattery, and no fear of falsehood; you shall not be stung with jealousy, nor maddened with treachery; nor watch with a breaking heart over waning bloom, and departing health, till the grave open, and your perishable paradise is *not*. No—the mimic work is mightier than the original, for it outlasts it: your love cannot wither it, or your desertion destroy—your very death, as the being who called it into life, only stamps it with a holier value.”

“And so then,” said Clarence, “you would seriously relinquish, for the mute copy of the mere features, those affections which no painting can express?”

“Ay,” said the painter, with an energy unusual to his quiet manner, and slightly wandering in his answer from Clarence’s remark, “Ay, one serves not two mistresses—mine is the glory of my art. Oh! what are the cold shapes of this tame earth, where the footsteps of the gods have vanished, and left no trace, the blemished forms, the debased brows, and the jarring features, to the glorious and gorgeous images which I can conjure up at my will? Away with human beauties, to him whose nights are haunted with the forms of angels and wanderers from the stars, the spirits of all things lovely and exalted in the universe: the universe as it *was*—when to fountain, and stream, and hill, and to every tree which the summer clothed, was allotted the vigil of a Nymph!—when through glade, and by waterfall, at glossy noontide, or under the silver stars, the forms of Godhead and Spirit were seen to walk; when the sculptor modeled his mighty work from the beauty and strength of Heaven, and the poet lay in the shade to dream of the Naiad and the Faun, and the Olympian dwellers whom he waked in rapture to behold; and the painter, not as now, shaping from shadow and in solitude the dim glories of his heart, caught at once his inspiration from the glow of earth and its living wanderers, and, lo, the canvas breathed! Oh! what are the dull realities and the abortive offspring of this altered and humbled world—the world of meaner and dwarfish men—to him whose realms are peopled with visions like these?”

And the artist, whose ardor, long excited, and pent within, had at last thus audibly, and to Clarence’s astonishment, burst forth, paused, as if to recall himself from his wandering enthusiasm. Such moments of excitement were, indeed, rare with him, except when utterly alone, and even then, were almost invariably followed by that depression of spirit by which all

overwrought susceptibility is succeeded. A change came over his face, like that of a cloud when the sunbeam, which gilded, leaves it, and with a slight sigh, and a subdued tone, he resumed :

“So, my friend, you see what our art can do even for the humblest professor, when I, a poor, friendless, patronless artist, can thus indulge myself by forgetting the present. But I have not yet explained to you the attitude of my principal figure”; and Warner proceeded once more to detail the particulars of his intended picture. It must be confessed that he had chosen a fine, though an arduous, subject : it was the Trial of Charles the First ; and as the painter, with the enthusiasm of his profession and the eloquence peculiar to himself, dwelt upon the various expressions of the various forms which that extraordinary judgment court afforded, no wonder that Clarence forgot, with the artist himself, the disadvantages Warner had to encounter, in the inexperience of an unregulated taste, and an imperfect professional education.

CHAPTER XIV.

“All manners take a tincture from our own,
Or come discolored through our passions shown.”—POPE.

“What ! give up liberty, property, and, as the Gazetteer says, lie down to be saddled with wooden shoes ?”—*Vicar of Wakefield.*

THERE was something in the melancholy and reflective character of Warner resembling that of Mordaunt ; had they lived in these days, perhaps both the artist and the philosopher had been poets. But (with regard to the latter) at that time poetry was not the customary vent for deep thought, or passionate feeling. Gray, it is true, though unjustly condemned as artificial and meretricious in his style, had infused into the scanty works which he has bequeathed to immortality a pathos and a richness foreign to the literature of the age ; and, subsequently, Goldsmith, in the affecting yet somewhat enervate simplicity of his verse, had obtained for Poetry a brief respite from a school at once declamatory and powerless, and led her forth for a “Sunshine Holiday,” into the village green, and under the hawthorn shade. But though the softer and meeker feelings had struggled into a partial and occasional vent, those which partook more of passion and of thought, the deep, the wild, the fervid, were still without “the music of a voice.” For the

after-century it was reserved to restore what we may be permitted to call the spirit of our national literature; to forsake the *clingant* of the French mimickers of classic gold; to exchange a thrice-adulterated Hippocrene for the pure well of Shakspeare and of nature; to clothe philosophy in the gorgeous and solemn majesty of appropriate music; and to invest passion with a language as burning as its thought, and rapid as its impulse. At that time reflection found its natural channel in metaphysical inquiry, or political speculation: both valuable, perhaps, but neither profound. It was a bold, and a free, and an inquisitive age, but not one in which thought ran over its set and stationary banks, and watered even the common flowers of verse: not one in which Lucretius could have embodied the dreams of Epicurus; Shakspeare lavished the mines of a superhuman wisdom upon his fairy palaces and enchanted isles; or the Beautifier* of this common earth have called forth—

“The motion of the spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought”;

or Disappointment and Satiety have hallowed their human griefs by a pathos wrought from whatever is magnificent, and grand, and lovely in the unknown universe; or the speculations of a great but visionary† mind have raised, upon subtlety and doubt, a vast and irregular pile of verse, full of dim-lighted cells and winding galleries, in which what treasures lie concealed! That was an age in which poetry took one path, and contemplation another; those who were addicted to the latter pursued it in its orthodox roads; and many whom Nature, perhaps, intended for poets, the wizard Custom converted into speculators or critics.

It was this which gave to Algernon's studies their peculiar hue; while, on the other hand, the taste for the fine arts which then universally prevailed, directed to the creations of painting, rather than those of poetry, more really congenial to his powers, the intense imagination and passion for glory which marked and pervaded the character of the artist.

But as we have seen that that passion for glory made the great characteristic difference between Clarence and Warner, so also did that passion terminate any resemblance which Warner bore to Algernon Mordaunt. With the former, a rank and unwholesome plant, it grew up to the exclusion of all else: with the latter, subdued and regulated, it *sheltered*, not *withered*,

* Wordsworth.

† Shelley.

the virtues by which it was surrounded. With Warner, ambition was a passionate desire to separate himself by fame from the herd of other men; with Mordaunt, to bind himself by charity yet closer to his kind: with the one it produced a disgust to his species; with the other, a pity and a love: with the one, power was the badge of distinction; with the other, the means to bless! But our story lingers.

It was now the custom of Warner to spend the whole day at his work, and wander out with Clarence, when the evening darkened, to snatch a brief respite of exercise and air. Often, along the lighted and populous streets, would the two young and unfriended competitors for this world's high places roam with the various crowd, moralizing as they went, or holding dim conjecture upon their destinies to be. And often would they linger beneath the portico of some house where, "haunted with great resort," Pleasure and Pomp held their nightly revels, to listen to the music that, through the open windows, stole over the rare exotics with which wealth mimics the southern scents, and floated, mellowing by distance, along the unworthy streets, and while they stood together, silent, and each feeding upon separate thoughts, the artist's pale lip would curl with scorn, as he heard the laugh and the sounds of a frivolous and hollow mirth ring from the crowd within, and startle the air from the silver spell which music had laid upon it. "These," would he say to Clarence, "these are the dupes of the same fever as ourselves: like us, they strive, and toil, and vex their little lives for a distinction from their race. Ambition comes to them, as to all; but they throw for a different prize than we do; theirs is the honor of a day, ours is immortality; yet they take the same labor, and are consumed by the same care. And, fools that they are, with their gilded names and their gaudy trappings, they would shrink in disdain from that comparison with us which we, with a juster fastidiousness, blush at this moment to acknowledge.

From these scenes they would rove on, and, both delighting in contrast, enter some squalid and obscure quarter of the city. There, one night, quiet observers of their kind, they paused beside a group congregated together by some common cause of obscene merriment or unholy fellowship—a group on which low vice had set her sordid and hideous stamp—to gaze and draw strange humors or a motley moral from that depth and ferment of human nature, into whose sink the thousand streams of civilization had poured their dregs and offal.

"You survey these," said the painter, marking each with the

curious eye of his profession: "they are a base horde, it is true, but they have their thirst of fame, their aspirations even in the abyss of crime, or the loathsomeness of famished want. Down in yon cellar, where a farthing rushlight glimmers upon haggard cheeks, distorted with the idiotcy of drink—there, in that foul attic, from whose casement you see the beggar's rags hang to dry, or rather to crumble in the reeking and filthy air—farther on, within those walls which, black and heavy as the hearts they hide, close our miserable prospect,—there, even there, in the mildewed dungeon, in the felon's cell, on the very scaffold shelf—Ambition hugs her own hope, or scowls upon her own despair. Yes! the inmates of those walls had their perilous game of honor, their 'hazard of the die,' in which vice was triumph and infamy success. We do but share their passion, though we direct it to a better object."

Pausing for a moment, as his thoughts flowed into a somewhat different channel of his character, Warner continued—"We have now caught a glimpse of the two great divisions of mankind; they who riot in palaces, and they who make mirth hideous in rags and hovels: own that it is but a poor survey in either. Can we be contemptible with these, or loathsome with those? Or rather have we not a nobler spark within us, which we have but to fan into a flame, that shall burn forever, when these miserable meteors sink into the corruption from which they rise?"

"But," observed Clarence, "these are the two extremes; the pinnacle of civilization too worn and bare for any more noble and vigorous fruit, and the base upon which the cloud descends in rain and storm." Look to the central portion of society; there the soil is more genial, and its produce more rich."

"Is it so, in truth?" answered Warner; "pardon me, I believe not: the middling classes are as human as the rest. There is the region,—the heart—of Avarice,—systematized, spreading, rotting, the very fungus and leprosy of social states—suspicion, craft, hypocrisy, servility to the great, oppression to the low, the wax-like mimicry of courtly vices, the hardness of flint to humble woes; thought, feeling, the faculties and impulses of man, all ulcered into one great canker—Gain; these make the general character of the middling class, the unleavened mass of that mediocrity which it has been the wisdom of the shallow to applaud. Pah! *we* too are of this class, this potter's earth, this paltry mixture of mud and stone; but *we*, my friend, we will knead gold into our clay."

"But look," said Clarence, pointing to the group before

them ; “look, yon wretched mother, whose voice an instant ago uttered the coarsest accents of maudlin and intoxicated prostitution, is now fostering her infant, with a fondness stamped upon her worn cheek and hollow eye, which might shame the nice maternity of nobles ; and there too, yon wretch whom, in the reckless effrontery of hardened abandonment, we ourselves heard a few minutes since boast of his dexterity in theft, and openly exhibit its token—look, he is now, with a Samaritan’s own charity, giving the very goods for which his miserable life was risked, to that attenuated and starving stripling ! No, Warner, no ! even this mass is *not* unleavened. The vilest infamy is not too deep for the Seraph Virtue to descend and illumine its abyss !”

“Out on the weak fools !” said the artist, bitterly : “it would be something, if they could be consistent even in crime !” and, placing his arm in Linden’s, he drew him away.

As the picture grew beneath the painter’s hand, Clarence was much struck with the outline and expression of countenance given to the regicide Bradshaw.

“They are but an imperfect copy of the living original from whom I have borrowed them,” said Warner, in answer to Clarence’s remark upon the sternness of the features. “But that original, a relation of mine, is coming here to-day—you shall see him.”

While Warner was yet speaking, the person in question entered. His were, indeed, the form and face worthy to be seized by the painter. The peculiarity of his character made him affect a plainness of dress unusual to the day, and approaching to the simplicity, but not the neatness, of Quakerism. His hair,—then, with all the better ranks, a principal object of cultivation,—was wild, dishevelled, and, in wiry flakes of the sablest hue, rose abruptly from a forehead on which either thought or passion had written its annals with an iron pen ; the lower part of the brow, which overhung the eye, was singularly sharp and prominent ; while the lines, or rather furrows, traced under the eyes and nostrils, spoke somewhat of exhaustion and internal fatigue. But this expression was contrasted and contradicted by the firmly compressed lip ; the lighted, steady, stern eye ; the resolute and even stubborn front, joined to proportions strikingly athletic, and a stature of uncommon height.

“Well, Wolfe,” said the young painter to the person we have described, “it is indeed a kindness to give me a second sitting.”

“Tush, boy !” answered Wolfe : “all men have their vain

points, and I own that I am not ill pleased that these rugged features should be assigned, even in fancy, to one of the noblest of those men who judged the mightiest cause in which a country was ever plaintiff, a tyrant criminal, and a world witness ! ”

While Wolfe was yet speaking, his countenance, so naturally harsh, took a yet sterner aspect, and the artist, by a happy touch, succeeded in transferring it to the canvas.

“ But, after all,” continued Wolfe, “ it shames me to lend aid to an art frivolous in itself, and almost culpable in times when Freedom wants the head to design, and, perhaps, the hand to execute, far other and nobler works than the blazoning of her past deeds upon perishable canvas.”

A momentary anger at the slight put upon his art crossed the pale brow of the artist ; but he remembered the character of the man, and continued his work in silence.

“ You consider then, sir, that these are times in which liberty is attacked ? ” said Clarence.

“ Attacked ! ” repeated Wolfe—“ attacked ! ” and then suddenly sinking his voice into a sort of sneer—“ why, since the event which this painting is designed to commemorate—I know not if we have ever had one solitary gleam of liberty break along the great chaos of jarring prejudice and barbarous law which we term, forsooth, a glorious constitution. Liberty attacked ! no, boy—but it is a time when Liberty may be gained.”

Perfectly unacquainted with the excited politics of the day, or the growing and mighty spirit which then stirred through the minds of men, Clarence remained silent ; but his evident attention flattered the fierce republican, and he proceeded.

“ Ay,” he said slowly, and as if drinking in a deep and stern joy from his conviction in the truth of the words he uttered—“ Ay, I have wandered over the face of the earth, and I have warmed my soul at the fires which lay hidden under its quiet surface ; I have been in the city and the desert—the herded and banded crimes of the Old World, and the scattered, but bold, hearts which are found among the savannahs of the New ; and in either I have beheld that seed sown which, from a mustard grain, too scanty for a bird’s beak, shall grow up to be a shelter and a home for the whole family of man. I have looked upon the thrones of kings, and lo, the anointed ones were in purple and festive pomp ; and I looked *beneath* the thrones, and I saw Want and Hunger and despairing Wrath gnawing the foundations away. I have stood in the streets of that great city where Mirth seems to hold an eternal jubilee,

and beheld the noble riot while the peasant starved; and the priest build altars to Mammon piled from the earnings of groaning Labor, and cemented with blood and tears. But I looked farther, and saw, in the rear, chains sharpened into swords, misery ripening into justice, and famine darkening into revenge; and I laughed as I beheld, for I knew that the day of the oppressed was at hand."

Somewhat awed by the prophetic tone, though revolted by what seemed to him the novelty and the fierceness, of the sentiments of the republican, Clarence after a brief pause said:

"And what of our own country?"

Wolfe's brow darkened. "The oppression here," said he, "has not been so weighty, therefore the reaction will be less strong; the parties are more blended, therefore their separation will be more arduous; the extortion is less strained, therefore the endurance will be more meek; but, soon or late, the struggle must come; bloody will it be if the strife be even; gentle and lasting, if the people predominate."

"And if the rulers be the strongest?" said Clarence.

"The struggle will be renewed," replied Wolfe doggedly.

"You still attend those oratorical meetings, cousin, I think," said Warner.

"I do," said Wolfe; "and if you are not so utterly absorbed in your vain and idle art as to be indifferent to all things nobler, you will learn yourself to take interest in what concerns—I will not say your country—but mankind. For you, young man (and the republican turned to Clarence), I would fain hope that life has not already been diverted from the greatest of human objects; if so, come to-morrow night to our assembly, and learn from worthier lips than mine the precepts and the hopes for which good men live or die."

"I will come at all events to listen, if not to learn," said Clarence eagerly, for his curiosity was excited. And the republican, having now fulfilled the end of his visit, rose and departed.

CHAPTER XV.

"Bound to suffer persecution
And martyrdom with resolution,
T'oppose *himself* against the hate
And vengeance of the incensed state."—*Hudibras*.

BORN of respectable, though not wealthy, parents, John Wolfe was one of those fiery and daring spirits which, previous to

some mighty revolution, Fate seems to scatter over various parts of the earth, even those removed from the predestined explosion; heralds of the events in which they are fitted, though not fated, to be actors. The period at which he is presented to the reader was one considerably prior to that French Revolution so much debated, and so little understood. But some such event, though not foreseen by the common, had been already foreboded by the more enlightened eye; and Wolfe, from a protracted residence in France, among the most discontented of its freer spirits, had brought hope to that burning enthusiasm which had long made the pervading passion of his existence.

Bold to ferocity, generous in devotion to folly in self-sacrifice, unflinching in his tenets to a degree which rendered their ardor ineffectual to all times, because utterly inapplicable to the present, Wolfe was one of those zealots whose very virtues have the semblance of vice, and whose very capacities for danger become harmless from the rashness of their excess.

It was not among the philosophers and reasoners of France that Wolfe had drawn strength to his opinions: whatever such companions might have done to his tenets, they would at least have moderated his actions. The philosopher may aid, or expedite, a change; but never does the philosopher in any age, or of any sect, countenance a crime. But of philosophers Wolfe knew little, and probably despised them for their temperance: it was among fanatics—ignorant, but imaginative—that he had strengthened the love, without comprehending the nature, of republicanism. Like Lucian's painter, whose flattery portrayed the one-eyed prince in profile, he viewed only that side of the question in which there was no defect, and gave beauty to the whole by concealing the half. Thus, though on his return to England herding with the common class of his reforming brethren, Wolfe possessed many peculiarities and distinctions of character which in rendering him strikingly adapted to the purpose of the novelist, must serve as a caution to the reader not to judge of the class by the individual.

With a *class* of republicans in England there was a strong tendency to support their cause by reasoning. With Wolfe, whose mind was little wedded to logic, all was the offspring of turbulent feelings, which, in rejecting arguments, substituted declamation for syllogism. This effected a powerful and irconcilable distinction between Wolfe and the better part of his comrades; for the habits of cool reasoning, whether true or false, are little likely to bias the mind towards those crimes to which Wolfe's irregular emotions might possibly urge him,

and give to the characters, to which they are a sort of common denominator, something of method and much of similarity. But the feelings—those orators which allow no calculation, and baffle the tameness of comparison—rendered Wolfe alone, unique, eccentric in opinion or action, whether of vice or virtue.

Private ties frequently moderate the ardor of our public enthusiasm. Wolfe had none. His nearest relation was Warner, and it may readily be supposed that with the pensive and contemplative artist he had very little in common. He had never married, nor had ever seemed to wander from his stern and sterile path; in the most transient pursuit of the pleasures of sense. Inflexibly honest, rigidly austere—in his moral character his bitterest enemies could detect no flaw—poor, even to indigence, he had invariably refused all overtures of the government—thrice imprisoned and heavily fined for his doctrines, no fear of a future, no remembrance of the past, punishment could ever silence his bitter eloquence or moderate the passion of his distempered zeal—kindly, though rude, his scanty means were ever shared by the less honest and disinterested followers of his faith; and he had been known for days to deprive himself of food, and for nights of shelter, for the purpose of yielding food and shelter to another.

Such was the man doomed to forsake, through a long and wasted life, every substantial blessing, in pursuit of a shadowy good; with the warmest benevolence in his heart, to relinquish private affections, and to brood even to madness over public offences—to sacrifice everything in a generous, though erring, devotion for that freedom whose cause, instead of promoting, he was calculated to retard; and, while he believed himself the martyr of a high and uncompromising virtue, to close his career with the greatest of human crimes.

CHAPTER XVI.

“Faith, methinks his humor is good, and his purse will buy good company.”
The Parson's Wedding.

WHEN Clarence returned home, after the conversation recorded in our last chapter, he found a note from Talbot, inviting him to meet some friends of the latter at supper that evening. It was the first time Clarence had been asked, and he looked forward with some curiosity and impatience to the hour appointed in the note.

It is impossible to convey any idea of the jealous rancor felt by Mr. and Mrs. Copperas on hearing of this distinction—a distinction which “the perfect courtier” had never once bestowed upon themselves.

Mrs. Copperas tossed her head, too indignant for words; and the stock-jobber, in the bitterness of his soul, affirmed, with a meaning air, “that he dared say, after all, that the old gentleman was not so rich as he gave out.”

On entering Talbot’s drawing-room, Clarence found about seven or eight people assembled: their names, in proclaiming the nature of the party, indicated that the aim of the host was to combine aristocracy and talent. The literary acquirements and worldly tact of Talbot, joined to the adventitious circumstances of birth and fortune, enabled him to effect this object, so desirable in polished society, far better than we generally find it effected now. The conversation of these guests was light and various. The last *bon mot* of Chesterfield, the last sarcasm of Horace Walpole, Goldsmith’s “Traveller,” Shenstone’s “Pastorals,” and the attempt of Mrs. Montagu to bring Shakespeare into fashion—in all these subjects the graceful wit and exquisite taste of Talbot shone pre-eminent; and he had almost succeeded in convincing a profound critic that Gray was a poet more likely to live than Mason, when the servant announced supper.

That was the age of suppers! Happy age! Meal of ease and mirth; when Wine and Night lit the lamp of Wit! O, what precious things were said and looked at those banquets of the soul! There epicurism was in the lip as well as the palate, and one had humor for a *hors d’œuvre*, and repartee for an *entremet*. In dinner there is something too pompous, too formal, for the true ease of Table Talk. One’s intellectual appetite, like the physical, is coarse but dull. At dinner one is fit only for eating; *after* dinner only for politics. But supper was a glorious relic of the ancients. The bustle of the day had thoroughly wound up the spirit, and every stroke upon the dial-plate of wit was true to the genius of the hour. The wallet of diurnal anecdote was full, and craved unloading. The great meal—that vulgar first love of the appetite—was over, and one now only flattered it into coquetting with another. The mind, disengaged and free, was no longer absorbed in a cutlet or burthened with a joint. The *gourmand* carried the nicety of his physical perception to his moral, and applauded a *bon mot* instead of a *bonne bouche*.

Then too one had no necessity to keep a reserve of thought

for the after-evening ; supper was the final consummation, the glorious funeral pyre of day. One could be merry till bedtime without an interregnum. Nay, if in the ardor of convivialism one did—I merely hint of the possibility of such an event—if one *did* exceed the narrow limits of strict ebriety, and open the heart with a ruby key, one had nothing to dread from the cold, or, what is worse, the warm looks of ladies in the drawing-room ; no fear that an imprudent word, in the amatory fondness of the fermented blood, might expose one to matrimony and settlements. There was no tame, trite medium of propriety and suppressed confidence, no bridge from board to bed, over which a false step (and your wine cup is a marvellous corruptor of ambulatory rectitude) might precipitate into an irrecoverable abyss of perilous communication or unwholesome truth. One's pillow became at once the legitimate and natural bourne to "the overheated brain"; and the generous rashness of the cœnatorial reveller was not damped by untimeous caution or ignoble calculation.

But "we have changed all that now"; Sobriety has become the successor of suppers ; the great ocean of moral encroachment has not left us one little island of refuge. Miserable supper-lovers that we are, like the native Indians of America, a scattered and daily disappearing race, we wander among strange customs, and behold the innovating and invading Dinner spread gradually over the very space of time in which the majesty of Supper once reigned undisputed and supreme !

" O, ye heavens, be kind,
And feel, thou earth, for this afflicted race."—WORDSWORTH.

As he was sitting down to the table Clarence's notice was arrested by a somewhat suspicious and displeasing occurrence. The supper room was on the ground floor, and, owing to the heat of the weather, one of the windows, facing the small garden, was left open. Through this window Clarence distinctly saw the face of a man look into the room for one instant, with a prying and curious gaze, and then as instantly disappear. As no one else seemed to remark this incident, and the general attention was somewhat noisily engrossed by the subject of conversation, Clarence thought it not worth while to mention a circumstance for which the impertinence of any neighboring servant, or drunken passer-by, might easily account. An apprehension, however, of a more unpleasant nature shot across him, as his eye fell upon the costly plate which Talbot rather ostentatiously displayed, and then glanced to the single

and aged servant, who was, beside his master, the only male inmate of the house. Nor could he help saying to Talbot, in the course of the evening, that he wondered he was not afraid of hoarding so many articles of value in a house at once lonely and ill guarded.

"Ill guarded!" said Talbot, rather affronted, "why, I and my servant always sleep here!"

To this Clarence thought it neither prudent nor well-bred to offer further remark.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Meetings, or public calls he never miss'd,
To dictate often, always to assist.

* * * * *

To his experience and his native sense,
He joined a bold, imperious eloquence:
The grave, stern look of men inform'd and wise,
A full command of feature, heart and eyes,
An awe-compelling frown, and fear-inspiring size."—CRABBE.

THE next evening Clarence, mindful of Wolfe's invitation, inquired from Warner (who repaid the contempt of the republican for the painter's calling by a similar feeling for the zealot's) the direction of the oratorical meeting, and repaired there alone. It was the most celebrated club (of that description) of the day, and well worth attending, as a gratification to the curiosity, if not an improvement to the mind.

On entering, he found himself in a long room, tolerably well lighted, and still better filled. The sleepy countenances of the audience, the whispered conversation carried on at scattered intervals, the listless attitudes of some, the frequent yawns of others, the eagerness with which attention was attracted to the opening door, when it admitted some new object of interest, the desperate resolution with which some of the more energetic turned themselves towards the orator, and then, with a faint shake of the head, turned themselves again hopelessly away—were all signs that denoted that no very eloquent declaimer was in possession of the "house." It was, indeed, a singularly dull, monotonous voice which, arising from the upper end of the room, dragged itself on towards the middle; and expired with a sighing sound before it reached the end. The face of the speaker suited his vocal powers; it was small, mean, and of a round stupidity, without anything even in fault that could

possibly command attention, or even the excitement of disapprobation: the very garments of the orator seemed dull and heavy, and, like the Melancholy of Milton, had a "leadен look." Now and then some words, more emphatic than others—stones breaking, as it were, with a momentary splash, the stagnation of the heavy stream—produced from three very quiet, unhappy-looking persons, seated next to the speaker, his immediate friends, three single isolated "hears!"

"The force of friendship could no farther go."

At last the orator, having *spoken through*, suddenly stopped; the whole meeting seemed as if a weight had been taken from it; there was a general buzz of awakened energy, each stretched his limbs, and resettled himself in his place,

"And turning to his neighbor, said,
'Rejoice!'"

A pause ensued—the chairman looked round—the eyes of the meeting followed those of their president, with an universal and palpable impatience, towards an obscure corner of the room: the pause deepened for one moment, and then was broken; a voice cried "Wolfe!" and at that signal the whole room shook with the name. The place which Clarence had taken did not allow him to see the object of these cries, till he rose from his situation, and, passing two rows of benches, stood forth in the middle space of the room; then, from one to one, went round the general roar of applause; feet stamped, hands clapped, umbrellas set their sharp points to the ground, and walking-sticks thumped themselves out of shape in the universal clamor. Tall, gaunt, and erect, the speaker possessed, even in the mere proportions of his frame, that physical power which never fails, in a popular assembly, to gain attention to mediocrity, and to throw dignity over faults. He looked very slowly round the room, remaining perfectly still and motionless, till the clamor of applause had entirely subsided, and every ear, Clarence's no less eagerly than the rest, was strained, and thirsting to catch the first syllables of his voice.

It was then with a low, very deep, and somewhat hoarse tone, that he began; and it was not till he had spoken for several minutes that the iron expression of his face altered, that the drooping hand was raised, and that the suppressed, yet powerful, voice began to expand and vary in its volume. He had then entered upon a new department of his subject. The question was connected with the English constitution, and

Wolfe was now preparing to put forth, in long and blackened array, the alleged evils of an aristocratical form of government. *Then* it was as if the bile and bitterness of years were poured forth in a terrible and stormy wrath—then his action became vehement, and his eye flashed forth unutterable fire; his voice, solemn, swelling and increasing with each tone in its height and depth, filled, as with something palpable and perceptible, the shaking walls. The listeners—a various and unconnected group, bound by no tie of faith or of party, many attracted by curiosity, many by the hope of ridicule, some abhorring the tenets expressed, and nearly all disapproving their principles, or doubting their wisdom—the listeners, certainly not a group previously formed or molded into enthusiasm, became rapt and earnest, their very breath forsook them.

Linden had never before that night heard a public speaker; but he was of a thoughtful and rather calculating mind, and his early habits of decision, and the premature cultivation of his intellect, rendered him little susceptible, in general, to the impressions of the vulgar; nevertheless, in spite of himself, he was hurried away by the stream, and found that the force and rapidity of the speaker did not allow him even time for the dissent and disapprobation which his republican maxims and fiery denunciations perpetually excited in a mind aristocratic both by creed and education. At length, after a peroration of impetuous and magnificent invective, the orator ceased.

In the midst of the applause that followed, Clarence left the assembly; he could not endure the thought that any duller or more commonplace speaker should fritter away the spell which yet bound and engrossed his spirit.

CHAPTER XVIII.

“At the bottom of the staircase was a small door, which gave way before Nigel, as he precipitated himself upon the scene of action, a cocked pistol in one hand, etc.”—*Fortunes of Nigel*.

THE night, though not utterly dark, was rendered capricious and dim by alternate wind and rain; and Clarence was delayed in his return homeward by seeking occasional shelter from the rapid and heavy showers which hurried by. It was during one of the temporary cessations of the rain that he reached Copperas Bower, and while he was searching in his pockets for the key which was to admit him, he observed two men loitering about

his neighbor's house. The light was not sufficient to give him more than a scattered and imperfect view of their motions. Somewhat alarmed, he stood for several moments at the door, watching them as well as he was able; nor did he enter the house till the loiterers had left their suspicious position, and, walking onwards, were hid entirely from him by the distance and darkness.

"It really is a dangerous thing for Talbot," thought Clarence, as he ascended to his apartment, "to keep so many valuables, and only one servant, and that one as old as himself too. However, as I am by no means sleepy, and my room is by no means cool, I may as well open my window, and see if those idle fellows make their reappearance." Suiting the action to the thought, Clarence opened his little casement, and leant wistfully out.

He had no light in his room, for none was ever left for him. This circumstance, however, of course enabled him the better to penetrate the dimness and haze of the night, and, by the help of the fluttering lamps, he was enabled to take a general, though not minute, survey of the scene below.

I think I have before said that there was a garden between Talbot's house and Copperas Bower; this was bounded by a wall, which confined Talbot's peculiar territory of garden, and this wall, describing a parallelogram, faced also the road. It contained two entrances—one the principal adytus, in the shape of a comely iron gate, the other a wooden door, which, being a private pass, fronted the intermediate garden before mentioned, and was exactly opposite to Clarence's window.

Linden had been more than ten minutes at his post, and had just begun to think his suspicions without foundation, and his vigil in vain, when he observed the same figures he had seen before advance slowly from the distance, and pause by the front gate of Talbot's mansion.

Alarmed and anxious, he redoubled his attention; he stretched himself, as far as his safety would permit, out of the window; the lamps, agitated by the wind, which swept by in occasional gusts, refused to grant to his straining sight more than an inaccurate and unsatisfying survey. Presently a blast, more violent than ordinary, suspended as it were the falling columns of rain, and left Clarence in almost total darkness; it rolled away, and the momentary calm which ensued enabled him to see that one of the men was stooping by the gate, and the other standing apparently on the watch at a little distance. Another gust shook the lamps, and again obscured his view: and when

it had passed onward in its rapid course, the men had left the gate, and were in the garden beneath his window. They crept cautiously, but swiftly, along the opposite wall, till they came to the small door we have before mentioned ; here they halted, and one of them appeared to occupy himself in opening the door. Now, then, fear was changed into certainty, and it seemed, without doubt, that the men, having found some difficulty or danger in forcing the stronger or more public entrance, had changed their quarter of attack. No more time was to be lost ; Clarence shouted aloud, but the high wind probably prevented the sound reaching the ears of the burglars, or at least rendered it dubious and confused. The next moment, and before Clarence could repeat his alarm, they had opened the door, and were within the neighboring garden, beyond his view. Very young men, unless their experience has outstripped their youth, seldom have much presence of mind ; that quality, which is the opposite to *surprise*, comes to us in those years when nothing seems to us strange or unexpected. But a much older man than Clarence might have well been at a loss to know what conduct to adopt in the situation in which our hero was placed. The visits of the watchman to that (then) obscure and ill-inhabited neighborhood, were more regulated by his indolence than his duty, and Clarence knew that it would be in vain to listen for his cry, or tarry for his assistance. He himself was utterly unarmed, but the stock-jobber had a pair of horse pistols, and, as this recollection flashed upon him, the pause of deliberation ceased.

With a swift step he descended the first flight of stairs, and, pausing at the chamber door of the faithful couple, knocked upon its panels with a loud and hasty summons. The second repetition of the noise produced the sentence, uttered in a very trembling voice, of "Who's there?"

"It is I, Clarence Linden," replied our hero ; "lose no time in opening the door."

This answer seemed to reassure the valorous stock-jobber. He slowly undid the bolt, and turned the key.

"In Heaven's name, what do you want, Mr. Linden ?" said he.

"Ay," cried a sharp voice from the more internal recesses of the chamber, "what do you want, sir, disturbing us in the bosom of our family, and at the dead of night ?"

With a rapid voice, Clarence repeated what he had seen, and requested the broker to accompany him to Talbot's house, or at least to lend him his pistols.

"He shall do no such thing," cried Mrs. Copperas. "Come here, Mr. C., and shut the door directly."

"Stop, my love," said the stock-jobber, "stop a moment."

"For God's sake," cried Clarence, "make no delay; the poor old man may be murdered by this time."

"It's no business of mine," said the stock-jobber.

"If Adolphus had not broken the rattle I would not have minded the trouble of springing it; but you are very much mistaken if you think I am going to leave my warm bed, in order to have my throat cut."

"Then give me your pistols," cried Clarence; "I will go alone."

"I shall commit no such folly," said the stock-jobber; "if you are murdered, I may have to answer it to your friends, and pay for your burial. Besides, you owe us for your lodgings—go to your bed, young man, as I shall to mine." And so saying, Mr. Copperas proceeded to close the door.

But enraged at the brutality of the man, and excited by the urgency of the case, Clarence did not allow him so peaceable a retreat. With a strong and fierce grasp, he seized the astonished Copperas by the throat, and shaking him violently, forced his own entrance into the sacred nuptial chamber.

"By Heaven," cried Linden, in a savage and stern tone, for his blood was up, "I will twist your coward's throat, and save the murderer his labor, if you do not instantly give me up your pistols."

The stock-jobber was panic-stricken. "Take them," he cried in the extremest terror; "there they are on the chimney-piece, close by."

"Are they primed and loaded?" said Linden, not relaxing his gripe.

"Yes, yes!" said the stock-jobber, "loose my throat, or you will choke me!" and, at that instant, Clarence felt himself clasped by the invading hands of Mrs. Copperas.

"Call off your wife," said he, "or I *will* choke you!" and he tightened his hold, "and tell her to give me the pistols."

The next moment Mrs. Copperas extended the debated weapons towards Clarence. He seized them, flung the poor stock-jobber against the bed-post, hurried downstairs, opened the back door which led into the garden, flew across the intervening space, arrived at the door, and entering Talbot's garden, paused to consider what was the next step to be taken.

A person equally brave as Clarence, but more cautious, would not have left the house without alarming Mr. de Warens, even

in spite of the failure with his master ; but Linden only thought of the pressure of time, and the necessity of expedition, and he would have been a very unworthy hero of romance had he felt fear for two antagonists, with a brace of pistols at his command, and a high and good action in view.

After a brief, but decisive, halt, he proceeded rapidly round the house, in order to ascertain at which part the ruffians had admitted themselves, should they (as indeed there was little doubt) have already effected their entrance.

He found the shutters of one of the principal rooms on the ground floor had been opened, and through the aperture he caught the glimpse of a moving light, which was suddenly obscured. As he was about to enter, the light again flashed out : he drew back just in time, carefully screened himself behind the shutter, and, through one of the chinks, observed what passed within. Opposite to the window was a door which conducted to the hall and principal staircase ; this door was open, and in the hall, at the foot of the stairs, Clarence saw two men ; one carried a dark lantern, from which the light proceeded, and some tools of the nature of which Clarence was naturally ignorant : this was a middle-sized, muscular man, dressed in the rudest garb of an ordinary laborer ; the other was much taller and younger, and his dress was of rather a less ignoble fashion.

“Hist ! hist !” said the taller one, in a low tone, “did you not hear a noise, Ben ?”

“Not a pin fall ; but stow your whids, man !”

This was all that Clarence heard in a connected form ; but as the wretches paused, in evident doubt how to proceed, he caught two or three detached words, which his ingenuity rapidly formed into sentences. “No, no ! sleeps to the left—old man above—plate chest—we must have the blunt too. Come, track up the dancers, and dowse the glim.” And at the last words the light was extinguished, and Clarence’s quick and thirsting ears caught their first steps on the stairs as they died away—and all was hushed.

It had several times occurred to Clarence to rush from his hiding-place, and fire at the ruffians, and perhaps that measure would have been the wisest he could have taken ; but Clarence had never discharged a pistol in his life, and he felt, therefore, that his aim must be uncertain enough to render a favorable position and a short distance essential requisites. Both these were, at present, denied to him ; and although he saw no weapons about the persons of the villains, yet he imagined

they would not have ventured on so dangerous an expedition without firearms ; and if he failed, as would have been most probable, in his two shots, he concluded that, though the alarm would be given, his own fate would be inevitable.

If this was reasoning upon false premises, for housebreakers seldom or never carry loaded fire-arms, and never stay for revenge, when their safety demands escape, Clarence may be forgiven for not knowing the customs of housebreakers, and for not making the very best of an extremely novel and dangerous situation.

No sooner did he find himself in total darkness, than he bitterly reproached himself for his late backwardness, and, inwardly resolving not again to miss any opportunity which presented itself, he entered the window, groped along the room into the hall, and found his way very slowly, and after much circumlocution, to the staircase.

He had just gained the summit, when a loud cry broke upon the stillness : it came from a distance, and was instantly hushed ; but he caught, at brief intervals, the sound of angry and threatening voices. Clarence bent down anxiously, in the hope that some solitary ray would escape through the crevice of the door within which the robbers were engaged. But though the sounds came from the same floor as that on which he now trod, they seemed far and remote, and not a gleam of light broke the darkness.

He continued, however, to feel his way in the direction from which the sounds proceeded, and soon found himself in a narrow gallery ; the voices seemed more loud and near as he advanced ; at last he distinctly heard the words :

“Will you not confess where it is placed ?”

“Indeed, indeed,” replied an eager and earnest voice, which Clarence recognized as Talbot’s, “This is all the money I have in the house—the plate is above—my servant has the key—take it—take all—but save his life and mine.”

“None of your gammon,” said another and rougher voice than that of the first speaker : “we know you have more blunt than this—a paltry sum of fifty pounds, indeed !”

“Hold !” cried the other ruffian, “here is a picture set with diamonds, that will do, Ben. Let go the old man.”

Clarence was now just at hand, and probably from a sudden change in the position of the dark lantern within, a light abruptly broke from beneath the door and streamed along the passage.

“No, no, no !” cried the old man, in a loud yet tremulous

voice—"No, not that, anything else, but I will defend *that* with my life."

"Ben, my lad," said the ruffian, "twist the old fool's neck : we have no more time to lose."

At that very moment the door was flung violently open, and Clarence Linden stood within three paces of the reprobates and their prey. The taller villain had a miniature in his hand, and the old man clung to his legs with a convulsive but impotent clasp : the other fellow had already his gripe upon Talbot's neck, and his right hand grasped a long case-knife.

With a fierce and flashing eye, and a cheek deadly pale with internal and resolute excitement, Clarence confronted the robbers.

"Thank Heaven," cried he, "I am not too late !" And advancing yet another step toward the shorter ruffian, who struck mute with the suddenness of the apparition, still retained his grasp of the old man, he fired his pistol, with a steady and close aim ; the ball penetrated the wretch's brain, and without sound or sigh he fell down dead, at the very feet of his just destroyer. The remaining robber had already meditated, and a second more sufficed to accomplish his escape. He sprang towards the door : the ball whizzed beside him, but touched him not. With a safe and swift step, long inured to darkness, he fled along the passage ; and Linden, satisfied with the vengeance he had taken upon his comrade, did not harass him with an unavailing pursuit.

Clarence turned to assist Talbot. The old man was stretched upon the floor insensible, but his hand grasped the miniature which the plunderer had dropped in his flight and terror, and his white and ashen lip was pressed convulsively upon the recovered treasure.

Linden raised and placed him on his bed, and while employed in attempting to revive him, the ancient domestic, alarmed by the report of the pistol, came, poker in hand, to his assistance.

By little and little they recovered the object of their attention.

His eyes rolled wildly round the room, and he muttered :

"Off, off ! ye shall not rob me of my only relic of her—where is it ?—have you got it ?—the picture, the picture ?"

"It is here, sir, it is here," said the old servant, "it is in your own hand."

Talbot's eye fell upon it ; he gazed at it for some moments, pressed it to his lips, and then, sitting erect, and looking wildly round, he seemed to awaken to the sense of his late danger and his present deliverance.

CHAPTER XIX.

“ Ah, fleetier far than fleetest storm or steed,
 Or the death they bear,
 The heart which tender thought clothes like a dove,
 With the wings of care !
 In the battle—in the darkness—in the need,
 Shall mine cling to thee!
 Nor claim one smile for all the comfort, love,
 It may bring to thee ! ” —SHELLEY.

LETTER FROM ALGERNON MORDAUNT TO ISABEL ST. LEGER.

“ You told me not to write to you. You know how long, but not how uselessly, I have obeyed you. Did you think, Isabel, that my love was of that worldly and common order which requires a perpetual aliment to support it? Did you think that, if you forbade the stream to flow visibly, its sources would be exhausted, and its channels dried up? This may be the passion of others; it is not mine. Months have passed since we parted, and since then you have not seen me: this letter is the first token you have received from a remembrance which cannot die. But do you think that I have not watched, and tended upon you, and gladdened my eyes with gazing on your beauty, when you have not dreamed that I was by? Ah, Isabel, your heart should have told you of it—*mine* would, had *you* been so near me ! ”

“ You receive no letters from me, it is true—think you that my hand and heart are therefore idle? No. I write to you a thousand burning lines; I pour out my soul to you: I tell you of all I suffer: my thoughts, my actions, my very dreams, are all traced upon paper. I send them not to you, but I read them over and over, and when I come to your name, I pause, and shut my eyes, and then ‘Fancy has her power,’ and lo! ‘you are by my side!’

“ Isabel, our love has not been a holiday and joyous sentiment; but I feel a solemn and unalterable conviction that our union is ordained.

“ Others have many objects to distract and occupy the thoughts which are once forbidden a single direction, but we have *none*. At least, to me you are everything. Pleasure, splendor, ambition, all are merged into one great and eternal thought, and that is *you* !

“ Others have told me, and I believed them, that I was hard, and cold, and stern—so perhaps I was before I knew you, but

now I am weaker and softer than a child. There is a stone which is of all the hardest and the chillest, but when once set on fire it is unquenchable. You smile at my image, perhaps, and I should smile if I saw it in the writing of another; for all that I have ridiculed in romance, as exaggerated, seems now to me too cool and too commonplace for reality.

“But this is not what I meant to write to you; you are ill, dearest and noblest Isabel, you are ill! I am the cause, and you conceal it from me; and you would rather pine away and die than suffer *me* to lose one of those worldly advantages which are in *my* eyes but as dust in the balance,—it is in vain to deny it. I heard from others of your impaired health; I have witnessed it myself. Do you remember last night when you were in the room with your relations, and they made you sing—a song too which you used to sing to me, and when you came to the second stanza your voice failed you and you burst into tears, and *they* instead of soothing reproached and chid you, and you answered not, but wept on? Isabel, do you remember that a sound was heard at the window and a groan? Even they were startled, but they thought it was the wind, for the night was dark and stormy, and they saw not it was *I*—yes, my devoted, my generous love, it was I who gazed upon you, and from whose heart that voice of anguish was wrung; and I saw your cheek was pale and thin, and that the canker at the core had preyed upon the blossom.

“Think you, after this, that I could keep silence or obey your request? No, dearest, no! Is not my happiness your object? I have the vanity to believe so; and am I not the best judge how that happiness is to be secured? I tell you I say it calmly, coldly, dispassionately—not from the imagination, not even from the heart, but solely from the *reason*—that I can bear everything rather than the loss of *you*; and that if the evil of my love scathe and destroy you, I shall consider and curse myself as your murderer! Save me from this extreme of misery, my—yes, *my* Isabel! I shall be at the copse where we have so often met before, to-morrow at noon. You will meet me; and if I cannot *convince* you, I will not ask you to be *persuaded*.

“A. M.”

And Isabel read this letter, and placed it at her heart, and felt less miserable than she had done for months; for, though she wept, there was sweetness in the tears which the assurance of *his* love, and the tenderness of his remonstrance, had called forth. She met him—how could she refuse? and the struggle

was past. Though not "convinced" she *was* "persuaded"; for her heart, which refused his reasonings, melted at his reproaches and his grief. But she would not consent to unite her fate with him at once, for the evils of that step to his interests were immediate and near; she was only persuaded to permit their correspondence and occasional meetings, in which, however imprudent they might be for herself, the disadvantages to her lover were distant and remote. It was of him only that she thought: for him she trembled; for him she was the coward and the woman: for herself she had no fears and no forethought.

And Algernon was worthy of this devoted love, and returned it as it was given. Man's love, in general, is a selfish and exacting sentiment: it demands every sacrifice, and refuses all. But the nature of Mordaunt was essentially high and disinterested, and his honor, like his love, was not that of the world: it was the ethereal and spotless honor of a lofty and generous mind, the honor which custom can neither give nor take away; and, however impatiently he bore the deferring of an union, in which he deemed that *he* was the only sufferer, he would not have uttered a sigh or urged a prayer for that union, could it, in the minutest or remotest degree, have injured or degraded *her*.

These are the hearts and natures which make life beautiful: these are the shrines which sanctify love: these are the diviner spirits for whom there is kindred and commune with everything exalted and holy in heaven and earth. For them Nature unfolds her hoarded poetry, and her hidden spells: for their steps are the lonely mountains, and the still woods have a murmur for their ears: for them there is strange music in the wave, and in the whispers of the light leaves, and rapture in the voices of the birds: their souls drink, and are saturated with the mysteries of the Universal Spirit, which the philosophy of old times believed to be God himself. They look upon the sky with a gifted vision, and its dove-like quiet descends and overshadows their hearts: the Moon and the Night are to them wells of Castalian inspiration and golden dreams; and it was one of *them*, who, gazing upon the Evening Star, felt in the inmost sanctuary of his soul, its mysterious harmonies with his most worshipped hope, his most passionate desire, and dedicated it to—LOVE.

CHAPTER XX.

Maria. Here's the brave old man's love,

Bianca. That loves the young man.

The Woman's Prize: or, the Tamer Tamea.

“No, my dear Clarence, you have placed confidence in me, and it is now my duty to return it; you have told me your history and origin, and I will inform you of mine, but not yet. At present we will talk of you. You have conferred upon me what our universal love of life makes us regard as the greatest of human obligations; and though I can bear a large burden of gratitude, yet I must throw off an atom or two, in using my little power in *your* behalf. Nor is this all: your history has also given you another tie upon my heart, and in granting you a *legitimate* title to my good offices, removes any scruple you might otherwise have had in accepting them.

“I have just received this letter from Lord —, the minister for foreign affairs: you will see that he has appointed you to the office of *attaché* at —. You will also oblige me by looking over this other letter at your earliest convenience; the trifling sum which it contains will be repeated every quarter: it will do very well for an *attaché*: when you are an ambassador, why, we must equip you by a mortgage on Scarsdale; and now, my dear Clarence, tell me all about the Copperases.”

I need not say who was the speaker of the above sentences: sentences, apparently of a very agreeable nature; nevertheless, Clarence seemed to think otherwise, for the tears gushed into his eyes, and he was unable for several minutes to reply.

“Come, my young friend,” said Talbot kindly; “I have no near relations among whom I can choose a son I like better than you, nor you any at present from whom you might select a more desirable father, consequently, you must let me look upon you as my own flesh and blood; and, as I intend to be a very strict and peremptory father, I expect the most silent and scrupulous obedience to my commands. My first parental order to you is to put up those papers, and to say nothing more about them; for I have a great deal to talk to you about upon other subjects.”

And by these and similar kind-hearted and delicate remonstrances, the old man gained his point. From that moment Clarence looked upon him with the grateful and venerating love of a son; and I question very much, if Talbot had really been

the father of our hero, whether he would have liked so handsome a successor half so well.

The day after this arrangement, Clarence paid his debt to the Copperases, and removed to Talbot's house. With this event commenced a new era in his existence: he was no longer an outcast and a wanderer: out of alien ties he had wrought the link of a close and even paternal friendship: life, brilliant in its prospects, and elevated in its ascent, opened flatteringly before him; and the fortune and courage, which had so well provided for the present, were the best omens and auguries for the future.

One evening, when the opening autumn had made its approaches felt, and Linden and his new parent were seated alone by a blazing fire, and had come to a full pause in their conversation, Talbot, shading his face with the friendly pages of the "Whitehall Evening Paper," as if to protect it from the heat, said:

"I told you, the other day, that I would give you, at some early opportunity, a brief sketch of my life. This confidence is due to you in return for yours; and since you will soon leave me, and I am an old man, whose life no prudent calculation can fix, I may as well choose the present time to favor you with my confessions."

Clarence expressed and looked his interest, and the old man thus commenced:

THE HISTORY OF A VAIN MAN.

"I was the favorite of my parents, for I was quick at my lessons, and my father said I inherited my genius from him; and comely in my person, and my mother said that my good looks came from her. So the honest pair saw in their eldest son the union of their own attractions, and thought they were making much of themselves when they lavished their caresses upon me. They had another son, poor Arthur—I think I see him now! He was a shy, quiet, subdued boy, of a very plain personal appearance. My father and mother were vain, showy, ambitious people of the world, and they were as ashamed of my brother as they were proud of myself. However, he afterwards entered the army, and distinguished himself highly. He died in battle, leaving an only daughter, who married, *as you know*, a nobleman of high rank. Her subsequent fate it is now needless to relate.

"Petted and pampered from my childhood, I grew up with a profound belief in my own excellences, and a feverish and ir-

ritating desire to impress every one who came in my way with the same idea. There is a sentence in Sir William Temple, which I have often thought of with a painful conviction of its truth: 'A restlessness in men's minds to be something they are not, and to have something they have not, is the root of all immorality.'* At school, I was confessedly the cleverest boy in my remove; and, what I valued equally as much, I was the best cricketer of the best eleven. Here, then, you will say my vanity was satisfied—no such thing! There was a boy who shared my room, and was next me in the school; we were, therefore, always thrown together. He was a great, stupid, lubberly cub, equally ridiculed by the masters, and disliked by the boys: will you believe that this individual was the express and almost sole object of my envy? He was more than my rival, he was my superior; and I hated him with all the unleavened bitterness of my soul.

"I have said he was my superior—it was in one thing. He could balance a stick, nay, a cricket-bat, a poker, upon his chin, and I could not; you laugh, and so can I now, but it was no subject of laughter to me then. This circumstance, trifling as it may appear to you, poisoned my enjoyment. The boy saw my envy, for I could not conceal it; and as all fools are malicious, and most fools ostentatious, he took a particular pride and pleasure in displaying his dexterity, and 'showing off' my discontent. You can form no idea of the extent to which this petty insolence vexed and disquieted me. Even in my sleep, the clumsy and grinning features of this tormenting imp haunted me like a spectre; my visions were nothing but chins and cricket-bats; walking sticks sustaining themselves upon human excrescences, and pokers dancing a hornpipe upon the tip of a nose. I assure you that I have spent hours in secret seclusion, practicing to rival my hated comrade, and my face—see how one vanity quarrels with another—was little better than a map of bruises and discolorations.

"I actually became so uncomfortable as to write home and request to leave the school. I was then about sixteen, and my indulgent father, in granting my desire, told me that I was too old and too advanced in my learning to go to any other academic establishment than the University. The day before I left the school, I gave, as was usually the custom, a breakfast to all my friends; the circumstance of my tormentor's sharing my room obliged me to invite him among the rest. However, I was in high spirits, and being an universal favorite with my

* And of all good.—*Author.*

schoolfellows, I succeeded in what was always to me an object of social ambition, and set the table on a roar; yet, when our festival was nearly expired, and I began to allude more particularly to my approaching departure, my vanity was far more gratified, for my feelings were far more touched, by observing the regret and receiving the good wishes of all my companions. I still recall that hour as one of the proudest and happiest of my life; but it had its immediate reverse. My evil demon put it into my tormentor's head to give me one last parting pang of jealousy. A large umbrella happened accidentally to be in my room; Crompton—such was my schoolfellow's name—saw and seized it; 'Look, Talbot,' said he, with his taunting and hideous sneer, 'you can't do this'; and placing the point of the umbrella upon his forehead, just above the eyebrow, he performed various antics around the room.

"At that moment I was standing by the fire-place and conversing with two boys upon whom, above all others, I wished to leave a favorable impression. My foolish soreness on this one subject had been often remarked, and as I turned, in abrupt and awkward discomposure, from the exhibition, I observed my two schoolfellows smile and exchange looks. I am not naturally passionate, and even at that age I had, in ordinary cases, great self-command; but this observation, and the cause which led to it, threw me off my guard. Whenever we are utterly under the command of one feeling we cannot be said to have our reason; at that instant I literally believe I was beside myself. What! in the very flush of the last triumph that that scene would ever afford me; amidst the last regrets of my early friends, to whom I fondly hoped to bequeath a long and brilliant remembrance, to be thus bearded by a contemptible rival, and triumphed over by a pitiful, yet insulting, superiority; to close my condolences with laughter; to have the final solemnity of my career thus terminating in mockery, and ridicule substituted as an ultimate reminiscence in the place of an admiring regret; all this, too, to be effected by one so long hated, one whom I was the only being forbidden the comparative happiness of despising? I could not brook it; the insult—the insulter were too revolting. As the unhappy buffoon approached me, thrusting his distorted face towards mine, I seized and pushed him aside, with a brief curse and a violent hand. The sharp point of the umbrella slipped; my action gave it impetus and weight: it penetrated his eye, and—spare me, spare me the rest."*

* This instance of vanity, and, indeed, the whole of Talbot's history, is literally from facts.

The old man bent down and paused for a few moments before he resumed.

“Crompton lost his eye, but my punishment was as severe as his. People who are very vain are usually equally susceptible, and they who feel one thing acutely will so feel another. For years, aye, for many years afterwards, the recollection of my folly goaded me with the bitterest and most unceasing remorse. Had I committed murder, my conscience could scarce have afflicted me more severely. I did not regain my self-esteem till I had somewhat repaired the injury I had done. Long after that time Crompton was in prison, in great and overwhelming distress. I impoverished myself to release him; I sustained him and his family till fortune rendered my assistance no longer necessary; and no triumphs were ever more sweet to me than the sacrifices I was forced to submit to in order to restore him to prosperity.

“It is natural to hope that this accident had, at least, the effect of curing me of my fault; but it requires philosophy in yourself, or your advisers, to render remorse of future avail. How could I amend my fault, when I was not even aware of it? Smarting under the effects, I investigated not the cause, and I attributed to irascibility and vindictiveness what had a deeper and more dangerous origin.

“At college, in spite of all my advantages of birth, fortune, health, and intellectual acquirements, I had many things besides the one enemy of remorse to corrode my tranquillity of mind. I was sure to find some one to excel me in something, and this was enough to embitter my peace. Our living Goldsmith is my favorite poet, and I perhaps insensibly venerate the genius the more because I find something congenial in the infirmities of the man. I can fully credit the anecdotes recorded of him. I too could once have been jealous of a puppet handling a spon-toon; I too could once have been miserable if two ladies at the theatre were more the objects of attention than myself! You, Clarence, will not despise me for this confession; those who knew me less would. Fools! there is no man so great as not to have some littleness more predominant than all his greatness. Our virtues are the dupes, and often only the playthings, of our follies!

“I entered the world—with what advantages, and what avidity! I smile, but it is mournfully, in looking back to that day. Though rich, high-born, and good-looking, I possessed not one of these three qualities in that eminence which could alone satisfy my love of superiority and desire of effect. I knew this

somewhat humiliating truth, for, though vain, I was not conceited. Vanity, indeed, is the very antidote to conceit; for, while the former makes us all *nerve* to the opinion of others, the latter is perfectly satisfied with its opinion of itself.

"I knew this truth, and as Pope, if he could not be the greatest of poets, resolved to be the most correct, so I strove, since I could not be the handsomest, the wealthiest, and the noblest of my contemporaries, to excel them, at least, in the grace and consummateness of manner; and in this, after incredible pains, after diligent apprenticeship in the world, and intense study in the closet, I at last flattered myself that I had succeeded. Of all success, while we are yet in the flush of youth, and its capacities of enjoyment, I can imagine none more intoxicating or gratifying than the success of society, and I had certainly some years of its triumph and *éclat*. I was courted, followed, flattered, and sought by the most envied and fastidious circles in England, and even in Paris; for society, so indifferent to those who disdain it, overwhelms with its gratitude—profuse though brief—those who devote themselves to its amusement. The victim to sameness and *ennui*, it offers, like the pallid and luxurious Roman, a reward for a new pleasure; and, as long as our industry or talent can afford the pleasure; the reward is ours. At that time, then, I reaped the full harvest of my exertions; the disappointment and vexation were of later date.

"I now come to the great era of my life—Love. Among my acquaintance was Lady Mary Walden, a widow of high birth, and noble, though not powerful connections. She lived about twenty miles from London, in a beautiful retreat; and, though not rich, her jointure, rendered ample by economy, enabled her to indulge her love of society. Her house was always as full as its size would permit, and I was among the most welcome of its visitors. She had an only daughter—even now, through the dim mists of years, that beautiful and fairy form rises still and shining before me, undimmed by sorrow, unfaded by time. Caroline Walden was the object of general admiration, and her mother, who attributed the avidity with which her invitations were accepted by all the wits and fine gentlemen of the day to the charms of her own conversation, little suspected the face and wit of her daughter to be the magnet of attraction. I had no idea at that time of marriage, still less could I have entertained such a notion, unless the step had greatly exalted my rank and prospects.

"The poor and powerless Caroline Walden was therefore the

last person for whom I had what the jargon of mothers terms 'serious intentions.' However, I was struck with her exceeding loveliness, and amused by the vivacity of her manners; moreover, my vanity was excited by the hope of distancing all my competitors for the smiles of the young beauty. Accordingly I set myself out to please, and neglected none of those subtle and almost secret attentions which, of all flatteries, are the most delicate and successful: and I succeeded. Caroline loved me with all the earnestness and devotion which characterize the love of woman. It never occurred to her that I was only trifling with those affections which it seemed so ardently my intention to win. She knew that my fortune was large enough to dispense with the necessity of fortune with my wife, and in birth she would have equalled men of greater pretensions to myself; added to this, long adulation had made her sensible, though not vain, of her attractions, and she listened with a credulous ear to the insinuated flatteries I was so well accustomed to instil.

"Never shall I forget—no, though I double my present years—the shock, the wildness of despair with which she first detected the selfishness of my homage; with which she saw that I had only mocked her trusting simplicity; and that while she had been lavishing the richest treasures of her heart before the burning altars of Love, my idol had been Vanity, and my offerings deceit. She tore herself from the profanation of my grasp; she shrouded herself from my presence. All interviews with me were rejected; all my letters returned to me unopened; and though, in the repentance of my heart, I entreated, I urged her to accept vows that were no longer insincere, her pride became her punishment, as well as my own. In a moment of bitter and desperate feeling, she accepted the offers of another, and made the marriage bond a fatal and irrevocable barrier to our reconciliation and union.

"Oh! how I now cursed my infatuation; how passionately I recalled the past! how coldly I turned from the hollow and false world, to whose service I had sacrificed my happiness, to muse and madden over the prospects I had destroyed, and the loving and noble heart I had rejected! Alas! after all, what is so ungrateful as that world for which we renounce so much! Its votaries resemble the Gymnosophists of old, and while they profess to make their chief end pleasure, we can only learn that they expose themselves to every torture and every pain!

"Lord Merton, the man whom Caroline now called husband,

was among the wealthiest and most dissipated of his order; and two years after our separation I met once more with the victim of my unworthiness, blazing in 'the full front' of courtly splendor! the leader of its gaities, and the cynosure of her followers. Intimate with the same society, we were perpetually cast together, and Caroline was proud of displaying the indifference towards me, which, if she felt not, she had at least learnt artfully to assume. This indifference was her ruin. The depths of my evil passion were again sounded and aroused, and I resolved yet to humble the pride and conquer the coldness which galled to the very quick the morbid acuteness of my self-love. I again attached myself to her train—I bowed myself to the very dust before her. What to me were her chilling reply and disdainful civilities?—only still stronger excitements to persevere.

"I spare you and myself the gradual progress of my schemes. A woman may recover her first passion, it is true; but then she must replace it with another. That other was denied to Caroline; she had not even children to engross her thoughts and to occupy her affections; and the gay world, which to many becomes an object, was to her only an escape.

"Clarence, my triumph came! Lady Walden (who had never known our secret) invited me to her house; Caroline was there. In the same spot where we had so often stood before, and in which her earliest affections were insensibly breathed away, in that same spot I drew from her colorless and trembling lips the confession of her weakness, the restored and pervading power of my remembrance.

"But Caroline was a proud and virtuous woman; even while her heart betrayed her, her mind resisted; and in the very avowal of her unconquered attachment, she renounced and discarded me forever. I am not an ungenerous, though a vain man; but my generosity was wayward, tainted, and imperfect. I could have borne the separation; I could have severed myself from her; I could have flown to the uttermost parts of the earth; I could have hoarded there my secret, yet unextinguished love, and never disturbed her quiet by a murmur; but then the fiat of separation must have come from *me!* My vanity could not bear that *her* lips should reject me; that *my* part was not to be the nobility of sacrifice, but the submission of resignation. However, my better feelings were aroused, and though I could not stifle, I concealed, my selfish repinings. We parted: she returned to town, I buried myself in the country; and, amidst the literary studies to which,

though by fits and starts, I was passionately devoted, I endeavored to forget my ominous and guilty love.

“But I was then too closely bound to the world not to be perpetually reminded of its events. My retreat was thronged with occasional migrators from London; my books were mingled with the news and scandal of the day. All spoke to me of Lady Merton; not as I loved to picture her to myself, pale and sorrowful, and brooding over my image; but gay, dissipated, the dispenser of smiles, the prototype of joy. I contrasted this account of her with the melancholy and gloom of my own feelings, and I resented her seeming happiness as an insult to myself.

“In this angry and fretful mood I returned to London. My empire was soon resumed; and now, Linden, comes the most sickening part of my confessions. Vanity is a growing and insatiable disease: what seems to its desires as wealth to-day, to-morrow it rejects as poverty. I was at first contented to know that I was beloved; by degrees, slow, yet sure, I desired that others should know it also. I longed to display my power over the celebrated and courted Lady Merton, and to put the last crown to my reputation and importance. The envy of others is the food of our own self-love. Oh, you know not, you dream not, of the galling mortifications to which a proud woman, whose love commands her pride, is subjected! I imposed upon Caroline the most humiliating, the most painful trials; I would allow her to see none but those I pleased; to go to no place where I withheld my consent; and I hesitated not to exert and testify my power over her affections, in proportion to the publicity of the opportunity.

“Yet, with all this littleness, would you believe that I loved Caroline with the most ardent and engrossing passion? I have paused behind her, in order to kiss the ground she trod on; I have staid whole nights beneath her window, to catch one glimpse of her passing form, even though I had spent hours of the day-time in her society; and, though my love burned and consumed me, like a fire, I would not breathe a single wish against her innocence, or take advantage of my power to accomplish what I knew, from her virtue and pride, no atonement could possibly repay. Such are the inconsistencies of the heart, and such, while they prevent our perfection, redeem us from the utterness of vice! Never, even in my wildest days, was I blind to the glory of virtue, yet never, till my latest years, have I enjoyed the faculty to avail myself of my perception. I resembled the mole, which by Boyle is supposed to possess

the idea of light, but to be unable to comprehend the objects on which it shines.

“Among the varieties of my prevailing sin was a weakness, common enough to worldly men. While I ostentatiously played off the love I had *excited*, I could not bear to show the love I *felt*. In our country, and perhaps, though in a less degree, in all other highly artificial states, enthusiasm, or even feeling of any kind, is ridiculous ; and I could not endure the thought that my treasured and secret affections should be dragged from their retreat, to be cavilled and carped at by

‘Every beardless, vain comparative.’

“This weakness brought on the catastrophe of my love ; for, mark me, Clarence, it is through our weaknesses that our vices are punished ! One night I went to a masquerade ; and, while I was sitting in a remote corner, three of my acquaintances, whom I recognized, though they knew it not, approached and rallied me upon my *romantic* attachment to Lady Merton. One of them was a woman of a malicious and sarcastic wit ; the other two were men whom I disliked, because their pretensions interfered with mine ; they were diners-out, and anecdote-mongers. Stung to the quick by their sarcasm and laughter, I replied in a train of mingled arrogance and jest ; at last I spoke slightly of the person in question ; and these profane and false lips dared not only to disown the faintest love to that being who was more to me than all on earth, but even to speak of herself with ridicule, and her affection with disdain.

“In the midst of this, I turned and beheld, within hearing, a figure which I knew upon the moment. O heaven ! the burning shame and agony of that glance !—It raised its mask—I saw that blanched cheek, and that trembling lip ! and I knew that the iron had indeed entered into her soul.

“Clarence, I never beheld her again alive. Within a week from that time she was a corpse. She had borne much, suffered much, and murmured not ; but this shock pressed too hard, came too home, and from the hand of him for whom she would have sacrificed all ! I stood by her in death ; I beheld my work ; and I turned away, a wanderer and a pilgrim upon the face of the earth. Verily, I have had my reward.”

The old man paused, in great emotion ; and Clarence, who could offer him no consolation, did not break the silence. In a few minutes Talbot continued :

“From that time, the smile of woman was nothing to me ; I seemed to grow old in a single day. Life lost to me all its

objects. A dreary and desert blank stretched itself before me—the sounds of creation had only in my ears one voice—the past, the future, one image. I left my country for twenty years, and lived an idle and hopeless man in the various courts of the continent.

“At the age of fifty I returned to England; the wounds of the past had not disappeared, but they were scarred over; and I longed, like the rest of my species, to have an object in view. At that age, if we have seen much of mankind, and possess the talents to profit by our knowledge, we must be one of two sects: a politician or a philosopher. My time was not yet arrived for the latter, so I resolved to become the former; but this was denied me, for my vanity had assumed a different shape. It is true that I cared no longer for the reputation women can bestow; but I was eager for the applause of men, and I did not like the long labor necessary to attain it. I wished to make a short road to my object, and I eagerly followed every turn but the right one, in the hopes of its leading me sooner to my goal.

“The great characteristic of a vain man, in contradistinction to an ambitious man, and his eternal obstacle to a high and honorable fame, is this: he requires for an expenditure of trouble too speedy a reward; he cannot wait for years, and climb, step by step, to a lofty object: whatever he attempts, he must seize at a single grasp. Added to this, he is incapable of an exclusive attention to one end; the universality of his cravings is not contented, unless it devours all; and thus he is perpetually doomed to fritter away his energies by grasping at the trifling baubles within his reach, and in gathering the worthless fruit which a single sun can mature.

“This, then, was my fault, and the cause of my failure. I could not give myself up to finance, nor puzzle through the intricacies of commerce: even the common parliamentary drudgeries of constant attendance and late hours were insupportable to me; and so after two or three ‘splendid orations,’ as my friends termed them, I was satisfied with the puffs of the pamphleteers, and closed my political career. I was now, then, the wit and the conversationalist. With my fluency of speech and variety of information, these were easy distinctions; and the popularity of a dinner table, or the approbation of a literary coterie, consoled me for the more public and more durable applause I had resigned.

“But even this gratification did not last long. I fell ill; and the friends who gathered round the wit fled from the valetudinarian. This disgusted me, and when I was sufficiently re-

covered, I again returned to the continent. But I had a fit of misanthropy and solitude upon me, and so it was not to courts and cities, the scenes of former gaieties, that I repaired ; on the contrary, I hired a house by one of the most sequestered of the Swiss lakes, and, avoiding the living, I surrendered myself, without interruption or control, to commune with the dead. I surrounded myself with books, and pored, with a curious and searching eye, into those works which treat particularly upon 'man.' My passions were over, my love of pleasure and society was dried up, and I had now no longer the obstacles which forbid us to be wise ; I unlearned the precepts my manhood had acquired, and in my old age I commenced philosopher ; Religion lent me her aid, and by her holy lamp my studies were coned and my hermitage illumined.

"There are certain characters which, in the world, are evil, and in seclusion are good : Rousseau, whom I know well, is one of them. These persons are of a morbid sensitiveness, which is perpetually galled by collision with others. In short, they are under the dominion of VANITY ; and that vanity, never satisfied, and always restless in the various competitions of society, produces 'envy, malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness !' but, in solitude, the good and benevolent dispositions with which our self-love no longer interferes have room to expand and ripen without being cramped by opposing interests ; this will account for many seeming discrepancies in character. There are also some men, in whom old age supplies the place of solitude, and Rousseau's antagonist and mental antipodes, Voltaire, is of this order. The pert, the malignant, the arrogant, the lampooning author, in his youth and manhood, has become, in his old age, the mild, the benevolent, and the venerable philosopher. Nothing is more absurd than to receive the characters of great men so implicitly upon the word of a biographer ; and nothing can be less surprising than our eternal disputes upon individuals ; for no man throughout life is the same being, and each season of our existence contradicts the characteristics of the last.

"And now in my solitude and my old age, a new spirit entered within me ; the game in which I had engaged so vehemently was over for me ; and I joined to my experience as a player my coolness as a spectator ; I no longer struggled with my species, and I began insensibly to love them. I established schools, and founded charities ; and, in secret, but active, services to mankind, I employed my exertions and lavished my desires.

"From this amendment I date the peace of mind and elasticity which I now enjoy; and in my later years, the happiness which I pursued in my youth and maturity so hotly, yet so ineffectually, has flown unsolicited to my breast.

"About five years ago I came again to England, with the intention of breathing my last in the country which gave me birth. I retired to my family home; I endeavored to divert myself in agricultural improvements, and my rental was consumed in speculation. This did not please me long: I sought society—society in Yorkshire! You may imagine the result: I was out of my element; the mere distance from the metropolis, from all genial companionship, sickened me with a vague feeling of desertion and solitude: for the first time in my life I felt my age and my celibacy. Once more I returned to town, a complaint attacked my lungs, the physicians recommended the air of this neighborhood, and I chose the residence I now inhabit. Without being exactly in London, I can command its advantages, and obtain society as a recreation, without buying it by restraint. I am not fond of new faces, nor any longer covetous of show; my old servant therefore contented me: for the future, I shall, however, satisfy your fears, remove to a safer habitation, and obtain a more numerous guard. It is, at all events, a happiness to me that fate, in casting me here, and exposing me to something of danger, has raised up, in you, a friend for my old age, and selected from this great universe of strangers one being to convince my heart that it has not outlived affection. My tale is done; may you profit by its moral!"

When Talbot said, that our characters were undergoing a perpetual change he should have made this reservation: the one ruling passion remains to the last; it may be modified, but it never departs: and it is these modifications which do, for the most part, shape out the channels of our change: or, as Helvetius has beautifully expressed it, "we resemble those vessels which the waves still carry towards the south, when the north wind has ceased to blow," but in our old age, this passion, having little to feed on, becomes sometimes dormant and inert, and then our good qualities rise, as it were from an incubus, and have their sway.

Yet these cases are not common, and Talbot was a remarkable instance, for he was a remarkable man. His mind had not slept while the age advanced, and thus it had swelled as it were from the bondage of its earlier passions and prejudices.

But little did he think, in the blindness of self-delusion—though it was so obvious to Clarence, that he could have smiled if he had not rather inclined to weep at the frailties of human nature—little did he think that the vanity which had cost him so much remained “a monarch still,” undeposed alike by his philosophy, his religion, or his remorse; and that, debarred by circumstances from all wider and more dangerous field, it still lavished itself upon trifles unworthy of his powers, and puerilities dishonoring his age. Folly is a courtesan whom we ourselves seek, whose favors we solicit at an enormous price! and who, like Lais, finds philosophers at her door, scarcely less frequently than the rest of mankind!

CHAPTER XXI.

Mrs. Trinket. What d’ye buy—what d’ye lack, gentlemen?
Gloves, ribbons, and essences—ribbons, gloves, and essences.—ETHEREGE.

“AND so, my love,” said Mr. Copperas, one morning at breakfast, to his wife, his right leg being turned over his left, and his dexter hand conveying to his mouth a huge morsel of buttered cake,—“and so, my love, they say that the old fool is going to leave the jackanapes all his fortune?”

“They do say so, Mr. C.: for my part I am quite out of patience with the art of the young man; I dare say he is no better than he should be; he always had a sharp look, and for ought I know, there may be more in that robbery than you or I dreamt of, Mr. Copperas. It was a pity,” continued Mrs. Copperas, upbraiding her lord with true matrimonial tenderness and justice, for the consequences of his having acted from *her* advice—“it was a pity, Mr. C., that you should have refused to lend him the pistols to go to the old fellow’s assistance, for then who knows but—”

“I might have converted them into *pocket* pistols,” interrupted Mr. C., “and not have overshot the mark, my dear—ha, ha, ha!”

“Lord, Mr. Copperas, you are always making a joke of everything.”

“No, my dear, for once I am making a joke of nothing.”

“Well, I declare it’s shameful,” cried Mrs. Copperas, still following up her own indignant meditations, “and after taking such notice of Adolphus, too, and all!”

“Notice, my dear! mere words,” returned Mr. Copperas,

"mere words, like ventilators, which make a great deal of air, but *never raise the wind*; but don't put yourself in a *stew*, my love, for the doctors say that *copperas in a stew* is poison!"

At this moment Mr. de Warens, throwing open the door, announced Mr. Brown; that gentleman entered with a sedate but cheerful air. "Well, Mrs. Copperas, your servant; any table linen wanted? Mr. Copperas, how do you do? I can give you a hint about the stocks. Master Copperas, you are looking bravely; don't you think he wants some new pin-befores, ma'am? But Mr. Clarence Linden, where is he? Not up yet, I dare say? Ah, the present generation is a generation of sluggards, as his worthy *aunt*, Mrs. Minden, used to say."

"I am sure," said Mrs. Copperas, with a disdainful toss of the head, "I know nothing about the young man. He has left us: a very mysterious piece of business indeed, Mr. Brown; and now I think of it, I can't help saying that we were by no means pleased with your introduction; and by the by, the chairs you bought for us at the sale were a mere take-in, so slight that Mr. Walruss broke two of them by only sitting down."

"Indeed, ma'am?" said Mr. Brown, with expostulating gravity; "but then Mr. Walruss is so very corpulent. But the young gentleman, what of him?" continued the broker, artfully turning from the point in dispute.

"Lord, Mr. Brown, don't ask me: it was the unluckiest step we ever made to admit him into the bosom of our family; quite a viper, I assure you; absolutely robbed poor Adolphus."

"Lord help us!" said Mr. Brown, with a look which "cast a browner horror" o'er the room, "who would have thought it? and such a pretty young man!"

"Well," said Mr. Copperas, who, occupied in finishing the buttered cake, had hitherto kept silence, "I must be off. Tom—I mean de Warens—have you stopped the coach?"

"Yees, sir."

"And what coach is it?"

"It be the Swallow, sir."

"Oh, very well. And now, Mr. Brown, having swallowed *in the roll*, I will e'en *roll in the Swallow*. Ha, ha, ha! At any rate," thought Mr. Copperas, as he descended the stairs, "*he* has not heard that before."

"Ha, ha!" gravely chuckled Mr. Brown; "what a very facetious, lively gentleman Mr. Copperas is. But touching this ungrateful young man, Mr. Linden, ma'am?"

"Oh, don't tease me, Mr. Brown, I must see after my domes-

tics : ask Mr. Talbot, the old miser in the next house, the *havarr*, as the French say."

"Well, now," said Mr. Brown, following the good lady downstairs—"how distressing for me—and to say that he was Mrs. Minden's nephew, too !"

But Mr. Brown's curiosity was not so easily satisfied, and finding Mr. de Warens leaning over the "front" gate, and "pursuing with wistful eyes" the departing "Swallow," he stopped, and, accosting him, soon possessed himself of the facts that "old Talbot had been robbed and murdered, but that Mr. Linden had brought him to life again ; and that old Talbot had given him a hundred thousand pounds, and adopted him as his son ; and that how Mr. Linden was going to be sent to foreign parts, as an ambassador, or governor, or great person ; and that how meester and meeses were quite 'cut up' about it."

All these particulars having been duly deposited in the mind of Mr. Brown, they produced an immediate desire to call upon the young gentleman, who, to say nothing of his being so very nearly related to his old customer, Mrs. Minden, was always so very great a favorite with him, Mr. Brown.

Accordingly, as Clarence was musing over his approaching departure, which was now very shortly to take place, he was somewhat startled by the apparition of Mr. Brown—"Charming day, sir—charming day," said the friend of Mrs. Minden—"just called in to congratulate you. I have a few articles, sir, to present you with—quite rarities, I assure you—quite presents, I may say. I picked them up at a sale of the late Lady Waddilove's most valuable effects. They are just the things, sir, for a gentleman going on a foreign mission. A most curious ivory chest, with an Indian padlock, to hold confidential letters—belonged formerly, sir, to the great Mogul ; and a beautiful diamond snuff-box, sir, with a picture of Louis XVI. on it, prodigiously fine, and will look so loyal too ; and, sir, if you have any old aunts in the county, to send a farewell present to, I have some charmingly fine cambric, a superb Dresden tea set, and a lovely little 'ape,' stuffed by the late Lady W. herself."

"My good sir," began Clarence.

"Oh, no thanks, sir—none at all—too happy to serve a relation of Mrs. Minden—always proud to keep up family connections. You will be at home to-morrow, sir, at eleven—I will look in—your most humble servant, Mr. Linden." And, almost upsetting Talbot, who had just entered, Mr. Brown bowed himself out.

CHAPTER XXII.

“ We talked with open heart and tongue,
Affectionate and true ;
A pair of friends, though I was young
And Matthew seventy-two.”—WORDSWORTH.

MEANWHILE the young artist proceeded rapidly with his picture. Devoured by his enthusiasm, and utterly engrossed by the sanguine anticipation of a fame which appeared to him already won, he allowed himself no momentary interval of relaxation ; his food was eaten by starts, and without stirring from his easel ; his sleep was broken and brief by feverish dreams ; he no longer roved with Clarence, when the evening threw her shade over his labors ; all air and exercise he utterly relinquished ; shut up in his narrow chamber, he passed the hours in a fervid and passionate self-commune, which, even in suspense from his work, riveted his thoughts the closer to its object. All companionship, all intrusion, he bore with irritability and impatience. Even Clarence found himself excluded from the presence of his friend : even his nearest relation, who doated on the very ground which he hallowed with his footstep, was banished from the haunted sanctuary of the painter ; from the most placid of human beings, Warner seemed to have grown the most morose.

Want of rest, abstinence from food, the impatience of the strained spirit and jaded nerves, all contributed to waste the health, while they excited the genius, of the artist. A crimson spot, never before seen there, burnt in the centre of his pale cheek ; his eye glowed with a brilliant but unnatural fire ; his features grew sharp and attenuated ; his bones worked from his whitening and transparent skin ; and the soul and frame, turned from their proper and kindly union, seemed contesting, with fierce struggles, which should obtain the mastery and the triumph.

But neither his new prospects, nor the coldness of his friend, diverted the warm heart of Clarence from meditating how he could most effectually serve the artist before he departed from the country. It was a peculiar object of desire to Warner that the most celebrated painter of the day, who was in terms of intimacy with Talbot, and who with the benevolence of real superiority was known to take a keen interest in the success of more youthful and inexperienced genius,—it was a peculiar object of desire to Warner, that Sir Joshua Reynolds

should see his picture before it was completed ; and Clarence, aware of this wish, easily obtained from Talbot a promise that it should be effected. That was the least service of his zeal : touched by the earnestness of Linden's friendship, anxious to oblige in any way his preserver, and well pleased himself to be the patron of merit, Talbot readily engaged to obtain for Warner whatever the attention and favor of high rank or literary distinction could bestow. "As for his picture," said Talbot (when, the evening before Clarence's departure, the latter was renewing the subject), "I shall myself become the purchaser, and at a price which will enable our friend to afford leisure and study for the completion of his next attempt ; but even at the risk of offending your friendship, and disappointing your expectations, I will frankly tell you, that I think Warner overrates, perhaps not his talents, but his powers ; not his ability for doing something great hereafter, but his capacity of doing it at present. In the pride of his heart, he has shown me many of his designs, and I am somewhat of a judge : they want experience, cultivation, taste, and, above all, a deeper study of the Italian masters. They all have the defects of a feverish coloring, an ambitious desire of effect, a wavering and imperfect outline, an ostentatious and unnatural strength of light and shadow ; they show, it is true, a genius of no ordinary stamp, but one ill-regulated, inexperienced, and utterly left to its own suggestions for a model. However, I am glad he wishes for the opinion of one necessarily the best judge ; let him bring the picture here by Thursday ; on that day my friend has promised to visit me ; and now let us talk of you and your departure."

The intercourse of men of different ages is essentially unequal : it must always partake more or less of advice on one side and deference on the other ; and although the easy and unpedantic turn of Talbot's conversation made his remarks rather entertaining than obviously admonitory, yet they were necessarily tinged with his experience, and regulated by his interest in the fortunes of his young friend.

"My dearest Clarence," said he affectionately, "we are about to bid each other a long farewell. I will not damp your hopes and anticipations by insisting on the little chance there is that you should ever see me again. You are about to enter upon the great world, and have within you the desire and the power of success ; let me flatter myself that you can profit by my experience. Among the Colloquia of Erasmus, there is a very entertaining dialogue between Apicius and a man who,

desirous of giving a feast to a very large and miscellaneous party, comes to consult the epicure what will be the best means to give satisfaction to all. Now you shall be this Spudæus (so I think he is called), and I will be Apicius; for the world, after all, is nothing more than a great feast of different strangers, with different tastes, and of different ages, and we must learn to adapt ourselves to their minds, and our temptations to their passions, if we wish to fascinate or even content them. Let me then call your attention to the hints and maxims which I have in this paper amused myself with drawing up for your instruction. Write to me from time to time, and I will, in replying to your letters, give you the best advice in my power. For the rest, my dear boy, I have only to request that you will be frank, and I, in my turn, will promise that when I cannot assist I will never reprove. And now, Clarence, as the hour is late, and you leave us early to-morrow, I will no longer detain you. God bless you and keep you. You are going to enjoy life—I to anticipate death; so that you can find in me little congenial to yourself; but, as the good Pope said to our Protestant countryman, 'Whatever the difference between us, I know well that an old man's blessing is never without its value.'

As Clarence clasped his benefactor's hand, the tears gushed from his eyes. Is there one being, stubborn as the rock to misfortune, whom kindness does not affect? For my part, kindness seems to me to come with a double grace and tenderness from the old; it seems in them the hoarded and long purified benevolence of years; as if it had survived and conquered the baseness and selfishness of the ordeal it had passed; as if the winds, which had broken the form, had swept in vain across the heart, and the frosts, which had chilled the blood and whitened the thin locks, had possessed no power over the warm tide of the affections. It is the triumph of nature over art; it is the voice of the angel which is yet within us. Nor is this all: the tenderness of age is twice blessed—blessed in its trophies over the obduracy of encrusting and withering years, blessed because it is tinged with the sanctity of the grave; because it tells us that the heart will blossom even upon the precincts of the tomb, and flatters us with the inviolacy and immortality of love.

CHAPTER XXIII.

“ Cannot I create,
“ Cannot I form, cannot I fashion forth
Another world, another universe ? ”—KEATS.

THE next morning Clarence, in his way out of town, directed his carriage (the last and not the least acceptable present from Talbot) to stop at Warner's door. Although it was scarcely sunrise, the aged grandmother of the artist was stirring, and opened the door to the early visitor. Clarence passed her with a brief salutation—hurried up the narrow stairs, and found himself in the artist's chamber. The windows were closed, and the air of the room was confined and hot. A few books, chiefly of history and poetry, stood in confused disorder upon some shelves opposite the window. Upon a table beneath them lay a flute, once the cherished recreation of the young painter, but now long neglected and disused: and, placed exactly opposite to Warner, so that his eyes might open upon his work, was the high-prized and already more than half-finished picture.

Clarence bent over the bed; the cheek of the artist rested upon his arm in an attitude unconsciously picturesque; the other arm was tossed over the coverlid, and Clarence was shocked to see how emaciated it had become. But ever and anon the lips of the sleeper moved restlessly, and words, low and inarticulate, broke out. Sometimes he started abruptly, and a bright but evanescent flush darted over his faded and hollow cheek; and once the fingers of the thin hand, which lay upon the bed, expanded, and suddenly closed in a firm and almost painful grasp; it was then that, for the first time, the words of the artist became distinct.

“ Ay, ay,” said he, “ I have thee, I have thee, at last. Long, very long, thou hast burnt up my heart like fuel, and mocked me, and laughed at my idle efforts; but now, now, I have thee. Fame, Honor, Immortality, whatever thou art called, I have thee, and thou canst not escape; but it is almost too late!” And, as if wrung by some sudden pain, the sleeper turned heavily round, groaned audibly, and awoke.

“ My friend,” said Clarence soothingly, and taking his hand, “ I have come to bid you farewell. I am just setting off for the continent, but I could not leave England without once more seeing you. I have good news, too, for you.” And Clarence proceeded to repeat Talbot's wish that Warner should bring the picture to his house on the following Thursday, that Sir Joshua

might inspect it. He added also, in terms the flattery of which his friendship could not resist exaggerating, Talbot's desire to become the purchaser of the picture.

"Yes," said the artist, as his eye glanced delightedly over his labor; "yes, I believe when it is once seen there will be many candidates!"

"No doubt," answered Clarence; "and for that reason you cannot blame Talbot for wishing to forestall all other competitors for the prize": and then continuing the encouraging nature of the conversation, Clarence enlarged upon the new hopes of his friend, besought him to take time, to spare his health, and not to injure both himself and his performance by over-anxiety and hurry. Clarence concluded by retailing Talbot's assurance that in all cases and circumstances he (Talbot) considered himself pledged to be Warner's supporter and friend.

With something of impatience, mingled with pleasure, the painter listened to all these details; nor was it to Linden's zeal, nor to Talbot's generosity, but rather to the excess of his own merit, that he secretly attributed the brightening prospect afforded him.

The difference which Warner, though of a disposition naturally kind, evinced at parting with a friend who had always taken so strong an interest in his behalf, and whose tears at that moment contrasted forcibly enough with the apathetic coldness of his own farewell, was a remarkable instance how acute vividness on a single point will deaden feeling on all others. Occupied solely and burningly with one intense thought, which was to him love, friendship, health, peace, wealth, Warner could not excite feelings, languid and exhausted with many and fiery conflicts, to objects of minor interest, and perhaps he inwardly rejoiced that his musings and his study would henceforth be sacred even from friendship.

Deeply affected, for his nature was exceedingly unselfish, generous, and susceptible, Clarence tore himself away, placed in the grandmother's hand a considerable portion of the sum he had received from Talbot, hurried into his carriage, and found himself on the high road to fortune, pleasure, distinction, and the continent.

But while Clarence, despite of every advantage before him, hastened to a court of dissipation and pleasure, with feelings in which regretful affection for those he had left darkened his worldly hopes, and mingled with the sanguine anticipations of youth, Warner, poor, low-born, wasted with sickness, destitute of friends, shut out by his temperament from the pleasures of

his age, burned with hopes far less alloyed than those of Clarence, and found in them, for the sacrifice of all else, not only a recompense, but a triumph.

Thursday came. Warner had made one request of Talbot, which had with difficulty been granted : it was that he himself might, unseen, be the auditor of the great painter's criticisms, and that Sir Joshua should be perfectly unaware of his presence. It had been granted with difficulty, because Talbot wished to spare Warner the pain of hearing remarks which he felt would be likely to fall far short of the sanguine self-elation of the young artist ; and it *had* been granted because Talbot imagined that, even should this be the case, the pain would be more than counterbalanced by the salutary effect it might produce. Alas ! vanity calculates but poorly upon the vanity of others ! What a virtue we should distil from frailty ; what a world of pain we should save our brethren, if we would suffer our own weakness to be the measure of theirs !

Thursday came : the painting was placed by the artist's own hand in the most favorable light ; a curtain, hung behind it, served as a screen for Warner, who, retiring to his hiding-place, surrendered his heart to delicious forebodings of the critic's wonder, and golden anticipations of the future destiny of his darling work. Not a fear dashed the full and smooth cup of his self-enjoyment. He had lain awake the whole of the night, in restless and joyous impatience for the morrow. At day-break he had started from his bed, he had unclosed his shutters, he had hung over his picture with a fondness greater, if possible, than he had ever known before ; like a mother, he felt as if his own partiality was but a part of an universal tribute ; and, as his aged relative turned her dim eyes to the painting, and, in her innocent idolatry, rather of the artist than his work, praised, and expatiated, and foretold, his heart whispered, "If it wring this worship from ignorance, what will be the homage of science?"

He who first laid down the now hackneyed maxim, that diffidence is the companion of genius, knew very little of the workings of the human heart. True, there may have been a few such instances, and it is probable that in this maxim, as in most, the exception made the rule. But what could ever reconcile genius to its sufferings, its sacrifices, its fevered inquietudes, the intense labor which can alone produce what the shallow world deems the giant offspring of a momentary inspiration ; what could ever reconcile it to these but the haughty and unquenchable consciousness of internal power ; the hope which

has the fulness of certainty that in proportion to the toil is the reward ; the sanguine and impetuous anticipation of glory, which burst the boundaries of time and space, and ranges immortality with a prophet's rapture? Rob Genius of its confidence, of its lofty self-esteem, and you clip the wings of the eagle ; you domesticate, it is true, the wanderer you could not hitherto comprehend, in the narrow bounds of your household affections : you abase and tame it more to the level of your ordinary judgments, but you take from it the power to soar ; the hardihood which was content to brave the thunder-cloud and build its eyrie on the rock, for the proud triumph of rising above its kind, and contemplating with a nearer eye the majesty of heaven.

But if something of presumption is a part of the very essence of genius, in Warner it was doubly natural, for he was still in the heat and flush of a design, the defects of which he had not yet had the leisure to examine ; and his talents, self-taught and self-modelled, had never received either the excitement of emulation or the chill of discouragement from the study of the masterpieces of his art.

The painter had not been long alone in his concealment before he heard steps ; his heart beat violently, the door opened, and he saw, through a small hole which he purposely made in the curtain, a man with a benevolent and prepossessing countenance, whom he instantly recognized as Sir Joshua Reynolds, enter the room, accompanied by Talbot. They walked up to the picture ; the painter examined it closely, and in perfect silence. "Silence," thought Warner, "is the best homage of admiration" ; but he trembled with impatience to hear the admiration confirmed by words—those words came too soon.

"It is the work of a clever man, certainly," said Sir Joshua ; "*but*" (terrible monosyllable) "of one utterly unskilled in the grand principles of his art ; look here, and here, and here, for instance," and the critic, perfectly unconscious of the torture he inflicted, proceeded to point out the errors of the work. Oh, the agony, the withering agony, of that moment to the ambitious Artist ! In vain he endeavored to bear up against the judgment—in vain he endeavored to persuade himself that it was the voice of envy which in these cold, measured, *defining* accents, fell like drops of poison upon his heart. He felt at once, and as if by a magical inspiration, the truth of the verdict ; the scales of self-delusion fell from his eyes ; by a hideous mockery, a kind of terrible pantomime, his goddess seemed at a word, a breath, transformed into a monster ; life, which had

been so lately concentrated into a single hope, seemed now, at once and forever, cramped, curdled, blistered into a single disappointment.

"But," said Talbot, who had in vain attempted to arrest the criticisms of the painter (who, very deaf at all times, was, at that time in particular, engrossed by the self-satisfaction always enjoyed by one expatiating on his favorite topic)—"but," said Talbot, in a louder voice, "you own there is great genius in the design?"

"Certainly, there is genius," replied Sir Joshua, in a tone of calm and complacent good-nature; "but what is genius without culture? You say the artist is young, very young; let him take time. I do not say let him attempt a humbler walk—let him persevere in the lofty one he has chosen, but let him first retrace every step he has taken; let him devote days, months, years, to the most diligent study of the immortal masters of the divine art, before he attempts (to exhibit, at least), another historical picture. He has mistaken, altogether, the nature of invention; a fine invention is nothing more than a fine deviation from, or enlargement on, a fine model; imitation, if noble and general, insures the best hope of originality. Above all, let your young friend, if he can afford it, visit Italy."

"He *shall* afford it," said Talbot kindly, "for he shall have whatever advantages I can procure him; but you see the picture is only half completed—he could alter it!"

"*He had better burn it!*" replied the painter, with a gentle smile.

And Talbot, in benevolent despair, hurried his visitor out of the room. He soon returned to seek and console the artist, but the artist was gone; the despised, the fatal picture, the blessing and curse of so many anxious and wasted hours, had vanished also with its creator.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"What is this soul, then? Whence
Came it?—It does not seem my own, and I
Have no self-passion or identity!
Some fearful end must be—

* * * * *

There never lived a mortal man, who bent
His appetite beyond his natural sphere,
But starved and died."—KEATS'S *Endymion*.

ON entering his home, Warner pushed aside, for the first time in his life with disrespect, his aged and kindly relation,

who, as if in mockery of the unfortunate artist, stood prepared to welcome and congratulate his return. Bearing his picture in his arms, he rushed upstairs, hurried into his room, and locked the door. Hastily he tore aside the cloth which had been drawn over the picture; hastily and tremblingly he placed it upon the frame accustomed to support it, and then, with a long, long, eager, searching, scrutinizing glance, he surveyed the once-beloved mistress of his worship. Presumption, vanity, exaggerated self-esteem, are, in their punishment, supposed to excite ludicrous, not sympathetic, emotions; but there is an *excess* of feeling, produced by whatever cause it may be, into which, in spite of ourselves, we are forced to enter. Even fear, the most contemptible of the passions, becomes tragic the moment it becomes an agony.

"Well, well!" said Warner at last, speaking very slowly, "it is over—it was a pleasant dream—but it is over—I ought to be thankful for the lesson." Then suddenly changing his mood and tone, he repeated, "Thankful! for what? that I am a wretch—a wretch more utterly hopeless, and miserable, and abandoned, than a man who freights with all his wealth, his children, his wife, the hoarded treasures and blessings of an existence, one ship, one frail, worthless ship, and, standing himself on the shore, sees it suddenly go down! Oh, was I not a fool—a right noble fool—a vain fool—an arrogant fool—a very essence and concentration of all things that make a fool, to believe such delicious marvels of myself! What, man!—(here his eye saw in the opposite glass his features, livid and haggard with disease, and the exhausting feelings which preyed within him)—what, man! would nothing serve thee but to be a genius—*thee* whom Nature stamped with her curse! Dwarf-like and distorted, mean in stature and in lineament, thou wert, indeed, a glorious being to perpetuate grace and beauty, the majesties and dreams of art! Fame for thee, indeed—ha—ha! Glory—ha—ha! a place with Titian, Correggio, Raphael—ha—ha—ha! O, thrice modest, thrice reasonable fool! But this vile daub; this disfigurement of canvas; this loathed and wretched monument of disgrace; this notable candidate for—ha—ha—immortality!—this I have, at least, in my power." And seizing the picture, he dashed it to the ground, and trampled it with his feet upon the dusty boards, till the moist colors presented nothing but one confused and dingy stain.

This sight seemed to recall him for a moment. He paused, lifted up the picture once more, and placed it on the table. "But," he muttered, "might not this critic be envious? am I

sure that he judged rightly—fairly? The greatest masters have looked askant and jealous at their pupil's works. And then, how slow, how cold, how damned cold, how indifferently he spoke; why, the very art should have warmed him more. Could he have— No, no, no: it *was* true, it was! I felt the conviction thrill through me like a searing iron. Burn it—did he say—ay—burn it—it shall be done this instant."

And, hastening to the door, he undid the bolt. He staggered back as he beheld his old and nearest surviving relative, the mother of his father, seated upon the ground beside the door, terrified by the exclamations she did not dare to interrupt. She rose slowly, and with difficulty, as she saw him; and, throwing around him the withered arms which had nursed his infancy, exclaimed, "My child! my poor—poor child! what has come to you of late? you, who were so gentle, so mild, so quiet—you are no longer the same—and oh, my son, how ill you look: your father looked so just before he died!"

"Ill!" said he, with a sort of fearful gaiety, "ill—no—I never was so well—I have been in a dream till now—but I have woken at last. Why, it is true that I have been silent and shy, but I will be so no more. I will laugh, and talk, and walk, and make love, and drink wine, and be all that other men are. Oh, we will be so merry. But stay here, while I fetch a light."

"A light, my child, for what?"

"For a funeral!" shouted Warner, and, rushing past her, he descended the stairs, and returned almost in an instant with a light.

Alarmed and terrified, the poor old woman had remained motionless, and weeping violently. Her tears Warner did not seem to notice; he pushed her gently into the room, and began deliberately, and without uttering a syllable, to cut the picture into shreds.

"What are you about, my child?" cried the old woman; "you are mad, it is your beautiful picture that you are destroying!"

Warner did not reply, but, going to the hearth, piled together, with nice and scrupulous care, several pieces of paper, and stick, and matches, into a sort of pyre; then, placing the shreds of the picture upon it, he applied the light, and the whole was instantly in a blaze.

"Look, look!" cried he, in an hysterical tone, "how it burns, and crackles, and blazes! What master ever equalled it now?—no fault now in those colors—no false tints in that light

and shade ! See how that flame darts up and soars !—that flame is my spirit ! Look—is it not restless?—does it not aspire bravely?—why, all its brother flames are grovellers to it !—and now—why don't you look !—it falters—fades—droops—and—ha—ha—ha !—poor idler, the fuel is consumed—and—it is darkness !”

As Warner uttered these words his eyes reeled ; the room swam before him : the excitement of his feeble frame had reached its highest pitch ; the disease of many weeks had attained its crisis ; and, tottering back a few paces, he fell upon the floor, the victim of a delirious and raging fever.

But it was not thus that the young artist was to die. He was reserved for a death, that, like his real nature, had in it more of gentleness and poetry. He recovered, by slow degrees, and his mind, almost in spite of himself, returned to that profession from which it was impossible to divert the thoughts and musings of many years. Not that he resumed the pencil and the easel ; on the contrary, he could not endure them in his sight ; they appeared, to a mind festered and sore, like a memorial and monument of shame. But he nursed within him a strong and ardent desire to become a pilgrim to that beautiful land of which he had so often dreamed, and which the innocent destroyer of his peace had pointed out as the theatre of inspiration, and the nursery of future fame.

The physicians who, at Talbot's instigation, attended him, looked at his hectic cheek and consumptive frame, and readily flattered his desire : and Talbot, no less interested in Warner's behalf on his own account, than bound by his promise to Clarence, generously extended to the artist that bounty which is the most precious prerogative of the rich. Notwithstanding her extreme age, his grandmother insisted upon attending him : there is in the heart of woman so deep a well of love, that no age can freeze it. They made the voyage : they reached the shore of the myrtle and the vine, and entered the imperial city. The air of Rome seemed at first to operate favorably upon the health of the English artist. His strength appeared to increase, his spirit to expand ; and though he had relapsed into more than his original silence and reserve, he resumed, with apparent energy, the labors of the easel : so that they who looked no deeper than the surface might have imagined the scar healed, and the real foundation of future excellence begun.

But while Warner most humbled himself before the gods of the pictured world ; while the true principles of the mighty art opened in their fullest glory on his soul ; precisely at this

very moment shame and despondency were most bitter at his heart: and while the enthusiasm of the painter kindled, the ambition of the man despaired. But still he went on, transfusing into his canvas the grandeur and simplicity of the Italian school; still, though he felt palpably within him the creeping advance of the deadliest and surest enemy to fame, he pursued with an unwearied ardor the mechanical completion of his task; still the morning found him bending before the easel, and the night brought to his solitary couch meditation, rather than sleep. The fire, the irritability which he had evinced before his illness, had vanished, and the original sweetness of his temper had returned; he uttered no complaint, he dwelt upon no anticipation of success; hope and regret seemed equally dead within him; and it was only when he caught the fond, glad eyes of his aged attendant that his own filled with tears, or that the serenity of his brow darkened unto sadness.

This went on for some months; till one evening they found the painter by his window, seated opposite to an unfinished picture; the pencil was still in his hand: the quiet of settled thought was still upon his countenance; the soft breeze of a southern twilight waved the hair livingly from his forehead—the earliest star of a southern sky lent to his cheek something of that subdued lustre which, when touched by enthusiasm, it had been accustomed to wear; but these were only the mockeries of life: life itself was no more! He had died, reconciled, perhaps, to the loss of fame—in discovering that art is to be loved for itself—and not for the rewards it may bestow upon the artist.

There are two tombs close to each other in the stranger's burial-place at Rome: they cover those for whom life, unequally long, terminated in the same month. The one is of a woman, bowed with the burden of many years: the other darkens over the dust of the young artist.

CHAPTER XXV.

“Think upon my grief,
And on the justice of my flying hence,
To keep me from a most unholy match.”—SHAKESPEARE.

“But are you quite sure,” said General St. Leger, “are you quite sure that this girl still permits Mordaunt's addresses?”

“Sure!” cried Miss Diana St. Leger, “sure, General! I saw it with my own eyes. They were standing together in the

copse, when I, who had long had my suspicions, crept up, and saw them; and Mr. Mordaunt held her hand, and kissed it every moment. Shocking and indecorous!"

"I hate that man! as proud as Lucifer," growled the General. "Shall we lock her up, or starve her?"

"No, General, something better than that."

"What, my love? flog her!"

"She's too old for that, brother; we'll marry her."

"Marry her!"

"Yes, to Mr. Glumford; you know that he has asked her several times."

"But she cannot bear him."

"We'll make her bear him, General St. Leger."

"But if she marries, I shall have nobody to nurse me when I have the gout."

"Yes, brother: I know of a nice little girl, Martha Richardson, your second cousin's youngest daughter: you know he has fourteen children, and you may have them all, one after another, if you like."

"Very true, Diana—let the jade marry Mr. Glumford."

"She shall," said the sister; "and I'll go about it this very moment: meantime I'll take care that she does not see her lover any more."

About three weeks after this conversation, Mordaunt, who had in vain endeavored to see Isabel, who had not even heard from her, whose letters had been returned to him unopened, and who, consequently, was in despair, received the following note:

"This is the first time I have been able to write to you, or at least to get my letter conveyed: it is a strange messenger that I have employed, but I happened formerly to make his acquaintance, and accidentally seeing him to-day, the extremity of the case induced me to give him a commission which I could trust to no one else. Algernon, are not the above sentences written with admirable calmness? are they not very explanatory, very consistent, very cool? and yet do you know that I firmly believe I am going mad? My brain turns round and round, and my hand burns so that I almost think that, like our old nurse's stories of the fiend, it will scorch the paper as I write. And I see strange faces in my sleep, and in my waking, all mocking at me, and they torture and haunt me; and when I look at those faces, I see no human relenting,—no! though I weep and throw myself on my knees, and implore them to save

me. Algernon, my only hope is in you. You know that I have always hitherto refused to ruin you ; and even now, though I implore you to deliver me, I will not be so selfish as— as—I know not what I write, but if I cannot be your wife—I will not be his ! No ! if they drag me to church, it shall be to my grave, not my bridal.

ISABEL ST. LEGER."

When Mordaunt had read this letter, which, in spite of its incoherence, his fears readily explained, he rose hastily ; his eyes rested upon a sober-looking man, clad in brown. The proud love no spectators to their emotions.

"Who are you, sir?" said Algernon quickly.

"Morris Brown," replied the stranger, coolly and civilly. "Brought that letter to you, sir ; shall be very happy to serve you with anything else ; just fitted out a young gentleman as ambassador, a nephew to Mrs. Minden—very old friend of mine. Beautiful slabs you have here, sir, but they want a few nick-nacks ; shall be most happy to supply you ; got a lovely little ape, sir, stuffed by the late Lady Waddilove ; it would look charming with this old-fashioned carving : give the room quite the air of a museum !"

"And so," said Mordaunt, for whose ear the eloquence of Mr. Brown contained only one sentence, "and so you brought this note, and will take back my answer?"

"Yes, sir ; anything to keep up family connections—I knew a Lady Morden very well—very well indeed, sir—a relation of yours, I presume, by the similarity of name ; made her many valuable presents ; shall be most happy to do the same to you when you are married, sir. You will refurnish the house, I suppose ? Let me see—fine proportions to this room, sir—about thirty-six feet by twenty-eight ; I'll do the thing twenty per cent. cheaper than the trade ; and touching the lovely little—"

"Here," interrupted Mordaunt, "you will take this note, and be sure that Miss Isabel St. Leger has it as soon as possible ; oblige me by accepting this trifle—a trifle indeed compared with my gratitude, if this note reaches its destination safely."

"I am sure," said Mr. Brown, looking with surprise at the gift, which he held with no unwilling hand, "I am sure, sir, that you are very generous, and strongly remind me of your relation, Lady Morden ; and if you would like the lovely little ape as a present—I mean *really* a present—you shall have it, Mr. Mordaunt."

But Mr. Mordaunt had left the room, and the sober Morris, looking round, and cooling in his generosity, said to himself,

“It is well he did not hear me, however; but I hope he will marry the nice young lady, for I love doing a kindness. This house must be refurnished—no lady will like these old-fashioned chairs.”

CHAPTER XXVI.

“Squire and fool are the same thing here.”—FARQUHAR.

“In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew,
And, with an unthrift love, did run from Venice.”—SHAKESPEARE.

THE persecutions which Isabel had undergone had indeed preyed upon her reason as well as her health; and in her brief intervals of respite from the rage of the uncle, the insults of the aunt, and, worse than all, the addresses of the intended bridegroom, her mind, shocked and unhinged, reverted with such intensity to the sufferings she endured as to give her musings the character of insanity. It was in one of these moments that she had written to Mordaunt; and had the contest continued much longer the reason of the unfortunate and persecuted girl would have totally deserted her.

She was a person of acute, and even poignant, sensibilities, and these the imperfect nature of her education had but little served to guide or to correct; but as her habits were pure and good, the impulses which spring from habit were also sinless and exalted, and, if they erred, “they leant on virtue’s side,” and partook rather of a romantic and excessive generosity than of the weakness of *womanhood* or the selfishness of passion. All the misery and debasement of her equivocal and dependent situation had not been able to drive her into compliance with Mordaunt’s passionate and urgent prayers; and her heart was proof even to the eloquence of love, when that eloquence pointed towards the worldly injury and depreciation of her lover;—but this new persecution was utterly unforeseen in its nature and intolerable from its cause. To marry another—to be torn forever from one in whom her whole heart was wrapped—to be forced not only to forego his love, but to feel that the very thought of him was a crime; all this, backed by the vehement and galling insults of her relations, and the sullen and unmoved meanness of her intended bridegroom, who answered her candor and confession with a stubborn indifference and renewed overtures, made a load of evil which could neither be borne with resignation nor contemplated with patience.

She was sitting, after she had sent her letter, with her two relations, for they seldom trusted her out of their sight, when Mr. Glumford was announced. Now, Mr. George Glumford was a country gentleman of what might be termed a third-rate family in the county : he possessed about twelve hundred a year, to say nothing of the odd pounds, shillings, and pence, which, however, did not meet with such contempt in his memory or estimation ; was of a race which could date as far back as Charles Second ; had been educated at a country school with sixty others, chiefly inferior to himself in rank ; and had received the last finish at a very small hall at Oxford. In addition to these advantages, he had been indebted to nature for a person five feet eight inches high, and stout in proportion ; for hair very short, very straight, and of a red hue, which even through powder cast out a mellow glow ; for an obstinate, dogged sort of nose, beginning in snub, and ending in bottle , for cold, small, gray eyes, a very small mouth, pinched up and avaricious ; and very large, very freckled, yet rather white hands, the nails of which were punctiliously cut into a point every other day, with a pair of scissors which Mr. Glumford often boasted had been in his possession since his eighth year ; viz., for about thirty-two legitimate revolutions of the sun.

He was one of those persons who are equally close and adventurous ; who love the *éclat* of a little speculation, but take exceeding good care that it should be, in their own graceful phrase, "on the safe side of the hedge." In pursuance of this characteristic of mind, he had resolved to fall in love with Miss Isabel St. Leger ; for she being very dependent, he could boast to her of his disinterestedness, and hope that she would be economical through a principle of gratitude ; and being the nearest relation to the opulent General St. Leger, and his unmarried sister, there seemed to be every rational probability of her inheriting the bulk of their fortunes. Upon these hints of prudence spake Mr. George Glumford.

Now, when Isabel, partly in her ingenuous frankness, partly from the passionate promptings of her despair, revealed to him her attachment to another, and her resolution never, with her own consent, to become his, it seemed to the slow, but not uncalculating, mind of Mr. Glumford not by any means desirable that he should forego his present intentions, but by all means desirable that he should make this reluctance of Isabel's an excuse for sounding the intentions and increasing the posthumous liberality of the East Indian and his sister.

"The girl is of my nearest blood," said the Major-general,

“and if I don't leave my fortune to her, who the devil should I leave it to, sir?” and so saying, the speaker, who was in a fell paroxysm of the gout, looked so fiercely at the hinting wooer, that Mr. George Glumford, who was no Achilles, was somewhat frightened, and thought it expedient to hint no more.

“My brother,” said Miss Diana, “is so odd ; but he is the most generous of men : besides, the girl has claims upon him.”

Upon these speeches, Mr. Glumford thought himself secure, and inly resolving to punish the fool for her sulkiness and bad taste, as soon as he lawfully could, he continued his daily visits, and told his sporting acquaintance that his time was coming.

Revenons à nos moutons, forgive this preliminary detail, and let us return to Mr. Glumford himself, whom we left at the door, pulling and fumbling at the glove which covered his right hand, in order to present the naked palm to Miss Diana St. Leger. After this act was performed, he approached Isabel, and drawing his chair near to her, proceeded to converse with her as the Ogre did with Puss in Boots ; viz., “as civilly as an Ogre could do.”

This penance had not proceeded far, before the door was again opened, and Mr. Morris Brown presented himself to the conclave.

“Your servant, General ; your servant, Madam. I took the liberty of coming back again, Madam, because I forgot to show you some very fine silks, the most extraordinary bargain in the world—quite presents ; and I have a *Sèvres* bowl here, a superb article, from the cabinet of the late Lady Waddilove.”

Now Mr. Brown was a very old acquaintance of Miss Diana St. Leger, for there is a certain class of old maids with whom our fair readers are no doubt acquainted, who join to a great love of expense a great love of bargains, and who never purchase at the regular place if they can find any *à* regular vendor. They are great friends of Jews and itinerants, hand-in-glove with smugglers, Ladies Bountiful to pedlars, are diligent readers of puffs and advertisements, and eternal haunters of sales and auctions. Of this class was Miss Diana a most prominent individual ; judge, then, how acceptable to her was the acquaintance of Mr. Brown. That indefatigable merchant of miscellanies had, indeed, at a time when brokers were perhaps rather more rare and respectable than now, a numerous country acquaintance, and thrice a year he performed a sort of circuit to all his customers and connections ; hence his visit to St. Leger House. and hence Isabel's opportunity of conveying her epistle.

"Pray," said Mr. Glumford, who had heard much of Mr. Brown's 'presents' from Miss Diana—"pray don't you furnish rooms, and *things of that sort?*"

"Certainly, sir, certainly, in the best manner possible."

"Oh! very well, I shall want some rooms furnished soon; a bed-room, and a dressing-room; and things of that sort, you know. And so—perhaps you may have something in your box that will suit me, gloves, or handkerchiefs, or shirts, or things of that sort."

"Yes, sir, everything, I sell everything," said Mr. Brown, opening his box.—"I beg pardon, Miss Isabel, I have dropt my handkerchief by your chair; allow me to stoop," and Mr. Brown, stooping under the table, managed to effect his purpose: unseen by the rest, a note was slipped into Isabel's hand, and, under pretence of stooping, too, she managed to secure the treasure. Love need well be honest if, even when it is most true, it leads us into so much that is false!

Mr. Brown's box was now unfolded before the eyes of the crafty Mr. Glumford, who, having selected three pair of gloves, offered the exact half of the sum demanded.

Mr. Brown lifted up his hands and eyes.

"You see," said the imperturbable Glumford, "that if you let me have them for that, and they last me well, and don't come unsewn, and stand cleaning, you'll have my custom in furnishing the house, and rooms, and—things of that sort."

Struck with the grandeur of this opening, Mr. Brown yielded, and the gloves were bought.

"The fool!" thought the noble George, laughing in his sleeve, "as if I should ever furnish the house from his box!"

Strange that some men should be proud of being mean.

The moment Isabel escaped to dress for dinner, she opened her lover's note. It was as follows:

"Be in *the* room, your retreat, at nine this evening. Let the window be left unclosed. Precisely at that hour I will be with you. I shall have everything in readiness for your flight. Be sure, dearest Isabel, that nothing prevents your meeting me there, even if all your house follow or attend you. I will bear you from all. Oh, Isabel! in spite of the mystery and wretchedness of your letter, I feel too happy, too blest at the thought that our fates will be at length united, and that the union is at hand. Remember nine. A. M."

Love is a feeling which has so little to do with the world, a passion so little regulated by the known laws of our more

steady and settled emotions, that the thoughts which it produces are always more or less connected with exaggeration and romance. To the secret spirit of enterprise which, however chilled by his pursuits and habits, still burned within Mordaunt's breast, there was a wild pleasure in the thought of bearing off his mistress and his bride from the very home and hold of her false friends and real foes ; while in the contradictions of the same passion, Isabel, so far from exulting at her approaching escape, trembled at her danger, and blushed for her temerity ; and the fear and the modesty of woman almost triumphed over her brief energy and fluctuating resolve.

CHAPTER XXVII.

“ We haste—the chosen and the lovely bringing,
 Love still goes with her from her place of birth ;
 Deep, silent joy, within her soul is springing,
 Though in her glance the light no more is mirth.”

—MRS. HEMANS.

“ DAMN it !” said the General.

“ The vile creature !” cried Miss Diana.

“ I don't understand things of that sort,” ejaculated the bewildered Mr. Glumford.

“ She has certainly gone,” said the valiant General.

“ Certainly !” grunted Miss Diana.

“ Gone !” echoed the bridegroom *not* to be.

And she was gone ! never did more loving and tender heart forsake all, and cling to a more loyal and generous nature. The skies were darkened with clouds,

“ And the dim stars rushed through them rare and fast ;”

and the winds wailed with a loud and ominous voice ; and the moon came forth with a faint and sickly smile, from her chamber in the mist, and then shrunk back, and was seen no more ; but neither omen nor fear was upon Mordaunt's breast, as it swelled beneath the dark locks of Isabel, which were pressed against it.

As Faith clings the more to the cross of life, while the wastes deepen around her steps, and the adders creep forth upon her path, so love clasps that which is its hope and comfort the closer, for the desert which encompasses, and the dangers which harass its way.

They had fled to London, and Isabel had been placed with a very distant, and very poor, though very high-born relative of Algernon, till the necessary preliminaries could be passed, and the final bond knit. Yet still the generous Isabel would have refused—despite the injury to her own fame, to have ratified an union which filled her with gloomy presentiments for Mordaunt's fate; and still Mordaunt by little and little broke down her tender scruples and self-immolating resolves, and ceased not his eloquence and his suit till the day of his nuptials was set and come.

The morning rose bright and clear—the autumn was drawing towards its close, and seemed willing to leave its last remembrance tinged with the warmth and softness of its parent summer, rather than with the stern gloom and severity of its chilling successor.

And they stood beside the altar, and their vows were exchanged. A slight tremor came over Algernon's frame, a slight shade darkened his countenance; for even in that bridal hour an icy and thrilling foreboding curdled to his heart; it passed—the ceremony was over, and Mordaunt bore his blushing and weeping bride from the church. His carriage was in attendance; for, not knowing how long the home of his ancestors might be his, he was impatient to return to it. The old Countess D'Arcy, Mordaunt's relation, with whom Isabel had been staying, called them back to bless them; for, even through the coldness of old age, she was touched by the singularity of their love, and affected by their nobleness of heart. She laid her wan and shrivelled hand upon each, as she bade them farewell, and each shrunk back involuntarily, for the cold and light touch seemed like the fingers of the dead.

Fearful indeed is the vicinity of death and life—the bridal chamber and the charnel. That night the old woman died. It appeared as if Fate had set its seal upon the union it had so long forbidden, and had woven a dark thread even in the marriage bond. At least, it tore from two hearts, over which the cloud and the blast lay couched in a "grim repose," the last shelter which, however frail and distant, seemed left to them upon the inhospitable earth!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

“Live while ye may, yet happy pair: enjoy
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed.”—MILTON.

THE autumn and the winter passed away; Mordaunt's relation continued implacable. Algernon grieved for this, independent of worldly circumstances; for, though he had seldom seen that relation, yet he loved him for former kindness—rather promised, to be sure, than yet shown—with the natural warmth of an affection which has but few objects. However, the old gentleman (a very short, very fat person—very short, and very fat people, when they *are* surly, are the devil and all; for the humors of their mind, like those of their body, have something corrupt and un purgeable in them)—wrote him one bluff, contemptuous letter, in a witty strain—for he was a bit of a humorist—disowned his connection, and very shortly afterwards died, and left all his fortune to the very Mr. Vavasour who was at law with Mordaunt, and for whom he had always openly expressed the strongest personal dislike—spite to one relation is a marvellous tie to another. Meanwhile the lawsuit went on less slowly than lawsuits usually do, and the final decision was very speedily to be given.

We said the autumn and winter were gone; and it was in one of those latter days in March, when, like a hoyden girl subsiding into dawning womanhood, the rude weather mellows into a softer and tenderer month, that, by the side of a stream, overshadowed by many a brake and tree, sat two persons.

“I know not, dearest Algernon,” said one, who was a female, “if this is not almost the sweetest month in the year, because it is the month of *Hope*.”

“Ay, Isabel; and they did it wrong who called it harsh, and dedicated it to Mars. I exult even in the fresh winds which hardier frames than mine shrink from, and I love feeling their wild breath fan my cheek as I ride against it. I remember,” continued Algernon musingly, “that on this very day three years ago, I was travelling through Germany, alone and on horseback, and I paused, not far from Ens, on the banks of the Danube; the waters of the river were disturbed and fierce, and the winds came loud and angry against my face, dashing the spray of the waves upon me, and filling my spirit with a buoyant and glad delight; and at that time I had been indulging old dreams of poetry, and had laid my philosophy aside; and, in the inspiration of the moment, I lifted up my hand towards the

quarter whence the winds came, and questioned them audibly of their birthplace and their bourne ; and, as the enthusiasm increased, I compared them to our human life, which a moment is, and then is *not* ; and, proceeding from folly to folly, I asked them, as if they were the interpreters of heaven, for a type and sign of my future lot."

"And what said they?" inquired Isabel, smiling, yet smiling timidly.

"They answered not," replied Mordaunt ; "but a voice within me seemed to say—'Look above!' and I raised my eyes,—but did not see *thee*, love—so the Book of Fate lied."

"Nay, Algernon, what *did* you see?" asked Isabel, more earnestly than the question deserved.

"I saw a thin cloud, alone amidst many dense ones scattered around ; and as I gazed it seemed to take the likeness of a funeral procession—coffin, bearers, priest, all—as clear in the cloud as I have seen them upon earth : and I shuddered as I saw ; but the winds blew the vapor onwards, and it mingled with the broader masses of cloud ; and then, Isabel, the sun shone forth for a moment, and I mistook, love, when I said you were not there, for *that* sun was you ; but suddenly the winds ceased, and the rain came on fast and heavy : so my romance cooled, and my fever slaked—I thought on the inn at Ens, and the blessings of a wood fire, which is lighted in a moment, and I spurred on my horse accordingly.

"It is very strange," said Isabel.

"What, love?" whispered Algernon, kissing her cheek.

"Nothing, dearest, nothing."

At that instant, the deer, which lay waving their lordly antlers to and fro beneath the avenue which sloped upward from the stream to the house, rose hurriedly and in confusion, and stood gazing, with watchful eyes, upon a man advancing towards the pair.

It was one of the servants with a letter. Isabel saw a faint change (which none else could have seen) in Mordaunt's countenance, as he recognized the writing and broke the seal. When he had read the letter, his eyes fell upon the ground, and then, with a slight start, he lifted them up, and gazed long and eagerly around. Wistfully did he drink, as it were, into his heart the beautiful and expanded scene which lay stretched on either side ; the noble avenue which his forefathers had planted as a shelter for their sons, and which now, in its majestic growth and its waving boughs, seemed to say, "Lo! ye are repaid!" and the never silent and silver stream, by which

his boyhood had sat for hours, lulled by its music, and inhaling the fragrance of the reed and wild-flower that decoyed the bee to its glossy banks ; and the deer, to whose melancholy *belling* he had listened so often in the gray twilight with a rapt and dreaming ear ; and the green fern waving on the gentle hill, from whose shade his young feet had startled the hare and the infant fawn ; and far and faintly gleaming through the thick trees, which clasped it as with a girdle, the old Hall, so associated with vague hopes and musing dreams, and the dim legends of gone time, and the lofty prejudices of ancestral pride,—all seemed to sink within him, as he gazed, like the last looks of departing friends ; and when Isabel, who had not dared to break a silence which partook so strongly of gloom, at length laid her hand upon his arm, and lifted her dark, deep, tender eyes to his, he said, as he drew her towards him, and a faint, sickly smile played upon his lips :

“It is past, Isabel : henceforth we have no wealth but in each other. The cause has been decided—and—and—we are beggars !”

CHAPTER XXIX.

“We expose our life to a quotidian ague of frigid impertinences, which would make a wise man tremble to think of.”—COWLEY.

WE must suppose a lapse of four years from the date of those events which concluded the last chapter ; and, to recompense the reader, who, I know, has a little penchant for “High Life,” even in the last century, for having hitherto shown him human beings in a state of society not wholly artificial, I beg him to picture to himself a large room, brilliantly illuminated, and crowded “with magnates of the land.” Here (some in saltatory motion, some in sedentary rest) are dispersed various groups of young ladies and attending swains, talking upon the subject of Lord Rochester’s celebrated poem, viz.—“*Nothing!*” —and, lounging around the door, meditating probably upon the same subject, stand those unhappy victims of dancing daughters, denominated “Papas.”

The music has ceased—the dancers have broken up, and there is a general but gentle sweep towards the refreshment room. In the crowd—having just entered—there glided a young man of an air more distinguished and somewhat more joyous than the rest.

“How do you do, Mr. Linden ?” said a tall and (though

somewhat *passée*) very handsome woman, blazing with diamonds; "are you just come?"

And here, by the way, I cannot resist pausing to observe, that a friend of mine, meditating a novel, submitted a part of the MS. to a friendly publisher. "Sir," said the bookseller, "your book is very clever, but it wants dialogue."

"Dialogue?" cried my friend—"you mistake—it is all dialogue."

"Ay, sir, but not what *we* call dialogue; we want a little conversation in fashionable life—a little elegant chit-chat or so: and, as you must have seen so much of the *beau monde*, you could do it to the life: we must have something light, and witty, and entertaining."

"Light, witty, and entertaining!" said our poor friend; "and how the deuce then is it to be like conversation in 'fashionable life'? When the very best conversation one can get is so insufferably dull, how do you think that people will be amused by reading a copy of the very worst?"

"They *are* amused, sir," said the publisher, "and works of this kind *sell!*"

"I am convinced," said my friend: for he was a man of a placid temper; he took the hint, and his book did sell!

Now this anecdote rushed into my mind after the penning of the little address of the lady in diamonds—"How do you do, Mr. Linden? Are you just come?"—and it received an additional weight from my utter inability to put into the mouth of Mr. Linden—notwithstanding my desire of representing him in the most brilliant colors—any more happy and eloquent answer than, "Only this instant!"

However, as this is in the true spirit of elegant dialogue, I trust my readers find it as light, witty, and entertaining as, according to the said publisher, the said dialogue is always found by the public.

While Clarence was engaged in talking with this lady, a very pretty, lively, animated girl, with laughing blue eyes, which, joined to the dazzling fairness of her complexion, gave a Hebe-like youth to her features and expression, was led up to the said lady by a tall young man, and consigned, with the ceremonious bow of the *vicille cour*, to her protection.

"Ah, Mr. Linden," cried the young lady, "I am very glad to see you—such a beautiful ball! Everybody here that I most like. Have you had any refreshments, mamma? But I need not ask, for I am sure you have not; do come, Mr. Linden will be our cavalier."

“Well, Flora, as you please,” said the elder lady, with a proud and fond look at her beautiful daughter; and they proceeded to the refreshment-room.

No sooner were they seated at one of the tables, than they were accosted by Lord St. George, a nobleman whom Clarence, before he left England, had met more than once at Mr. Talbot’s.

“London,” said his lordship, to her of the diamonds, “has not seemed like the same place since Lady Westborough arrived; your presence brings out all the other luminaries: and therefore a young acquaintance of mine—God bless me, there he is, seated by Lady Flora—very justly called you ‘the evening star.’”

“Was that Mr. Linden’s pretty saying?” said Lady Westborough, smiling.

“It was,” answered Lord St. George, “and, by the bye, he is a very sensible, pleasant person, and greatly improved since he left England last.”

“What!” said Lady Westborough, in a low tone (for Clarence, though in earnest conversation with Lady Flora, was within hearing), and making room for Lord St. George beside her, “What! did *you* know him before he went to——? You can probably tell me, then, who—that is to say—what family he is exactly of—the Lindens of Devonshire, or—or—”

“Why, really,” said Lord St. George, a little confused, for no man likes to be acquainted with persons whose pedigree he cannot explain, “I don’t know what may be his family: I met him at Talbot’s four or five years ago; he was then a mere boy, but he struck me as being very clever, and Talbot since told me that he was a nephew of his own.”

“Talbot,” said Lady Westborough musingly, “what Talbot?”

“Oh! *the* Talbot—the *ci-devant* *jeune homme*!”

“What, that charming, clever, animated old gentleman, who used to dress so oddly, and had been so celebrated a *beau garçon* in his day?”

“Exactly so,” said Lord St. George, taking snuff, and delighted to find he had set his young acquaintance on so honorable a footing.

“I did not know he was still alive,” said Lady Westborough; and then, turning her eyes towards Clarence and her daughter, she added carelessly, “Mr. Talbot is very rich, is he not?”

“Rich as Cræsus,” replied Lord St. George, with a sigh.

“And Mr. Linden is his heir, I suppose?”

“In all probability,” answered Lord St. George; “though I believe I can boast a distant relationship to Talbot. However,

I could not make him fully understand it the other day, though I took particular pains to explain it."

While this conversation was going on between the Marchioness of Westborough and Lord St. George, a dialogue equally interesting to the parties concerned, and, I hope, equally light, witty, and entertaining to readers in general, was sustained between Clarence and Lady Flora.

"How long shall you stay in England?" asked the latter, looking down.

"I have not yet been able to decide," replied Clarence, "for it rests with the ministers, not me. Directly Lord Aspeden obtains another appointment, I am promised the office of Secretary of Legation; but till then, I am—

'A captive in Augusta's towers
To beauty and her train.'

"Oh!" cried Lady Flora, laughing, "you mean Mrs. Desborough and her train: see where they sweep! Pray go and render her homage."

"It *is* rendered," said Linden, in a low voice, "without so long a pilgrimage, but perhaps despised."

Lady Flora's laugh was hushed; the deepest blushes suffused her cheeks, and the whole character of that face, before so playful and joyous, seemed changed, as by a spell, into a grave, subdued, and even timid look.

Linden resumed, and his voice scarcely rose above a *whisper*. A whisper! O delicate and fairy sound! music that speaketh to the heart, as if loth to break the spell that binds it while it listens! Sigh breathed into words, and freighting love in tones languid, like homeward bees, by the very sweets with which they are charged!

"Do you remember," said he, "that evening at——when we last parted? and the boldness which at that time you were gentle enough to forgive?"

Lady Flora replied not.

"And do you remember," continued Clarence, "that I told you that it was not as an unknown and obscure adventurer that I would *claim* the hand of her whose heart, *as* an adventurer, I had won?"

Lady Flora raised her eyes for one moment, and encountering the ardent gaze of Clarence, as instantly dropped them.

"The time is not *yet* come," said Linden, "for the fulfilment of this promise; but may I—dare I hope, that when it does I shall not be—"

“Flora, my love,” said Lady Westborough, “let me introduce to you Lord Borodaile.”

Lady Flora turned—the spell was broken; and the lovers were instantly transformed into ordinary mortals. But, as Flora, after returning Lord Borodaile’s address, glanced her eye towards Clarence, she was struck with the sudden and singular change of his countenance; the flush of youth and passion was fled, his complexion was deadly pale, and his eyes were fixed with a searching and unaccountable meaning upon the face of the young nobleman, who was alternately addressing, with a quiet and somewhat haughty fluency, the beautiful mother, and the more lovely, though less commanding daughter. Directly Linden perceived that he was observed, he rose, turned away, and was soon lost among the crowd.

Lord Borodaile, the son and heir of the powerful Earl of Ulswater, was about the age of thirty, small, slight, and rather handsome than otherwise, though his complexion was dark and sallow; and a very aquiline nose gave a stern and somewhat severe air to his countenance. He had been for several years abroad, in various parts of the continent, and (no other field for an adventurous and fierce spirit presenting itself) had served with the gallant Earl of Effingham, in the war between the Turks and Russians, as a volunteer in the armies of the latter. In this service he had been highly distinguished for courage and conduct; and, on his return to England about a twelve-month since, had obtained the command of a cavalry regiment. Passionately fond of his profession, he entered into its minutest duties with a zeal not exceeded by the youngest and poorest subaltern in the army.

His manners were very cold, haughty, collected, and self-possessed, and his conversation that of a man who has cultivated his intellect rather in the world than in the closet. I mean, that, perfectly ignorant of things, he was driven to converse solely upon persons, and, having imbibed no other philosophy than that which worldly deceits and disappointments bestow, his remarks, though shrewd, were bitterly sarcastic, and partook of all the ill-nature for which a very scanty knowledge of the world gives a sour and malevolent mind so ready an excuse.

“How very disagreeable Lord Borodaile is!” said Lady Flora, when the object of the remark turned away, and rejoined some idlers of his corps.

“Disagreeable!” said Lady Westborough. “I think him

charming ; he is so sensible. How true [his remarks on the world are ! ”

Thus is it always : the young judge harshly of those who undeceive or revolt their enthusiasm ; and the more advanced in years, who have not learned by a diviner wisdom to look upon the human follies and errors by which they have suffered, with a pitying and lenient eye, consider every maxim of severity on those frailties as the proof of a superior knowledge, and praise that as a profundity of thought which in reality is but an infirmity of temper.

Clarence is now engaged in a *minuet de la cour*, with the beautiful Countess of —, the best dancer of the day in England. Lady Flora is flirting with half a dozen *beaux*, the more violently in proportion as she observes the animation with which Clarence converses, and the grace with which his partner moves ; and, having thus left our two principal personages occupied and engaged, let us turn for a moment to a room which we have not entered.

This is a forlorn, deserted chamber, destined to cards, which are never played in this temple of Terpsichore. At the far end of this room, opposite to the fire-place, are seated four men, engaged in earnest conversation.

The tallest of these was Lord Quintown, a nobleman, remarkable at that day for his personal advantages, his good fortunes with the *beau sexe*, his attempts at parliamentary eloquence, in which he was lamentably unsuccessful, and his adherence to Lord North. Next to him sat Mr. St. George, the younger brother of Lord St. George, a gentleman to whom power and place seemed married without hope of divorce, for, whatever had been the changes of ministry for the last twelve years, he, secure in a lucrative, though subordinate situation, had “smiled at the whirlwind, and defied the storm,” and, while all things shifted and vanished round him, like clouds and vapors, had remained fixed and stationary as a star. “Solid St. George,” was his appellative by his friends, and his enemies did not grudge him the title. The third was the minister for — ; and the fourth was Clarence’s friend, Lord Aspeden. Now this nobleman, blessed with a benevolent, smooth, calm countenance, valued himself especially upon his diplomatic elegance in turning a compliment.

Having a great taste for literature as well as diplomacy, this respected and respectable peer also possessed a curious felicity for applying quotation ; and nothing rejoiced him so much as when, in the same phrase, he was enabled to set the two jewels

of his courtliness of flattery and his profundity of erudition. Unhappily enough, his compliments were seldom as well taken as they were meant; and, whether from the ingratitude of the person complimented, or the ill-fortune of the noble adulator, seemed sometimes to produce indignation in place of delight. It has been said that his civilities had cost Lord Aspeden four duels and one beating; but these reports were probably the malicious invention of those who had never tasted the delicacies of his flattery.

Now these four persons, being all members of the Privy Council, and being thus engaged in close and earnest conference, were, you will suppose, employed in discussing the gravities and secrets of state—no such thing: that whisper from Lord Quintown, the handsome nobleman, to Mr. St. George, is no hoarded and valuable information which would rejoice the heart of the editor of an opposition paper, no direful murmur, “perplexing monarchs with the dread of change”; it is only a recent piece of scandal, touching the virtue of a lady of the court, which (albeit the sage listener seems to pay so devout an attention to the news) is far more interesting to the gallant and handsome informant than to his brother statesman; and that emphatic and vehement tone with which Lord Aspeden is assuring the minister for — of some fact, is merely an angry denunciation of the chicanery practiced at the last Newmarket.

“By the bye, Aspeden,” said Lord Quintown, “who is that good-looking fellow always flirting with Lady Flora Ardenne—an *attaché* of yours, is he not?”

“Oh! Linden, I suppose you mean. A very sensible, clever young fellow, who has a great genius for business, and plays the flute admirably. I must have him for my secretary, my dear lord, mind that.”

“With such a recommendation, Lord Aspeden,” said the minister, with a bow, “the state would be a great loser did it not elect your *attaché*, who plays so admirably on the flute, to the office of your secretary. Let us join the dancers.”

“I shall go and talk with Count B——,” quoth Mr. St. George.

“And I shall make my court to his beautiful wife,” said the minister, sauntering into the ballroom, to which his fine person and graceful manner were much better adapted than was his genius to the cabinet, or his eloquence to the senate.

The morning had long dawned, and Clarence, for whose mind pleasure was more fatiguing than business, lingered near

the door, to catch one last look of Lady Flora before he retired. He saw her leaning on the arm of Borodaile, and hastening to join the dancers, with her usual light step and laughing air; for Clarence's short conference with her had, in spite of his subsequent flirtations, rendered her happier than she had ever felt before. Again a change passed over Clarence's countenance—a change which I find it difficult to express without borrowing from those celebrated German dramatists who could portray in such exact colors “a look of mingled joy, sorrow, hope, passion, rapture, and despair,” for the look was not that of jealousy alone, although it certainly partook of its nature, but a little also of interest, and a little of sorrow; and when he turned away, and slowly descended the stairs, his eyes were full of tears, and his thoughts far—far away; whither?

CHAPTER XXX.

“Quæ fert adolescentia
Ea ne me celet consuefeci filium.” *—TERENT.

THE next morning Clarence was lounging over his breakfast, and glancing listlessly now at the pages of the newspapers, now at the various engagements for the week, which lay confusedly upon his table, when he received a note from Talbot, requesting to see him as soon as possible.

“Had it not been for that man,” said Clarence to himself, “what should I have been now? But, at least, I have not disgraced his friendship. I have already ascended the roughest, because the lowest, steps on the hill where Fortune builds her temple. I have already won for the name I have chosen some ‘golden opinions,’ to gild its obscurity. One year more may confirm my destiny, and ripen hope into success: then—then. I may perhaps throw off a disguise that, while it befriended, has not degraded me, and avow myself to *her*! Yet how much better to dignify the name I have assumed, than to owe respect only to that which I have not been deemed worthy to inherit. Well, well, these are bitter thoughts; let them turn to others. How beautiful Flora looked last night? and *he—he—he*—but enough of this: I must dress, and then to Talbot.”

Muttering these wayward fancies, Clarence rose, completed his toilet, sent for his horses, and repaired to a village about seven miles from London, where Talbot, having yielded to

* “The things which youth proposes I accustomed my son, that he should never conceal from me.”

Clarence's fears and solicitations, and left his former insecure tenement, now resided under the guard and care of an especial and private watchman.

It was a pretty, quiet villa, surrounded by a plantation and pleasure-ground of some extent for a suburban residence, in which the old philosopher (for though, in some respects, still frail and prejudiced, Talbot deserved that name) held his home. The ancient servant, on whom four years had passed lightly and favoringly, opened the door to Clarence, with his usual smile of greeting, and familiar, yet respectful, salutation, and ushered our hero into a room furnished with the usual fastidious and rather feminine luxury which characterized Talbot's tastes. Sitting with his back turned to the light, in a large easy-chair, Clarence found the wreck of the once gallant, gay Lothario.

There was not much alteration in his countenance since we last saw him; the lines, it is true, were a little more decided, and the cheeks a little more sunken, but the dark eye beamed with all its wonted vivacity, and the delicate contour of the mouth preserved all its physiognomical characteristics of the inward man. He rose with somewhat more difficulty than he was formerly wont to do, and his limbs had lost much of their symmetrical proportions; yet the kind clasp of his hand was as firm and warm as when it had pressed that of the boyish *attaché* four years since; and the voice which expressed his salutation yet breathed its unconquered suavity and distinctness of modulation. After the customary greetings and inquiries were given and returned, the young man drew his chair near to Talbot's and said:

"You sent for me, dear sir; have you anything more important than usual to impart to me!—or—and I hope *this* is the case—have you at last thought of any commission, however trifling, in the execution of which I can be of use?"

"Yes, Clarence, I wish your judgment to select me some strawberries—you know that I am a great epicure in fruit—and get me the new work Dr. Johnson has just published. There, are you contented? And now, tell me all about your horse, does he step well? Has he the true English head and shoulder? Are his legs fine, yet strong? Is he full of spirit and devoid of vice?"

"He is all this, sir, thanks to you for him."

"Ah!" cried Talbot—

'Old as I am, for riding feats unfit,
The shape of horses I remember yet.'

And now let us hear how you like Ranelagh ! and above all how you liked the ball last night ?”

And the vivacious old man listened with the profoundest appearance of interest to all the particulars of Clarence's animated detail. His vanity, which made him wish to be loved, had long since taught him the surest method of becoming so; and with him, every visitor, old, young, the man of books, or the disciple of the world, was sure to find the readiest and even eagerest sympathy in every amusement or occupation. But for Clarence, this interest lay deeper than in the surface of courtly breeding. Gratitude had first bound to him his adopted son, then a tie yet unexplained, and lastly, but not least, the pride of protection. He was vain of the personal and mental attractions of his *protégé*, and eager for the success of one whose honors would reflect credit on himself.

But there was one part of Clarence's account of the last night to which the philosopher paid a still deeper attention, and on which he was more minute in his advice; what this was, I cannot, as yet, reveal to the Reader.

The conversation then turned on light and general matters. The scandals, the literature, the politics, the *on dits* of the day; and lastly upon women; thence Talbot dropped into his office of Mentor.

“A celebrated cardinal said, very wisely, that few ever did anything among men until women were no longer an object to them. That is the reason, by the bye, why I never succeeded with the former, and why people seldom acquire any reputation except for a hat, or a horse, till they marry. Look round at the various occupations of life. How few bachelors are eminent in any of them ! So you see, Clarence, you will have my leave to marry Lady Flora as soon as you please.”

Clarence colored, and rose to depart. Talbot followed him to the door, and then said, in a careless way, “By the bye, I had almost forgotten to tell you that, as you have now many new expenses, you will find the yearly sum you have hitherto received doubled. To give you this information is the chief reason why I sent for you this morning. God bless you, my dear boy.”

And Talbot shut the door, despite his politeness, in the face and thanks of his adopted son.

CHAPTER XXXI.

“There is a great difference between seeking to raise a laugh from everything, and seeking in everything what may justly be laughed at.”—LORD SHAFTESBURY.

BEHOLD our hero, now in the zenith of distinguished dissipation! Courteous, attentive, and animated, the women did not esteem him the less for admiring them rather than himself; while by the gravity of his demeanor to men—the eloquent, yet unpretending flow of his conversation, whenever topics of intellectual interest were discussed—the plain and solid sense which he threw into his remarks, and the avidity with which he courted the society of all distinguished for literary or political eminence, he was silently, but surely, establishing himself in esteem as well as popularity, and laying the certain foundation of future honor and success.

Thus, although he had only been four months returned to England, he was already known and courted in every circle, and universally spoken of as among “the most rising young gentlemen” whom fortune and the administration had marked for their own. His history, during the four years in which we have lost sight of him, is briefly told.

He soon won his way into the good graces of Lord Aspeden; became his private secretary, and occasionally his confidant. Universally admired for his attraction of form and manner, and, though aiming at reputation, not averse to pleasure, he had that position which fashion confers at the Court of —, when Lady Westborough and her beautiful daughter, then only seventeen, came to —, in the progress of a continental tour, about a year before her return to England. Clarence and Lady Flora were naturally brought much together in the restricted circle of a small court, and intimacy soon ripened into attachment.

Lord Aspeden being recalled, Clarence accompanied him to England; and the ex-minister, really liking much one who was so useful to him, had faithfully promised to procure him the office and honor of secretary whenever his lordship should be reappointed Minister.

Three intimate acquaintances had Clarence Linden. The one was the Honorable Henry Trollop, the second Mr. Callythorpe, and the third Sir Christopher Findlater. We will sketch them to you in an instant. Mr. Trollop was a short,

stout gentleman, with a very thoughtful countenance.—that is to say, he wore spectacles, and took snuff. Mr. Trollop—we delight in pronouncing that soft, liquid name—was eminently distinguished by a love of metaphysics—metaphysics were in a great measure the order of the day; but fate had endowed Mr. Trollop with a singular and felicitous confusion of ideas. Reid, Berkeley, Cudworth, Hobbes, all lay jumbled together in most edifying chaos at the bottom of Mr. Trollop's capacious mind; and whenever he opened his mouth, the imprisoned enemies came rushing and scrambling out, overturning and contradicting each other, in a manner quite astonishing to the ignorant spectator. Mr. Callythorpe was meagre, thin, sharp, and yellow. Whether from having a great propensity for nailing stray acquaintances, or being particularly heavy company, or from any other cause better known to the wits of the period than to us, he was occasionally termed by his friends the "yellow-hammer." The peculiar characteristics of this gentleman were his sincerity and friendship. These qualities led him into saying things the most disagreeable, with the civilest and coolest manner in the world—always prefacing them with, "You know, my dear so and so, *I* am your true friend." If this proof of amity was now and then productive of altercation, Mr. Callythorpe, who was a great patriot, had another and a nobler plea: "Sir," he would say, putting his hand to his heart—"sir, I'm an Englishman—I know not what it is to feign." Of a very different stamp was Sir Christopher Findlater. Little cared he for the subtleties of the human mind, and not much more for the disagreeable duties of "an Englishman." Honest and jovial—red in the cheeks—empty in the head—born to twelve thousand a year—educated in the country, and heir to an earldom, Sir Christopher Findlater piqued himself, notwithstanding his worldly advantages, usually so destructive to the kindlier affections, on having the best heart in the world, and this good heart, having a very bad head to regulate and support it, was the perpetual cause of error to the owner and evil to the public.

One evening, when Clarence was alone in his rooms, Mr. Trollop entered.

"My dear Linden," said the visitor, "how are you?"

"I am, as I hope you are, very well," answered Clarence.

"The human mind," said Trollop, taking off his great coat—

"Sir Christopher Findlater, and Mr. Callythorpe, sir," said the valet.

"Pshaw! What has Sir Christopher Findlater to do with the human mind?" muttered Mr. Trollop.

Sir Christopher entered with a swagger and a laugh. "Well, old fellow, how do you do? Deuced cold this evening."

"Though it *is* an evening in May," observed Clarence; "but then, this cursed climate."

"Climate!" interrupted Mr. Callythorpe, "it is the best climate in the world: I'm an Englishman, and I never abuse my country.

'England, with all thy faults, I love thee still!'

"As to climate," said Trollop, "there is no climate, neither here nor elsewhere: the climate is in your mind, the chair is in your mind, and the table too, though I dare say you are stupid enough to think the two latter are in the room; the human mind, my dear Findlater—"

"Don't *mind* me, Trollop," cried the baronet, "I can't bear your clever heads; give me a good heart—that's worth all the heads in the world, d—n me if it is not! Eh, Linden!"

"Your good heart," cried Trollop, in a passion—(for all your self-called philosophers are a little choleric)—"your good heart is all cant and nonsense—there is no heart at all—we are all mind."

"I'll be hanged if I'm all mind," said the baronet.

"At least," quoth Linden gravely, "no one ever accused you of it before."

"We are all mind," pursued the reasoner; "we are all mind, *un moulin à raisonnement*. Our ideas are derived from two sources, sensation or memory. That neither our thoughts, nor passions, nor ideas formed by the imagination, exist without the mind, everybody will allow;* therefore, you see, the human mind is—in short, there is nothing *in* the world but the human mind!"

"Nothing could be better demonstrated," said Clarence.

"I don't believe it," quoth the baronet.

"But you do believe it, and you must believe it," cried Trollop; "for 'the Supreme Being has implanted within us the principle of credulity,' and therefore you do believe it."

"But I don't," cried Sir Christopher.

"You are mistaken," replied the metaphysician calmly; "because I *must* speak truth."

"Why must you, pray?" said the baronet.

* Berkeley; Sect. iii. "Principles of Human Knowledge."

"Because," answered Trollop, taking snuff, "there is a principle of veracity implanted in our nature."

"I wish I were a metaphysician," said Clarence, with a sigh.

"I am glad to hear you say so, for you know, my dear Linden," said Callythorpe, "that I am your true friend, and I must therefore tell you that you are shamefully ignorant. You are not offended?"

"Not at all!" said Clarence, trying to smile.

"And you, my dear Findlater" (turning to the baronet), "you know that I wish you well—you know that I never flatter, I'm your real friend, so you must not be angry; but you really are not considered a Solomon."

"Mr. Callythorpe!" exclaimed the baronet, in a rage (the best-hearted people can't always bear truth), "what do you mean!"

"You must not be angry, my good sir—you must not, really. I can't help telling you of your faults, for I am a true Briton, sir, a true Briton, and leave lying to slaves and Frenchmen."

"You are in an error," said Trollop; "Frenchmen don't lie, at least not naturally, for in the human mind, as I before said, the Divine Author has implanted a principle of veracity which—"

"My dear sir," interrupted Callythorpe, very affectionately, "you remind me of what people say of *you*."

"Memory may be reduced to sensation, since it is only a weaker sensation," quoth Trollop; but proceed."

"You know, Trollop," said Callythorpe, in a singularly endearing intonation of voice, "you know that I never flatter: flattery is unbecoming a true friend—nay, more, it is unbecoming a native of our happy isles, and people do say of you that you know nothing whatsoever, no, not an iota, of all the nonsensical, worthless philosophy of which you are always talking. Lord St. George said the other day, that you were very conceited—'No, not conceited,' replied Dr. —, 'only ignorant,' so if I were you, Trollop, I would cut metaphysics—you're not offended?"

"By no means," cried Trollop, foaming at the mouth.

"For my part," said the good-hearted Sir Christopher, whose wrath had now subsided, rubbing his hands—"for my part, I see no good in any of those things: I never read—never—and I don't see how I'm a bit the worse for it. A good man, Linden, in my opinion, only wants to do his duty, and that is very easily done."

"A good man!—and what is good?" cried the metaphysi-

cian triumphantly. "Is it implanted within us? Hobbes, according to Reid, who is our last, and consequently best, philosopher, endeavors to demonstrate that there is no difference between right and wrong."

"I have no idea of what you mean," cried Sir Christopher.

"Idea!" exclaimed the pious philosopher. "Sir, give me leave to tell you that no solid proof has ever been advanced of the existence of ideas; they are a mere fiction and hypothesis. Nay, sir, 'hence arises that skepticism which disgraces our philosophy of the mind.' Ideas!—Findlater, you are a skeptic and an idealist."

"I?" cried the affrighted baronet; "upon my honor I am no such a thing. Everybody knows that I am a Christian, and—"

"Ah!" interrupted Callythorpe, with a solemn look, "everybody knows that you are not one of those horrid persons—those atrocious deists, and atheists, and skeptics, from whom the church and freedom of old England have suffered such danger. I am a true Briton of the good old school; and I confess, Mr. Trollop, that I do not like to hear any opinions but the right ones."

"Right ones being only those which Mr. Callythorpe professes," said Clarence.

"Exactly so!" rejoined Mr. Callythorpe.

"The human mind,"—commenced Mr. Trollop, stirring the fire; when Clarence, who began to be somewhat tired of this conversation, rose. "You will excuse me," said he, "but I am particularly engaged, and it is time to dress. Harrison will get you tea, or whatever else you are inclined for."

"The human mind," renewed Trollop, not heeding the interruption; and Clarence forthwith left the room.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"You blame Marcius for being proud."—*Coriolanus*.

"Here is another fellow, a marvellous pretty hand at fashioning a compliment."—*The Tanner of Tyburn*.

THERE was a brilliant ball at Lady T——'s, a personage who, every one knows, did, in the year 17—, give the best balls, and have the best-dressed people at them, in London. It was about half-past twelve, when Clarence, released from his three friends, arrived at the countess's. When he entered, the first thing

which struck him was Lord Borodaile in close conversation with Lady Flora.

Clarence paused for a few moments, and then, sauntering towards them, caught Flora's eye—colored, and advanced. Now, if there was a haughty man in Europe, it was Lord Borodaile. He was not proud of his birth, nor fortune, but he was proud of himself; and, next to that pride, he was proud of being a gentleman. He had an exceeding horror of all common people; a Claverhouse-sort of supreme contempt to "pudle blood"; his lip seemed to wear scorn as a garment; a lofty and stern self-admiration, rather than self-love, sat upon his forehead as on a throne. He had, as it were, an awe of himself; his thoughts were so many mirrors of Viscount Borodaile, dressed *en dieu*. His mind was a little Versailles, in which *self* sate like Louis XIV., and saw nothing but pictures of *its* self, sometimes as Jupiter, and sometimes as Apollo. What marvel, then, that Lord Borodaile was a very unpleasant companion: for every human being he had "something of contempt." His eye was always eloquent in disdaining: to the plebeian it said, "You are not a gentleman"; to the prince, "You are not Lord Borodaile."

Yet, with all this, he had his good points. He was brave as a lion; strictly honorable; and though very ignorant, and very self-sufficient, had that sort of dogged good sense which one very often finds in men of stern hearts, who, if they have many prejudices, have little feeling, to overcome.

Very stiffly, and very haughtily, did Lord Borodaile draw up, when Clarence approached, and addressed Lady Flora; much more stiffly, and much more haughtily, did he return, though with old-fashioned precision of courtesy, Clarence's bow, when Lady Westborough introduced them to each other. Not that this hauteur was intended as a particular affront; it was only the agreeability of his lordship's *general* manner.

"Are you engaged?" said Clarence to Flora.

"I am, at present, to Lord Borodaile."

"After him, may I hope?"

Lady Flora nodded assent, and disappeared with Lord Borodaile.

His Royal Highness the Duke of—— came up to Lady Westborough; and Clarence, with a smiling countenance and an absent heart, plunged into the crowd. There he met Lord Aspeden, in conversation with the Earl of Holdenworth, one of the administration.

"Ah, Linden!" said the diplomatist, "let me introduce you

to Lord Holdenworth—a clever young man, my dear lord, and plays the flute beautifully.” With this eulogium, Lord Aspenden glided away; and Lord Holdenworth, after some conversation with Linden, honored him by an invitation to dinner the next day.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

‘Tis true his nature may with faults abound;
But who will cavil when *the heart* is sound?”

STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

“Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt.”*—HOR.

THE next day Sir Christopher Findlater called on Clarence. “Let us lounge into the park,” said he.

“With pleasure,” replied Clarence; and into the park they lounged.

By the way they met a crowd, who were hurrying a man to prison. The good-hearted Sir Christopher stopped: “Who is that poor fellow?” said he.

“It is the celebrated”—(in England all criminals are celebrated. Thurtell was a hero, Thistlewood a patriot, and Fauntleroy was discovered to be exactly like Bonaparte!)—“it is the celebrated robber, John Jefferies, who broke into Mrs. Wilson’s house, and cut the throats of herself and her husband, wounded the maid-servant, and split the child’s skull with the poker.”

Clarence pressed forward: “I have seen that man before,” thought he. He looked again, and recognized the face of the robber who had escaped from Talbot’s house, on the eventful night which had made Clarence’s fortune. It was a strongly marked and rather handsome countenance, which would not be easily forgotten; and a single circumstance of excitement will stamp features on the memory as deeply as the commonplace intercourse of years.

“John Jeffries!” exclaimed the baronet, “let us come away.”

“Linden,” continued Sir Christopher, “that fellow was my servant once. He robbed me to some considerable extent. I caught him. He appealed to my heart, and you know, my dear fellow, that was irresistible, so I let him off. Who could have thought he would have turned out so?” And the baronet proceeded to eulogize his own good nature, by which it is just necessary to remark that one miscreant had been saved for a few years from transportation, in order to rob and murder *ad libi-*

* The foolish while avoiding vice run into the opposite extremes.

tum, and having fulfilled the office of a common pest, to suffer on the gallows at last. What a fine thing it is to have a good heart!

Both our gentlemen now sunk into a reverie, from which they were awakened, at the entrance of the park, by a young man in rags, who, with a piteous tone, supplicated charity. Clarence, who, to his honor be it spoken, spent an allotted and considerable part of his income in judicious and laborious benevolence, had read a little of political morals, then beginning to be understood, and walked on. The good-hearted baronet put his hand in his pocket, and gave the beggar half a guinea, by which a young, strong man, who had only just commenced the trade, was confirmed in his imposition for the rest of his life; and, instead of the useful support, became the pernicious incumbrance, of society.

Sir Christopher had now recovered his spirits.—“What’s like a good action?” said he to Clarence, with a swelling breast.

The park was crowded to excess; our loungers were joined by Lord St. George. His lordship was a staunch Tory. He could not endure Wilkes, liberty, or general education. He launched out against the enlightenment of domestics.*

“What has made you so bitter?” said Sir Christopher.

“My valet,” cried Lord St. George,—“he has invented a new toasting fork, is going to take out a patent, make his fortune, *and leave me*; that’s what I call ingratitude, Sir Christopher; for I ordered his wages to be raised five pounds but last year.”

“It *was* very ungrateful,” said the ironical Clarence.

“Very!” reiterated the good-hearted Sir Christopher.

“You cannot recommend me a valet, Findlater,” renewed his lordship, “a good, honest, sensible fellow, who can neither read nor write?”

“N-o-o—that is to say, yes! I can; my old servant Col-lard, is out of place, and is as ignorant as—as—”

“I—or you are?” said Lord St. George, with a laugh.

“Precisely,” replied the baronet.

“Well, then, I take your recommendation: send him to me to-morrow at twelve.”

“I will,” said Sir Christopher.

“My dear Findlater,” cried Clarence, when Lord St. George

* The ancestors of our present footmen, if we may believe Sir William Temple, seem to have been to the full as intellectual as their descendants. “I have had,” observes the philosophic statesman, “several servants far gone in divinity, others in poetry; have known in the families of some friends, a keeper deep in the Rosicrucian mysteries, and a laundress firm in those of Epicurus.”

was gone, "did you not tell me, some time ago, that Collard was a great rascal, and very intimate with Jefferies? and now you recommend him to Lord St. George!"

"Hush, hush, hush!" said the baronet; "he was a great rogue to be sure; but poor fellow, he came to me yesterday with tears in his eyes, and said he should starve if I would not give him a character; so what could I do?"

"At least, tell Lord St. George the truth," observed Clarence.

"But then Lord St. George would not take him!" rejoined the good-hearted Sir Christopher, with forcible *naïveté*. "No, no, Linden, we must not be so hard-hearted; we must forgive and forget"; and so saying, the baronet threw out his chest, with the conscious exultation of a man who has uttered a noble sentiment. The moral of this little history is that Lord St. George, having been pillaged "through thick and thin," as the proverb has it, for two years, at last missed a gold watch, and Monsieur Collard finished his career as his exemplary tutor, Mr. John Jefferies, had done before him. Ah, what a fine thing it is to have a good heart!

But to return, just as our wanderers had arrived at the farther end of the park, Lady Westborough and her daughter passed them. Clarence, excusing himself to his friends, hastened towards them, and was soon occupied in saying the prettiest things in the world to the prettiest person, at least in his eyes; while Sir Christopher, having done as much mischief as a good heart well can do in a walk of an hour, returned home to write a long letter to his mother, against "learning, and all such nonsense, which only served to blunt the affections and harden the heart."

"Admirable young man!" cried the mother, with tears in her eyes. "A good heart is better than all the heads in the world."

Amen—

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"Make way, Sir Geoffrey Peveril, or you will compel me to do that I may be sorry for!"

"You shall make no way here but at your peril," said Sir Geoffrey; "this is my ground."—*Peveril of the Peak*.

ONE night on returning home from a party at Lady Westborough's in Hanover Square, Clarence observed a man before him walking with an uneven and agitated step. His right hand was clenched, and he frequently raised it as with a sudden impulse, and struck fiercely as if at some imagined enemy.

The stranger slackened his pace. Clarence passed him, and, turning round to satisfy the idle curiosity which the man's eccentric gestures had provoked, his eye met a dark, lowering, iron countenance, which, despite the lapse of four years, he recognized on the moment—it was Wolfe, the republican.

Clarence moved, involuntarily, with a quicker step; but in a few minutes, Wolfe, who was vehemently talking to himself, once more passed him: the direction he took was also Clarence's way homeward, and he therefore followed the republican, though at some slight distance, and on the opposite side of the way. A gentleman on foot, apparently returning from a party, met Wolfe, and, with an air half haughty, half unconscious, took the wall; though, according to old-fashioned rules of street courtesy, he was on the wrong side for asserting the claim. The stern-republican started, drew himself up to his full height, and sturdily and doggedly placed himself directly in the way of the unjust claimant. Clarence was now nearly opposite to the two, and saw all that was going on.

With a motion, a little rude and very contemptuous, the passenger attempted to put Wolfe aside, and win his path. Little did he know of the unyielding nature he had to do with; the next instant the republican, with a strong hand, forced him from the pavement into the very kennel, and silently and coldly continued his way.

The wrath of the discomfited passenger was vehemently kindled.

“Insolent dog!” cried he, in a loud and arrogant tone, “your baseness is your protection.” Wolfe turned rapidly, and made but two strides before he was once more by the side of his defeated opponent.

“What did you say?” he asked, in his low, deep, hoarse voice.

Clarence stopped. “There will be mischief done here,” thought he, as he called to mind the stern temper of the republican.

“Merely,” said the other, struggling with his rage, “that it is not for men of my rank to avenge the insults offered us by those of yours!”

“Your rank,” said Wolfe, bitterly retorting the contempt of the stranger, in a tone of the loftiest disdain; “your rank, poor changeling! And what are you that you should lord it over me? Are your limbs stronger? your muscles firmer? your proportions juster? your mind acuter? your conscience clearer? Fool—fool—go home, and measure yourself with lackeys!”

The republican ceased, and pushing the stranger aside, turned slowly away. But this last insult enraged the passenger beyond all prudence. Before Wolfe had proceeded two paces, he muttered a desperate but brief oath, and struck the reformer with a strength so much beyond what his figure (which was small and slight) appeared to possess, that the powerful and gaunt frame of Wolfe recoiled backward several steps, and, had it not been for the iron railing of the neighboring area, would have fallen to the ground.

Clarence pressed forward; the face of the rash aggressor was turned towards him; the features were Lord Borodaile's. He had scarcely time to make this discovery, before Wolfe had recovered himself. With a wild and savage cry, rather than exclamation, he threw himself upon his antagonist, twined his sinewy arms around the frame of the struggling, but powerless, nobleman, raised him in the air, with the easy strength of a man lifting a child, held him aloft for one moment, with a bitter and scornful laugh of wrathful derision, and then dashed him to the ground, and, planting his foot upon Borodaile's breast said:

"So shall it be with all of you: there shall be but one instant between your last offence and your first but final debasement. Lie there! it is your proper place! By the only law which you yourself acknowledge, the law which gives the right divine to the strongest; if you stir limb or muscle, I will crush the breath from your body."

But Clarence was now by the side of Wolfe, a new and more powerful opponent.

"Look you," said he: "you have received an insult, and you have done justice yourself. I condemn the offence, and quarrel not with you for the punishment; but that punishment is now past: remove your foot, or—"

"What?" shouted Wolfe fiercely, his lurid and vindictive eye flashing with the released fire of long-pent and cherished passions.

"Or," answered Clarence calmly, "I will hinder you from committing murder."

At that instant the watchman's voice was heard, and the night's guardian himself was seen hastening from the far end of the street towards the place of contest. Whether this circumstance, or Clarence's answer, somewhat changed the current of the republican's thoughts, or whether his anger, suddenly raised, was now as suddenly subsiding, it is not easy to decide; but he slowly and deliberately moved his foot from the breast

of his baffled foe, and, bending down, seemed endeavoring to ascertain the mischief he had done. Lord Borodaile was perfectly insensible.

"You have killed him!" cried Clarence, in a voice of horror, "but you shall not escape"; and he placed a desperate and nervous hand on the republican.

"Stand off," said Wolfe, "my blood is up! I would not do more violence to-night than I have done. Stand off! the man moves; see!"

And Lord Borodaile, uttering a long sigh, and attempting to rise, Clarence released his hold of the republican, and bent down to assist the fallen nobleman. Meanwhile, Wolfe, muttering to himself, turned from the spot, and strode haughtily away.

The watchman now came up, and, with his aid, Clarence raised Lord Borodaile. Bruised, stunned, half insensible as he was, that personage lost none of his characteristic stateliness; he shook off the watchman's arm, as if there was contamination in the touch; and his countenance, still menacing and defying in its expression, turned abruptly towards Clarence, as if he yet expected to meet, and struggle with, a foe.

"How are you, my lord?" said Linden; "not severely hurt, I trust?"

"Well, quite well," cried Borodaile. "Mr. Linden, I think?—I thank you cordially for your assistance; but the dog—the rascal—where is he?"

"Gone," said Clarence.

"Gone! Where—where?" cried Borodaile; "that living man should insult me, and yet escape!"

"Which way did the fellow go?" said the watchman, anticipative of half-a-crown. "I will run after him in a trice, your honor—I warrant I nab him."

"No—no—" said Borodaile haughtily; "I leave my quarrels to no man; if I could not master him myself, no one else shall do it for me. Mr. Linden, excuse me, but I am perfectly recovered, and can walk very well without your polite assistance. Mr. Watchman, I am obliged to you: there is a guinea to reward your trouble."

With these words, intended as a farewell, the proud patrician, smothering his pain, bowed with extreme courtesy to Clarence—again thanked him, and walked on unaided, and alone.

"He is a game blood," said the watchman, pocketing the guinea.

"He is worthy his name," thought Clarence; "though he was in the wrong, my heart yearns to him."

CHAPTER XXXV.

“Things wear a vizard which I think to like not.”—*Tanner of Tyburn.*

CLARENCE, from that night, appeared to have formed a sudden attachment to Lord Borodaile. He took every opportunity of cultivating his intimacy, and invariably treated him with a degree of consideration which his knowledge of the world told him was well calculated to gain the good will of his haughty and arrogant acquaintance; but all this was ineffectual in conquering Borodaile's coldness and reserve. To have been once seen in a humiliating and degrading situation is quite sufficient to make a proud man hate the spectator, and, with the confusion of all prejudiced minds, to transfer the sore remembrance of the event to the association of the witness. Lord Borodaile, though always ceremoniously civil, was immovably distant; and avoided, as well as he was able, Clarence's insinuating approaches and address. To add to his indisposition to increase his acquaintance with Linden, a friend of his, a captain in the Guards, once asked him who that Mr. Linden was? and, on his lordship's replying that he did not know, Mr. Percy Bobus, the son of a wine-merchant, though the nephew of a duke, rejoined, “Nobody *does* know.”

“Insolent intruder!” thought Lord Borodaile: “A man whom nobody knows to make such advances to *me*!”

A still greater cause of dislike to Clarence arose from jealousy. Ever since the first night of his acquaintance with Lady Flora, Lord Borodaile had paid her unceasing attention. In good earnest, he was greatly struck by her beauty, and had for the last year meditated the necessity of presenting the world with a Lady Borodaile. Now, though his lordship did look upon himself in as favorable a light as a man well can do, yet he could not but own that Clarence *was* very handsome—had a devilish gentlemanlike air—talked with a better grace than the generality of young men, and danced to perfection. “I detest that fellow!” said Lord Borodaile, involuntarily and aloud, as these unwilling truths forced themselves upon his mind.

“Whom do you detest?” asked Mr. Percy Bobus, who was lying on the sofa in Lord Borodaile's drawing-room, and admiring a pair of red-heeled shoes which decorated his feet.

“That puppy, Linden!” said Lord Borodaile, adjusting his cravat.

“He *is* a deuced puppy, certainly!” rejoined Mr. Percy

Bobus, turning round to contemplate more exactly the shape of his right shoe. "I can't bear conceit, Borodaile."

"Nor I—I abhor it—it is so d—d disgusting!" replied Lord Borodaile, leaning his chin upon his two hands, and looking fully into the glass. "Do you use MacNeile's divine pomatum?"

"No, it's too hard; I get mine from Paris: shall I send you some?"

"Do," said Lord Borodaile.

"Mr. Linden, my lord," said the servant, throwing open the door; and Clarence entered.

"I am very fortunate," said he, with that smile which so few ever resisted, "to find you at home, Lord Borodaile; but as the day was wet, I thought I should have some chance of that pleasure; I therefore wrapped myself up in my roquelaure, and here I am!"

Now, nothing could be more diplomatic than the compliment of choosing a wet day for a visit, and exposing one's self to "the pitiless shower," for the greater probability of finding the person visited at home. Not so thought Lord Borodaile; he drew himself up, bowed very solemnly, and said with cold gravity:

"You are very obliging, *Mr. Linden.*"

Clarence colored, and bit his lip as he seated himself. Mr. Percy Bobus, with true insular breeding, took up the newspaper.

"I think I saw you at Lady C.'s last night," said Clarence; "did you stay there long?"

"No, indeed," answered Borodaile; "I hate her parties."

"One *does* meet such odd people there," observed Mr. Percy Bobus; "creatures one never sees anywhere else."

"I hear," said Clarence, who never abused any one, even the givers of stupid parties, if he could help it, and therefore thought it best to change the conversation—"I hear, Lord Borodaile, that some hunters of yours are to be sold. I purpose being a bidder for Thunderbolt."

"I have a horse to sell you, Mr. Linden," cried Mr. Percy Bobus, springing from the sofa into civility; "a superb creature."

"Thank you," said Clarence, laughing; "but I can only afford to buy *one*, and I have taken a great fancy to Thunderbolt."

Lord Borodaile, whose manners were very antiquated in their affability, bowed. Mr. Bobus sank back into his sofa, and resumed the paper.

A pause ensued. Clarence was chilled in spite of himself. Lord Borodaile played with a paper-cutter.

"Have you been to Lady Westborough's lately?" said Clarence, breaking silence.

"I was there last night," replied Lord Borodaile.

"Indeed!" cried Clarence. "I wonder I did not see you there, for I dined with them."

Lord Borodaile's hair curled itself. "*He* dined there, and I only asked in the evening," thought he; but his sarcastic temper suggested a very different reply.

"Ah," said he, elevating his eyebrows, "Lady Westborough told me she had had some people to dinner, whom she had been *obliged* to ask. Bobus, is that the 'Public Advertiser'? See whether that d—d fellow Junius has been writing any more of his venomous letters."

Clarence was not a man apt to take offence, but he felt his bile rise. "It will not do to show it," thought he; so he made some further remark in a jesting vein; and, after a very ill-sustained conversation of some minutes longer, rose, apparently in the best humor possible, and departed, with a solemn intention never again to enter the house. Thence he went to Lady Westborough's.

The marchioness was in her boudoir; Clarence was, as usual, admitted, for Lady Westborough loved amusement above all things in the world, and Clarence had the art of affording it better than any young man of her acquaintance. On entering, he saw Lady Flora hastily retreating through an opposite door. She turned her face towards him for one moment—that moment was sufficient to freeze his blood: the large tears were rolling down her cheeks, which were as white as death, and the expression of those features, usually so laughing and joyous, was that of utter and ineffable despair.

Lady Westborough was as lively, as bland, and as agreeable as ever; but Clarence thought he detected something restrained and embarrassed lurking beneath all the graces of her exterior manner; and the single glance he had caught of the pale and altered face of Lady Flora was not calculated to reassure his mind or animate his spirits. His visit was short; when he left the room, he lingered for a few moments in the ante-chamber, in the hope of again seeing Lady Flora. While thus loitering, his ear caught the sound of Lady Westborough's voice: "When Mr. Linden calls again, you have my orders never to admit him into this room; he will be shown into the drawing-room."

With a hasty step and a burning cheek Clarence quitted the house, and hurried, first to his solitary apartments, and thence, impatient of loneliness, to the peaceful retreat of his benefactor.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

“A maiden’s thoughts do check my trembling hand.”—DRAYTON.

THERE is something very delightful in turning from the unquietness and agitation, the fever, the ambition, the harsh and worldly realities of man’s character to the gentle and deep recesses of woman’s more secret heart. Within her musings is a realm of haunted and fairy thought, to which the things of this turbid and troubled life have no entrance. What to her are the changes of state, the rivalries and contentions which form the staple of *our* existence? For her there is an intense and fond philosophy, before whose eye substances flit and fade like shadows, and shadows grow glowingly into truth. Her soul’s creations are not as the moving and mortal images seen in the common day; they are things, like spirits steeped in the dim moonlight, heard when all else are still, and busy when earth’s laborers are at rest! They are

“Such stuff
As dreams are made of, and their little life
Is rounded by a sleep.”

Hers is the real and uncentred *poetry of being*, which pervades and surrounds her as with an air, which peoples her visions and animates her love, which shrinks from earth into itself, and finds marvel and meditation in all that it beholds within, and which spreads even over the heaven in whose faith she so ardently believes, the mystery and the tenderness of romance.

LETTER I.

FROM LADY FLORA ARDENNE TO MISS ELEANOR TREVANION.

“You say that I have not written to you so punctually of late as I used to do before I came to London, and you impute my negligence to the gaieties and pleasures by which I am surrounded. *Eh bien!* my dear Eleanor, could you have thought of a better excuse for me? You know how fond *we*—ay, dearest, you as well as I—used to be of dancing, and how earnestly we were wont to anticipate those children’s balls at my uncle’s, which were the only ones we were ever permitted

to attend. I found a stick the other day, on which I had cut seven notches, significant of seven days more to the next ball—we reckoned time by balls then, and danced chronologically. Well, my dear Eleanor, here I am now, brought out, tolerably well-behaved, only not dignified enough, according to mamma—as fond of laughing, talking, and dancing as ever; and yet, do you know, a ball, though still very delightful, is far from being the most important event in creation; its anticipation does not keep me awake of a night; and, what is more to the purpose, its recollection does not make me lock up my writing-desk, burn my *portefeuille*, and forget you, all of which you seem to imagine it has been able to effect.

“No, dearest Eleanor, you are mistaken; for were she twice as giddy, and ten times as volatile as she is, your own Flora could never, never forget you, nor the happy hours we have spent together, nor the pretty goldfinches we had in common, nor the little Scotch duets we used to sing together, nor our longings to change them into Italian, nor our disappointment when we did so, nor our laughter at Signior Shrikalini, nor our tears when poor darling Bijou died. And do you remember, dearest, the charming green lawn where we used to play together, and plan tricks for your governess? She was very, very cross; though, I think, we were a little to blame, too. However, I was much the worst! And pray, Eleanor, don't you remember how we used to like being called pretty, and told of the conquests we should make! Do you like all that now? For my part, I am tired of it, at least from the generality of one's flatterers.

“Ah! Eleanor, or 'heigho!' as the young ladies in novels write, do you remember how jealous I was of you at—, and how spiteful I was, and how you were an angel, and bore with me, and kissed me, and told me that—that I had nothing to fear? Well, Clar—, I mean Mr. Linden, is now in town, and so popular, and so admired! I wish we were at— again, for there we saw him every day, and now we don't meet more than three times a week: and though I like hearing him praised above all things, yet I feel very uncomfortable when that praise comes from very, very pretty women. I wish we were at— again! Mamma, who is looking more beautiful than ever, is very kind! she says nothing, to be sure, but she must see how—that is to say—she must know that—that I—I mean that Clarence is very attentive to me, and that I blush and look exceedingly silly whenever he is; and therefore I suppose that whenever Clarence thinks fit to ask me, I shall not be under

the necessity of getting up at six o'clock, and travelling to Gretna Green, through that odious North-road, up the High-gate-hill, and over Finchley-common.

“‘But when will he ask you?’ My dearest Eleanor, that is more than I can say. To tell you the truth, there is something about Linden which I cannot thoroughly understand. They say he is a nephew and heir to the Mr. Talbot whom you may have heard papa talk of; but if so, why the hints, the insinuations, of not being what he seems, which Clarence perpetually throws out, and which only excite my interest without gratifying my curiosity? ‘It is not,’ he has said, more than once, ‘as an obscure adventurer that I will claim your love’: and if I venture, which is very seldom (for I am a little afraid of him), to question his meaning, he either sinks into utter silence, for which, if I had loved *according to book*, and not so naturally, I should be very angry with him, or twist his words into another signification, such as that he would not claim me till he had become something higher and nobler than he is now. Alas, my dear Eleanor, it takes a long time to make an ambassador out of an *attaché*.

“See now if you reproached me justly with scanty correspondences. If I write a line more, I must begin a new sheet, and that will be beyond the power of a frank—a thing which would, I know, break the heart of your dear, good, generous, but a little too prudent aunt, and irrevocably ruin me in her esteem. So God bless you, dearest Eleanor, and believe me most affectionately yours,
 FLORA ARDENNE.”

LETTER II.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

“Pray, dearest Eleanor, does that good aunt of yours—now, don’t frown, I am not going to speak disrespectfully of her—ever take a liking to young gentlemen whom you detest, and insist upon the fallacy of your opinion, and the unerring rectitude of hers? If so, you can pity and comprehend my grief. Mamma has formed quite an attachment to a very disagreeable person! He is Lord Borodaile, the eldest, and, I believe, the only son of Lord Ulswater. Perhaps you may have met him abroad, for he has been a great traveller; his family is among the most ancient in England, and his father’s estate covers half a county. All this mamma tells me, with the most earnest air in the world, whenever I declaim upon his impertinence or *disagreeability*—(is there such a word? there ought to be).

‘Well,’ said I to-day, ‘what’s that to me?’ ‘It may be a great deal to you,’ replied mamma significantly, and the blood rushed from my face to my heart. She could not, Eleanor, she could not mean, after all her kindness to Clarence, and in spite of all her penetration into my heart—oh, no, no—she could not. How terribly suspicious this love makes one!

“But if I disliked Lord Borodaile at first, I have hated him of late; for, somehow or other, he is always in the way. If I see Clarence hastening through the crowd to ask me to dance, at that very instant up steps Lord Borodaile with his cold, changeless face, and his haughty, old-fashioned bow, and his abominable dark complexion—and mamma smiles—and he hopes he finds me disengaged—and I am hurried off—and poor Clarence looks so disappointed and so wretched! You have no idea how ill-tempered this makes me. I could not help asking Lord Borodaile, yesterday, if he was *never* going abroad again, and the hateful creature played with his cravat, and answered ‘Never!’ I was in hopes that my sullenness would drive his lordship away; *tout au contraire*, ‘Nothing,’ said he to me the other day, when he was in full pout, ‘Nothing is so plebeian as good-humor!’

“I wish, then, Eleanor, that he could see your governess; she must be majesty in his eyes!”

“Ah, dearest, how we belie ourselves. At this moment, when you might think, from the idle, rattling, silly flow of my letter, that my heart was as light and as free as when we used to play on the green lawn, and under the sunny trees, in the merry days of our childhood, the tears are running down my cheeks; see where they have fallen on the page, and my head throbs as if my thoughts were too dull and heavy for it to contain. It is past one! I am alone, and in my own room. Mamma is gone to a rout at H—— House; but I knew I should not meet Clarence there, and so said I was ill, and remained at home. I have done so often of late, whenever I have learned from *him* that he was not going to the same place as mamma. Indeed, I love much better to sit alone and think over his words and looks: and I have drawn, after repeated attempts, a profile likeness of him; and oh, Eleanor, I cannot tell you how dear it is to me; and yet there is not a line, not a look of his countenance which I have not learned by heart, without such useless aids to my memory. But I am ashamed of telling you all this, and my eyes ache so, that I can write no more.

“Ever, as ever, dearest Eleanor, your affectionate friend.”

LETTER III.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

“Eleanor, I am undone! My mother has been so cruel; but she cannot, she cannot intend it, or she knows very little of my heart. With some, ties may be as easily broken as formed; with others they are twined around life itself.

“Clarence dined with us yesterday and was unusually animated and agreeable. He was engaged on business with Lord Aspeden afterwards, and left us early. We had a few people in the evening; Lord Borodaile among the rest; and my mother spoke of Clarence, and his relationship to, and expectations from, Mr. Talbot. Lord Borodaile sneered: ‘You are mistaken,’ said he, sarcastically; ‘Mr. Linden may feel it convenient to give out that he is related to so old a family as the Talbots; and since Heaven only knows who or what he is, he may as well claim alliance with one person as another; but he is certainly not the nephew of Mr. Talbot of Searsdale Park, for that gentleman had no sisters and but one brother, who left an only daughter; that daughter had also but one child, certainly no relation to Mr. Linden. I can vouch for the truth of this statement; for the Talbots are related to, or at least nearly connected with, myself; and I thank Heaven that I have a pedigree, even in its collateral branches, worth learning by heart.’ And then Lord Borodaile—I little thought, when I railed against him, what serious cause I should have to hate him—turned to me, and harassed me with his tedious attentions the whole of the evening.

“This morning mamma sent for me into her boudoir. ‘I have observed,’ said she, with the greatest indifference, ‘that Mr. Linden has, *of late*, been much too particular in manner towards you—your foolish and undue familiarity with every one has perhaps given him encouragement.’ After the gross imposition which Lord Borodaile exposed to us last night, I cannot but consider the young man as a mere adventurer, and must not only insist upon your total termination to civilities which we must henceforth consider presumption, but I myself shall consider it incumbent upon me greatly to limit the advances he has thought proper to make towards my acquaintance.’

“You may guess how thunderstruck I was by this speech. I could not answer; my tongue literally clove to my mouth, and I was only relieved by a sudden and violent burst of tears. Mamma looked exceedingly displeased, and was just going to

speaking, when the servant threw open the door and announced Mr. Linden. I rose hastily, and had only just time to escape, as he entered; but when I heard that dear, dear voice, I could not resist turning for one moment. He saw me—and was struck mute, for the agony of my soul was stamped visibly on my countenance. That moment was over—with a violent effort I tore myself away.

“Eleanor, I can write no more. God bless you! and *me* too—for I am very, very unhappy. F. A.”

CHAPTER XXXVII.

“What a charming character is a kind old man.”—STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

“CHEER up, my dear boy,” said Talbot kindly, “we must never despair. What though Lady Westborough has forbidden you the *boudoir*, a *boudoir* is a very different thing from a daughter, and you have no right to suppose that the veto extends to both. But now that we are on this subject, do let me reason with you seriously. Have you not already tasted all the pleasures, and been sufficiently annoyed by some of the pains, of acting the ‘Incognito’? Be ruled by me; resume your proper name; it is at least one which the proudest might acknowledge; and its discovery will remove the greatest obstacle to the success you so ardently desire.”

Clarence, who was laboring under strong excitement, paused for some moments, as if to collect himself, before he replied: “I have been thrust from my father’s home—I have been made the victim of another’s crime—I have been denied the rights and name of son; perhaps—(and I say this bitterly) justly denied them, despite my own innocence. What would you have me do? Resume a name never conceded to me—perhaps not righteously mine—thrust myself upon the unwilling and shrinking hands which disowned and rejected me—blazon my virtues by pretensions which I myself have promised to forego, and foist myself on the notice of strangers by the very claims which my nearest relations dispute? Never—never—never! With the simple name I have assumed—the friend I myself have won—you, my generous benefactor, my real father, who never forsook, nor insulted, me for my misfortunes—with these, I have gained some steps in the ladder; with these, and those gifts of nature, a stout heart and a will-

ing hand, of which none can rob me, I will either ascend the rest, even to the summit, or fall to the dust, unknown, but not contemned ; unlamented, but not despised."

"Well, well," said Talbot, brushing away a tear which he could not deny to the feeling, even while he disputed the judgment, of the young adventurer—"well, this is all very fine and very foolish ; but you shall never want friend or father while I live, or when I have ceased to live ; but come—sit down, share my dinner, which is not very good, and my dessert, which is : help me to entertain two or three guests who are coming to me in the evening, to talk on literature, sup, and sleep ; and to-morrow you shall return home, and see Lady Flora in the drawing-room, if you cannot in the *boudoir*."

And Clarence was easily persuaded to accept the invitation.

Talbot was not one of those men who are forced to exert themselves to be entertaining. He had the pleasant and easy way of imparting his great general and curious information, that a man, partly humorist, partly philosopher, who values himself on being a man of letters, and is in spite of himself a man of the world, always ought to possess. Clarence was soon beguiled from the remembrance of his mortifications, and, by little and little, entirely yielded to the airy and happy flow of Talbot's conversation.

In the evening three or four men of literary eminence (as many as Talbot's small Tusculum would accommodate with beds) arrived, and in a conversation, free alike from the jargon of pedants and the insipidities of fashion, the night fled away swiftly and happily, even to the lover.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"We are here (in the country) among the vast and noble scenes of nature ; we are there (in the town) among the pitiful shifts of policy. We walk here in the light and open ways of the divine bounty—we grope there in the dark and confused labyrinths of human malice ; our senses are here feasted with all the clear and genuine taste of their objects, which are all sophisticated there, and for the most part overwhelmed with their contraries : here pleasure, methinks, looks like a beautiful, constant, and modest wife : it is there an impudent, fickle, and painted harlot."—COWLEY.

DRAW up the curtain ! The scene is the Opera.

The pit is crowded ; the connoisseurs in the front row are in a very ill-humor. It must be confessed that extreme heat is a little trying to the temper of a critic.

The Opera then was not what it is now, nor even what it had

been in a former time. It is somewhat amusing to find Goldsmith questioning, in one of his essays, whether the Opera could ever become popular in England? But on the night on which the reader is summoned to that "theatre of sweet sounds," a celebrated singer from the continent made his first appearance in London, and all the world thronged to "that odious Opera-house," to hear or to say they had heard the famous Sopraniello.

With a nervous step, Clarence proceeded to Lady Westborough's box; and it was many minutes that he lingered by the door before he summoned courage to obtain admission.

He entered; the box was crowded; but Lady Flora was not there. Lord Borodaile was sitting next to Lady Westborough. As Clarence entered, Lord Borodaile raised his eyebrows, and Lady Westborough her glass. However disposed a great person may be to drop a lesser one, no one of real birth or breeding ever cuts another. Lady Westborough, therefore, though much colder, was no less civil than usual; and Lord Borodaile bowed lower than ever to *Mr.* Linden, as he punctiliously called him. But Clarence's quick eye discovered instantly that he was no welcome intruder, and that his day with the beautiful marchioness was over. His visit, consequently, was short and embarrassed. When he left the box, he heard Lord Borodaile's short, slow, sneering laugh, followed by Lady Westborough's "hush" of reproof.

His blood boiled. He hurried along the passage, with his eyes fixed upon the ground, and his hand clenched.

"What ho! Linden, my good fellow; why, you look as if all the ferocity of the great Figg were in your veins," cried a good-humored voice. Clarence started, and saw the young and high-spirited Duke of Haverfield.

"Are you going behind the scenes?" said his grace. "I have just come thence; and you had much better drop into La Meronville's box with me. You sup with her to-night, do you not?"

"No, indeed!" replied Clarence; "I scarcely know her, except by sight."

"Well, and what think you of her?"

"That she is the prettiest Frenchwoman I ever saw."

"Commend me to secret sympathies!" cried the duke. "She has asked me three times who you were, and told me three times that you were the handsomest man in London, and had quite a foreign air; the latter recommendation being of course

far greater than the former. So, after this, you cannot refuse to accompany me to her box, and make her acquaintance."

"Nay," answered Clarence, "I shall be too happy to profit by the taste of so discerning a person: but it is cruel in you, duke, not to feign a little jealousy—a little reluctance to introduce so formidable a rival."

"Oh, as to me," said the duke, "I only like her for her mental, not her personal attractions. She is very agreeable, and a little witty; sufficient attractions for one in her situation."

"But do tell me a little of her history," said Clarence; "for, in spite of her renown, I only know her as La Belle Meronville. Is she not living *en ami* with some one of our acquaintance?"

"To be sure," replied the duke, "with Lord Borodaile. She is prodigiously extravagant; and Borodaile affects to be prodigiously fond; but as there is only a certain fund of affection in the human heart, and all in Lord Borodaile's is centered *in* Lord Borodaile, that cannot really be the case."

"Is he jealous of her?" said Clarence.

"Not in the least! nor, indeed, does she give him any cause. She is very gay, very talkative, gives excellent suppers, and always has her box at the Opera crowded with admirers; but that is all. She encourages many, and favors but one. Happy Borodaile! My lot is less fortunate! You know, I suppose, that Julia has deserted me?"

"You astonish me—and for what?"

"Oh, she told me, with a vehement burst of tears, that she was convinced I did not love her, and that a hundred pounds a month was not sufficient to maintain a milliner's apprentice. I answered the first assertion by an assurance that I adored her; but I preserved a total silence with regard to the latter: and so I found Trevanion *tête-à-tête* with her the next day."

"What did you?" said Clarence.

"Sent my valet to Trevanion with an old coat of mine, my compliments, and my hopes that, as Mr. Trevanion was so fond of my cast-off conveniences, he would honor me by accepting the accompanying trifle."

"He challenged you, without doubt?"

"Challenged me! No: he tells all his friends that I am the wittiest man in Europe."

"A fool can speak the truth, you see," said Clarence, laughing.

"Thank you, Linden; you shall have my good word with La Meronville for that; *mais allons*."

Mademoiselle *de* la Meronville, as she pointedly entitled herself, was one of those charming adventuresses, who, making the

most of a good education and a prepossessing person, a delicate turn for letter-writing, and a lively vein of conversation, come to England for a year or two, as Spaniards were wont to go to Mexico, and who return to their native country with a profound contempt for the barbarians whom they have so egregiously despoiled. Mademoiselle de la Meronville was small, beautifully formed, had the prettiest hands and feet in the world, and laughed *musically*. By-the-by, how difficult it is to laugh, or even to smile, at once, naturally and gracefully. It is one of Steele's finest touches of character, where he says of Will Honeycomb, "He can smile when one speaks to him, and laughs easily."

In a word, the pretty Frenchwoman was precisely formed to turn the head of a man like Lord Borodaile, who loved to be courted and who required to be amused. Mademoiselle de la Meronville received Clarence with a great deal of grace, and a little reserve, the first chiefly natural, the last wholly artificial.

"Well," said the duke (in French), "you have not told me who are to be of your party this evening—Borodaile, I suppose, of course?"

"No, he cannot come to-night."

"Ah, *quel malheur!* then the hock will not be iced enough—Borodaile's looks are the best wine-coolers in the world."

"Fie!" cried La Meronville, glancing towards Clarence: "I cannot endure your malevolence; wit makes you very bitter."

"And that is exactly the reason why *la belle* Meronville loves me so: nothing is so sweet to one person as bitterness upon another; it is human nature and French nature (which is a very different thing) into the bargain."

"Bah! my lord duke, you judge of others by yourself."

"To be sure I do," cried the duke; "and that is the best way of forming a right judgment. Ah! what a foot that little *figurante* has—you don't admire her, Linden?"

"No, duke; my admiration is like the bird in the cage—chained here, and cannot fly away!" answered Clarence, with a smile at the frippery of his compliment.

"Ah, Monsieur," cried the pretty Frenchwoman, leaning back, "you have been at Paris, I see—one does not learn those graces of language in England. I have been five months in your country—brought over the prettiest dresses imaginable, and have only received three compliments, and (pity me!) two out of the three were upon my pronunciation of 'How do you do?'"

"Well," said Clarence, "I should have imagined that in England, above all other countries, your vanity would have been

gratified, for you know we pique ourselves on our sincerity, and say all we think."

"Yes! then you always think very unpleasantly; what an alternative! which is the best, to speak ill, or to think ill of one?"

"*Pour l'amour de Dieu!*" cried the duke, "don't ask such puzzling questions; you are always getting into those moral subtleties, which I suppose you learn from Borodaile. He is a wonderful metaphysician, I hear—I can answer for his chemical powers; the moment he enters a room the very walls grow damp: as for me, I dissolve; I should flow into a fountain, like Arethusa, if happily his lordship did not freeze one again into substance as fast as he dampens one into thaw."

"*Fi donc!*" cried La Meronville. "I should be very angry, had you not taught me to be very indifferent—"

"To *him!*" said the duke drily. "I am glad to hear it. He is not worth *une grande passion*, believe me—but tell me, *ma belle*, who else sups with you?"

"*D'abord*, Monsieur Linden, I trust," answered Meronville, with a look of invitation, to which Clarence bowed and smiled his assent, "Milord D—, and Mons. Trevanion, Mademoiselle Caumartin, and Le Prince Pietro del Ordino."

"Nothing can be better arranged," said the duke. "But see, they are just going to drop the curtain. Let me call your carriage."

"You are too good, milord," replied La Meronville, with a bow, which said, "of course"; and the duke, who would not have stirred three paces for the first princess of the blood, hurried out of the box (despite of Clarence's offer to undertake the commission) to inquire after the carriage of the most notorious adventuress of the day.

Clarence was alone in the box with the beautiful Frenchwoman. To say truth, Linden was far too much in love with Lady Flora, and too occupied, as to his other thoughts, with the projects of ambition to be easily led into any disreputable or criminal *liaison*; he therefore conversed with his usual ease, though with rather more than his usual gallantry, without feeling the least touched by the charms of La Meronville, or the least desirous of supplanting Lord Borodaile in her favor.

The duke reappeared, and announced the carriage. As, with La Meronville leaning on his arm, Clarence hurried out, he accidentally looked up, and saw on the head of the stairs Lady Westborough with her party (Lord Borodaile among the rest) in waiting for her carriage. For almost the first time in his life, Clarence felt ashamed of himself; his cheek burned like

fire, and he involuntarily let go the fair hand which was leaning upon his arm. However, the weaker our cause the better face we should put upon it, and Clarence, recovering his presence of mind, and vainly hoping he had not been perceived, buried his face as well as he was able in the fur collar of his cloak, and hurried on.

"You saw Lord Borodaile?" said the duke to La Meronville, as he handed her into her carriage.

"Yes, I accidentally looked back after we had passed him, and then I saw him."

"Looked back?" said the duke; I wonder he did not turn you into a pillar of salt."

"*Fi donc!*" cried La Belle Meronville, tapping his grace playfully on the arm, in order to do which *she was forced to lean* a little harder upon Clarence's, which she had not yet relinquished—" *Fi donc!—François, chez moi!*"

"My carriage is just behind," said the duke. "You will go with me to La Meronville's, of course."

"Really, my dear duke," said Clarence, "I wish I could excuse myself from this party. I have another engagement."

"Excuse yourself? and leave me to the mercy of Mademoiselle Caumartin, who has the face of an ostrich, and talks me out of breath! Never, my dear Linden, never! Besides, I want you to see how well I shall behave to Trevanion. Here is the carriage. *Entrez, mon cher.*"

And Clarence, weakly and foolishly (but he *was* very young and very unhappy, and so, longing for an escape from his own thoughts), entered the carriage, and drove to the supper party, in order to prevent the Duke of Haverfield being talked out of breath by Mademoiselle Caumartin, who had the face of an ostrich.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"Yet truth is keenly sought for, and the wind,
Charged with rich words, pour'd out in thought's defence;
Whether the church inspire that eloquence,
Or a Platonic piety, confined
To the sole temple of the inward mind;
And one there is who builds immortal lays,
Though doom'd to tread in solitary ways;
Darkness before, and danger's voice behind!
Yet not alone—"—WORDSWORTH.

LONDON—thou Niobe, who sittest in stone, amidst thy stricken and fated children; nurse of the desolate, who hidest in thy

bosom the shame, the sorrows, the sins of many sons ; in whose arms the fallen and the outcast shroud their distresses, and shelter from the proud man's contumely ; Epitome and Focus of the disparities and maddening contrasts of this wrong world, that assemblage together in one great heap the woes, the joys, the elevations, the debasements of the various tribes of man ; mightiest of levellers, confounding in thy whirlpool all ranks, all minds, the graven labors of knowledge, the straws of the maniac, purple and rags, the regalities and the loathsomeness of earth—palace and lazar-house combined ! Grave of the living, where, mingled and massed together, we couch, but rest not—"for in that sleep *of life* what dreams *do* come"—each vexed with a separate vision—"shadows" which "grieve the heart," unreal in their substance, but faithful in their warnings, flitting from the eye, but graving unfleeting memories on the mind, which reproduce new dreams over and over, until the phantasm ceases, and the pall of a heavier torpor falls upon the brain, and all is still, and dark, and hushed !—"From the stir of thy great Babel," and the fixed tinsel glare in which sits Pleasure like a star, "which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays," we turn to thy deeper and more secret haunts. Thy wilderness is all before us—where to choose our place of rest ; and, to our eyes, thy hidden recesses are revealed.

The clock of St. Paul's had tolled the second hour of morning. Within a small and humble apartment in the very heart of the city, there sat a writer, whose lucubrations, then obscure and unknown, were destined, years afterwards, to excite the vague admiration of the crowd, and the deeper homage of the wise. They were of that nature which is slow in winning its way to popular esteem ; the result of the hived and hoarded knowledge of years—the produce of deep thought and sublime aspirations, influencing, in its bearings, the interests of the many, yet only capable of analysis by the judgment of the few. But the stream broke forth at last from the cavern to the daylight, although *the source* was never traced ; or, to change the image—albeit none know the hand which executed, and the head which designed—the monument of a mighty intellect has been at length dug up, as it were, from the envious earth, the brighter for its past obscurity, and the more certain of immortality from the temporary neglect it has sustained.

The room was, as we before said, very small and meanly furnished ; yet were there a few articles of costliness and luxury scattered about, which told that the tastes of its owner had not been quite humbled to the level of his fortunes. One side of

the narrow chamber was covered with shelves, which supported books, in various languages ; and, though chiefly on scientific subjects, not utterly confined to them. Among the doctrines of the philosopher, and the golden rules of the moralist, were also seen the pleasant dreams of poets, the legends of Spenser, the refining moralities of Pope, the lofty errors of Lucretius, and the sublime relics of *our* "dead kings of melody." * And over the hearth was a picture, taken in more prosperous days, of one who had been, and was yet, to the tenant of that abode, better than fretted roofs, and glittering banquets, the objects of ambition, or even the immortality of fame. It was the face of one very young and beautiful, and the deep, tender eyes looked down, as with a watchful fondness, upon the lucubrador and his labors. While beneath the window, which was left unclosed, for it was scarcely June, were simple, yet not inelegant, vases, filled with flowers :

" Those lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave." †

The writer was alone, and had just paused from his employment : he was leaning his face upon one hand, in thoughtful and earnest mood, and the air which came chill, but gentle, from the window, slightly stirred the locks from the broad and marked brow, over which they fell in thin but graceful waves. Partly owing perhaps to the waning light of the single lamp, and the lateness of the hour, his cheek seemed very pale, and the complete, though contemplative, rest of the features partook greatly of the quiet of habitual sadness, and a little of the languor of shaken health : yet the expression, despite the proud cast of the brow and profile, was rather benevolent than stern or dark in its pensiveness, and the lines spoke more of the wear and harrow of deep thought, than the inroads of ill-regulated passion.

There was a slight tap at the door,—the latch was raised, and the original of the picture I have described entered the apartment.

Time had not been idle with her since that portrait had been taken : the round, elastic figure had lost much of its youth and freshness ; the step, though light, was languid, and in the centre of the fair, smooth cheek, which was a little sunken, burned one deep, bright spot—fatal sign to those who have watched the progress of the most deadly and deceitful of our national

* Shakespeare and Milton.

† Herrick.

maladies; yet still the form and countenance were eminently interesting and lovely; and though the bloom was gone for ever, the beauty, which not even death could wholly have spoiled, remained to triumph over debility, misfortune, and disease.

She approached the student, and laid her hand upon his shoulder—

“Dearest!” said he tenderly yet reproachfully, “yet up, and the hour so late, and yourself so weak? Fie, I must learn to scold you.”

“And how,” answered the intruder, “how could I sleep or rest while you are consuming your very life in those thankless labors?”

“By which,” interrupted the writer, with a faint smile, “we glean our scanty subsistence.”

“Yes,” said the wife (for she held that relation to the student), and the tears stood in her eyes, “I know well that every morsel of bread, every drop of water, is wrung from your very heart’s blood, and I—I am the cause of all; but surely you exert yourself too much, more than can be requisite. These night damps, this sickly and chilling air, heavy with the rank vapors of the coming morning, are not suited to thoughts and toils which are alone sufficient to sear your mind and exhaust your strength. Come, my own love, to bed: and yet, first, come and look upon our child, how sound she sleeps! I have leant over her for the last hour, and tried to fancy it was you whom I watched, for she has learned already your smile, and has it even when she sleeps.”

“She has cause to smile,” said the husband, bitterly.

“She has, *for she is yours!* and even in poverty and humble hopes, that is an inheritance which may well teach her pride and joy. Come, love, the air is keen, and the damp rises to your forehead—yet stay, till I have kissed it away.”

“Mine own love,” said the student, as he rose and wound his arm around the slender waist of his wife, “wrap your shawl closer over your bosom, and let us look for one instant upon the night. I cannot sleep till I have slaked the fever of my blood: the air has nothing of coldness in its breath to me.”

And they walked to the window, and looked forth. All was hushed and still, in the narrow street; the cold gray clouds were hurrying fast along the sky, and the stars, weak and waning in their light, gleamed forth at rare intervals upon the mute city, like the expiring watch-lamps of the dead.

They leaned out, and spoke not; but when they looked above upon the melancholy heavens, they drew nearer to each other, as if it were their natural instinct to do so, whenever the world without seemed discouraging and sad.

At length the student broke the silence; but his thoughts, which were wandering and disjointed, were breathed less to her than vaguely and unconsciously to himself. "Morn breaks—another and another!—day upon day!—while we drag on our load like the blind beast which knows not when the burden shall be cast off, and the hour of rest be come."

The woman pressed his hand to her bosom, but made no rejoinder—she knew his mood—and the student continued:

"And so life frets itself away! Four years have passed over our seclusion—four years! a great segment in the little circle of our mortality; and of those years what day has pleasure won from labor, or what night has sleep snatched wholly from the lamp? Weaker than the miser, the insatiable and restless mind traverses from east to west; and from the nooks, and corners, and crevices of earth collects, fragment by fragment, grain by grain, atom by atom, the riches which it gathers to its coffers—for what?—to starve amidst the plenty! The fantasies of the imagination bring a ready and substantial return: not so the treasures of thought. Better that I had renounced the soul's labor for that of its hardier frame—better that I had 'sweated in the eye of Phœbus,' than 'eat my heart with crosses and with cares,'—seeking truth and wanting bread—adding to the indigence of poverty its humiliation; wroth with the arrogance of men, who weigh in the shallow scales of their meagre knowledge the product of lavish thought, and of the hard hours for which health, and sleep, and spirit have been exchanged; sharing the lot of those who would enchant the old serpent of evil, which refuses the voice of the charmer; struggling against the prejudice and bigoted delusion of the bandaged and fettered herd to whom, in our fond hopes and aspirations, we trusted to give light and freedom; seeing the slavish judgments we would have redeemed from error clashing their chains at us in ire; made criminal by our very benevolence—the martyrs whose zeal is rewarded with persecution, whose prophecies are crowned with contempt! Better, oh, better that I had not listened to the vanity of a heated brain—better that I had made my home with the lark and the wild bee, among the fields and the quiet hills, where life, if obscurer, is less debased, and hope, if less eagerly indulged, is less bitterly disappointed. The frame, it is true, might have been bowed to a harsher

labor, but the heart would at least have had its rest from anxiety, and the mind its relaxation from thought."

The wife's tears fell upon the hand she clasped. The student turned, and his heart smote him for the selfishness of his complaints. He drew her closer and closer to his bosom; and, gazing fondly upon those eyes which years of indigence and care might have robbed of their young lustre, but not of their undying tenderness, he kissed away her tears, and addressed her in a voice which never failed to charm her grief into forgetfulness.

"Dearest and kindest," he said, "was I not to blame for accusing those privations or regrets which have only made us love each other the more! Trust me, mine own treasure, that it is only in the peevishness of an inconstant and fretful humor, that I have murmured against my fortune. For in the midst of all, I look upon you, my angel, my comforter, my young dream of love which God, in his mercy, breathed into waking life—I look upon you, and am blest and grateful. Nor in my juster moments do I accuse even the nature of these studies, though they bring us so scanty a reward. Have I not hours of secret and overflowing delight, the triumphs of gratified research—flashes of sudden light, which reward the darkness of thought, and light up my solitude as a revel? These feelings of rapture, which nought but Science can afford, amply repay her disciples for worse evils and severer hardships than it has been my destiny to endure. Look along the sky, how the vapors struggle with the still yet feeble stars: even so have the mists of error been pierced, though not scattered, by the dim but holy lights of past wisdom, and now the morning is at hand, and in that hope we journey on, doubtful, but not utterly in darkness. Nor is this *all my* hope; there *is* a loftier and more steady comfort than that which mere philosophy can bestow. If the certainty of future fame bore Milton rejoicing through his blindness, or cheered Galileo in his dungeon, what stronger and holier support shall not be given to *him* who has loved mankind as his brothers, and devoted his labors to their cause?—who has not sought, but relinquished, his own renown?—who has braved the present censures of men for their future benefit, and trampled upon glory in the energy of benevolence? Will there not be for him something more powerful than fame to comfort his sufferings and to sustain his hopes? If the wish of mere posthumous honor be a feeling rather vain than exalted, the love of our race affords us a more rational and noble desire of remembrance. Come what will, that love, if it animates our toils and directs our studies, shall, when we

are dust, make our relics of value, our efforts of avail, and consecrate the desire of fame, which were else a passion selfish and impure, by connecting it with the welfare of ages, and the eternal interests of the world and its Creator!—Come, we will to bed.”

CHAPTER XL.

“A man may be formed by nature for an admirable citizen, and yet, from the purest motives, be a dangerous one to the State in which the accident of birth has placed him.”—STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

THE night again closed, and the student once more resumed his labors. The spirit of his hope and comforter of his toils sat by him, ever and anon lifting her fond eyes from her work to gaze upon his countenance, to sigh, and to return sadly and quietly to her employment.

A heavy step ascended the stairs, the door opened, and the tall figure of Wolfe, the republican, presented itself. The female rose, pushed a chair towards him with a smile and grace suited to better fortunes, and, retiring from the table, reseated herself silent and apart.

“It is a fine night,” said the student, when the mutual greetings were over. “Whence come you?”

“From contemplating human misery and worse than human degradation,” replied Wolfe, slowly seating himself.

“Those words specify no place—they apply universally,” said the student, with a sigh.

“Ay, Glendower, for misgovernment is universal,” rejoined Wolfe.

Glendower made no answer.

“Oh!” said Wolfe, in the low, suppressed tone of intense passion which was customary to him, “it maddens me to look upon the willingness with which men hug their trappings of slavery,—bears, proud of the rags which deck, and the monkeys which ride them. But it frets me yet more when some lordling sweeps along, lifting his dull eyes above the fools whose only crime and debasement are—what?—their subjection to *him*! Such an one I encountered a few nights since; and he will remember the meeting longer than I shall. I taugth that ‘god to tremble.’”

The female rose, glanced towards her husband, and silently withdrew.

Wolfe paused for a few moments, looked curiously and pryingly

round, and then rising, went forth into the passage to see that no loiterer or listener was near—returned, and, drawing his chair close to Glendower, fixed his dark eye upon him and said :

“You are poor, and your spirit rises against your lot ; you are just, and your heart swells against the general oppression you behold ; can you not dare to remedy your ills and those of mankind ?”

“I can dare,” said Glendower calmly, though haughtily, “all things but crime.”

“And which is crime?—the rising against, or the submission to, evil government? Which is crime, I ask you?”

“That which is the most imprudent,” answered Glendower. “We may sport in ordinary cases with our own safeties, but only in rare cases with the safety of others.”

Wolfe rose, and paced the narrow room impatiently to and fro. He paused by the window, and threw it open. “Come here,” he cried—“come, and look out.”

Glendower did so—all was still and quiet.

“Why did you call me ?” said he ; “I see nothing.”

“Nothing !” exclaimed Wolfe ; “look again—look on yon sordid and squalid huts—look at yon court, that from this wretched street leads to abodes to which these are as palaces : look at yon victims of vice and famine, plying beneath the midnight skies their filthy and infectious trade. Wherever you turn your eyes, what see you ? Misery, loathsomeness, sin ! Are you a man, and call you these nothing ! And now lean forth still more—see afar off, by yonder lamp, the mansion of ill-gotten and griping wealth. He who owns those buildings, what did he that he should riot while we starve ? He wrung from the negro’s tears and bloody sweat the luxuries of a pampered and vitiated taste : he pandered to the excesses of the rich : he heaped their tables with the product of a nation’s groans. Lo ! his reward ! He is rich—prosperous—honored ! He sits in the legislative assembly ; he declaims against immorality ; he contends for the safety of property, and the equilibrium of ranks. Transport yourself from this spot for an instant—imagine that you survey the gorgeous homes of aristocracy and power—the palaces of the west. What see you there ? The few sucking, draining, exhausting the blood, the treasure, the very existence of the many. Are we, who are *of* the many, wise to suffer it ?”

“Are we of the many ?” said Glendower.

“We could be,” said Wolfe hastily.

"I doubt it," replied Glendower.

"Listen," said the republican, laying his hand upon Glendower's shoulder, "listen to me. There are in this country men whose spirits not years of delayed hope, wearisome persecution, and, bitterer than all, misrepresentation from some and contempt from others, have yet quelled and tamed. We watch our opportunity; the growing distress of the country, the increasing severity and misrule of the administration will soon afford it us. Your talents, your benevolence, render you worthy to join us. Do so, and—"

"Hush!" interrupted the student; "you know not what you say: you weigh not the folly, the madness of your design! I am a man more fallen, more sunken, more disappointed than you. I, too, have had at my heart the burning and lonely hope which, through years of misfortune and want, has comforted me with the thought of serving and enlightening mankind—I, too, have devoted to the fulfilment of that hope, days and nights, in which the brain grew dizzy, and the heart heavy and clogged with the intensity of my pursuits. Were the dungeon and the scaffold my reward, Heaven knows that I would not flinch eye nor hand, or abate a jot of heart and hope in the thankless prosecution of my toils. Know me, then, as one of fortunes more desperate than your own; of an ambition more unquenchable; of a philanthropy no less ardent; and I *will* add, of a courage no less firm: and behold the utter hopelessness of your projects with others, when to me they only appear the visions of an enthusiast."

Wolfe sunk down in the chair.

"Is it even so?" said he, slowly and musingly. "Are my hopes but delusions? Has my life been but one idle, though convulsive dream?—is the goddess of our religion banished from this great and populous earth, to the seared and barren hearts of a few solitary worshippers, whom all else despise as madmen or persecute as idolaters? And if so, shall we adore her the less? No! though we perish in her cause, it is around her altar that our corpses shall be found!"

"My friend," said Glendower kindly, for he was touched by the sincerity, though opposed to the opinions, of the republican, "the night is yet early: we will sit down to discuss our several doctrines calmly, and in the spirit of truth and investigation."

"Away!" cried Wolfe, rising and slouching his hat over his bent and lowering brows; "away! I will not listen to you—I dread your reasonings—I would not have a particle of my faith

shaken. If I err, I have erred from my birth: erred with Brutus and Tell, Hampden and Milton, and all whom the thousand tribes and parties of earth consecrate with their common gratitude and eternal reverence. In that error I will die! If our party can struggle not with hosts, there may yet arise some minister with the ambition of Cæsar, if not his genius—of whom a single dagger can rid the earth!”

“And if not?” said Glendower.

“I have the same dagger for myself,” replied Wolfe, as he closed the door.

CHAPTER XLI.

“Bolingbroke has said that ‘Man is his own sharper and his own bubble’; and certainly he who is acutest in duping others is ever the most ingenious in outwitting himself. The criminal is always a sophist; and finds in his own reason a special pleader to twist laws human and divine into a sanction of his crime. The rogue is so much in the habit of cheating, that he packs the cards even when playing at Patience with himself.”—STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

THE only two acquaintances in this populous city whom Glendower possessed, who were aware that in a former time he had known a better fortune, were Wolfe, and a person of far higher worldly estimation, of the name of Crauford. With the former the student had become acquainted by the favor of chance, which had for a short time made them lodgers in the same house. Of the particulars of Glendower’s earliest history, Wolfe was utterly ignorant; but the addresses upon some old letters, which he had accidentally seen, had informed him that Glendower had formerly borne another name; and it was easy to glean from the student’s conversation that something of greater distinction and prosperity than he now enjoyed was coupled with the appellation he had renounced. Proud, melancholy, austere—brooding upon thoughts whose very loftiness received somewhat of additional grandeur from the gloom which encircled it—Glendower found, in the ruined hopes and the solitary lot of the republican, that congeniality which neither Wolfe’s habits, nor the excess of his political fervor, might have afforded to a nature which philosophy had rendered moderate and early circumstances refined. Crauford was far better acquainted than Wolfe with the reverses Glendower had undergone. Many years ago, he had known, and indeed travelled with, him upon the continent; since then, they had not met until about six months prior to the time in which

Glendower is presented to the reader. It was in an obscure street of the city, that Crauford had then encountered Glendower, whose haunts were so little frequented by the higher orders of society that Crauford was the first, and the only one, of his former acquaintance with whom for years he had been brought into contact. That person recognized him at once, accosted him, followed him home, and three days afterwards surprised him with a visit. Of manners which, in their dissimulation, extended far beyond the ordinary ease and breeding of the world, Crauford readily appeared not to notice the altered circumstances of his old acquaintance; and, by a tone of conversation artfully respectful, he endeavored to remove from Glendower's mind that soreness which his knowledge of human nature told him that his visit was calculated to create.

There is a certain species of pride which contradicts the ordinary symptoms of the feeling, and appears most elevated when it would be reasonable to expect it should be most depressed. Of this sort was Glendower's. When he received the guest who had known him in his former prosperity, some natural sentiment of emotion called, it is true, to his pale cheek a momentary flush, as he looked round his humble apartment, and the evident signs of poverty it contained; but his address was calm and self-possessed, and whatever mortification he might have felt, no intonation of his voice, no tell-tale embarrassment of manner, revealed it. Encouraged by this air, even while he was secretly vexed by it, and perfectly unable to do justice to the dignity of mind which gave something of majesty, rather than humiliation, to misfortune, Crauford resolved to repeat his visit, and by intervals, gradually lessening, renewed it, till acquaintance seemed, though little tintured, at least on Glendower's side, by *friendship*, to assume the semblance of *intimacy*. It was true, however, that he had something to struggle against in Glendower's manner, which certainly grew colder in proportion to the repetition of the visits; and, at length, Glendower said, with an ease and quiet which abashed, for a moment, an effrontery both of mind and manner, which was almost parallel, "Believe me, Mr. Crauford, I feel fully sensible of your attentions; but as circumstances at present are such as to render an intercourse between us little congenial to the habits and sentiments of either, you will probably understand and forgive my motives in wishing no longer to receive civilities which, however I may feel them, I am unable to return."

Crauford colored, and hesitated, before he replied: "Forgive

me then," said he, "for my fault. I did venture to hope that no circumstances would break off an acquaintance to me so valuable. Forgive me if I did imagine that an intercourse between mind and mind could be equally carried on, whether the mere body were lodged in a palace or a hovel"; and then suddenly changing his tone into that of affectionate warmth, Crauford continued: "My dear Glendower, my dear friend, I would say, if I durst, is not your pride rather to blame here? Believe me, in my turn, I fully comprehend and bow to it; but it wounds me beyond expression. Were you in your proper station, a station much higher than my own, I would come to you at once, and proffer my friendship—as it is, I cannot; but your pride wrongs me, Glendower—indeed it does."

And Crauford turned away, apparently in the bitterness of wounded feeling.

Glendower was touched: and his nature, as kind as it was proud, immediately smote him for conduct certainly ungracious, and perhaps ungrateful. He held out his hand to Crauford; with the most respectful warmth, that personage seized and pressed it: and from that time Crauford's visits appeared to receive a license which, if not perfectly welcome, was at least never again questioned:

"I shall have this man now," muttered Crauford, between his ground teeth, as he left the house, and took his way to his counting-house. There, cool, bland, fawning, and weaving in his close and dark mind various speculations of guilt and craft, he sat among his bills and gold, like the very gnome and personification of that Mammon of gain to which he was the most supple, though concealed, adherent.

Richard Crauford was of a new but not unimportant family. His father had entered into commerce, and left a flourishing firm, and a name of great respectability in his profession, to his son. That son was a man whom many and opposite qualities rendered a character of very singular and uncommon stamp. Fond of the laborious acquisition of money, he was equally attached to the ostentatious pageantries of expense. Profoundly skilled in the calculating business of his profession, he was devoted equally to the luxuries of pleasure; but the pleasure was suited well to the mind which pursued it. The divine intoxication of that love where the delicacies and purities of affection consecrate the humanity of passion, was to him a thing of which not even his youngest imagination had ever dreamed. The social concomitants of the wine cup—(which have for the lenient an excuse, for the austere a temptation)—the generous

expanding of the heart—the increased yearning to kindly affection—the lavish spirit throwing off its exuberance in the thousand lights and emanations of wit—these, which have rendered the molten grape, despite of its excesses, not unworthy of the praise of immortal hymns, and taken harshness from the judgment of those averse to its enjoyment—these never presented an inducement to the stony temperament and dormant heart of Richard Crauford.

He looked upon the essences of things internal as the common eye upon outward nature, and loved the many shapes of evil as the latter does the varieties of earth, not for their graces, but their utility. His loves, coarse and low, fed their rank fires from an unmingled and gross depravity. His devotion to wine was either solitary and unseen—for he loved safety better than mirth—or in company with those whose station flattered his vanity, not whose fellowship ripened his crude and nipped affections. Even the recklessness of vice in him had the character of prudence; and, in the most rapid and turbulent stream of his excesses, one might detect the rocky and unmoved heart of the calculator at the bottom.

Cool, sagacious, profound in dissimulation, and not only observant of, but deducing sage consequences from, those human inconsistencies and frailties by which it was his aim to profit, he cloaked his deeper vices with a masterly hypocrisy—and for those too dear to forego and too difficult to conceal, he obtained pardon by the intercession of virtues it cost him nothing to assume. Regular in his attendance at worship—professing rigidity of faith, beyond the tenets of the orthodox church—subscribing to the public charities, where the common eye knoweth what the private hand giveth—methodically constant to the forms of business—primitively scrupulous in the proprieties of speech—hospitable, at least to his superiors—and, being naturally smooth, both of temper and address, popular with his inferiors—it was no marvel that one part of the world forgave, to a man rich and young, the irregularities of dissipation—that another forgot real immorality in favor of affected religion—or that the remainder allowed the most unexceptionable excellence of words to atone for the unobtrusive errors of a conduct which did not prejudice *them*.

“It is true,” said his friends, “that he loves women too much; but he is young—he will marry and amend.”

Mr. Crauford did *marry*—and, strange as it may seem, for love—at least for that brute-like love of which alone he was capable. After a few years of ill-usage on his side, and endurance of his

wife's, they parted. Tired of her person, and profiting by her gentleness of temper, he sent her to an obscure corner of the country, to starve upon the miserable pittance which was all he allowed her from his superfluities. Even then—such is the effect of the showy proprieties of form and word—Mr. Crauford sank not in the estimation of the world.

“It was easy to see,” said the spectators of his domestic drama, “that a man in temper so mild—in his business so honorable—so civil of speech—so attentive to the stocks and the sermon—could not have been the party to blame. One never knew the rights of matrimonial disagreements, nor could sufficiently estimate the provoking disparities of temper. Certainly Mrs. Crauford never did look in good humor, and had not the open countenance of her husband ; and certainly the very excesses of Mr. Crauford betokened a generous warmth of heart, which the sullenness of his conjugal partner might easily chill and revolt.”

And thus, unquestioned and unblamed, Mr. Crauford walked onward in his beaten way ; and secretly laughing at the toleration of the crowd, continued, at his luxurious villa, the orgies of a passionless, yet brutal, sensuality.

So far might the character of Richard Crauford find parallels in hypocrisy and its success. Dive we now deeper into his soul. Possessed of talents which, though of a secondary rank, were in that rank consummate, Mr. Crauford could not be a villain by intuition, or the irregular bias of his nature ; he was a villain upon a grander scale : he was a villain upon system. Having little learning and less knowledge, out of his profession, his reflection expended itself upon apparently obvious deductions from the great and mysterious book of life. He saw vice prosperous in externals, and from this sight his conclusion was drawn. “Vice,” said he, “is not an obstacle to success ; and if so, it is at least a pleasanter road to it than your narrow and thorny ways of virtue.” But there are certain vices which require the mask of virtue, and Crauford thought it easier to wear the mask than to school his soul to the reality. So to the villain he added the hypocrite. He found the success equalled his hopes, for he had both craft and genius ; nor was he, naturally, without the minor amiabilities which, to the ignorance of the herd, seem more valuable than coin of a more important amount. Blinded as we are by prejudice, we not only *mistake* but *prefer* decencies to moralities ; and, like the inhabitants of Cos, when offered the choice of two statues of the same goddess, we choose, not that which is the most beautiful, but that which is the most dressed.

Accustomed easily to dupe mankind, Crauford soon grew to despise them ; and from justifying roguery by his own interest, he now justified it by the folly of others ; and as no wretch is so unredeemed as to be without excuse to himself, Crauford actually persuaded his reason that he was vicious upon principle, and a rascal on a system of morality. But why the desire of this man, so consummately worldly and heartless, for an intimacy with the impoverished and powerless student? This question is easily answered. In the first place, during Crauford's acquaintance with Glendower abroad, the latter had often, though innocently, galled the vanity and self-pride of the *parvenu* affecting the aristocrat, and in poverty the *parvenu* was anxious to retaliate. But this desire would probably have passed away after he had satisfied his curiosity, or gloated his spite, by one or two insights into Glendower's home—for Crauford, though at times a malicious, was not a vindictive, man—had it not been for a much more powerful object which afterwards occurred to him. In an extensive scheme of fraud, which for many years this man had carried on, and which for secrecy and boldness was almost unequalled, it had of late become necessary to his safety to have a partner, or rather tool. A man of education, talent, and courage was indispensable, and Crauford had resolved that Glendower should be that man. With the supreme confidence in his own powers which long success had given him—with a sovereign contempt for, or rather disbelief in, human integrity—and with a thorough conviction that the bribe to him was the bribe with all, and that none could on any account be poor if they had the offer to be rich, Crauford did not bestow a moment's consideration upon the difficulty of his task, or conceive that in the nature and mind of Glendower there could exist any obstacle to his design.

Men addicted to calculation are accustomed to suppose those employed in the same mental pursuit arrive, or ought to arrive, at the same final conclusion. Now looking upon Glendower as a philosopher, Crauford looked upon him as a man who, however he might conceal his real opinions, secretly laughed, like Crauford's self, not only at the established customs, but at the established moralities of the world. Ill-acquainted with books, the worthy Richard was, like all men similarly situated, somewhat infected by the very prejudices he affected to despise ; and he shared the vulgar disposition to doubt the hearts of those who cultivate the head. Glendower himself had confirmed this opinion by lauding, though he did not entirely sub-

scribe to, those moralists who have made an enlightened self-interest the proper measure of all human conduct; and Crauford, utterly unable to comprehend this system in its grand, naturally interpreted it in a partial, sense. Espousing self-interest as his own code, he deemed that in reality Glendower's principles did not differ greatly from his; and as there is no pleasure to a hypocrite like that of finding a fit opportunity to unburden some of his real sentiments, Crauford was occasionally wont to hold some conference and argument with the student, in which his opinions were not utterly cloaked in their usual disguise; but cautious even in his candor, he always forbore stating such opinions as his own: he merely mentioned them as those which a man, beholding the villainies and follies of his kind, might be tempted to form; and thus Glendower, though not greatly esteeming his acquaintance, looked upon him as one ignorant in his opinions but not likely to err in his conduct.

These conversations did, however, it is true, increase Crauford's estimate of Glendower's integrity, but they by no means diminished his confidence of subduing it. Honor, a deep and pure sense of the divinity of good, the steady desire of rectitude, and the supporting aid of a sincere religion—these he did not deny to his intended tool; he rather rejoiced that he possessed them. With the profound arrogance, the sense of immeasurable superiority which men of no principle invariably feel for those who have it, Crauford said to himself: "Those very virtues will be my best dupes—they cannot resist the temptations I shall offer, but they can resist any offer to betray me afterwards, for no man can resist hunger; but your fine feelings, your nice honor, your precise religion—he! he! he!—these can teach a man very well to resist a common inducement: they cannot make him submit to be his own executioner; but they can prevent his turning king's evidence, and being executioner to another. No, no—it is not to your common rogue that I may dare trust my secret—*my* secret, which is my life! It is precisely of such a fine, Athenian, moral rogue as I shall make my proud friend, that I am in want. But he has some silly scruples; we must beat them away—we must not be too rash; and above all, we must leave the best argument to poverty. Want is your finest orator; a starving wife—a famished brat—he! he!—these are your true tempters—your true fathers of crime, and fillers of gaols and gibbets. Let me see; he has no money I know, but what he gets from that bookseller. What bookseller, by-the-by? Ah, rare thought!

"I'll find out, and cut off that supply. My lady wife's check will look somewhat thinner next month, I fancy—he! he! But 'tis a pity, for she is a glorious creature! Who knows but I may serve two purposes? However, one at present! business first, and pleasure afterwards—and faith, the business is damnably like that of life and death."

Muttering such thoughts as these, Crauford took his way one evening to Glendower's house.

CHAPTER XLII.

"*Iago—Virtue ; a fig!—'tis in ourselves that we are thus and thus.*"—
OTHELLO.

"So—so, my little one, don't let me disturb you. Madam, dare I venture to hope your acceptance of this fruit? I chose it myself, and I am somewhat of a judge. Oh! Glendower, here is the pamphlet you wished to see."

With this salutation, Crauford drew his chair to the table by which Glendower sate, and entered into conversation with his purposed victim. A comely and a pleasing countenance had Richard Crauford! the lonely light of the room fell upon a face which, though forty years of guile had gone over it, was as fair and unwrinkled as a boy's. Small, well-cut features—a blooming complexion—eyes of lightest blue—a forehead high, though narrow, and a mouth from which the smile was never absent: these, joined to a manner at once soft and confident, and an elegant, though unaffected, study of dress, gave to Crauford a personal appearance well suited to aid the effect of his hypocritical and dissembling mind.

"Well, my friend," said he, "always at your books—eh! Ah! it is a happy taste; would that I had cultivated it more; but we who are condemned to business have little leisure to follow our own inclinations. It is only on Sundays that I have time to read; and then (to say truth, I am an old-fashioned man, whom the gayer part of the world laughs at), and then I am too occupied with the Book of Books to think of any less important study."

Not deeming that a peculiar reply was required to this pious speech, Glendower did not take that advantage of Crauford's pause which it was evidently intended that he should. With a glance towards the student's wife, our mercantile friend continued; "I did once—once, in my young dreams, intend—"

that whenever I married I would relinquish a profession for which, after all, I am but little calculated. I pictured to myself a country retreat, well stored with books; and having concentrated in one home all the attractions which could have tempted my thoughts abroad, I had designed to surrender myself solely to those studies which, I lament to say, were but ill attended to in my earlier education. But—but,"—(here Mr. Crauford sighed deeply, and averted his face)—"fate willed it otherwise!"

Whatever reply of sympathetic admiration or condolence Glendower might have made, was interrupted by one of those sudden and overpowering attacks of faintness which had of late seized the delicate and declining health of his wife. He rose, and leant over her with a fondness and alarm which curled the lip of his visitor.

"Thus it is," said Crauford to himself, "with weak minds under the influence of habit. The love of lust becomes the love of custom, and the last is as strong as the first."

When she had recovered, she rose, and (with her child) retired to rest, the only restorative she ever found effectual for her complaint. Glendower went with her, and, after having seen her eyes, which swam with tears of gratitude at his love, close in the seeming slumber she affected in order to release him from his watch, he returned to Crauford. He found that gentleman leaning against the chimney-piece with folded arms, and apparently immersed in thought. A very good opportunity had Glendower's absence afforded to a man whose boast it was never to lose one. Looking over the papers on the table, he had seen and possessed himself of the address of the bookseller the student dealt with. "So much for business—now for philanthropy," said Mr. Crauford, in his favorite antithetical phrase, throwing himself in his attitude against the chimney-piece.

As Glendower entered, Crauford started from his reverie, and with a melancholy air and pensive voice, said:

"Alas, my friend, when I look upon this humble apartment, the weak health of your unequalled wife—your obscurity—your misfortunes; when I look upon these, and contrast them with your mind, your talents, all that you were born and fitted for, I cannot but feel tempted to believe with those who imagine the pursuit of virtue a chimera, and who justify their own worldly policy by the example of all their kind."

"Virtue," said Glendower, "would indeed be a chimera, did it require support from those whom you have cited."

"True—most true," answered Crauford, somewhat disconcerted in reality, though not in appearance; "and yet, strange as it may seem, I have known some of those persons very good, admirably good men. They were extremely moral and religious; they only played the great game for worldly advantages upon the same terms as the other players; nay, they never made a move in it without most fervently and sincerely praying for divine assistance."

"I readily believe you," said Glendower, who always, if possible, avoided a controversy—"the easiest person to deceive is one's own self."

"Admirably said," answered Crauford, who thought it, nevertheless, one of the most foolish observations he had ever heard: "admirably said!—and yet my heart does grieve bitterly for the trials and distresses it surveys. One must make excuses for poor human frailty; and one is often placed in such circumstances as to render it scarcely possible, without the grace of God"—(here Crauford lifted up his eyes)—"not to be urged, as it were, into the reasonings and actions of the world."

Not exactly comprehending this observation, and not very closely attending to it, Glendower merely bowed, as in assent, and Crauford continued:

"I remember a remarkable instance of this truth. One of my partner's clerks had, through misfortune or imprudence, fallen into the greatest distress. His wife, his children—(he had a numerous family)—were on the literal and absolute verge of starvation. Another clerk, taking advantage of these circumstances, communicated to the distressed man a plan for defrauding his employer. The poor fellow yielded to the temptation, and was at last discovered. I spoke to him myself, for I was interested in his fate, and had always esteemed him.—'What,' said I, 'was your motive for this fraud?' 'My duty!' answered the man fervently; 'My duty! Was I to suffer my wife, my children to starve before my face, when I could save them at a little personal risk? No—my duty forbade it!'—and in truth, Glendower, there was something very plausible in this manner of putting the question."

"You might, in answering it," said Glendower, "have put the point in a manner equally plausible, and more true; was he to commit a great crime against the millions connected by social order, for the sake of serving a single family—and that his own."

"Quite right," answered Crauford; "that was just the point

of view in which I did put it ; but the man, who was something of a reasoner, replied, 'Public law is instituted for public happiness. Now if *mine* and my children's happiness is infinitely and immeasurably more served by this comparatively petty fraud than my employer's is advanced by my abstaining from, or injured by my committing, it, why, the origin of law itself allows me to do it.' What say you to that, Glendower? It is something in your Utilitarian, or, as you term it, Epicurean* principle ; is it not?" and Crauford, shading his eyes, as if from the light, watched narrowly Glendower's countenance, while he concealed his own.

"Poor fool!" said Glendower ; "the man was ignorant of the first lesson in his moral primer. Did he not know that no rule is to be applied to a peculiar instance, but extended to its most general bearings? Is it necessary even to observe that the particular consequence of fraud in this man might, it is true, be but the ridding his employer of superfluities, scarcely missed, for the relief of most urgent want in two or three individuals ; but the general consequences of fraud and treachery would be the disorganization of all society? Do not think, therefore, that this man was a disciple of my, or of any, system of morality."

"It is very just, very," said Mr. Crauford, with a benevolent sigh ; "but you will own that want seldom allows great nicety in moral distinctions, and that, when those whom you love most in the world are starving, you may be pitied, if not forgiven, for losing sight of the after laws of nature, and recurring to her first ordinance, self-preservation."

"We should be harsh, indeed," answered Glendower, "if we did not pity ; or, even while the law condemned, if the individual did not forgive."

"So I said, so I said," cried Crauford ; "and in interceding for the poor fellow, whose pardon I am happy to say I procured, I could not help declaring that, if I were placed in the same circumstances, I am not sure that my crime would not have been the same."

"No man *could* feel sure!" said Glendower dejectedly.

Delighted and surprised at this confession, Crauford continued : "I believe—I fear not ; thank God, *our* virtue can never be so tried : but even you, Glendower, even *you*, philosopher, moralist as you are—just, good, wise, religious—even

* See the article on Mr. Moore's Epicurean in the "Westminster Review." Though the strictures on that work are harsh and unjust, yet the part relating to the real philosophy of Epicurus is one of the most masterly things in criticism.

you might be tempted, if you saw your 'angel wife dying for want of the aid, the very sustenance, necessary to existence, and your innocent and beautiful daughter stretch her little hands to you, and cry in the accents of famine for bread."

The student made no reply for a few moments, but averted his countenance, and then in a slow tone said, "Let us drop this subject; none know their strength until they are tried; self-confidence should accompany virtue, but not precede it."

A momentary flash broke from the usually calm, cold eye of Richard Crauford. "He is mine," thought he; "the very name of want abases his pride; what will the reality do? O human nature, how I know and mock thee!"

"You are right," said Crauford, aloud; "let us talk of the pamphlet."

And after a short conversation upon indifferent subjects, the visitor departed.

Early the next morning was Mr. Crauford seen on foot, taking his way to the bookseller, whose address he had learnt. The bookseller was known as a man of a strongly evangelical bias. "We must insinuate a lie or two," said Crauford inly, "about Glendower's principles. He! he! it will be a fine stroke of genius to make the upright tradesman suffer Glendower to starve, out of a principle of religion. But who would have thought my prey had been so easily snared?—why, if I had proposed the matter last night, I verily think he would have agreed to it."

Amusing himself with these thoughts, Crauford arrived at the bookseller's. There he found Fate had saved him from one crime at least. The whole house was in confusion—the bookseller had that morning died of an apoplectic fit.

"Good God! how shocking!" said Crauford to the foreman; "but he was a most worthy man, and Providence could no longer spare him. The ways of Heaven are inscrutable! Oblige me with three copies of that precious tract termed the 'Divine Call.' I should like to be allowed to attend the funeral of so excellent a man. Good-morning, sir. Alas! alas!" and shaking his head piteously, Mr. Crauford left the shop.

"Hurra!" said he, almost audibly, when he was once more in the street, "hurra! my victim is made, my game is won—death or the devil fights for me. But, hold—there are other booksellers in this monstrous city!—ay, but not above two or three in our philosopher's way. I must forestall him there—so, so—that is soon settled. Now, then, I must leave him a

little while undisturbed, to his fate. Perhaps my next visit may be to him in jail; your debtor's side of the Fleet is almost as good a pleader as an empty stomach—he! he! he!—but the stroke must be made soon, for time presses, and this d—d business spreads so fast that if I don't have a speedy help; it will be too much for my hands, griping as they are. However, if it holds on a year longer, I will change my seat in the lower House for one in the upper; twenty thousand pounds to the minister may make a merchant a very pretty peer. O brave Richard Crauford, wise Richard Crauford, fortunate Richard Crauford, *noble* Richard Crauford! Why, if thou art ever hanged, it will be by a jury of *peers*. Gad, the rope would then have a dignity in it, instead of disgrace. But stay, here comes the Dean of —; not orthodox, it is said—rigid Calvinist!—out with the 'Divine Call!'

When Mr. Richard Crauford repaired next to Glendower, what was his astonishment and dismay at hearing he had left his home, none knew whither, nor could give the inquirer the slightest clue.

"How long has he left?" said Crauford to the landlady.

"Five days, sir."

"And will he not return to settle any little debts he may have incurred?" said Crauford.

"Oh, no, sir—he paid them all before he went. Poor gentleman—for though he was poor, he was the finest and most thorough gentleman I ever saw!—my heart bled for him. They parted with all their valuables to discharge their debts: the books, and instruments, and busts—all went; and what I saw, though he spoke so indifferently about it, hurt him the most—he sold even the lady's picture. 'Mrs. Croftson,' said he, 'Mr. —, the painter, will send for that picture the day after I leave you. See that he has it, and that the greatest care is taken of it in delivery.'

"And you cannot even guess where he has gone to?"

"No, sir; a single porter was sufficient to convey his remaining goods, and he took him from some distant part of the town."

"Ten thousand devils!" muttered Crauford, as he turned away, "I should have foreseen this! He is lost now. Of course he will again change his name; and in the d—d holes and corners of this gigantic puzzle of houses, how shall I ever find him out?—and time presses too? Well, well, well! there is a fine prize for being cleverer, or, as fools would say, more rascally than others; but there is a world of trouble in winning

it. But come—I will go home, lock myself up, and get drunk! I am as melancholy as a cat in love, and about as stupid: and, faith, one must get spirits in order to hit on a new invention. But if there be consistency in fortune, or success in perseverance, or wit in Richard Crauford, that man shall yet be my victim—and preserver!”

CHAPTER XLIII.

“Revenge is now the cud
That I do chew.—I’ll challenge him.”

—BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

WE return to “the world of fashion,” as the admirers of the polite novel of —— would say. The noon-day sun broke hot and sultry through half-closed curtains of roseate silk, playing in broken beams upon rare and fragrant exotics, which cast the perfumes of southern summers over a chamber, moderate, indeed, as to its dimensions, but decorated with a splendor rather gaudy than graceful, and indicating much more a passion for luxury than a refinement of taste.

At a small writing-table sat the beautiful La Meronville. She had just finished a note, written (how Jean Jacques would have been enchanted!) upon paper *couleur de rose*, with a mother-of-pearl pen, formed as one of Cupid’s darts, dipped into an inkstand of the same material, which was shaped as a quiver, and placed at the back of a little Love, exquisitely wrought. She was folding this billet when a page, fantastically dressed, entered, and, announcing Lord Borodaile, was immediately followed by that nobleman. Eagerly and almost blushing did La Meronville thrust the note into her bosom, and hasten to greet and to embrace her adorer. Lord Borodaile flung himself on one of the sofas with a listless and discontented air. The experienced Frenchwoman saw that there was a cloud on his brow:

“My dear friend,” said she, in her own tongue, “you seem vexed—has anything annoyed you?”

“No, Cecile, no. By-the-by, who supped with you last night?”

“Oh! the Duke of Haverfield—your friend.”

“My friend!” interrupted Borodaile haughtily—“he’s no friend of mine—a vulgar, talkative fellow—my friend, indeed!”

"Well, I beg your pardon: then there was Mademoiselle Caumartin, and the prince Pietro del Orbino, and Mr. Trevanion, and Mr. Lin—Lin—Linten, or Linden."

"And, pray, will you allow me to ask how you became acquainted with Mr. Lin—Lin—Linten, or Linden?"

"Assuredly—through the Duke of Haverfield."

"Humph—Cecile, my love, that young man is not fit to be the acquaintance of my friend—allow me to strike him from your list."

"Certainly, certainly!" said La Meronville hastily: and stooping as if to pick up a fallen glove, though, in reality, to hide her face from Lord Borodaile's searching eye, the letter she had written fell from her bosom. Lord Borodaile's glance detected the superscription, and before La Meronville could regain the note, he had possessed himself of it.

"A Monsieur, Monsieur Linden!" said he coldly, reading the address; "and, pray, how long have you corresponded with that gentleman?"

Now La Meronville's situation at that moment was by no means agreeable. She saw at one glance that no falsehood or artifice could avail her; for Lord Borodaile might deem himself fully justified in reading the note, which would contradict any glossing statement she might make. She saw this. She was a woman of independence—cared not a straw for Lord Borodaile at present, though she *had* had a caprice for him—knew that she might choose her *bon ami* out of all London, and replied:

"That is the first letter I ever wrote to him; but I own that it will not be the last."

Lord Borodaile turned pale.

"And will you suffer me to read it?" said he; for even in these cases he was punctiliously honorable.

La Meronville hesitated. She did not know him. "If I do not consent," thought she, "he will do it without the consent: better submit with a good grace."—"Certainly!" she answered, with an air of indifference.

Borodaile opened and read the note; it was as follows:

"You have inspired me with a feeling for you which astonishes myself. Ah, why should that love be the strongest which is the swiftest in its growth? I used to love Lord Borodaile—I now only esteem him—the love has flown to you. If I judge rightly from your words and your eyes, this avowal will not be unwelcome to you. Come and assure me, in person, of a persuasion so dear to my heart,

L. M."

"A very pretty effusion!" said Lord Borodaile sarcastically, and only showing his inward rage by the increasing paleness of his complexion, and a slight compression of his lip. "I thank you for your confidence in me. All I ask is, that you will not send this note till to-morrow. Allow me to take my leave of you first, and to find in Mr. Linden a successor rather than a rival."

"Your request, my friend," said La Meronville, adjusting her hair, "is but reasonable. I see that you understand these arrangements; and, for my part, I think that the end of love should always be the beginning of friendship—let it be so with us!"

"You do me too much honor," said Borodaile, bowing profoundly. "Meanwhile I depend upon your promise, and bid you, as a lover, farewell for ever."

With his usual slow step Lord Borodaile descended the stairs, and walked towards the central *quartier* of the town. His meditations were of no soothing nature. "To be seen by that man in a ridiculous and degrading situation—to be pestered with his d—d civility—to be rivalled by him with Lady Flora—to be duped and outdone by him with my mistress! Ay,—all this have I been; but vengeance shall come yet. As for La Meronville, the loss is a gain; and, thank Heaven, I did not betray myself by venting my passion and making a scene. But it was I who ought to have discarded her—not the reverse—and—death and confusion—for that upstart, above all men! And she talked in her letter about his eyes and words. Insolent coxcomb, to dare to have eyes and words for one who belonged to me. Well, well, he shall smart for this. But let me consider—I must not play the jealous fool—must not fight for a —; must not show the world that a man, nobody knows who, could really outwit and outdo *me*—me—Francis Borodaile!—No, no—I must throw the insult upon him—must myself be the aggressor, and the challenged; then, too, I shall have the choice of weapons—pistols of course. Where shall I hit him, by-the-by?—I wish I shot as well as I used to do at Naples. I was in full practice then.—Cursed place, where there was nothing else to do but to practice!"

Immersed in these, or somewhat similar reflections, did Lord Borodaile enter Pall Mall.

"Ah, Borodaile!" said Lord St. George, suddenly emerging from a shop. "This is really fortunate—you are going my way exactly—allow me to join you."

Now Lord Borodaile, to say nothing of his happening at that time to be in a mood more than usually unsocial, could never at

any time bear the thought of being made an instrument of convenience, pleasure, or good fortune to another. He therefore, with a little resentment at Lord St. George's familiarity, coldly replied, "I am sorry that I cannot avail myself of your offer. I am sure my way is *not* the same as yours."

"Then," replied Lord St. George, who was a good-natured, indolent man, who imagined everybody was as averse to walking alone as he was—"then I will make *mine* the same as yours."

Borodaile colored: though always uncivil, he did not like to be excelled in good manners; and therefore replied, that nothing but extreme business at White's could have induced him to prefer his own way to that of Lord St. George.

The good-natured peer took Lord Borodaile's arm. It was a natural incident, but it vexed the punctilious viscount, that any man should *take*, not *offer*, the support.

"So, they say," observed Lord St. George, "that young Linden is to marry Lady Flora Ardenne."

"*Les on-dits font la gazette des fous*," rejoined Borodaile with a sneer. "I believe that Lady Flora is little likely to contract such a *mésalliance*."

"*Mésalliance!*" replied Lord St. George. "I thought Linden was of a very old family, which you know the Westboroughs are not, and he has great expectations—"

"Which are never to be realized," interrupted Borodaile, laughing scornfully.

"Ah, indeed!" said Lord St. George seriously. "Well, at all events, he is a very agreeable, unaffected young man—and, by-the bye, Borodaile, you will meet him *chez-moi* to-day—you know you dine with me?"

"Meet Mr. Linden! I shall be proud to have that honor," said Borodaile, with sparkling eyes; "will Lady Westborough be also of the party?"

"No, poor Lady St. George is very ill, and I have taken the opportunity to ask only men."

"You have done wisely, my lord," said Borodaile, *secum multa revolvens*; "and I assure you I wanted no hint to remind me of your invitation."

Here the Duke of Haverfield joined them. The duke never bowed to any one of the male sex; he therefore *nodded* to Borodaile, who, with a very supercilious formality, took off his hat in returning the salutation. The viscount had at least this merit in his pride,—that if it was reserved to the humble, it was contemptuous to the high: his inferiors he wished to remain where they were; his equals he longed to lower.

"So I dine with you, Lord St. George, to-day," said the duke; "whom shall I meet?"

"Lord Borodaile, for one," answered St. George; "my brother, Aspeden, Findlater, Orbino and Linden."

"Linden!" cried the duke; "I'm very glad to hear it, *c'est un homme fait exprès pour moi*. He is very clever, and not above playing the fool; has humor without setting up for a wit, and is a good fellow without being a bad man. I like him excessively."

"Lord St. George," said Borodaile, who seemed that day to be the very martyr of the unconscious Clarence, "I wish you good morning. I have only just remembered an engagement which I *must* keep before I go to White's."

And, with a bow to the duke, and a remonstrance from Lord St. George, Borodaile effected his escape. His complexion was, insensibly to himself, more raised than usual, his step more stately; his mind, for the first time for years, was fully excited and engrossed. Ah, what a delightful thing it is for an idle man, who has been dying of *ennui*, to find an enemy.

CHAPTER XLIV.

"You must challenge him;
There's no avoiding—one or both must drop."

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

"HA ha, ha—bravo Linden!" cried Lord St. George, from the head of his splendid board, in approbation of some witticism of Clarence's; and ha, ha, ha! or he, he, he! according to the cachinnatory intonations of the guests, rung around.

"Your lordship seems unwell," said Lord Aspeden to Borodaile; "allow me to take wine with you."

Lord Borodaile bowed his assent.

"Pray," said Mr. St. George to Clarence, "have you seen my friend Talbot lately?"

"This very morning," replied Linden: "indeed, I generally visit him three or four times a week—he often asks after you."

"Indeed!" said Mr. St. George, rather flattered; "he does me much honor; but he is a distant connection of mine, and I suppose I must attribute his recollection of me to that cause. He is a near relation of yours, too, I think—is he not?"

"I *am* related to him," answered Clarence, coloring.

Lord Borodaile leant forward, and his lip curled. Though, in some respects, a very unamiable man, he had, as we have

said, his good points. He hated a lie as much as Achilles did ; and he believed in his heart of hearts that Clarence had just uttered one.

"Why," observed Lord Aspeden, "why, Lord Borodaile, the Talbots, of Scarsdale, are branches of *your* genealogical tree ; therefore your lordship must be related to Linden ; you are 'two cherries on one stalk !'"

"We are by no means related," said Lord Borodaile, with a distinct and clear voice, intended expressly for Clarence ; "that is an honor which I must beg leave most positively to disclaim."

There was a dead silence—the eyes of all who heard a remark so intentionally rude were turned immediately towards Clarence. His cheek burnt like fire ; he hesitated a moment, and then said, in the same key, though with a little trembling in his intonation—

"Lord Borodaile cannot be more anxious to disclaim it than I am."

"And yet," returned the viscount, stung to the soul, "they who advance false pretensions ought at least to support them !"

"I do not understand you, my lord," said Clarence.

"Possibly not," answered Borodaile, carelessly : "there is a maxim which says that people not accustomed to speak truth cannot comprehend it in others."

Unlike the generality of modern heroes, who are always in a passion—off-hand, dashing fellows, in whom irascibility is a virtue—Clarence was peculiarly sweet-tempered by nature, and had, by habit, acquired a command over all his passions to a degree very uncommon in so young a man. He made no reply to the inexcusable affront he had received. His lip quivered a little, and the flush of his countenance was succeeded by an extreme paleness—this was all : he did not even leave the room immediately, but waited till the silence was broken by some well-bred member of the party ; and then, pleading an early engagement as an excuse for his retiring so soon, he rose, and departed.

There was throughout the room an universal feeling of sympathy with the affront, and indignation against the offender ; for, to say nothing of Clarence's popularity, and the extreme dislike in which Lord Borodaile was held, there could be no doubt as to the wantonness of the outrage, or the moderation of the aggrieved party. Lord Borodaile already felt the punishment of his offence : his very pride, while it rendered him indifferent to the spirit, had hitherto kept him scrupulous as to the

formalities, of social politeness ; and he could not but see the grossness with which he had suffered himself to violate them, and the light in which his conduct was regarded. However, this internal discomfort only rendered him the more embittered against Clarence, and the more confirmed in his revenge. Resuming, by a strong effort, all the external indifference habitual to his manner, he attempted to enter into a conversation with those of the party who were next to him ; but his remarks produced answers brief and cold : even Lord Aspeden forgot his diplomacy and his smile ; Lord St. George replied to his observations by a monosyllable ; and the Duke of Haverfield, for the first time in his life, asserted the prerogative which his rank gave him of setting the example—his grace did not reply to Lord Borodaile at all. In truth, every one present was seriously displeased. All civilized societies have a paramount interest in repressing the rude. Nevertheless, Lord Borodaile bore the brunt of his unpopularity with a steadiness and unembarrassed composure worthy of a better cause ; and finding, at last, a companion disposed to be loquacious in the person of Sir Christopher Findlater (whose good heart, though its first impulse resented more violently than that of any heart present the discourtesy of the viscount, yet soon warmed to the *désagrémens* of his situation, and hastened to adopt its favorite maxim of forgive and forget), Lord Borodaile sat the meeting out ; and if he did not leave the latest, he was, at least, not the first to follow Clarence.—“ *L’orgueil ou donne le courage, ou il y supplée.*”*

Meanwhile Linden had returned to his solitary home. He hastened to his room—locked the door—flung himself on his sofa, and burst into a violent and almost feminine paroxysm of tears. This fit lasted for more than an hour ; and when Clarence at length stilled the indignant swellings of his heart, and rose from his supine position, he started, as his eye fell upon the opposite mirror, so haggard and exhausted seemed the forced and fearful calmness of his countenance. With a hurried step—with arms now folded on his bosom—now wildly tossed from him, and the hand so firmly clenched that the very bones seemed working through the skin—with a brow now fierce, now only dejected—and a complexion which one while burnt as with the crimson flush of a fever, and at another was wan and colorless, like his whose cheek a spectre has blanched—Clarence paced his apartment, the victim not only of shame—the bitterest of tortures to a young and high mind—but of other contending

* Pride either gives courage or supplies the place of it.

feelings, which alternately exasperated and palsied his wrath, and gave to his resolves at one moment an almost savage ferocity, and at the next an almost cowardly vacillation.

The clock had just struck the hour of twelve, when a knock at the door announced a visitor. Steps were heard on the stairs, and presently a tap at Clarence's room door. He unlocked it, and the Duke of Haverfield entered.

"I am charmed to find you at home," cried the duke, with his usual half kind, half careless address. "I was determined to call upon you, and be the first to offer my services in this unpleasant affair."

Clarence pressed the duke's hand, but made no answer.

"Nothing could be so unhandsome as Lord Borodaile's conduct," continued the duke. "I hope you both fence and shoot well. I shall never forgive you, if you do not put an end to that piece of rigidity."

Clarence continued to walk about the room in great agitation; the duke looked at him with some surprise. At last Linden paused by the window, and said, half unconsciously—"It must be so—I cannot avoid fighting!"

"Avoid fighting!" cried his grace, in undisguised astonishment. "No indeed—but that is the least part of the matter—you must kill as well as fight him."

"Kill *him!*" cried Clarence, wildly, "whom!" and then sinking into a chair, he covered his face with his hands for a few moments, and seemed to struggle with his emotions.

"Well," thought the duke, "I never was more mistaken in my life. I could have bet my black horse against Trevanion's Julia, which is certainly the most worthless thing I know, that Linden had been a brave fellow: but these English heroes always go into fits at a duel: one manages such things, as Sterne says, better in France."

Clarence now rose, calm and collected. He sat down—wrote a brief note to Borodaile, demanding the fullest apology, or the earliest meeting—put it into the duke's hands and said, with a faint smile, "My dear duke, dare I ask you to be second to a man who has been so grievously affronted, and whose genealogy has been so disputed?"

"My dear Linden," said the duke warmly, "I have always been grateful to my station in life for this advantage, the freedom with which it has enabled me to select my own acquaintance, and to follow my own pursuits. I am now more grateful to it than ever, because it has given me a better opportunity than I should otherwise have had of serving one whom I have

always esteemed. In entering into your quarrel; I shall at least show the world that there are some men, not inferior in pretensions to Lord Borodaile, who despise arrogance and resent overbearance even to others. Your cause I consider the common cause of society; but I shall take it up, if you will allow me, with the distinguishing zeal of a friend."

Clarence, who was much affected by the kindness of his speech, replied in a similar vein; and the duke, having read and approved the letter, rose. "There is, in my opinion," said he, "no time to be lost. I will go to Borodaile this very evening—adieu, *mon cher*: you shall kill the Argus, and then carry off the Io. I feel in a double passion with that ambulating poker, who is only malleable when he is red-hot, when I think how honorably scupulous you were with La Meronville last night, notwithstanding all her advances; but I go to bury Cæsar, not to scold him.—*Au revoir.*"

CHAPTER XLV.

Conon.—You're well met, Crates.

Crates.—If we part so, Conon.—*Queen of Corinth.*

It was as might be expected from the character of the aggressor. Lord Borodaile refused all apology, and agreed with avidity to a speedy rendezvous. He chose pistols (choice, then, was not merely nominal), and selected Mr. Percy Bobus for his second, a gentleman who was much fonder of acting in that capacity, than in the more honorable one of a principal. The author of "Lacon" says, "that if all seconds were as averse to duels as their principals, there would be very little blood spilt in that way"; and it was certainly astonishing to compare the zeal with which Mr. Bobus busied himself about this "affair," with that testified by him on another occasion, when he himself was more immediately concerned.

The morning came. Bobus breakfasted with his friend. "Damn it, Borodaile," said he, as the latter was receiving the ultimate polish of the hair-dresser, "I never saw you look better in my life. It will be a great pity if that fellow shoots you."

"Shoots *me!*" said Lord Borodaile, very quietly—"me—no!—that is *quite* out of the question; but joking apart, Bobus, I will not kill the young man. Where shall I hit him?"

"In the cap of the knee," said Mr. Percy, breaking an egg.

"Nay, that will lame him for life," said Lord Borodaile, putting on his cravat with peculiar exactitude.

"Serve him right," said Mr. Bobus. "Hang him, I never got up so early in my life—it is quite impossible to eat at this hour. Oh—*à propos*, Borodaile, have you left any little memoranda for me to execute?"

"Memoranda!—for what?" said Borodaile, who had now just finished his toilet.

"Oh!" rejoined Mr. Percy Bobus, "in case of accident, you know: the man may shoot well, though I never saw him in the gallery."

"Pray," said Lord Borodaile, in a great, though suppressed passion, "pray, Mr. Bobus, how often have I to tell you, that it is not by Mr. Linden that my days are to terminate: you are sure that Carabine saw to that trigger?"

"Certain," said Mr. Percy, with his mouth full, "certain—Bless me, here's the carriage, and breakfast not half done yet."

"Come, come," cried Borodaile, impatiently, "we must breakfast afterwards. Here, Roberts, see that we have fresh chocolate, and some more cutlets, when we return."

"I would rather have them now," sighed Mr. Bobus, foreseeing the possibility of the return being single—"Ibis! redibis?" etc.

"Come, we have not a moment to lose," exclaimed Borodaile, hastening down the stairs; and Mr. Percy Bobus followed, with a strange mixture of various regrets, partly for the breakfast that *was* lost, and partly for the friend that *might be*.

When they arrived at the ground, Clarence and the duke were already there: the latter, who was a dead shot, had fully persuaded himself that Clarence was equally adroit, and had, in his providence for Borodaile, brought a surgeon. This was a circumstance of which the viscount, in the plenitude of his confidence for himself and indifference for his opponent, had never once dreamt.

The ground was measured—the parties were about to take the ground. All Linden's former agitation was vanished—his mien was firm, grave, and determined, but he showed none of the careless and fierce hardihood which characterized his adversary; on the contrary, a close observer might have remarked something sad and dejected amidst all the tranquillity and steadiness of his brow and air.

"For Heaven's sake," whispered the duke, as he withdrew from the spot, "square your body a little more to your left,

and remember your exact level. Borodaile is much shorter than you."

There was a brief, dead pause—the signal was given—Borodaile fired—his ball pierced Clarence's side; the wounded man staggered one step, but fell not. He raised his pistol; the duke bent eagerly forward; an expression of disappointment and surprise passed his lips; Clarence had fired in the air. The next moment Linden felt a deadly sickness come over him—he fell into the arms of the surgeon. Borodaile, touched by a forbearance which he had so little right to expect, hastened to the spot. He leaned over his adversary in greater remorse and pity than he would have readily confessed to himself. Clarence unclosed his eyes; they dwelt for one moment upon the subdued and earnest countenance of Borodaile.

"Thank God," he said faintly, "that *you* were not the victim," and with those words he fell back insensible. They carried him to his lodgings. His wound was accurately examined. Though not mortal, it was of a dangerous nature; and the surgeons ended a very painful operation, by promising a very lingering recovery.

What a charming satisfaction for being insulted!

CHAPTER XLVI.

"Je me contente de ce qui peut s'écrire, et je rêve tout ce qui peut se rêver.*—DE SEVIGNE.

ABOUT a week after his wound, and the second morning of his return to sense and consciousness, when Clarence opened his eyes, they fell upon a female form seated watchfully and anxiously by his bedside. He raised himself in mute surprise, and the figure, startled by the motion, rose, drew the curtain, and vanished. With great difficulty he rang his bell. His valet, Harrison, on whose mind, though it was of no very exalted order, the kindness and suavity of his master had made a great impression, instantly appeared.

"Who was that lady?" asked Linden. "How came she here?"

Harrison smiled—"Oh, sir, pray please to lie down, and make yourself easy: the lady knows you very well, and *would* come here; she insists upon staying in the house, so we made up a bed in the drawing-room, and she has watched by you

* I content myself with writing what I am able, and I dream all I possibly can dream.

night and day. She speaks very little English to be sure, but your honor knows, begging your pardon, how well I speak French."

"French!" said Clarence faintly—"French? In Heaven's name, who is she?"

"A Madame—Madame—La Melonveal, or some such name, sir," said the valet.

Clarence fell back.—At that moment his hand was pressed. He turned and saw Talbot by his side. The kind old man had not suffered La Meronville to be Linden's only nurse—notwithstanding his age and peculiarity of habits, he had fixed his abode all the day in Clarence's house, and at night, instead of returning to his own home, had taken up his lodgings at the nearest hotel.

With a jealous and anxious eye to the real interest and respectability of his adopted son, Talbot had exerted all his address, and even all his power, to induce La Meronville, who had made her settlement previous to Talbot's, to quit the house, but in vain. With that obstinacy which a Frenchwoman, when she is sentimental, mistakes for nobility of heart, the *ci-devant amante* of Lord Borodaile insisted upon watching and tending one of whose sufferings, she said and believed, she was the unhappy, though innocent cause; and whenever more urgent means of removal were hinted at, La Meronville flew to the chamber of her beloved, apostrophized him in a strain worthy of one of D'Arlincourt's heroines, and, in short, was so unreasonably outrageous, that the doctors, trembling for the safety of their patient, obtained from Talbot a forced and reluctant acquiescence in the settlement she had obtained.

Ah! what a terrible creature a Frenchwoman is, when, instead of coquetting with a *caprice*, she insists upon conceiving a *grande passion*. Little, however, did Clarence, despite his vexation when he learnt of the *bienveillance* of La Meronville, foresee the whole extent of the consequences it would entail upon him; still less did Talbot, who in his seclusion knew not the celebrity of the handsome adventuress, calculate upon the notoriety of her motions, or the ill effect her ostentatious attachment would have upon Clarence's prosperity as a lover to Lady Flora. In order to explain these consequences more fully, let us, for the present, leave our hero to the care of the surgeon, his friends, and his would-be mistress; and while he is more rapidly recovering than the doctors either hoped or presaged, let us renew our acquaintance with a certain fair correspondent.

LETTER FROM THE LADY FLORA ARDENNE, TO MISS ELEANOR
TREVANION.

“MY DEAREST ELEANOR :

“I have been very ill, or you would sooner have received an answer to your kind—too kind and consoling letter. Indeed, I have only just left my bed: they say that I have been delirious, and I believe it; for you cannot conceive what terrible dreams I have had. But these are all over now, and every one is so kind to me—my poor mother above all! It is a pleasant thing to be ill when we have those who love us to watch our recovery.

“I have only been in bed a few days; yet it seems to me as if a long portion of my existence were past—as if I had stepped into a new era. You remember that my last letter attempted to express my feelings at mamma’s speech about Clarence, and at my seeing him so suddenly. Now, dearest, I cannot but look on that day, on these sensations, as on a distant dream. Every one is so kind to me, mamma caresses and soothes me so fondly, that I fancy I must have been under some illusion. I am sure they could not seriously have meant to forbid *his* addresses. No, no: I feel that all will yet be well—so well, that even you, who are of so contented a temper, will own, that if you were not Eleanor you would be Flora.

“I wonder whether Clarence knows that I have been ill. I wish you knew him.—Well, dearest, this letter—a very unhand-some return, I own, for yours—must content you at present, for they will not let me write more—though, so far as I am concerned, I am never so weak, in frame I mean, but what I could scribble to *you* about *him*. *Addio—carissima*. F. A.

“I have prevailed on mamma, who wished to sit by me and amuse me, to go to the Opera to-night, the only amusement of which she is particularly fond. Heaven forgive me for my insincerity, but *he* always comes into our box, and I long to hear some news of him.”

LETTER II.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

“ELEANOR, dearest Eleanor, I am again very ill, but not as I was before, ill from a foolish vexation of mind: no, I am now calm, and even happy. It was from an increase of cold only that I have suffered a relapse. You may believe this, I assure you, in spite of your well-meant but bitter jests upon my infatuation, as you very rightly call it, for Mr. Linden. You

ask me what news from the Opera? Silly girl that I was, to lie awake hour after hour, and refuse even to take my draught, lest I should be surprised into sleep, till mamma returned. I sent Jermyn down directly I heard her knock at the door (oh, how anxiously I had listened for it!), to say that I was still awake and longed to see her. So, of course, mamma came up, and felt my pulse, and said it was very feverish, and wondered the draught had not composed me—with a great deal more to the same purpose, which I bore as patiently as I could till it was my turn to talk; and then I admired her dress and her *coiffure*, and asked if it was a full house, and whether the *prima donna* was in voice, etc., etc.: till, at last, I won my way to the inquiry of who were her visitors. 'Lord Borodaile,' said she, 'and the Duke of —, and Mr. St. George, and Captain Leslie, and Mr. De Retz, and many others.' I felt so disappointed, Eleanor, but did not dare ask whether he was not of the list; till at last, my mother, observing me narrowly, said—'And, by-the-by, Mr. Linden looked in for a few minutes. I am glad, my dearest Flora, that I spoke to you so decidedly about him the other day.' 'Why, mamma?' said I, hiding my face under the clothes. 'Because,' said she, in rather a raised voice, 'he is quite unworthy of you!—but it is late now, and you should go to sleep—to-morrow I will tell you more.' I would have given worlds to press the question then, but could not venture. Mamma kissed and left me. I tried to twist her words into a hundred meanings, but in each I only thought that they were dictated by some worldly information—some new doubts as to his birth or fortune; and, though that supposition distressed me greatly, yet it could not alter my love, or deprive me of hope; and so I cried, and guessed, and guessed, and cried, till at last I cried myself to sleep.

"When I awoke, mamma was already up, and sitting beside me: she talked to me for more than an hour upon ordinary subjects, till, at last, perceiving how absent or rather impatient I appeared, she dismissed Jermyn, and spoke to me thus:

"You know, Flora, that I have always loved you, more perhaps than I ought to have done, more certainly than I have loved your brothers and sisters; but you were my eldest child, my first-born, and all the earliest associations of a mother are blent and entwined with you. You may be sure, therefore, that I have ever had only your happiness in view, and that it is only with a regard to that end that I now speak to you.'

"I was a little frightened, Eleanor, by this opening, but I was much more touched, so I took mamma's hand and kissed, and

wept silently over it ; she continued : ‘ I observed Mr. Linden’s attention to you, at — ; I knew nothing more of his rank and birth then, than I do at present : but his situation in the embassy, and his personal appearance, naturally induced me to suppose him a gentleman of family, and, therefore, if not a great, at least not an inferior match for you, so far as worldly distinctions are concerned. Added to this, he was uncommonly handsome, and had that general reputation for talent which is often better than actual wealth or hereditary titles. I therefore did not check, though I would not encourage, any attachment you might form for him ; and nothing being declared or decisive on either side when we left — , I imagined that if your flirtation with him did even amount to a momentary and girlish phantasy, absence and change of scene would easily and rapidly efface the impression. I believe that in a great measure it *was* effaced, when Lord Aspeden returned to England, and with him Mr. Linden. You again met the latter in society almost as constantly as before ; a caprice nearly conquered was once more renewed ; and in my anxiety that you should marry, not for aggrandizement, but happiness, I own to my sorrow that I rather favored than forbade his addresses. The young man—remember Flora—appeared in society as the nephew and heir of a gentleman of ancient family and considerable property ; he was rising in diplomacy, popular in the world, and, so far as we could see, of irreproachable character ; this must plead my excuse for tolerating his visits, without instituting further inquiries respecting him, and allowing your attachment to proceed without ascertaining how far it had yet extended. I was awakened to a sense of my indiscretion, by an inquiry, which Mr. Linden’s popularity rendered general,—viz : if Mr. Talbot was his uncle—who was his father—who his more immediate relations ? and at that time Lord Borodaile informed us of the falsehood he had either asserted or allowed to be spread, in claiming Mr. Talbot as his relation. This you will observe entirely altered the situation of Mr. Linden with respect to you. Not only his rank in life became uncertain, but suspicious. Nor was this all : his very personal respectability was no longer unimpeachable. Was this dubious and intrusive person, without a name, and with a sullied honor, to be your suitor ? No, Flora ; and it was from this indignant conviction that I spoke to you some days since. Forgive me, my child, if I was less cautious, less confidential than I am now. I did not imagine the wound was so deep, and thought that I should best cure you by seeming unconscious of your danger. The case is now changed ; your

illness has convinced me of my fault, and the extent of your unhappy attachment; but will my own dear child pardon me if I still continue, if I even confirm, my disapproval of her choice? Last night at the Opera Mr. Linden entered my box. I own that I was cooler to him than usual. He soon left us, and after the Opera I saw him with the Duke of Haverfield, one of the most incorrigible *roués* of the day, leading out a woman of notoriously bad character, and of the most ostentatious profligacy. He might have had some propriety, some decency, some concealment at least, but he passed just before me—before the mother of the woman to whom his vows of honorable attachment were due, and who at that very instant was suffering from her infatuation for him. Now Flora, for this man, an obscure and possibly a plebeian adventurer—whose only claim to notice has been founded on falsehood—whose only merit, a love of you, has been, if not utterly destroyed, at least polluted and debased—for this man, poor alike in fortune, character, and honor, can you any longer profess affection or esteem!

“‘Never, never, never!’ cried I, springing from the bed, and throwing myself upon my mother’s neck. ‘Never; I am your own Flora once more. I will never suffer any one again to make me forget you,’—and then I sobbed so violently that mamma was frightened, and made me lie down, and left me to sleep. Several hours have passed since then, and I could not sleep nor think, and I would not cry, for he is no longer worthy of my tears; so I have written to you.

“Oh how I despise and hate myself for having so utterly, in my vanity and folly, forgotten my mother, that dear, kind, constant friend, who never cost me a single tear, but for my own ingratitude. Think, Eleanor, what an affront to me—to me, who, he so often said, had made all other women worthless in his eyes. Do I hate him? No, I cannot hate. Do I despise? No, I will not despise, but I will forget him, and keep my contempt and hatred for myself.

“God bless you—I am worn out. Write soon, or rather come, if possible, to your affectionate but unworthy friend,

“F. A.

“Good Heavens! Eleanor, he is wounded. He has fought with Lord Borodaile. I have just heard it; Jermyn told me. Can it, can it be true? What—what have I said against him? Hate!—forget? No, no: I never loved him till now.”

LETTER III.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

(After an interval of several weeks.)

"TIME has flown, my Eleanor, since you left me, after your short but kind visit, with a heavy but healing wing. I do not think I shall ever again be the giddy girl I have been; but my head will change, not my heart; *that* was never giddy, and that shall still be as much yours as ever. You are wrong in thinking I have not forgotten, at least renounced all affection for, Mr. Linden. I have, though with a long and bitter effort. The woman for whom he fought went, you know, to his house, immediately on hearing of his wound. She has continued with him ever since. He had the audacity to write to me once; my mother brought me the note, and said nothing. She read my heart aright. I returned it unopened. He has even called since his convalescence. Mamma was not at home to him. I hear that he looks pale and altered. I hope not—at least I cannot resist praying for his recovery. I stay within entirely; the season is now over, and there are no parties: but I tremble at the thought of meeting him even in the Park or the Gardens. Papa talks of going into the country next week. I cannot tell you how eagerly I look forward to it; and you will then come and see me—will you not, dearest Eleanor?

"Ah! what happy days we will have yet; we will read Italian together, as we used to do; you shall teach me your songs, and I will instruct you in mine; we will keep birds as we did—let me see—eight years ago. You will never talk to me of my folly: let that be as if it had never been; but I will wonder with you about your future choice, and grow happy in anticipating your happiness. Oh, how selfish I was some weeks ago—then I could only overwhelm you with my egotisms; now, Eleanor, it is your turn, and you shall see how patiently I will listen to yours. Never fear that you can be too prolix; the diffuser you are, the easier I shall forgive myself.

"Are you fond of poetry, Eleanor? I used to say so, but I never felt that I was till lately. I will show you my favorite passages in my favorite poets when you come to see me. You shall see if yours correspond with mine. I am so impatient to leave this horrid town, where everything seems dull, yet feverish—insipid, yet false. Shall we not be happy when we meet?

If your dear aunt will come with you, she shall see how I (that is, my mind) am improved.

"Farewell.

"Ever your most affectionate,

"F. A."

CHAPTER XLVII.

"Brave Talbot, we will follow thee."—*Henry the Sixth.*

"My letter insultingly returned—myself refused admittance—not a single inquiry made during my illness—indifference joined to positive contempt. By Heaven, it is insupportable!"

"My dear Clarence," said Talbot, to his young friend, who, fretful from pain, and writhing beneath his mortification, walked to and fro his chamber with an impatient stride; "my dear Clarence, do sit down, and not irritate your wound by such violent exercise. I am as much enraged as yourself at the treatment you have received, and no less at a loss to account for it. Your duel, however unfortunate the event, must have done you credit, and obtained you a reputation both for generosity and spirit; so that it cannot be to that occurrence that you are to attribute the change. Let us rather suppose that Lady Flora's attachment to you has become evident to her father and mother—that they naturally think it would be very undesirable to marry their daughter to a man whose family nobody knows, and whose respectability he is forced into fighting in order to support. Suffer me then to call on Lady Westborough, whom I knew many years ago, and explain your origin, as well as your relationship to me."

Linden paused irresolutely.

"Were I sure that Lady Flora was not utterly influenced by her mother's worldly views, I would gladly consent to your proposal—but—"

"Forgive me, Clarence," cried Talbot; "but you really argue much more like a very young man than I ever heard you do before—even four years ago. To be sure Lady Flora *is* influenced by her mother's views. Would you have her otherwise? Would you have her, in defiance of all propriety, modesty, obedience to her parents, and right feeling for herself, encourage an attachment to a person not only unknown, but who does not even condescend to throw off the incognito to the woman he addresses? Come, Clarence, give me my instructions, and let me act as your ambassador to-morrow."

Clarence was silent.

"I may consider it settled then," replied Talbot: "meanwhile you shall come home and stay with me: the pure air of the country, even so near town, will do you more good than all the doctors in London; and, besides, you will thus be enabled to escape from that persecuting Frenchwoman."

"In what manner?" said Clarence.

"Why, when you are in my house, she cannot well take up her abode with you; and you shall, while I am forwarding your suit with Lady Flora, write a very flattering, very grateful letter of excuses to Madame la Meronville. But leave me alone to draw it up for you; meanwhile, let Harrison pack up your clothes and medicines, and we will effect our escape while Madame la Meronville yet sleeps."

Clarence rung the bell; the orders were given, executed, and in less than an hour he and his friend were on their road to Talbot's villa.

As they drove slowly through the grounds to the house, Clarence was sensibly struck with the quiet and stillness which breathed around. On either side of the road the honeysuckle and the rose cast their sweet scents to the summer wind, which, though it was scarcely noon, stirred freshly among the trees, and waved, as if it breathed a second youth over the wan cheek of the convalescent. The old servant's ear had caught the sound of wheels, and he came to the door, with an expression of quiet delight on his dry countenance, to welcome in his master. They had lived together for so many years, that they were grown like one another. Indeed, the veteran valet prided himself on his happy adoption of his master's dress and manner. A proud man, we ween, was that domestic, whenever he had time and listeners for the indulgence of his honest loquacity; many an ancient tale of his master's former glories was then poured from his unburthening remembrance. With what a glow, with what a racy enjoyment did he expand upon the triumphs of the past; how eloquently did he particularize the exact grace with which *young* Mr. Talbot was wont to enter the room, in which he instantly became the cynosure of ladies' eyes; how faithfully did he minute the courtly dress, the exquisite choice of color, the costly splendor of material, which were the envy of gentles, and the despairing wonder of their valets; and then the zest with which the good old man would cry—"I dressed the boy!" Even still, this modern Scipio (Le Sage's Scipio, not Rome's) would not believe that his master's sun was utterly set: he was only in a temporary retire-

ment, and would, one day or other, reappear and reastonish the London world. "I would give my right arm," Jasper was wont to say, "to see master at court. How fond the king would be of him.—Ah! well, well; I wish he was not so melancholy like with his books, but would go out like other people!"

Poor Jasper! Time is, in general, a harsh wizard in his transformations; but the change which thou didst lament so bitterly, was happier for thy master than all his former "palmy state" of admiration and homage. "*Nous avons recherché le plaisir,*" says Rousseau, in one of his own inimitable antitheses, "*et le bonheur a fui loin de nous.*"* But in the pursuit of Pleasure we sometimes chance on Wisdom, and Wisdom leads us to the right track, which, if it takes us not so far as Happiness, is sure at least of the shelter of Content.

Talbot leant kindly upon Jasper's arm as he descended from the carriage, and inquired into his servant's rheumatism with the anxiety of a friend. The old housekeeper, waiting in the hall, next received his attention; and in entering the drawing-room, with that consideration, even to animals, which his worldly benevolence had taught him, he paused to notice and caress a large gray cat which rubbed herself against his legs. Doubtless there is some pleasure in making even a gray cat happy!

Clarence having patiently undergone all the shrugs, and sighs, and exclamations of compassion at his reduced and wan appearance, which are the especial prerogatives of ancient domestics, followed the old man into the room. Papers and books, though carefully dusted, were left scrupulously in the places in which Talbot had last deposited them (incomparable good fortune! what would we not give for such chamber hand-maidens!)—fresh flowers were in the stands and vases; the large library chair was jealously set in its accustomed place, and all wore, to Talbot's eyes, that cheerful yet sober look of welcome and familiarity which makes a friend of our house.

The old man was in high spirits:

"I know not how it is," said he, "but I feel younger than ever! You have often expressed a wish to see my family seat at Scarsdale; it is certainly a great distance hence; but as you will be my travelling companion, I think I will try and crawl there before the summer is over; or, what say you, Clarence, shall I lend it to you and Lady Flora for the honeymoon?—You blush!—A diplomatist blush!—Ah, how the world has

* We have pursued pleasure, and happiness has fled far from our reach.

changed since my time! But come, Clarence, suppose you write to La Meronville?"

"Not to-day, sir, if you please," said Linden, "I feel so very weak."

"As you please, Clarence; but some years hence you will learn the value of the present. Youth is always a procrastinator, and, consequently, always penitent." And thus Talbot ran on into a strain of conversation, half serious, half gay, which lasted till Clarence went upstairs to lie down and muse on Lady Flora Ardenne.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

"*La vie est un sommeil.—Les vieillards sont ceux dont le sommeil a été plus long : ils ne commencent à se réveiller que quand il faut mourir.*" *—
LA BRUYERE.

"You wonder why I have never turned author, with my constant love of literature, and my former desire of fame," said Talbot, as he and Clarence sate alone after dinner, "discussing many things": "the fact is, that I have often intended it, and as often been frightened from my design. Those terrible feuds—those vehement disputes—those recriminations of abuse, so inseparable from literary life, appear to me too dreadful for a man not utterly hardened or malevolent voluntarily to encounter. Good heavens! what acerbity sours the blood of an author! The manifestoes of opposing generals, advancing to pillage, to burn, to destroy, contain not a tithe of the ferocity which animates the pages of literary controversialists! No term of reproach is too severe, no vituperation too excessive!—the blackest passions, the bitterest, the meanest malice, pour caustic and poison upon every page! It seems as if the greatest talent, the most elaborate knowledge, only sprung from the weakest and worst regulated mind, as exotics from dung. The private records, the public works of men of letters, teem with an immitigable fury! Their histories might all be reduced into these sentences—they were born—they quarrelled—they died!"

"But," said Clarence, "it would matter little to the world if these quarrels were confined merely to poets and men of imaginative literature, in whom irritability is perhaps almost

* Life is a sleep—the aged are those whose sleep has been the longest; they begin to awaken themselves just as they are obliged to die.

necessarily allied to the keen and quick susceptibilities which constitute their genius. These are more to be lamented and wondered at among philosophers, theologians, and men of science; the coolness, the patience, the benevolence, which ought to characterize their works, should at least moderate their jealousy and soften their disputes."

"Ah!" said Talbot, "but the vanity of discovery is no less acute than that of creation: the self-love of a philosopher is no less self-love than that of a poet. Besides, those sects the most sure of their opinions, whether in religion or science, are always the most bigoted and persecuting. Moreover, nearly all men deceive themselves in disputes, and imagine that they are intolerant, not through private jealousy, but public benevolence; they never declaim against the injustice done to themselves—no, it is the terrible injury *done* to *society* which grieves and inflames them. It is not the bitter expressions against *their* dogmas which give them pain: by no means; it is the atrocious doctrines—so prejudicial to the country, if in politics—so pernicious to the world, if in philosophy—which their duty, not their vanity, induces them to denounce and anathematize."

"There seems," said Clarence, "to be a sort of reaction in sophistry and hypocrisy; there has, perhaps, never been a deceiver who was not, by his own passions, himself the deceived."

"Very true," said Talbot, "and it is a pity that historians have not kept that fact in view; we should then have had a better notion of the Cromwells and Mahomets of the past than we have now, nor judged those as utter impostors who were probably half dupes. But to return to myself. I think you will be already able to answer your own question, why did I not turn author, now that we have given a momentary consideration to the penalties consequent on such a profession. But in truth, as I near the close of my life, I often regret that I had not more courage, for there is in us all a certain restlessness in the persuasion, whether true or false, of superior knowledge or intellect, and this urges us on to the proof; or, if we resist its impulse, renders us discontented with our idleness, and disappointed with the past. I have everything now in my possession which it has been the desire of my later years to enjoy: health, retirement, successful study, and the affection of one in whose breast, when I am gone, my memory will not utterly pass away. With these advantages, added to the gifts of fortune, and an habitual elasticity of spirit, I confess that

my happiness is not free from a biting and frequent regret : I would fain have been a better citizen ; I would fain have died in the consciousness, not only that I had improved my mind to the utmost, but that I had turned that improvement to the benefit of my fellow-creatures. As it is, in living wholly for myself, I feel that my philosophy has wanted generosity ; and my indifference to glory has proceeded from a weakness, not, as I once persuaded myself, from a virtue ; but the fruitlessness of my existence has been the consequence of the arduous frivolities and the petty objects in which my early years were consumed ; and my mind, in losing the enjoyments which it formerly possessed, had no longer the vigor to create for itself a new soil, from which labor it could only hope for more valuable fruits. It is no contradiction to see those who eagerly courted society in their youth shrink from it the most sensitively in their age ; for they who possess certain advantages, and are morbidly vain of them, will naturally be disposed to seek that sphere for which those advantages are best calculated ; and when youth and its concomitants depart, the vanity so long fed still remains, and perpetually mortifies them by recalling not so much the qualities they have lost, as the esteem which those qualities conferred ; and by contrasting not so much their own present alteration, as the change they experience in the respect and consideration of others. What wonder, then, that they eagerly fly from the world, which has only mortification for their self-love, or that we find, in biography, how often the most assiduous votaries of pleasure have become the most rigid of recluses ? For my part, I think that that love of solitude which the ancients so eminently possessed, and which, to this day, is considered by some as the sign of a great mind, nearly always arises from a tenderness of vanity, easily wounded in the commerce of the rough world ; and that it is under the shadow of Disappointment that we must look for the hermitage. Diderot did well, even at the risk of offending Rousseau, to write against solitude. The more a moralist binds man to man, and forbids us to divorce our interest from our kind, the more effectually is the end of morality obtained. They only are justifiable in seclusion who, like the Greek philosophers, make that very seclusion the means of serving and enlightening their race—who from their retreats send forth their oracles of wisdom, and render the desert which surrounds them eloquent with the voice of truth. But remember, Clarence (and let my life, useless in itself, have at least this moral), that for him who in no wise cultivates his talent for the

benefit of others ; who is contented with being a good hermit at the expense of being a bad citizen ; who looks from his retreat upon a life wasted in the *difficiles nugæ* of the most frivolous part of the world, nor redeems in the closet the time he has spent in the saloon,—remember, that for him seclusion loses its dignity, philosophy its comfort, benevolence its hope, and even religion its balm. Knowledge unemployed may preserve us from vice—but *knowledge beneficently employed is virtue*. Perfect happiness, in our present state, is impossible ; for Hobbes says justly, that our nature is inseparable from desires, and that the very word desire (the craving for something not possessed) implies that our present felicity is not complete. But there is one way of attaining what we may term, if not utter, at least mortal happiness ; it is this—a sincere and unrelaxing activity for the happiness of others. In that one maxim is concentrated whatever is noble in morality, sublime in religion, or unanswerable in truth. In that pursuit we have *all* scope for whatever is excellent in our hearts, and *none* for the petty passions which our nature is heir to. Thus engaged, whatever be our errors, there will be nobility, not weakness, in our remorse ; whatever our failure, virtue, not selfishness, in our regret ; and, in success, vanity itself will become holy and triumph eternal. As astrologers were wont to receive upon metals ‘the benign aspect of the stars, so as to detain and fix, as it were, the felicity of that hour which would otherwise be volatile and fugitive,’* even so will that success leave imprinted upon our memory a blessing which cannot pass away—preserve for ever upon our names, as on a signet, the hallowed influence of the hour in which our great end was effected, and treasure up ‘the relics of heaven’ in the sanctuary of a human fame.”

As the old man ceased, there was a faint and hectic flush over his face, an enthusiasm on his features, which age made almost holy, and which Clarence had never observed there before. In truth, his young listener was deeply affected, and the advice of his adopted parent was afterwards impressed with more awful solemnity upon his remembrance. Already he had acquired much worldly lore from Talbot's precepts and conversation. He had obtained even something better than worldly lore—a kindly and indulgent disposition to his fellow creatures : for he had seen that foibles were not inconsistent with generous and great qualities, and that we judge wrongly of human nature when we ridicule its littleness. The very circum-

* Bacon.

stances which make the shallow misanthropical, incline the wise to be benevolent. Fools discover that frailty is not incompatible with great men, they wonder and despise; but the discerning find that greatness is not incompatible with frailty, and they admire and indulge.

But a still greater benefit than this of toleration did Clarence derive from the commune of that night. He became strengthened in his honorable ambition, and nerved to unrelaxing exertion. The recollection of Talbot's last words, on that night, occurred to him often and often, when sick at heart, and languid with baffled hope!—it roused him from that gloom and despondency which are always unfavorable to virtue, and incited him once more to that labor in the vineyard which, whether our hour be late or early, will, if earnest, obtain a blessing and reward.

The hour was now waxing late, and Talbot, mindful of his companion's health, rose to retire. As he pressed Clarence's hand and bade him farewell for the night, Linden thought there was something more than usually impressive in his manner and affectionate in his words. Perhaps this was the natural result of their conversation.

The next morning, Clarence was awakened by a noise. He listened, and heard distinctly an alarmed cry proceeding from the room in which Talbot slept, and which was opposite to his own. He rose hastily and hurried to the chamber. The door was open, the old servant was bending over the bed: Clarence approached, and saw that he supported his master in his arms. "Good God!" he cried, "what is the matter?" The faithful old man lifted up his face to Clarence, and the big tears rolled fast from eyes in which the sources of such emotion were well-nigh dried up.

"He loved you well, sir!" he said, and could say no more. He dropped the body gently, and, throwing himself on the floor, sobbed aloud. With a foreboding and chilled heart, Clarence bent forward; the face of his benefactor lay directly before him, and the hand of death was upon it. The soul had passed to its account hours since, in the hush of night: passed apparently, without a struggle or a pang, like the wind, which animates the harp one moment, and the next is gone.

Linden seized his hand—it was heavy and cold; his eye rested upon the miniature of the unfortunate Lady Merton, which, since the night of the attempted robbery, Talbot had worn constantly round his neck. Strange and powerful was the contrast of the pictured face, in which not a color had yet faded, and where the

hues, and fulness, and prime of youth dwelt, unconscious of the lapse of years, with the aged and shrunken countenance of the deceased.

In that contrast was a sad and mighty moral ; it wrought, as it were, a contract between youth and age, and conveyed a rapid but full history of our passions and our life.

The servant looked up once more on the countenance ; he pointed toward it and muttered—" See—see ! how awfully it is changed ! "

" But there is a smile upon it ! " said Clarence, as he flung himself beside the body and burst into tears.

CHAPTER XLIX.

" Virtue is like precious odors, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed ; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue. "—BACON.

It is somewhat remarkable, that while Talbot was bequeathing to Clarence, as the most valuable of legacies, the doctrines of a philosophy he had acquired, perhaps too late to practice, Glendower was carrying those very doctrines, so far as his limited sphere would allow, into the rule and exercise of his life.

Since the death of the bookseller, which we have before recorded, Glendower had been left utterly without resource. The others to whom he applied were indisposed to avail themselves of an unknown ability. The trade of book-making was not then as it is now, and if it had been, it would not have suggested itself to the high-spirited and unworldly student. Some publishers offered, it is true, a reward tempting enough for an immoral tale ; others spoke of the value of an attack upon the Americans ; one suggested an ode to the minister, and another hinted that a pension might possibly be granted to one who would prove extortion not tyranny. But these insinuations fell upon a dull ear, and the tribe of Barabbas were astonished to find that an author could imagine interest and principle not synonymous.

Struggling with want, which hourly grew more imperious and urgent ; wasting his heart on studies which brought fever to his pulse, and disappointment to his ambition ; gnawed to the very soul by the mortifications which his poverty gave to his pride ; and watching with tearless eyes, but a maddening

brain, the slender form of his wife, now waxing weaker and fainter, as the canker of disease fastened upon the core of her young but blighted life; there was yet a high, though, alas! not constant consolation within him, whenever from the troubles of this dim spot his thoughts could escape, like birds released from their cage, and lose themselves in the lustre and freedom of their native heaven.

"If," thought he, as he looked upon his secret and treasured work, "if the wind scatter, or the rock receive these seeds, they were at least dispersed by a hand which asked no selfish return, and a heart which would have lavished the harvest of its labors upon those who know not the husbandman, and trample his hopes into the dust."

But by degrees, this comfort of a noble and generous nature, these whispers of a vanity rather to be termed holy than excusable, began to grow unfrequent and low. The cravings of a more engrossing and heavy want than those of the mind came eagerly and rapidly upon him; the fair cheek of his infant became pinched and hollow; his wife conquered nature itself by love, and starved herself in silence, and set bread before him with a smile, and bade him eat.

"But you—you?" he would ask inquiringly, and then pause.

"I *have* dined, dearest; I want nothing; eat, love, eat."

But he ate not. The food robbed from her seemed to him more deadly than poison; and he would rise, and dash his hand to his brow, and go forth alone, with nature unsatisfied to look upon this luxurious world, and learn content.

It was after such a scene that, one day, he wandered forth into the streets, desperate and confused in mind, and fainting with hunger, and half insane with fiery and wrong thoughts, which dashed over his barren and gloomy soul, and desolated, but conquered not! It was evening: he stood (for he had strode on so rapidly, at first, that his strength was now exhausted and he was forced to pause), leaning against the railed area of a house, in a lone and unfrequented street. No passenger shared the dull and obscure thoroughfare. He stood, literally, in scene as in heart, solitary amidst the great city, and wherever he looked—lo! there were none!

"Two days," said he, slowly and faintly, "two days, and bread has only once passed my lips: and that was snatched from her—from those lips which I have fed with sweet and holy kisses, and whence my sole comfort in this weary life has been drawn. And she—ay, she starves—and my child, too. They complain not—they murmur not—but they lift up their

eyes to me and ask for— Merciful God, thou *didst* make man in benevolence ; thou *dost* survey this world with a pitying and paternal eye—save, comfort, cherish them, and crush *me* if thou wilt !”

At that moment a man darted suddenly from an obscure alley, and passed Glendower at full speed ; presently came a cry and a shout, and the rapid trampling of feet, and, in another moment, an eager and breathless crowd rushed upon the solitude of the street.

“Where is he ?” cried a hundred voices to Glendower—“where—which road did the robber take ?”—but Glendower could not answer ; his nerves were unstrung, and his dizzy brain swam and reeled : and the faces which peered upon him, and the voices which shrieked and yelled in his ear, were to him as the forms and sounds of a ghastly and phantasmal world. His head drooped upon his bosom—he clung to the area for support—the crowd passed on—they were in pursuit of guilt—they were thirsting after blood—they were going to fill the dungeon and feed the gibbet—what to them was the virtue they could have supported, or the famine they could have relieved ? But they knew not his distress, nor the extent of his weakness, or some would have tarried and aided, for there is, after all, as much kindness as cruelty in our nature ; perhaps they thought it was only some intoxicated and maudlin idler—or, perhaps, in the heat of their pursuit, they thought not at all.

So they rolled on, and their voices died away, and their steps were hushed, and Glendower, insensible and cold as the iron he clung to, was once more alone. Slowly he revived ; he opened his dim and glazing eyes, and saw the evening star break from its chamber, and, though sullied by the thick and foggy air, scatter its holy smiles upon the polluted city.

He looked quietly on the still night, and its first watcher among the hosts of heaven, and felt something of balm sink into his soul ; not, indeed, that vague and delicious calm which, in his boyhood of poesy and romance, he had drunk in, by green solitudes, from the mellow twilight,—but a quiet, sad and sober, circling gradually over his mind, and bringing it back from its confused and disordered visions and darkness, to the recollection and reality of his bitter life.

By degrees the scene he had so imperfectly witnessed, the flight of the robber, and the eager pursuit of the mob, grew over him : a dark and guilty thought burst upon his mind.

“I am a man like that criminal,” said he fiercely. “I have

“nerves, sinews, muscles, flesh; I feel hunger, thirst, pain, as acutely; why should I endure more than he can? Perhaps he had a wife—a child—and he saw them starving inch by inch, and he felt that he *ought* to be their protector—and so he sinned.—And I—I—can I not sin too for mine? can I not dare what the wild beast and the vulture, and the fierce hearts of my brethren dare for their mates and young? One gripe of this hand—one cry from this voice—and my board might be heaped with plenty, and my child fed, and *she* smile as she was wont to smile—for one night at least.”

And as these thoughts broke upon him, Glendower rose, and with a step firm, even in weakness, he strode unconsciously onward.

A figure appeared; Glendower's heart beat thick. He slouched his hat over his brows, and for one moment wrestled with his pride and his stern virtue; the virtue conquered, but not the pride; the virtue forbade him to be the robber—the pride submitted to be the suppliant. He sprang forward, extended his hands toward the stranger, and cried in a sharp voice, the agony of which rung through the long, dull street with a sudden and echoless sound, “Charity—food!”

The stranger paused—one of the boldest of men in his own line, he was as timid as a woman in any other; mistaking the meaning of the petitioner, and terrified by the vehemence of his gesture, he said, in a trembling tone, as he hastily pulled out his purse:

“There, there! do not hurt me—take it—take all!”

Glendower knew the voice, as a sound not unfamiliar to him; his pride returned in full force. “None,” thought he, “who know me, shall know my full degradation also.” And he turned away; but the stranger, mistaking the motion, extended his hand to him, saying, “Take this, my friend—you will have no need of violence!” and as he advanced nearer to his supposed assailant, he beheld, by the pale lamp-light, and instantly recognized, his features:

“Ah!” cried he, in astonishment, but with internal rejoicing—“ah! is it you who are thus reduced!”

“You say right, Crauford,” said Glendower sullenly, and drawing himself up to his full height, “it is *I!* but you are mistaken,—I am a beggar, not a ruffian!”

“Good Heavens!” answered Crauford; “how fortunate that we should meet! Providence watches over us unceasingly! I have long sought you in vain. But”—(and here the wayward malignity, sometimes, though not always, the characteristic of

Crauford's nature, irresistibly broke out)—“but that you, of all men, should suffer so—you, proud, susceptible, virtuous beyond human virtue—you, whose fibres are as acute as the naked eye—that *you* should bear this, and wince not!”

“You do my humanity wrong!” said Glendower, with a bitter and almost ghastly smile; “I do worse than wince!”

“Ay, is it so!” said Crauford: “have you awakened at last? Has your philosophy taken a more impassioned dye?”

“Mock me not!” cried Glendower, and his eye, usually soft in its deep thoughtfulness, glared wild and savage upon the hypocrite, who stood trembling, yet half sneering, at the storm he had raised—“my passions are even now beyond my mastery—loose them not upon you!”

“Nay,” said Crauford gently, “I meant not to vex or wound you. I have sought you several times since the last night we met, but in vain; you had left your lodgings, and none knew whither. I would fain talk with you. I have a scheme to propose to you which will make you rich forever—rich—literally rich!—not merely above poverty, but high in affluence!”

Glendower looked incredulously at the speaker, who continued:

“The scheme has danger—*that* you can dare!”

Glendower was still silent; but his set and stern countenance was sufficient reply. “Some sacrifice of your pride,” continued Crauford—“that also you can bear?” and the tempter almost grinned with pleasure as he asked the question.

“He who is poor,” said Glendower, speaking at last, “has a right to pride. He who starves has it too; but he who sees those whom he loves famish, and cannot aid, has it not!”

“Come home with me, then,” said Crauford; “you seem faint and weak: nature craves food—come and partake of mine—we will then talk over this scheme, and arrange its completion.”

“I cannot,” answered Glendower quietly.

“And why?”

“Because *they* starve at home!”

“Heavens!” said Crauford, affected for a moment into sincerity—“it is indeed fortunate that business should have led me here; but, meanwhile, you will not refuse this trifle—as a loan merely. By and by our scheme will make you so rich, that I must be the borrower.”

Glendower *did* hesitate for a moment—he did swallow a bitter rising of the heart; but he thought of those at home, and the struggle was over.

"I thank you," said he; "I thank you for their sake: the *time may come*,"—and the proud gentleman stopped short, for his desolate fortunes rose before him, and forbade all hope of the future.

"Yes," cried Crauford, "the time may come when you will repay me this money a hundred-fold. But where do you live? You are silent. Well you will not inform me—I understand you. Meet me, then, here, on this very spot, three nights hence—you will not fail?"

"I will not," said Glendower; and pressing Crauford's hand with a generous and grateful warmth, which might have softened a heart less obdurate, he turned away.

Folding his arms, while a bitter yet joyous expression crossed his countenance, Crauford stood still, gazing upon the retreating form of the noble and unfortunate man whom he had marked for destruction.

"Now," said he, "this virtue is a fine thing, a very fine thing to talk so loftily about. A little craving of the gastric juices, a little pinching of this vile body, as your philosophers and saints call our better part, and lo! virtue oozes out like water through a leaky vessel,—and the vessel sinks! No, no; virtue is a weak game, and a poor game, and a losing game. Why, there is that man, the very pink of integrity and rectitude, he is now only wanting temptation to fall—and he *will* fall, in a fine phrase, too, I'll be sworn! And then, having once fallen, there will be no medium—he will become utterly corrupt; while *I*, honest Dick Crauford, doing as other wise men do, cheat a trick or two, in playing with fortune, without being a whit the worse for it. Do I not subscribe to charities; am I not constant at church, ay, and meeting to boot; kind to my servants, obliging to my friends, loyal to my king? 'Gad, if I were less loving to myself, I should have been far less useful to my country! And, now, now, let me see what has brought me to these filthy suburbs! Ah, Madam H——. Woman, incomparable woman! On, Richard Crauford, thou hast made a good night's work of it hitherto!—business seasons pleasure!" and the villain upon system moved away.

Glendower hastened to his home; it was miserably changed, even from the humble abode in which we last saw him. The unfortunate pair had chosen their present residence from a melancholy refinement in luxury; they had chosen it because none else shared it with them, and their famine, and pride, and struggles, and despair, were without witness or pity.

With a heavy step Glendower entered the chamber where

his wife sat. When at a distance he had heard a faint moan, but as he had approached, it ceased; for she from whom it came knew his step, and hushed her grief and pain, that they might not add to his own. The peevishness, the querulous and stinging irritations of want, came not to that affectionate and kindly heart; nor could all those biting and bitter evils of fate, which turn the love that is born of luxury into rancour and gall, scathe the beautiful and holy passion which had knit into one those two unearthly natures. They rather clung the closer to each other, as all things in heaven and earth spoke in tempest or in gloom around them, and coined their sorrows into endearment, and their looks into smiles, and strove, each from the depth of despair, to pluck hope and comfort for the other.

This, it is true, was more striking and constant in her than in Glendower! for in love, man, be he ever so generous, is always outdone. Yet even when, in moments of extreme passion and conflict, the strife broke from his breast into words, never once was his discontent vented upon her, nor his reproaches lavished on any but fortune or himself, nor his murmurs mingled with a single breath wounding to her tenderness, or detracting from his love.

He threw open the door; the wretched light cast its sickly beams over the squalid walls, foul with green damps, and the miserable yet clean bed, and the fireless hearth, and the empty board, and the pale cheek of the wife, as she rose and flung her arms round his neck, and murmured out her joy and welcome. "There," said he, as he extricated himself from her, and flung the money upon the table, "there, love, pine no more, feed yourself and our daughter, and then let us sleep and be happy in our dreams."

A writer, one of the most gifted of the present day, has told the narrator of this history, that no interest of a high nature can be given to extreme poverty. I know not if this be true; yet, if I mistake not our human feelings, there is nothing so exalted, or so divine, as a great and brave spirit working out its end through every earthly obstacle and evil; watching through the utter darkness, and steadily defying the phantoms which crowd around it; wrestling with the mighty allurements and rejecting the fearful voices of that WANT which is the deadliest and surest of human tempters; nursing through all calamity the love of species, and the warmer and closer affections of private ties; sacrificing no duty, resisting all sin; and amidst every horror and every humiliation, feeding the still and bright light

of that genius which, like the lamp of the fabulist, though it may waste itself for years amidst the depths of solitude and the silence of the tomb, shall live and burn immortal and undimmed, when all around it is rottenness and decay!

And yet I confess that it is a painful and bitter task to record the humiliations, the wearing, petty, stinging humiliations, of Poverty; to count the drops as they slowly fall, one by one, upon the fretted and indignant heart; to particularize, with the scrupulous and nice hand of indifference, the fractional and divided movements in the dial-plate of Misery; to behold the refinement of birth, the masculine pride of blood, the dignities of intellect, the wealth of knowledge, the delicacy and graces of womanhood—all that ennoble and soften the stony mass of commonplaces which *is* our life, frittered into atoms, trampled into the dust and mire of the meanest thoroughfares of distress; life and soul, the energies and aims of man, ground into one prostrating want, cramped into one levelling sympathy with the dregs and refuse of his kind, blistered into a single galling and festering sore: this is, I own, a painful and a bitter task; but it hath its redemption: a pride even in debasement, a pleasure even in woe: and it is therefore that while I have abridged, I have not shunned it. There are some whom the lightning of fortune blasts, only to render holy. Amidst all that humbles and scathes—amidst all that shatters from their life its verdure, smites to the dust the pomp and summit of their pride, and in the very heart of existence witeth a sudden and “strange defeature,” *they* stand erect,—riven, not uprooted,—a monument less of pity than of awe! There are some who pass through the Lazar-House of Misery with a step more august than a Cæsar’s in his hall. The very things which, seen alone, are despicable and vile, associated with them become almost venerable and divine; and one ray, however dim and feeble, of that intense holiness which, in the **INFANT GOD**, shed majesty over the manger and the straw, not denied to those who, in the depth of affliction, cherish His patient image, flings over the meanest localities of earth an emanation from the glory of Heaven!

CHAPTER L.

"Letters from divers hands, which will absolve
Ourselves from long narration."—*Tanner of Tyburn.*

ONE morning about a fortnight after Talbot's death, Clarence was sitting alone, thoughtful and melancholy, when the three following letters were put into his hand :

LETTER I.

FROM THE DUKE OF HAVERFIELD.

"LET me, my dear Linden, be the first to congratulate you upon your accession, of fortune : five thousand a year, Scarsdale, and eighty thousand pounds in the funds, are very pretty foes to starvation ! Ah, my dear fellow, if you had but shot that frosty Caucasus of humanity, that pillar of the state, made not to bend, that—but you know already whom I mean, and so I will spare you more of my lamentable metaphors : had you shot Lord Borodaile, your happiness would now be complete ! Everybody talks of your luck. La Meronville tending on you with her white hands, the prettiest hands in the world—who would not be wounded, even by Lord Borodaile, for such a nurse ? And then Talbot's—yet, I will not speak of *that*; for you are very unlike the present generation ; and who knows but you may have some gratitude, some affection, some natural feeling in you. I had once ; but that was before I went to France—those Parisians, with their fine sentiments, and witty philosophy, play the devil with one's good old-fashioned feelings. So Lord Aspeden is to have an Italian ministry. By-the-by, shall you go with him, or will you not rather stay at home, and enjoy your new fortunes—hunt—race—dine out—dance—vote in the House of Commons, and, in short, do all that an Englishman and a gentleman should do ? *Ornamento e splendor del secol nostro.* Write me a line whenever you have nothing better to do.

"And believe me,

"Most truly yours,

"HAVERFIELD.

"Will you sell your black mare, or will you buy my brown one ? *Utrum horum mavis accipe*, the only piece of Latin I remember."

LETTER FROM LORD ASPEDEN.

"MY DEAR LINDEN:

"Suffer me to enter most fully into your feeling. Death, my friend, is common to all: we must submit to its dispensations. I heard accidentally of the great fortune left you by Mr. Talbot (your father, I suppose I may venture to call him). Indeed, though there is a silly prejudice against illegitimacy, yet, as our immortal bard says:

'Wherefore base?

When thy dimensions are as well compact,
Thy mind as generous and thy shape as true
As honest madam's issue!

For my part, my dear Linden, I say, on your behalf, that it is very likely that you *are* a natural son, for such are always the luckiest and the best.

"You have probably heard of the honor his Majesty has conferred on me, in appointing to my administration the city of ——. As the choice of a secretary has been left to me, I need not say how happy I shall be to keep my promise to you. Indeed, as I told Lord — yesterday morning, I do not know anywhere a young man who has more talent, or who plays better on the flute.

"Adieu, my dear young friend;

"And believe me,

"Very truly yours,

"ASPEDEN."

LETTER FROM MADAME DE LA MERONVILLE.

(Translated.)

"You have done me wrong—great wrong. I loved you—I waited on you—tended you—nursed you—gave all up for you; and you forsook me—forsook me without a word. True, that you have been engaged in a melancholy duty, but, at least, you had time to write a line, to cast a thought, to one who had shown for you the love that I have done. But we will pass over all this; I will not reproach you—it is beneath me. The vicious upbraid—*the virtuous forgive!* I have for several days left your house. I should never have come to it, had you not been wounded, and, as I fondly imagined, for my sake. Return when you will, I shall no longer be there to persecute and torment you.

"Pardor this letter. I have said too much for myself—a hundred times too much to you; but I shall not sin again. This intrusion is my last. CECILE DE LA MERONVILLE."

These letters will, probably, suffice to clear up that part of Clarence's history which had not hitherto been touched upon ; they will show that Talbot's will (after several legacies to his old servants, his nearest connections, and two charitable institutions, which he had founded, and for some years supported) had bequeathed the bulk of his property to Clarence. The words in which the bequest was made were kind and somewhat remarkable. " To my relation and friend, commonly known by the name of Clarence Linden, to whom I am bound alike by blood and affection," etc. These expressions, joined to the magnitude of the bequest, the apparently unaccountable attachment of the old man to his heir, and the mystery which wrapt the origin of the latter, all concurred to give rise to an opinion, easily received, and soon universally accredited, that Clarence was a natural son of the deceased ; and so strong in England is the aristocratic aversion to an unknown lineage, that this belief, unflattering as it was, procured for Linden a much higher consideration, on the score of birth, than he might otherwise have enjoyed. Furthermore will the above correspondence testify the general *éclat* of Madam La Meronville's attachment, and the construction naturally put upon it. Nor do we see much left for us to explain, with regard to the Frenchwoman herself, which cannot equally well be gleaned by any judicious and intelligent reader from the epistle last honored by his perusal. Clarence's sense of gallantry did, indeed, smite him severely, for his negligence and ill-requital to one, who, whatever her faults or follies, had at least done nothing with which *he* had a right to reproach her. It must, however, be considered, in his defence, that the fatal event which had so lately occurred, the relapse which Clarence had suffered in consequence, and the melancholy confusion and bustle in which the last week or ten days had been passed, were quite sufficient to banish her from his remembrance. Still she was a woman, and had loved, or seemed to love ; and Clarence, as he wrote to her a long, kind, and almost brotherly letter, in return for her own, felt that, in giving pain to another, one often suffers almost as much for avoiding as for committing a sin.

We have said his letter was kind—it was also frank, and yet prudent. In it he said that he had long loved another—which love alone could have rendered him insensible to her attachment : that he, nevertheless, should always recall her memory with equal interest and admiration ; and then, with a tact of flattery which the nature of the correspondence and the sex of the person addressed rendered excusable, he endeavored, as

far as he was able, to soothe and please the vanity which the candor of his avowal was calculated to wound.

When he had finished this letter he despatched another to Lord Aspeden, claiming a reprieve of some days before he answered the proposal of the diplomatist. After these epistolary efforts, he summoned his valet, and told him, apparently in a careless tone, to find out if Lady Westborough was still in town. Then throwing himself on the couch, he wrestled with the grief and melancholy which the death of a friend, and more than a father, might well cause in a mind less susceptible than his, and counted the dull hours crawl onward until his servant returned. "Lady Westborough and all the family had been gone a week to their seat in —."

"Well," thought Clarence, "had *he* been alive, I could have entrusted my cause to a mediator; as it is, I will plead, or rather assert it, myself. Harrison," said he aloud, "see that my black mare is ready by sunrise to-morrow; I shall leave town for some days."

"Not in your present state of health, sir, surely?" said Harrison, with the license of one who had been a nurse.

"My health requires it—no more words, my good Harrison, see that I am obeyed." And Harrison, shaking his head doubtfully, left the room.

"Rich, independent, free to aspire to the heights which in England are only accessible to those who join wealth to ambition, I have at least," said Clarence proudly, "no unworthy pretensions even to the hand of Lady Flora Ardenne. If she can love me for myself, if she can trust to my honor, rely on my love, feel proud in my pride, and aspiring in my ambition, then, indeed, this wealth will be welcome to me, and the disguised name, which has cost me so many mortifications, become grateful, since she will not disdain to share it."

CHAPTER LI.

"A little druid wight,
Of withered aspect; but his eye was keen
With sweetness mixed—in russet *brown* bedight."

—THOMSON'S *Castle of Indolence*.

"Thus holding high di-course, they came to where
The cursed carle was at his wonted trade,
Still tempting heedless men into his snare,
In witching wise, as I before have said."—*Ibid*.

It was a fine, joyous summer morning when Clarence set out, alone, and on horseback, upon his enterprise of love and ad-

venture. If there be anything on earth more reviving and inspiriting than another, it is, to my taste, a bright day, a free horse, a journey of excitement before one, and loneliness! Rousseau—in his own way, a great, though rather a morbid epicure of this world's enjoyments—talks with rapture of his pedestrian rambles when in his first youth. But what are your foot-ploddings to the joy which lifts you into air with the bound of your mettled steed?

But there are times when an iron and stern sadness locks, as it were, within itself our capacities of enjoyment; and the song of the birds, and the green freshness of the summer morning, and the glad motion of the eager horse, brought neither relief nor change to the musings of the young adventurer.

He rode on for several miles without noticing anything on his road, and only now and then testifying the nature of his thoughts and his consciousness of solitude by brief and abrupt exclamations and sentences, which proclaimed the melancholy yet exciting subjects of his meditations. During the heat of the noon, he rested at a small public house about—miles from town; and resolving to take his horse at least ten miles further before his day's journey ceased, he remounted toward the evening, and slowly resumed his way.

He was now entering the same county in which he first made his appearance in this history. Although several miles from the spot on which the memorable night with the gypsies had been passed, his thoughts reverted to its remembrance, and he sighed as he recalled the ardent hopes which then fed and animated his heart. While thus musing, he heard the sound of hoofs behind him, and presently came by a sober-looking man, on a rough, strong pony, laden (besides its master's weight), with saddle-bags of uncommon size, and to all appearance substantially and artfully filled.

Clarence looked, and, after a second survey, recognized the person of his old acquaintance, Mr. Morris Brown.

Not equally reminiscent was the worshipful itinerant, who, in the great variety of forms and faces which it was his professional lot to encounter, could not be expected to preserve a very nice or distinguishing recollection of each.

"Your servant, sir, your servant," said Mr. Brown, as he rode his pony alongside of our traveller. "Are you going as far as W—— this evening?"

"I hardly know yet," answered Clarence; "the length of my ride depends upon my horse rather than myself."

"Oh, well, very well," said Mr. Brown; "but you will allow

me, perhaps, sir, the honor of riding with you as far as you go."

"You give me much gratification by your proposal, Mr. Brown!" said Clarence.

The broker looked in surprise at his companion. "So you know me, sir?"

"I do," replied Clarence. "I am surprised that you have forgotten *me*."

Slowly Mr. Brown gazed, till at last his memory began to give itself the rousing shake—"God bless me, sir, I beg you a thousand pardons—I now remember you perfectly—Mr. Linden, the nephew of my old patroness, Mrs. Minden. Dear, dear, how could I be so forgetful! I hope, by the by, sir, that the shirts wore well. I am thinking you will want some more. I have some capital cambric of curiously fine quality and texture, from the wardrobe of the late Lady Waddilove."

"What, Lady Waddilove still!" cried Clarence. "Why, my good friend, you will offer next to furnish me with pantaloons from her ladyship's wardrobe."

"Why, really, sir, I see you preserve your fine spirits; but I do think I have one or two pair of plum-colored velvet inexpressibles, that passed into my possession when her ladyship's husband died, which might, perhaps, with a *leetle* alteration, fit you, and at all events, would be a very elegant present from a gentleman to his valet."

"Well, Mr. Brown, whenever I or my valet wear plum-colored velvet breeches, I will certainly purchase those in your possession; but to change the subject, can you inform me what has become of my old host and hostess, the Copperases of Copperas Bower?"

"Oh, sir, they are the same as ever—nice, genteel people they are, too. Master Adolphus has grown into a fine young gentleman, very nearly as tall as *you* and *I* are. His worthy father preserves his jovial vein, and is very merry whenever I call there. Indeed, it was but last week that he made an admirable witticism. 'Bob,' said he—(Tom—you remember Tom, or De Warens, as Mrs. Copperas was pleased to call him—Tom is gone)—'Bob, have you stopt the coach?' 'Yes, sir,' said Bob. 'And what coach is it?' asked Mr. Copperas. 'It be the Swallow, sir,' said the boy. 'The Swallow! oh, very well,' cried Mr. Copperas; 'then, now, having swallowed in the roll, I will e'en roll in the Swallow!' Ha! ha! ha! sir, very facetious, was it not?"

"Very, indeed," said Clarence; "and so Mr. De Warens has gone; how came that?"

"Why, sir, you see, the boy was always of a *gay turn*, and he took to frisking it, as he called it, of a night, and so he was taken up for thrashing a watchman, and appeared before Sir John, the magistrate, the next morning."

"Caractacus before Cæsar!" observed Linden: "and what said Cæsar?"

"Sir!" said Mr. Brown.

"I mean, what said Sir John?"

"Oh, he asked him his name, and Tom, whose head Mrs. Copperas (poor, good woman!) had crammed with pride enough for fifty foot-boys, replied, 'De Warens,' with all the air of a man of independence. 'De Warens!' cried Sir John, amazed, 'we'll have no De's here: take him to Bridewell!' and so, Mrs. Copperas, being without a foot-boy, sent for me, and I supplied her—with *Bob!*"

"Out of the late Lady Waddilove's wardrobe too?" said Clarence.

"Ha, ha! that's well, very well, sir. No, *not exactly*, but he was a son of her late ladyship's coachman. Mr. Copperas has had two other servants of the name of Bob before, but this is the biggest of all, so he humorously calls him 'Triple Bob Major!' You observe that road to the right, sir—it leads to the mansion of an old customer of mine, General Cornelius St. Leger! many a good bargain have I sold to his sister. Heaven rest her!—when she died I lost a good friend, though she was a little hot or so, to be sure. But she had a relation, a young lady—such a lovely, noble-looking creature—it did one's heart, ay, and one's eyes also, good to look at her; and she's gone too—well, well, one loses one's customers sadly; it makes me feel old and comfortless to think of it. Now, yonder, as far as you can see among those distant woods, lived another friend of mine, to whom I offered to make some very valuable presents upon his marriage with the young lady I spoke of just now, but, poor gentleman, he had not time to accept them; he lost his property by a lawsuit, a few months after he was married, and a very different person now has Mordaunt Court."

"Mordaunt!" cried Clarence; "do you mean to say that Mr. Mordaunt has lost all that property?"

"Why, sir, one Mr. Mordaunt has lost it, and another has gained it: but the real Mr. Mordaunt has not an acre in this county or elsewhere, I fear, poor gentleman. He is univer-

sally regretted, for he was very good and very generous, though they say he was also mighty proud and reserved ; but, for my part, I never perceived it. If one is not proud one's self, Mr. Linden, one is very little apt to be hurt by pride in other people."

"And where is Mr. Algernon Mordaunt?" asked Clarence, as he recalled his interview with that person, and the interest with which Algernon then inspired him.

"That, sir, is more than any of us can say. He has disappeared altogether. Some declare that he has gone abroad, others think he is living in Wales in the greatest poverty. However, wherever he is, I am sure that he cannot be rich; for the lawsuit quite ruined him, and the young lady he married had not a farthing."

"Poor Mordaunt," said Clarence musingly.

"I think, sir, that the squire would not be best pleased if he heard you pity him. I don't know why, but he certainly looked, walked, and moved like one whom you felt it very hard to pity. But I am thinking that it is a great shame that the general should not do anything for Mordaunt's wife, for she was his own flesh and blood; and I am sure *he* had no cause to be angry at her marrying a gentleman of such an old family as Mr. Mordaunt. I am a great stickler for birth, sir—I learnt that from the late Lady W. 'Brown,' she said, and I shall never forget her ladyship's air when she did say it, 'Brown, respect your superiors, and never fall into the hands of the republicans and atheists!'"

"And why," said Clarence, who was much interested in Mordaunt's fate, "did General St. Leger withhold his consent?"

"That we don't exactly know, sir; but some say that Mr. Mordaunt was very high and proud with the general, and the general was, to the full, as fond of his purse as Mr. Mordaunt could be of his pedigree—and so, I suppose, one pride clashed against the other, and made a quarrel between them."

"Would not the general, then, relent after the marriage?"

"Oh no, sir!—for it was a runaway affair. Miss Diana St. Leger, his sister, was as hot as ginger upon it, and fretted and worried the poor general, who was never of the mildest, about the match, till at last he forbade the poor young lady's very name to be mentioned. And when Miss Diana died about two years ago, he suddenly introduced a tawny sort of *cretur*, whom they call a mulatto or creole, or some such thing, into the house;

and it seems that he has had several children by her, whom he never durst own during Miss Diana's life, but whom he now declares to be his heirs. Well—they rule him with a rod of iron, and suck him as dry as an orange. They are a bad, griping set, all of them; and, I am sure, I don't say so from any selfish feeling, Mr. Linden, though they have forbid me the house, and called me, to my very face, an old cheating Jew. Think of *that*, sir!—I, whom the late Lady W., in her exceeding friendship used to call 'honest Brown'—I whom your worthy—"

"And who," uncourteously interrupted Clarence, "has Mordaunt Court now?"

"Why, a distant relation of the last squire's, an elderly gentleman who calls himself Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt. I am going there to-morrow morning, for I still keep up a connection with the family. Indeed the old gentleman bought a lovely little ape of me, which I did intend as a present to the late (as I may call him) Mr. Mordaunt; so, though I will not say I exactly like him—he is a hard hand at a bargain—yet at least I will not deny him his due."

"What sort of person is he? What character does he bear?" asked Clarence.

"I really find it hard to answer that question," said the gossiping Mr. Brown. "In great things he is very lavish and ostentatious, but in small things he is very penurious, and saving, and miser-like—and all for one son, who is deformed and very sickly. He seems to doat on that boy; and now I have got two or three little presents in these bags for Mr. Henry. Heaven forgive me, but when I look at the poor creature, with his face all drawn up, and his sour, ill-tempered voice, and his limbs crippled, I almost think it would be better if he were in his grave, and the rightful Mr. Mordaunt, who would then be the next of kin, in his place."

"So then, there is only this unhappy cripple between Mr. Mordaunt and the property?" said Clarence.

"Exactly so, sir. But will you let me ask where you shall put up at W——? I will wait upon you, if you will give me leave, with some very curious and valuable articles, highly desirable either for yourself or for little presents to your friends."

"I thank you," said Clarence, "I shall make no stay at W——, but I shall be glad to see you in town next week. Favor me, meanwhile, by accepting this trifle."

"Nay, nay, sir," said Mr. Brown, pocketing the money—"I

really cannot accept this—anything in the way of exchange—a ring, or a seal, or—”

“No, no, not at present,” said Clarence; “the night is coming on, and I shall make the best of my way. Good-by, Mr. Brown”; and Clarence trotted off; but he had scarce got sixty yards before he heard the itinerant merchant cry out—“Mr. Linden, Mr. Linden!” and looking back, he beheld the honest Brown putting his shaggy pony at full speed, in order to overtake him: so he pulled up.

“Well, Mr. Brown, what do you want?”

“Why, you see, sir, you gave me no exact answer about the plum-colored velvet inexpressibles,” said Mr. Brown.

CHAPTER LII.

“Are we contemned?”—*The Double Marriage.*

It was dusk when Clarence arrived at the very same inn at which, more than five years ago, he had assumed his present name. As he recalled the note addressed to him, and the sum (his whole fortune) which it contained, he could not help smiling at the change his lot had since then undergone: but the smile soon withered when he thought of the kind and paternal hand from which that change had proceeded, and knew that his gratitude was no longer availing, and that that hand, in pouring its last favors upon him, had become cold. He was ushered into No. Four, and left to his meditations till bed-time.

The next day he recommenced his journey. Westborough Park was, though in another county, within a short ride of W—; but, as he approached it, the character of the scenery became essentially changed. Bare, bold, and meagre, the features of the country bore somewhat of a Scottish character. On the right side of the road was a precipitous and perilous descent, and some workmen were placing posts along a path for foot-passengers on that side nearest the carriage-road, probably with a view to preserve unwary coachmen or equestrians from the dangerous vicinity to the descent, which a dark night might cause them to incur. As Clarence looked idly on the workmen, and painfully on the crumbling and fearful descent I have described, he little thought that that spot would, a few years after, become the scene of a catastrophe affecting in the most powerful degree the interests of his future life. Our young traveller put up his horse at a small inn,

bearing the Westborough arms, and situated at a short distance from the park gates. Now that he was so near his mistress—now that less than an hour, than the fourth part of an hour, might place him before her, and decide his fate, his heart, which had hitherto sustained him, grew faint, and presented first fear, then anxiety, and, at last, despondency to his imagination and forebodings.

“At all events,” said he, “I will see her alone before I will confer with her artful and proud mother, or her cipher of a father. I will then tell her all my history, and open to her all my secrets: I will only conceal from her my present fortunes, for, even if rumor should have informed her of them, it will be easy to give the report no sanction; I have a right to that trial. When she is convinced that, at least, neither my birth nor character can disgrace her, I shall see if her love can enable her to overlook my supposed poverty, and to share my uncertain lot. If so, there will be some triumph in undeceiving her error and rewarding her generosity: if not, I shall be saved from involving my happiness with that of one who looks only to my worldly possessions. I owe it to her, it is true, to show her that I am no low-born pretender; but I owe it also to myself to ascertain if my own individual qualities are sufficient to gain her hand.”

Fraught with these ideas, which were natural enough to a man whose peculiar circumstances were well calculated to make him feel rather soured and suspicious, and whose pride had been severely wounded by the contempt with which his letter had been treated—Clarence walked into the park, and, hovering around the house, watched and waited that opportunity of addressing Lady Flora, which he trusted her habits of walking would afford him; but hours rolled away, the evening set in, and Lady Flora had not once quitted the house.

More disappointed and sick at heart than he liked to confess, Clarence returned to his inn, took his solitary meal, and strolling once more into the park, watched beneath the windows till midnight, endeavoring to guess which were the casements of her apartments, and feeling his heart beat high at every light which flashed forth, and disappeared, and every form which flitted across the windows of the great staircase. Little did Lady Flora, as she sat in her room alone, and, in tears, mused over Clarence's fancied worthlessness and infidelity, and told her heart again and again that she loved no more—little did she know whose eye kept vigils without, or whose feet brushed away the rank dews beneath her windows, or whose thoughts,

though not altogether unmingled with reproach, were riveted with all the ardor of a young and first love upon her.

It was unfortunate for Linden that he had no opportunity of personally pleading his suit; his altered form and faded countenance would at least have insured a hearing and an interest for his honest though somewhat haughty sincerity; but though that day, and the next, and the next, were passed in the most anxious and unremitting vigilance, Clarence only once caught a glimpse of Lady Flora, and then she was one amidst a large party; and Clarence, fearful of a premature and untimely discovery, was forced to retire into the thicknesses of the park, and lose the solitary reward of his watches almost as soon as he had won it.

Wearied and racked by his suspense, and despairing of obtaining any favorable opportunity for an interview, without such a request, Clarence at last resolved to write to Lady Flora, entreating her assent to a meeting, in which he pledged himself to clear up all that had hitherto seemed doubtful in his conduct or mysterious in his character. Though respectful, urgent, and bearing the impress of truth and feeling, the tone of the letter was certainly that of a man who conceived he had a right to a little resentment for the past, and a little confidence for the future. It was what might well be written by one who imagined his affection had once been returned, but would as certainly have been deemed very presumptuous by a lady who thought that the affection itself was a liberty.

Having penned this epistle, the next care was how to convey it. After much deliberation, it was at last committed to the care of a little girl, the daughter of the lodge-keeper, whom Lady Flora thrice a week personally instructed in the mysteries of spelling, reading, and calligraphy. With many injunctions to deliver the letter only to the hands of the beautiful teacher, Clarence trusted his despatches to the little scholar, and, with a trembling frame and wistful eye, watched Susan take her road, with her green satchel and her shining cheeks, to the great house.

One hour, two hours, three hours, passed, and the messenger had not returned. Restless and impatient, Clarence walked back to his inn, and had not been there many minutes before a servant, in the Westborough livery, appeared at the door of the humble hostelry, and left the following letter for his perusal and gratification:

“SIR:

“The letter intended for my daughter, has just been given to

me by Lady Westborough. I know not what gave rise to the language, or the very extraordinary request for a clandestine meeting, which you have thought proper to address to Lady Flora Ardenne; but you will allow me to observe, that if you intend to confer upon my daughter the honor of a matrimonial proposal, she fully concurs with me and her mother in the negative which I feel necessitated to put upon your obliging offer.

"I need not add that all correspondence with my daughter must close here. I have the honor to be,—Sir,

"Your very obedient servant,

"WESTBOROUGH.

"Westborough Park.

"To Clarence Linden, Esq."

Had Clarence's blood been turned to fire, his veins could not have swelled and burnt with a fiercer heat than they did, as he read the above letter—a masterpiece, perhaps, in the line of what may be termed the "d—d civil" of epistolary favors.

"Insufferable arrogance!" he muttered within his teeth. "I will live to repay it. Perfidious, unfeeling woman—what an escape I have had of her!—Now, now, I am on the world, and alone, thank Heaven. I will accept Aspeden's offer and leave this country; when I return, it shall not be as a humble suitor to Lady Flora Ardenne. Pish! how the name sickens me: but come, I have a father—at least a nominal one. He is old and weak, and may die before I return. I will see him once more, and then, hey for Italy! Oh! I am so happy—so happy at my freedom and escape. What, ho!—waiter!—my horse instantly!"

CHAPTER LIII.

Lucr.—What has thy father done?

Beat.—What have I done?

Am I not innocent?—*The Cenci.*

THE twilight was darkening slowly over a room of noble dimensions, and costly fashion. Although it was the height of summer, a low fire burnt in the grate; and, stretching his hands over the feeble flame, an old man, of about sixty, sate in an arm-chair curiously carved with armorial bearings. The dim, yet fitful flame, cast its upward light upon a countenance stern, haughty, and repellent, where the passions of youth and manhood had dug themselves graves in many an iron line and deep furrow: the forehead, though high, was narrow and compressed;

the brows sullenly overhung the eyes, and the nose, which was singularly prominent and decided, age had sharpened, and brought out, as it were, till it gave a stubborn and very forbidding expression to the more sunken features over which it rose with exaggerated dignity. Two bottles of wine, a few dried preserves, and a water-glass, richly chased, and ornamented with gold, showed that the inmate of the apartment had passed the hour of the principal repast, and his loneliness, at a time usually social, seemed to indicate that few olive branches were accustomed to overshadow his table.

The windows of the dining-room reached to the ground, and without the closing light just enabled one to see a thick copse of wood, which, at a very brief interval of turf, darkened immediately opposite the house. While the old man was thus bending over the fire and conning his evening contemplations, a figure stole from the copse I have mentioned, and, approaching the window, looked pryingly into the apartment; then with a noiseless hand it opened the spring of the casement, which was framed on a peculiar and old-fashioned construction, that required a practised and familiar touch—entered the apartment, and crept on, silent and unperceived by the inhabitant of the room, till it paused and stood motionless with folded arms, scarce three steps behind the high back of the old man's chair.

In a few minutes the latter moved from his position, and slowly rose; the abruptness with which he turned brought the dark figure of the intruder full and suddenly before him: he started back, and cried in an alarmed tone—"Who is there?"

The stranger made no reply.

The old man, in a voice in which anger and pride mingled with fear, repeated the question. The figure advanced, dropped the cloak in which it was wrapped, and presenting the features of Clarence Linden, said, in a low but clear tone:

"Your son."

The old man dropped his hold of the bell-rope, which he had just before seized, and leaned as if for support against the oak wainscot; Clarence approached.

"Yes!" said he mournfully, "your unfortunate, your offending, but your guiltless son. More than five years I have been banished from your house. I have been thrown, while yet a boy, without friends, without guidance, without name, upon the wide world, and to the mercy of chance. I come now to you as a man, claiming no assistance and uttering no reproach, but to tell you that him whom an earthly father rejected, God

has preserved ; that without one unworthy or debasing act, I have won for myself the friends who support, and the wealth which dignifies, life,—since it renders it independent. Through all the disadvantages I have struggled against, I have preserved unimpaired my honor, and unsullied my conscience ; you have disowned, but you might have claimed me without shame. Father, these hands are clean !”

A strong and evident emotion shook the old man's frame. He raised himself to his full height, which was still tall and commanding, and in a voice, the natural harshness of which was rendered yet more repellent by passion, replied, “Boy ! Your presumption is insufferable. What to me is your wretched fate ? Go—go—go to your miserable mother ; find her out—claim kindred there ; live together, toil together, rot together ; but come not to me !—disgrace to my house—ask not admittance to my affections ; the law may give you my name, but sooner would I be torn piece-meal than own your right to it. If you want money, name the sum, take it ; cut up my fortune to shreds—seize my property—revel on it—but come not *here*. This house is sacred ; pollute it not : I disown you ; I discard you ; I—ay, I detest—I loathe you !”

And with these words, which came forth as if heaved from the inmost heart of the speaker, who shook with the fury he endeavored to stifle, he fell back into his chair, and fixed his eyes, which glared fearfully through the increasing darkness, upon Linden, who stood high, erect, and sorrowfully before him.

“Alas, my lord !” said Clarence, with mournful bitterness, “have not the years which have seared your form and whitened your locks brought some meekness to your rancor, some mercy to your injustice, for one whose only crime against you seems to have been his birth. But I said I came not to reproach—nor do I. Many a bitter hour, many a pang of shame, and mortification, and misery, which have made scars in my heart that will never wear away, my wrongs have cost me—but let them pass. Let them not swell your future and last account whenever it be required. I am about to leave this country, with a heavy and foreboding heart ; we may never meet again on earth. I have no longer any wish, any chance of resuming the name you have deprived me of. I shall never thrust myself on your relationship, or cross your view. Lavish your wealth upon him whom you have placed so immeasurably above me in your affections. But I have not deserved your curse, father ; give me your blessing, and let me depart in peace.”

"Peace! and what peace have I had?—what respite from gnawing shame, the foulness and leprosy of humiliation and reproach, since—since—? But this is not your fault, you say: no, no—it is another's; and you are only the mark of my stigma, my disgrace, not its perpetrator. Ha! a nice distinction, truly. My blessing, you say! Come, kneel; kneel, boy, and have it!"

Clarence approached, and stood bending and bareheaded before his father, but he knelt not.

"Why do you not kneel?" cried the old man vehemently.

"It is the attitude of the injurer, not of the injured!" said Clarence firmly.

"Injured!—insolent reprobate—is it not I who am injured? Do you not read it in my brow—here, here?" and the old man struck his clenched hand violently against his temples. "Was I not injured (he continued, sinking his voice into a key unnaturally low)? did I not trust implicitly? Did I not give up my heart without suspicion? Was I not duped deliciously? Was I not kind enough, blind enough, fool enough—and was I not betrayed—damnably, filthily betrayed? But that was *no* injury. Was not my old age turned, a sapless tree, a poisoned spring? Were not my days made a curse to me, and my nights a torture? Was I not, am I not, a mock, and a byword, and a miserable, impotent, unavenged old man! Injured! But this is no injury! Boy, boy, what are your wrongs to mine?"

"Father!" cried Clarence deprecatingly, "I am not the cause of your wrongs: is it just that the innocent should suffer for the guilty?"

"Speak not in that voice!" cried the old man—"that voice! Fie, fie on it. Hence! away! away, boy!—why tarry you!—My son, and have that voice?—Pooh, you are *not* my son. Ha, ha!—*my* son!"

"What am I, then?" said Clarence soothingly; for he was shocked and grieved, rather than irritated, by a wrath which partook so strongly of insanity.

"I will tell you," cried the father—"I will tell you what you are—you are my curse!"

"Farewell!" said Clarence, much agitated, and retiring to the window by which he had entered; "may your heart never smite you for your cruelty! Farewell! may the blessing you have withheld from me be with you!"

"Stop! stay!" cried the father; for his fury was checked for one moment, and his nature, fierce as it was, relented; but

Clarence was already gone, and the miserable old man was left alone to darkness, and solitude, and the passions which can make a hell of the human heart!

CHAPTER LIV.

“Sed quæ præclara, et prospera tanti,
Ut rebus lætis par sit mensura malorum.”*—JUVENAL.

WE are now transported to a father and a son of a very different stamp.

It was about the hour of one, P. M., when the door of Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt's study was thrown open, and the servant announced Mr. Brown.

“Your servant, sir—your servant, Mr. Henry,” said the itinerant, bowing low to the two gentlemen thus addressed. The former, Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt, might be about the same age as Linden's father. A shrewd, sensible, ambitious man of the world, he had made his way from the state of a younger brother, with no fortune and very little interest, to considerable wealth, besides the property he had acquired by law, and to a degree of consideration for general influence and personal ability, which, considering he had no official or parliamentary rank, very few of his equals enjoyed. Persevering, steady, crafty, and possessing, to an eminent degree, that happy art of “*canting*” which opens the readiest way to character and consequence, the rise and reputation of Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt appeared less to be wondered at than envied; yet, even envy was only for those who could not look beyond the surface of things. He was at heart an anxious and unhappy man. The evil we do in the world is often paid back in the bosom of home. Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt was, like Crauford, what might be termed a mistaken utilitarian; he had lived utterly and invariably for self; but instead of uniting self-interest with the interest of others, he considered them as perfectly incompatible ends. But character was among the greatest of all objects to him; so that, though he had rarely deviated into what might fairly be termed a virtue, he had never transgressed what might rigidly be called a propriety. He had not the aptitude, the wit, the moral audacity of Crauford; he could not have indulged in one offence with impunity, by a mingled

* But what excellence or prosperity so great that there should be an equal measure of evils for our joys.

courage and hypocrisy in veiling others—he was the slave of the forms which Crauford subjugated to himself. He was only so far resembling Crauford; as one man of the world resembles another in selfishness and dissimulation; he could be dishonest, not villainous, much less a villain upon system. He was a *canter*, Crauford a *hypocrite*: his uttered opinions were, like Crauford's, differing from his conduct; but he *believed* the truth of the former even while sinning in the latter; he canted so sincerely that the tears came in his eyes when he spoke. Never was there a man more exemplary in words; people who departed from him went away impressed with the idea of an excess of honor—a plethora of conscience. “It was almost a pity,” said they, “that Mr. Vavasour was so romantic”; and thereupon they named him an executor to their wills and guardian to their sons. None but he could, in carrying the lawsuit against Mordaunt, have lost nothing in reputation by success. But there was something so specious, so ostensibly fair in his manner and words, while he was ruining Mordaunt, that it was impossible not to suppose he was actuated by the purest motives, the most holy desire for justice—not for himself, he said, for he was old, and already rich enough,—but for his son! From that son came the punishment of all his offenses—the black drop at the bottom of a bowl, seemingly so sparkling. To him, as the father grew old, and desirous of quiet, Vavasour had transferred all his selfishness, as if to a securer and more durable firm. The child, when young, had been singularly handsome and intelligent; but Vavasour, as he toiled and toiled at his ingenious and graceful cheateries, pleased himself with anticipating the importance and advantages the heir to his labor would enjoy. For that son he certainly *had* persevered more arduously than otherwise he might have done in the lawsuit, of the justice of which he better satisfied the world than his own breast; for that son he rejoiced as he looked around the stately halls and noble domain from which the rightful possessor had been driven; for that son he extended economy into penuriousness, and hope into anxiety; and, too old to expect much more from the world himself, for that son he anticipated, with a wearing and feverish fancy, whatever wealth could purchase, beauty win, or intellect command.

But as if, like the Castle of Otranto, there was something in Mordaunt Court which contained a penalty and a doom for the usurper, no sooner had Vavasour possessed himself of his kinsman's estate, than the prosperity of his life dried and withered

away, like Jonah's gourd, in a single night. His son, at the age of thirteen, fell from a scaffold, on which the workmen were making some extensive alterations in the old house, and became a cripple and a valetudinarian for life. But still Vavasour, always of a sanguine temperament, cherished a hope that surgical assistance might restore him: from place to place, from professor to professor, from quack to quack, he carried the unhappy boy, and as each remedy failed, he was only the more impatient to devise a new one. But as it was the mind as well as person of his son in which the father had stored up his ambition; so, in despite of this fearful accident, and the wretched health by which it was followed, Vavasour never suffered his son to rest from the tasks, and tuitions, and lectures of the various masters by whom he was surrounded. The poor boy, it is true, deprived of physical exertion, and naturally of a serious disposition, required very little urging to second his father's wishes for his mental improvement; and as the tutors were all of the orthodox university calibre, who imagine that there is no knowledge (but vanity) in any other works than those in which their own education has consisted; so Henry Vavasour became at once the victor and victim of Bentleys and Scaligers, word-weighers and metre-scanners, till, utterly ignorant of everything which could have softened his temper, dignified his misfortunes, and reconciled him to his lot, he was sinking fast into the grave, soured by incessant pain into moroseness, envy, and bitterness; exhausted by an unwholesome and useless application to unprofitable studies; an excellent scholar (as it is termed), with the worst regulated and worst informed mind of almost any of his contemporaries equal to himself in the advantages of ability, original goodness of disposition, and the costly and profuse expenditure of education.

But the vain father, as he heard on all sides of his son's talents, saw nothing sinister in their direction; and though the poor boy grew daily more contracted in mind and broken in frame, Vavasour yet hugged more and more closely to his breast the hope of ultimate cure for the latter, and future glory for the former. So he went on heaping money, and extending acres, and planting, and improving, and building, and hoping, and anticipating, for one at whose very feet the grave was already dug!

But we left Mr Brown in the study, making his bow and professions of service to Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt and his son.

"Good day, *honest* Brown," said the former, a middle-sized and rather stout man, with a well-powdered head, and a sharp,

shrewd, and very sallow countenance; "good day—have you brought any of the foreign *liqueurs* you spoke of, for Mr. Henry?"

"Yes, sir, I have some curiously fine *eau d'or* and *liqueur des Vés*, besides the *marasquino* and *curaçoa*. The late Lady Waddilove honored my taste in these matters with her especial approbation."

"My dear boy," said Vavasour, turning to his son, who lay extended on the couch, reading, *not* the Prometheus (that most noble drama ever created), *but the notes upon it*—"my dear boy, as you are fond of *liqueurs*, I desired Brown to get some peculiarly fine; perhaps—"

"Pish!" said the son, fretfully interrupting him, "do, I beseech you, take your hand off my shoulder. See, now you have made me lose my place. I really do wish you would leave me alone for one moment in the day."

"I beg your pardon, Henry," said the father, looking reverently on the Greek characters which his son preferred to the newspaper. "It is very vexatious, I own; but do taste these *liqueurs*. Dr. Lukewarm said you might have everything you liked—"

"But quiet!" muttered the cripple.

"I assure you, sir," said the wandering merchant, "that they are excellent; allow me, Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt, to ring for a corkscrew. I really do think, sir, that Mr. Henry looks much better—I declare he has quite a color."

"No, indeed!" said Vavasour, eagerly. "Well it seems to me, too, that he is getting better. I intend to try Mr. E——'s patent collar in a day or two; but that will in some measure prevent his reading. A great pity: for I am very anxious that he should lose no time in his studies just at present. He goes to Cambridge in October."

"Indeed, sir. Well, he will set the town in a blaze, I guess, sir! Everybody says what a fine scholar Mr. Henry is—even in the servants' hall!"

"Ay, ay," said Vavasour, gratified even by this praise, "he is clever enough, Brown; and, what is more" (and here Vavasour's looks grew sanctified), "he is good enough. His principles do equal honor to his head and heart. He would be no son of mine if he were not as much the gentleman as the scholar."

The youth lifted his heavy and distorted face from his book, and a sneer raised his lip for a moment; but a sudden spasm of pain seizing him, the expression changed, and Vavasour, whose eyes were fixed upon him, hastened to his assistance.

“ Throw open the window, Brown ; ring the bell—call—”

“ Pooh, father,” cried the boy, with a sharp, angry voice, “ I am not going to die yet, nor faint either ; but it is all your fault. If you *will* have those odious, vulgar people here for *your own* pleasure, at least suffer me, another day, to retire.”

“ My son, my son !” said the grieved father, in reproachful anger, “ it was my anxiety to give you some trifling enjoyment that brought Brown here—you must be sensible of that !”

“ You tease me to death,” grumbled the peevish unfortunate.

“ Well, sir,” said Mr. Brown, “ shall I leave the bottles here ? or do you please that I should give them to the butler ? I see that I am displeasing and troublesome to Mr. Henry ; but as my worthy friend and patroness, the late Lady—”

Go—go—honest Brown ?” said Vavasour (who desired every man’s good word)—“ go and give the *liqueurs* to Preston. Mr. Henry is extremely sorry that he is too unwell to see you now ; and I—I have the heart of a father for his sufferings.”

Mr. Brown withdrew. “ ‘ Odious and vulgar,’ ” said he to himself, in a little fury—for Mr. Brown peculiarly valued himself on his gentility—“ ‘ odious and vulgar !’ To think of his little *lordship* uttering such shameful words ! However, I will go into the steward’s room, and abuse him there. But, I suppose, I shall get no dinner in this house—no, not so much as a crust of bread ; for while the old gentleman is launching out into such prodigious expenses on a great scale—making heathenish temples, and spoiling the fine old house with his new picture gallery and nonsense—he is so close in small matters, that I warrant not a candle-end escapes him—gripping, and pinching, and squeezing with one hand, and scattering money, as if it were dirt, with the other—and all for that cross, ugly, deformed, little whippersnapper of a son. ‘ Odious and vulgar,’ indeed ! What shocking language ! Mr. Algernon Mordaunt would never have made use of such words, I know. And bless me, now I think of it, I wonder where that poor gentleman is—the young heir here is not long for this world, I can see ; and who know but what Mr. Algernon may be in great distress ; and I am sure, as far as four hundred pounds, or even a thousand, go, I would not mind lending it him, only upon the post-obits of Squire Vavasour and his hopeful. I like doing a kind thing ; and Mr. Algernon was always very good to me ; and I am sure I don’t care about the security, though I think it will be as sure as sixpence ; for the old gentleman must be past sixty, and the young one is the worse life of the two. And when he’s gone—what relation so near as Mr. Algernon ? We should help one another—it is but one’s

duty : and if he is in great distress he would not mind a handsome premium. Well, nobody can say Morris Brown is not as charitable as the best Christian breathing ; and, as the late Lady Waddilove very justly observed, ‘Brown, believe me, a prudent risk is the surest gain !’ I will lose no time in finding the late squire out.”

Muttering over these reflections, Mr. Brown took his way to the steward’s room.

CHAPTER LV.

Clar.—How, two letters?—*The Lover’s Progress.*

LETTER FROM CLARENCE LINDEN, ESQ., TO THE DUKE OF HAVERFIELD.

Hotel —, Calais.

“MY DEAR DUKE:—After your kind letter, you will forgive me for not having called upon you before I left England—for you have led me to hope that I may dispense with ceremony towards you ; and, in sad and sober earnest, I was in no mood to visit even you during the few days I was in London, previous to my departure. Some French philosopher has said that ‘the best compliment we can pay our friends, when in sickness or misfortune, is to avoid them.’ I will not say how far I disagree with this sentiment : but I know that a French philosopher will be an unanswerable authority with you ; and so I will take shelter even under the battery of an enemy.

“I am waiting here for some days in expectation of Lord Aspeden’s arrival. Sick as I was of England, and all that has lately occurred to me there, I was glad to have an opportunity of leaving it sooner than my chief could do ; and I amuse myself very indifferently in this dull town, with reading all the morning, plays all the evening, and dreams of my happier friends all the night.

“And so you are sorry that I did not destroy Lord Bordaile. My dear duke, you would have been much more sorry if I had ! What could you then have done for a living Pasquin for your stray lampoons and vagrant sarcasms ? Had an unfortunate bullet carried away

“‘ That peer of England—pillar of the state,’

as you term him, pray *on* whom could ‘Duke Humphrey unfold his griefs?’—Ah, Duke, better as it is, believe me ; and, whenever you are at a loss for a subject for wit, you will find

cause to bless my forbearance, and congratulate yourself upon the existence of its object.

“Dare I hope that, amidst all the gayeties which court you, you will find time to write to me? If so, you shall have in return the earliest intelligence of every new soprano, and the most elaborate criticisms on every budding figurante of our court.

“Have you met Trollop lately—and in what new pursuit are his intellectual energies engaged? There, you see, I have fairly entrapped your Grace into a question, which common courtesy will oblige you to answer.

“Adieu, ever, my dear duke,

“Most truly yours, etc.”

LETTER FROM THE DUKE OF HAVERFIELD TO CLARENCE LINDEN, ESQ.

“A THOUSAND thanks, *mon cher*, for your letter, though it was certainly less amusing and animated than I could have wished it for your sake, as well as my own; yet it could not have been more welcome received, had it been as witty as your conversation itself. I heard that you had accepted the place of secretary to Lord Aspeden, and that you had passed through London on your way to the continent, looking—(the amiable Callythorpe, ‘who never flatters,’ is my authority)—more like a ghost than yourself. So you may be sure my dear Linden, that I was very anxious to be convinced, under your own hand, of your carnal existence.

“Take care of yourself, my good fellow, and don’t imagine, as I am apt to do, that youth is like my hunter, Fearnought, and will carry you over everything. In return for your philosophical maxim, I will give you another. “In age we should remember that we *have been* young, and in youth that we are *to be* old.”—Ehem!—am I not profound as a moralist? I think a few such sentences would become my long face well; and, to say truth, I am tired of being witty—every one thinks he can be that—so I will borrow Trollop’s philosophy—take snuff, wear a wig out of curl, and grow wise instead of merry.

“Apropos of Trollop; let me not forget that you honor him with your inquiries. I saw him three days since, and he asked me if I had been impressed lately with the idea vulgarly called Clarence Linden; and he then proceeded to inform me that he had heard the atoms which composed your frame were about to be resolved into a new form. While I was knitting my brows very wisely at this intelligence, he passed on to apprise me that I had neither length, breath, nor extension, nor any-

thing but mind. Flattered by so delicate a compliment to my understanding, I yielded my assent; and he then shifted his ground, and told me that there was no such thing as mind—that we were but modifications of matter—and that, in a word, I was all body. I took advantage of this doctrine, and forthwith removed my modification of matter from his.

“Findlater has just lost his younger brother in a duel. You have no idea how shocking it was. Sir Christopher one day heard his brother, who had just entered the — dragoons, ridiculed for his want of spirit, by Major Elton, who professed to be the youth’s best friend—the honest heart of our worthy baronet was shocked beyond measure at this perfidy, and the next time his brother mentioned Elton’s name with praise, out came the story. You may guess the rest; young Findlater called out Elton, who shot him through the lungs!—‘I did it for the best,’” cried Sir Christopher.

“*La pauvre petite Meronville!*—What an Ariadne! Just as I was thinking to play the Bacchus to your Theseus, up steps an old gentleman from Yorkshire, who hears it is fashionable to marry *bonas robas*, proposes honorable matrimony, and deprives me and the world of La Meronville! The wedding took place on Monday last, and the happy pair set out to their seat in the North. Verily, we shall have quite a new race in the next generation—I expect all the babes will skip into the world with a *pas de zephyr*, singing in sweet trebles:

‘Little dancing loves we are!
—Who the deuce is our papa?’

“I think you will be surprised to hear that Lord Borodaile is beginning to thaw—I saw him smile the other day! Certainly, we are not so near the North Pole as we were! He is going, and so am I in the course of the autumn, to your old friends, the Westboroughs. Report says that he is *un peu épris de la belle Flore*; but, then, Report is such a liar!—For my own part I always contradict her.

“I eagerly embrace your offer of correspondence, and assure you that there are few people by whose friendship I conceive myself so much honored as by yours. You will believe this; for you know that, like Callythorpe, I never flatter.—Farewell for the present.

“Sincerely yours,

“HAVERFIELD.”

CHAPTER LVI.

Q. Eliz.—Shall I be tempted of the devil thus?

K. Rich.—Ay, if the devil tempt thee to do good.

Q. Eliz.—Shall I forget myself to be myself?

—SHAKESPEARE.

IT wanted one hour to midnight, as Crauford walked slowly to the lonely and humble street where he had appointed his meeting with Glendower. It was a stormy and fearful night. The day had been uncommonly sultry, and as it died away thick masses of clouds came laboring along the air, which lay heavy and breathless, as if under a spell—as if in those dense and haggard vapors the rider of the storm sat, like an incubus, upon the atmosphere beneath, and paralyzed the motion and wholesomeness of the sleeping winds. And about the hour of twilight, or rather when twilight should have been, instead of its quiet star from one obscure corner of the heavens flashed a solitary gleam of lightning, lingered a moment:

“And ere a man had power to say, Behold!
The jaws of darkness did devour it up.”

But then, as if awakened from a torpor by a signal universally acknowledged, from the courts and quarters of heaven came, blaze after blaze, and peal upon peal, the light and voices of the Elements when they walk abroad. The rain fell not; all was dry and arid; the mood of Nature seemed not gentle enough for tears; and the lightning, livid and forked, flashed from the sullen clouds with a deadly fierceness, made trebly perilous by the panting drought and stagnation of the air. The streets were empty and silent, as if the huge city had been doomed and delivered to the wrath of the tempest—and ever and anon the lightnings paused upon the housetops, shook and quivered as if meditating their stroke, and then baffled, as it were, by some superior and guardian agency, vanished into their gloomy tents, and made their next descent from some opposite corner of the skies.

It was a remarkable instance of the force with which a cherished object occupies the thoughts, and of the all-sufficiency of the human mind to itself, the slowness and unconsciousness of danger with which Crauford, a man luxurious as well as naturally timid, moved amidst the angry fires of heaven, and brooded, undisturbed, and sullenly serene, over the project at his heart.

“A rare night for our meeting,” thought he, “I suppose he

will not fail me. Now let me con over my task. I must not tell him all yet. Such babes must be led into error before they can walk—just a little inkling will suffice—a glimpse into the arcana of my scheme. Well, it is indeed fortunate that I met him, for verily I am surrounded with danger, and a very little delay in the assistance I am forced to seek might exalt me to a higher elevation than the peerage.”

Such was the meditation of this man, as with a slow, shuffling walk, characteristic of his mind, he proceeded to the appointed spot.

A cessation of unusual length in the series of the lightnings, and the consequent darkness, against which the dull and scanty lamps vainly struggled, prevented Crauford and another figure, approaching from the opposite quarter, seeing each other till they almost touched—Crauford stopped abruptly.

“Is it you?” said he.

“It is a man who has outlived fortune!” answered Glendower, in the exaggerated and metaphorical language which the thoughts of men who imagine warmly, and are excited powerfully, so often assume.

“Then,” rejoined Crauford, “you are the more suited for my purpose. A little urging of necessity behind is a marvellous whetter of the appetite to danger before.—He!—he!” And as he said this, his low, chuckling laugh jarringly enough contrasted with the character of the night and his companion. Glendower replied not: a pause ensued; and the lightning, which, spreading on a sudden from east to west, hung over the city a burning and ghastly canopy, showed the face of each to the other, working, and almost haggard, as it was, with the conception of dark thoughts, and rendered wan and unearthly by the spectral light in which it was beheld. “It is an awful night!” said Glendower.

“True,” answered Crauford—“a very awful night; but we are safe under the care of Providence.—Jesus! what a flash! Think you it is a favorable opportunity for our conversation?”

“Why not?” said Glendower; “what have the thunders and wrath of Heaven to do with us?”

“H—e—m! h—e—m! God sees all things,” rejoined Crauford, “and avenges himself on the guilty by his storms!”

“Ay; but those are the storms of the heart! I tell you that even the innocent may have that within to which the loudest tempests without are peace! But guilt, you say—what have *we* to do with guilt?”

Crauford hesitated, and, avoiding any reply to this question,

drew Glendower's arm within his own, and, in a low, half-whispered tone said:

"Glendower, survey mankind; look with a passionless and unprejudiced eye upon the scene which moves around us: what do you see anywhere but the same re-acted and eternal law of nature—all, all preying upon each other? Or if there be a solitary individual who refrains, he is as a man without a common badge, without a marriage garment, and the rest trample him under foot! Glendower, *you* are such a man! Now hearken, I will deceive you not; I honor you too much to beguile you, even to your own good. I own to you, fairly and at once, that in the scheme I shall unfold to you, there may be something repugnant to the factitious and theoretical principles of education—something hostile to the prejudices, though not to the reasonings, of the mind; but—"

"Hold!" said Glendower abruptly, pausing and fixing his bold and searching eye upon the tempter; "hold!—there will be no need of argument or refinement in this case: tell me at once your scheme, and at once I will accept or reject it!"

"Gently," answered Crauford: "to all deeds of contract there is a preamble. Listen to me yet farther: when I have ceased, I will listen to you. It is in vain that you place man in cities—it is in vain that you fetter him with laws—it is in vain that you pour into his mind the light of an imperfect morality, of a glimmering wisdom, of an ineffectual religion: in all places he is the same—the same savage and crafty being, who makes the passions which rule himself the tools of his conquest over others! There is in all creation but one evident law—self-preservation! Split it as you like into hairbreadths and atoms, it is still fundamentally and essentially unaltered. Glendower, that self-preservation is our bond now. Of myself I do not at present speak—I refer only to you: self-preservation commands you to place implicit confidence in me; it impels you to abjure indigence, by accepting the proposal I am about to make to you."

"You, as yet, speak enigmas," said Glendower; "but they are sufficiently clear to tell me their sense is not such as I have heard you utter."

"You are right. Truth is not always safe—safe either to others, or to ourselves! But I dare open to you now my real heart: look in it—I dare to say that you will behold charity, benevolence, piety to God, love and friendship at this moment to yourself; but I own, also, that you will behold there a determination—which, to me, seems courage—not to be the only

idle being in the world, where all are busy; or worse still, to be the only one engaged in a perilous and uncertain game, and yet shunning to employ all the arts of which he is master. I will own to you that, long since, had I been foolishly inert, I should have been at this moment more penniless and destitute than yourself. I live happy, respected, wealthy! I enjoy in their widest range the blessings of life. I dispense those blessings to others: Look round the world—whose name stands fairer than mine? whose hand relieves more of human distresses? whose tongue preaches purer doctrines? None, Glendower, none. I offer to you means not dissimilar to those I have chosen—fortunes not unequal to those I possess. Nothing but the most unjustifiable fastidiousness will make you hesitate to accept my offer.”

“You cannot expect that I have met you this night with a resolution to be unjustifiably fastidious,” said Glendower, with a hollow and cold smile.

Crauford did not immediately answer, for he was considering whether it was yet the time for disclosing the important secret. While he was deliberating, the sullen clouds began to break from their suspense. A double darkness gathered around, and a few large drops fell on the ground in token of a more general discharge about to follow from the floodgates of heaven. The two men moved onward, and took shelter under an old arch. Crauford first broke silence. “Hist,” said he—“hist—do you hear anything?”

“Yes! I heard the winds and the rain, and the shaking houses, and the plashing pavements, and the reeking housetops; nothing more.”

Looking long and anxiously around to certify himself that none was indeed the witness of their conference, Crauford approached close to Glendower, and laid his hand heavily upon his arm. At that moment a vivid and lengthened flash of lightning shot through the ruined arch, and gave to Crauford's countenance a lustre which Glendower almost started to behold. The face, usually so smooth, calm, bright in complexion, and almost inexpressive from its extreme composure, now agitated by the excitement of the moment, and tinged by the ghastly light of the skies, became literally fearful. The cold blue eye glared out from its socket—the lips blanched, and, parting in act to speak, showed the white glistening teeth; and the corners of the mouth, drawn down in a half sneer, gave to the cheeks, rendered green and livid by the lightning, a lean and hollow appearance, contrary to their natural shape.

"It is," said Crauford, in a whispered but distinct tone, "a perilous secret that I am about to disclose to you. I indeed have no concern in it, but my lords the judges have, and you will not therefore be surprised if I forestall the ceremonies of their court, and require an oath."

Then, his manner and voice suddenly changing into an earnest and deep solemnity, as excitement gave him an eloquence more impressive, because unnatural to his ordinary moments, he continued: "By those lightnings and commotions above—by the heavens in which they revel in their terrible sports—by the earth, whose towers they crumble, and herbs they blight, and creatures they blast into cinders at their will—by Him whom, whatever be the name He bears, all men in the living world worship and tremble before—by whatever is sacred in this great and mysterious universe, and at the peril of whatever can wither, and destroy, and curse—swear to preserve inviolable and for ever the secret I shall whisper to your ear!"

The profound darkness which now, in the pause of the lightning, wrapt the scene, hid from Crauford all sight of the effect he had produced, and even the very outline of Glendower's figure: but the gloom made more distinct the voice which thrilled through it upon Crauford's ear.

"Promise me that there is not dishonor, nor crime, which is dishonor, in this confidence, and I swear."

Crauford ground his teeth. He was about to reply impetuously, but he checked himself. "I am not going," thought he, "to communicate my own share of this plot, but merely to state that a plot does exist, and then to point out in what manner he can profit by it—so far, therefore, there is no guilt in his concealment, and, consequently, no excuse for him to break his vow."

Rapidly running over this self-argument, he said aloud—"I promise!"

"And," rejoined Glendower, "I swear!"

At the close of this sentence another flash of lightning again made darkness visible, and Glendower, beholding the countenance of his companion, again recoiled; for its mingled haggardness and triumph seemed to his excited imagination the very expression of a fiend!—"Now," said Crauford, relapsing into his usual careless tone, somewhat enlivened by his sneer, "now, then, you must not interrupt me in my disclosure, by those starts and exclamations which break from your philosophy like sparks from flint. Hear me throughout."

And, bending down, till his mouth reached Glendower's ear, he commenced his recital. Artfully hiding his own agency, the master-spring of the gigantic machinery of fraud, which, too mighty for a single hand, required an assistant—throwing into obscurity the sin, while, knowing the undaunted courage and desperate fortunes of the man, he did not affect to conceal the danger—expatiating upon the advantages, the immense and almost inexhaustible resources of wealth which his scheme suddenly opened upon one in the deepest abyss of poverty, and slightly sketching, as if to excite vanity, the ingenuity and genius by which the scheme originated, and could only be sustained—Crauford's detail of temptation, in its knowledge of human nature, in its adaptation of act to principles, in its web-like craft of self-concealment, and the speciousness of its lure, was indeed a splendid masterpiece of villainous invention.

But while Glendower listened, and his silence flattered Crauford's belief of victory, not for one single moment did a weak or yielding desire creep around his heart. Subtly as the scheme was varnished, and scarce a tittle of its comprehensive enormity unfolded, the strong and acute mind of one long accustomed to unravel sophistry and gaze on the loveliness of truth, saw at once that the scheme proposed was of the most unmingled treachery and baseness. Sick, chilled, withering at heart, Glendower leant against the damp wall; as every word which the tempter fondly imagined was irresistibly confirming his purpose, tore away the last prop to which, in the credulity of hope, the student had clung, and mocked while it crushed the fondness of his belief.

Crauford ceased, and stretched forth his hand to grasp Glendower's. He felt it not.—“You do not speak, my friend,” said he; “do you deliberate, or have you not decided?” Still no answer came. Surprised, and half alarmed, he turned round, and perceived, by a momentary flash of lightning, that Glendower had risen, and was moving away towards the mouth of the arch.

“Good Heavens! Glendower,” cried Crauford, “where are you going?”

“Anywhere,” cried Glendower, in a sudden paroxysm of indignant passion, “anywhere in this great globe of suffering, so that the agonies of my human flesh and heart are not polluted by the accents of crime! And such crime!—Why, I would rather go forth into the highways, and win bread by the sharp knife, and the death-struggle, than sink my soul in such mire and filthiness of sin. Fraud—fraud—treachery! Merciful

Father! what can be my state, when these are supposed to tempt me!"

Astonished and aghast, Crauford remained rooted to the spot.

"Oh!" continued Glendower—and his noble nature was wrung to the utmost; "Oh, MAN—MAN! that I should have devoted my best and freshest years to the dream of serving thee! In my boyish enthusiasm, in my brief day of pleasure and of power, in the intoxication of love, in the reverse of fortune, in the squalid and obscure chambers of degradation and poverty, that one hope animated, cheered, sustained me through all! In temptation did this hand belie, or in sickness did this brain forego, or in misery did this heart forget, thy great and advancing cause? In the wide world, is there one being whom I have injured, even in thought—one being who, in the fellowship of want, should not have drunk of my cup, or broken with me the last morsel of my bread!—and now—now, is it come to this!"

And, hiding his face in his hands, he gave way to a violence of feeling, before which the weaker nature of Crauford stood trembling and abashed. It lasted not long; he raised his head from its drooping posture, and, as he stood at the entrance of the arch, a prolonged flash from the inconstant skies shone full upon his form. Tall, erect, still, the gloomy and ruined walls gave his colorless countenance and haughty stature in bold and distinct relief; all trace of the past passion had vanished: perfectly calm and set, his features borrowed even dignity from their marble paleness, and the marks of suffering, which the last few months had writ in legible characters on the cheek and brow. Seeking out, with an eye to which the intolerable lightnings seemed to have lent something of their fire, the cowering and bended form of his companion, he said:

"Go home, miserable derider of the virtue you cannot understand—go to your luxurious and costly home—go and repine that human nature is not measured by your mangled and crippled laws; amidst men, yet more fallen than I am, hope to select your victim—amidst prisons, and hovels, and roofless sheds—amidst rags and destitution, and wretches made mad by hunger, hope that you may find a villain.—I leave you to that hope, and—to remembrance!"

As Glendower moved away, Crauford recovered himself. Rendered desperate by the vital necessity of procuring some speedy aid in his designs, and not yet perfectly persuaded of the fallacy of his former judgment, he was resolved not to suffer Glendower thus easily to depart. Smothering his feelings by

an effort violent even to his habitual hypocrisy, he sprung forward, and laid his hand upon Glendower's shoulder.

"Stay, stay," said he, in a soothing and soft voice; "you have wronged me greatly. I pardon your warmth—nay, I honor it; but hereafter you will repent your judgment of me. At least, do justice to my intentions. Was I an actor in the scheme proposed to you?—what was it to me? Was I in the smallest degree to be benefited by it? Could I have any other motive than affection for you? If I erred, it was from a different view of the question; but is it not the duty of a friend to find expedients for distress, and to leave to the distressed person the right of accepting or rejecting them? But let this drop for ever—partake of my fortune—be my adopted brother. Here, I have hundreds about me at this moment; take them all, and own at least that I meant you well."

Feeling that Glendower, who at first had vainly endeavored to shake off his hand, now turned towards him, though at the moment it was too dark to see his countenance, the wily speaker continued—"Yes, Glendower, if by that name I must alone address you, take all I have—there is no one in this world dearer to me than you are. I am a lonely and disappointed man, without children or ties. I sought out a friend who might be my brother in life, and my heir in death. I found you—be that to me!"

"I am faint and weak," said Glendower slowly, "and I believe my senses cannot be clear; but a minute since, and you spoke at length, and with a terrible distinctness, words which it polluted my very ear to catch, and *now* you speak as if you loved me. Will it please you to solve the riddle?"

"The truth is this," said Crauford: "I knew your pride—I feared you would not accept a permanent pecuniary aid, even from friendship. I was driven therefore, to devise some plan of independence for you. I could think of no plan but that which I proposed. You speak of it as wicked: it may be so; but it seemed not wicked to me. I may have formed a wrong—I own it is a peculiar—system of morals; but it is, at least, sincere. Judging of my proposal by that system, I saw no sin in it. I saw, too, much less danger than, in the honesty of my heart, I spoke of. In a similar distress, I solemnly swear, I myself would have adopted a similar relief. Nor is this all; the plan proposed would have placed thousands in your power. Forgive me if I thought your life, and the lives of those most dear to you, of greater value than these sums to

the persons defrauded—ay—defrauded, if you will ; forgive me if I thought that with these thousands you would effect far more good to the community than their legitimate owners. Upon these grounds, and on some others, too tedious now to state, I justified my proposal to my conscience. Pardon me, I again beseech you : accept my last proposal ; be my partner, my friend, my heir ; and forget a scheme never proposed to you, if I had hoped (what I hope now) that you would accept the alternative which it is my pride to offer, and which you are not justified, even by pride, to refuse."

"Great Source of all knowledge !" ejaculated Glendower, scarcely audibly, and to himself. "Supreme and unfathomable God—dost thou most loathe or pity thine abased creatures, walking in their dim reason upon this little earth, and sanctioning fraud, treachery, crime, upon a principle borrowed from thy laws ! Oh ! when—when will thy full light of wisdom travel down to us, and guilt, and sorrow, and this world's evil mysteries roll away like vapors before the blaze !"

"I do not hear you, my friend," said Crauford. "Speak aloud ; you will—I feel you will, accept my offer, and become my brother !"

"Away !" said Glendower. "I will not."

"He wanders—his brain is touched !" muttered Crauford, and then resumed aloud—"Glendower, we are both unfit for talk at present—both unstrung by our late jar. You will meet me again to-morrow, perhaps. I will accompany you now to your door."

"Not a step : our paths are different."

"Well, well, if you will have it so, be it as you please. I have offended ; you have a right to punish me, and play the churl to-night ; but your address ?"

"Yonder," said Glendower, pointing to the heavens. "Come to me a month hence, and you will find me *there* !"

"Nay, nay, my friend, your brain is heated, but you leave me ! Well, as I said, your will is mine—at least take some of these paltry notes in earnest of our bargain ; remember when next we meet you will share all I have."

"You remind me," said Glendower, quietly, "that we have old debts to settle. When last I saw you, you lent me a certain sum—there it is—take it—count it—there is but one poor guinea gone. Fear not—even to the uttermost farthing you shall be repaid."

"Why, why, this is unkind, ungenerous. Stay, stay,—"
but, waving his hand impatiently, Glendower darted away,

and passing into another street, the darkness effectually closed upon his steps.

"Fool, fool that I am!" cried Crauford, stamping vehemently on the ground—"in what point did my wit fail me, that I could not win one whom very hunger had driven into my net! But I must yet find him—and I will—the police shall be set to work: these half confidences may ruin me. And how deceitful he has proved—to talk more diffidently than a whining harlot upon virtue, and yet be so stubborn upon trial! Dastard that I am too, as well as fool—I felt sunk into the dust by his voice. But pooh, I must have him yet; your worst villains make the most noise about the first step. True, that I cannot storm, but I will undermine. But, wretch that I am, I must win him or another soon, or I perish on a gibbet—Out, base thought!"

CHAPTER LVII.

"Formam quidem ipsam, Marce fili, et tanquam faciem honesti vides: quæ, si oculis cerneretur, mirabiles amores (ut ait Plato) excitaret sapientia."*—TULL.

It was almost dawn when Glendower returned to his home. Fearful of disturbing his wife, he stole with mute steps to the damp and rugged chamber, where the last son of a princely line, and the legitimate owner of lands and halls which ducal rank might have envied, held his miserable asylum. The first faint streaks of coming light broke through the shutterless and shattered windows, and he saw that *she* reclined in a deep sleep upon the chair beside their child's couch. She would not go to bed herself till Glendower returned, and she had sat up, watching and praying, and listening for his footsteps, till, in the utter exhaustion of debility and sickness, sleep had fallen upon her. Glendower bent over her.

"Sleep," said he, "sleep on! The wicked do not come to thee now. Thou art in a world that has no fellowship with this—a world from which even happiness is not banished! Nor woe, nor pain, nor memory of the past, nor despair of all before thee, make the characters of thy present state! Thou forestaltest the forgetfulness of the grave, and thy heart concentrates all earth's comfort in one word—'Oblivion.' Beautiful, *how* beautiful thou art even yet!—that smile, that momen-

* Son Marcus, you see the form and as it were the face of Virtue—that Wisdom, which, if it could be perceived by the eyes, would (as Plato saith) kindle absolute and marvellous affection.

tary blush, years have not conquered *them*. They are as when, my young bride, thou didst lean first upon my bosom, and dream that sorrow was no more! And I have brought thee unto this. These green walls make thy bridal chamber—yon fragments of bread thy bridal board. Well! it is no matter! thou art on thy way to a land where all things, even a breaking heart, are at rest. I weep not; wherefore should I weep! Tears are not for the dead, but their survivors. I would rather see thee drop inch by inch into the grave, and smile as I beheld it, than save thee for an inheritance of sin. What is there in this little and sordid life that we should strive to hold it? What in this dreadful dream that we should fear to wake?"

And Glendower knelt beside his wife, and, despite his words, tears flowed fast and gushingly down his cheeks; and wearied as he was, he watched upon her slumbers, till they fell from the eyes to which his presence was more joyous than the day.

It was a beautiful thing, even in sorrow, to see that couple, whom want could not debase, nor misfortune, which makes even generosity selfish, divorce! All that Fate had stripped from the poetry and graces of life had not shaken one leaf from the romance of their green and unwithered affections! They were the very type of love in its holiest and most enduring shape: their hearts had grown together—their being had flowed through caves and deserts, and reflected the storms of an angry Heaven; but its waters had indissolubly mingled into one! Young, gifted, noble, and devoted, they were worthy victims of this blighting and bitter world! Their garden was turned into a wilderness; but, like our first parents, it was hand in hand that they took their solitary way! Evil beset them, but they swerved not; the rains and the winds fell upon their unsheltered heads, but they were not bowed; and through the mazes and briars of this weary life, their bleeding footsteps strayed not, *for they had a clue!* The mind seemed, as it were, to become visible and *external* as the frame decayed, and to cover the body with something of its own invulnerable power; so that whatever should have attacked the moral and frail part, fell upon that which, imperishable and divine, resisted and subdued it!

It was unfortunate for Glendower that he never again met Wolfe; for neither fanaticism of political faith, nor sternness of natural temper, subdued in the republican the real benevolence and generosity which redeemed and elevated his character: nor could any impulse of party-zeal have induced him, like Crauford, systematically to take advantage of poverty in

order to tempt to participation in his schemes. From a more evil companion Glendower had not yet escaped : Crauford, by some means or other, found out his abode, and lost no time in availing himself of the discovery. In order fully to comprehend his unwearied persecution of Glendower, it must constantly be remembered, that to this persecution he was bound by a necessity which, urgent, dark, and implicating life itself, rendered him callous to every obstacle, and unsusceptible of all remorse. With the exquisite tact which he possessed, he never openly recurred to his former proposal of fraud : he contented himself with endeavoring to persuade Glendower to accept pecuniary assistance ; but in vain. The veil once torn from his character, no craft could restore. Through all his pretences, and seven-fold hypocrisy, Glendower penetrated at once into his real motives : he was not to be duped by assurances of friendship which he knew the very dissimilarities between their natures rendered impossible. He had seen at the first, despite of all allegations to the contrary, that in the fraud Crauford had proposed, that person could by no means be an uninfluenced and cold adviser. In after-conversations, Crauford, driven by the awful interest he had in success, from his usual consummateness of duplicity, betrayed in various important minutiae how deeply he was implicated in the crime for which he had argued ; and not even the visible and progressive decay of his wife and child could force the stern mind of Glendower into accepting those wages of iniquity which he knew well were only offered as an earnest or a snare.

There is a royalty in extreme suffering, when the mind falls not with the fortunes, which no hardihood of vice can violate unabashed. Often and often, humbled and defeated, through all his dissimulation, was Crauford driven from the presence of the man whom it was his bitterest punishment to fear most when most he affected to despise ; and *as* often, recollecting his powers, and fortifying himself in his experience of human frailty when sufficiently tried, did he return to his attempts. He waylaid the door and watched the paths of his intended prey. He knew that the mind which even best repels temptation first urged, hath seldom power to resist the same suggestion, if daily,—dropping,—enwearying,—presenting itself in every form,—obtruded in every hour,—losing its horror by custom,—and finding in the rebellious bosom itself its smoothest vizard and most alluring excuse. And it was, indeed, a mighty and perilous trial to Glendower, when rushing from the presence of his wife and child—when fainting under accumulated

evils—when almost delirious with sickening and heated thought, to hear at each prompting of the wrong and excited nature, each heave of the black fountain that in no mortal breast is utterly exhausted, one smooth, soft, persuasive voice forever whispering, “Relief!”—relief, certain, utter, instantaneous!—the voice of one pledged never to relax an effort or spare a pang, by a danger to himself, a danger of shame and death—the voice of one who never spoke but in friendship and compassion, profound in craft, and a very sage in the disguises with which language invests deeds.

But VIRTUE has resources buried in itself, which we know not, till the invading hour calls them from their retreats. Surrounded by hosts without, and when Nature itself, turned traitor, is its most deadly enemy within; it assumes a new and a superhuman power, which is greater than Nature itself. Whatever be its creed—whatever be its sect—from whatever segment of the globe its orisons arise, Virtue is God’s empire, and from His throne of thrones He will defend it. Though cast into the distant earth, and struggling on the dim arena of a human heart, all things above are spectators of its conflict, or enlisted in its cause. The angels have their charge over it—the banners of archangels are on its side; and from sphere to sphere, through the illimitable ether, and round the impenetrable darkness at the feet of God, its triumph is hymned by harps, which are strung to the glories of the Creator!

One evening, when Crauford had joined Glendower in his solitary wanderings, the dissembler renewed his attacks.

“But why not,” said he, “accept from my friendship what to my benevolence you would deny? I couple with my offers, my prayers rather, no conditions. How then *do* you, *can* you, reconcile it to your conscience, to suffer your wife and child to perish before your eyes?”

“Man—man,” said Glendower, “tempt me no more—let them die! At present the worst is death—what you offer me is dishonor.”

“Heavens!—how uncharitable is this! Can you call the mere act of accepting money from one who loves you, dishonor!”

“It is in vain that you varnish your designs,” said Glendower, stopping, and fixing his eyes upon him. “Do you not think that cunning ever betrays itself? In a thousand words—in a thousand looks, which have escaped *you*, but not *me*, I know that, if there be one being on this earth whom you hate, and would injure, that being is myself. Nay, start not—listen

to me patiently. I have sworn that it is the last opportunity you shall have. I will not subject myself to farther temptation: I am now sane; but there are things which may drive me mad, and in madness you might conquer. You hate me: it is out of the nature of earthly things that you should not. But even were it otherwise, do you think that I could believe you would come from your voluptuous home to these miserable retreats; that, among the lairs of beggary and theft, you would lie in wait to allure me to forsake poverty, without a stronger motive than love for one who affects it not for you? I know you—I have read your heart—I have penetrated into that stronger motive—it is your own safety. In the system of atrocity you proposed to me, you are the principal. You have already bared to me enough of the extent to which that system reaches, to convince me that a single miscreant, however ingenious, cannot, unassisted, support it with impunity. You want help: I am he in whom you have dared to believe that you could find it. You are detected—now be undeceived!”

“Is it so?” said Crauford; and as he saw that it was no longer possible to feign, the poison of his heart broke forth in its full venom. The fiend rose from the reptile, and stood exposed in its natural shape. Returning Glendower’s stern but lofty gaze with an eye to which all evil passions lent their unholy fire, he repeated, “Is it so?—then you are more penetrating than I thought; but it is indifferent to me. It was for your sake, not mine, most righteous man, that I wished you might have a disguise to satisfy the modesty of your punctilios. It is all one to Richard Crauford whether you go blindfold or with open eyes into his snare. Go you must, and *shall*. Ay, frowns will not awe me. You have desired the truth; you shall have it. You are right, I hate you—hate you with a soul whose force of hatred you cannot dream of. Your pride, your stubbornness, your coldness of heart, which things that would stir the blood of beggars, cannot warm—your icy and passionless virtue—I hate—I hate all! You are right also, most wise inquisitor, in supposing that in the scheme proposed to you, I am the principal—I am! You were to be the tool, and *shall*. I have offered you mild inducements—pleas to soothe the technicalities of your conscience—you have rejected them—be it so. Now choose between my first offer and the gibbet. Ay, the gibbet! That night on which we made the appointment, which shall not yet be in vain—on that night you stopped me in the street—you demanded money—you robbed me—I

will swear—I will prove it. Now, then, tremble, man of morality—dupe of your own strength—you are in my power—tremble! Yet in *my* safety is your escape—I am generous. I repeat my original offer—wealth, as great as you will demand, or—the gibbet—the gibbet—do I speak loud enough?—do you hear?”

“Poor fool!” said Glendower, laughing scornfully, and moving away. But when Crauford, partly in mockery, partly in menace, placed his hand upon Glendower’s shoulder, as if to stop him, the touch seemed to change his mood from scorn to fury—turning abruptly round, he seized the villain’s throat with a giant’s strength, and cried out, while his whole countenance worked beneath the tempestuous wrath within, “What if I squeeze out thy poisonous life from thee this moment?”—and then once more bursting into a withering laughter, as he surveyed the terror which he had excited, he added, “No, no; thou art too vile!”—and, dashing the hypocrite against the wall of a neighboring house, he strode away.

Recovering himself slowly, and trembling with rage and fear, Crauford gazed round, expecting yet to find he had sported too far with the passions he had sought to control. When, however, he had fully satisfied himself that Glendower was gone, all his wrathful and angry feelings returned with redoubled force. But their most biting torture was the consciousness of their impotence. For after the first paroxysm of rage had subsided, he saw, too clearly, that his threat could not be executed without incurring the most imminent danger of discovery. High as his character stood, it was possible that no charge against him might excite suspicion; but a word might cause inquiry—and inquiry would be ruin. Forced, therefore, to stomach his failure, his indignation, his shame, his hatred, and his vengeance, his own heart became a punishment almost adequate to his vices.

“But my foe will die,” said he, clenching his fist so firmly that the nails almost brought blood from the palm; “he will starve, famish; and see them—his wife, his child—perish first! I shall have my triumph, though I shall not witness it: But now away to my villa: there, at least, will be some one whom I can mock, and beat, and trample, if I will! *Would—would—would that I were that very man, destitute as he is?* His neck, at least, is safe: if he dies, it will not be upon the gallows, nor among the hootings of the mob! O, horror! horror! What are my villa, my wine, my women, with that black thought ever following me like a shadow?—Who—who, while

an avalanche is sailing over him, who would sit down to feast!"

Leaving this man to shun or be overtaken by Fate, we return to Glendower. It is needless to say that Crauford visited him no more; and, indeed, shortly afterwards Glendower again changed his home. But every day and every hour brought new strength to the disease which was creeping and burning through the veins of the devoted wife; and Glendower, who saw, on earth, nothing before them but a gaol, from which, as yet, they had been miraculously delivered, repined not as he beheld her approach to a gentler and benigner home. Often he sat, as she was bending over their child, and gazed upon her cheek with an insane and fearful joy at the characters which consumption had there engraved; but when she turned towards him her fond eyes (those deep wells of love, in which truth lay hid, and which neither languor nor disease could exhaust), the unnatural hardness of his heart melted away, and he would rush from the house, to give vent to an agony against which fortitude and manhood were in vain!

There was no hope for their distress. His wife had, unknown to Glendower (for she dreaded his pride), written several times to a relation, who, though distant, was still the nearest in blood which fate had spared her, but ineffectually; the scions of a large and illegitimate family, which surrounded him, utterly prevented the success, and generally interrupted the application, of any claimant on his riches but themselves. Glendower, whose temper had ever kept him aloof from all but the commonest acquaintances, knew no human being to apply to. Utterly unable to avail himself of the mine which his knowledge and talents should have proved—sick, and despondent at heart, and debarred by the loftiness of honor, or rather principle, that nothing could quell, from any unlawful means of earning bread, which to most minds would have been rendered excusable by the urgency of nature, Glendower marked the days drag on in dull and protracted despair, and envied every corpse that he saw borne to the asylum in which all earth's hopes seemed centred and confined.

CHAPTER LVIII.

“ For ours was not like earthly love.
 And must this parting be our very last ?
 No ! I shall love thee still when death itself is past

* * * * *
 * * * * *

Hush'd were his Gertrude's lips ! but still their bland
 And beautiful expression seemed to melt
 With love that could not die ! and still his hand
 She presses to the heart, no more that felt.

Ah, heart ! where once each fond affection dwelt.”—CAMPBELL.

“ I WONDER,” said Mr. Brown to himself, as he spurred his shaggy pony to a speed very unusual to the steady habits of either party—“ I wonder where I shall find him. I would not for the late Lady Waddilove's best diamond cross have anybody forestall me in the news. To think of my young master dying so soon after my last visit, or rather my last visit but one—and to think of the old gentleman taking on so, and raving about his injustice to the rightful possessor, and saying that he is justly punished, and asking me so eagerly if I could discover the retreat of the late squire, and believing me so implicitly when I undertook to do it, and giving me this letter ?” And here Mr. Brown wistfully examined an epistle sealed with black wax, peeping into the corners, which irritated rather than satisfied his curiosity—“ I wonder what the old gentleman says in it—I suppose he will, of course, give up the estate and house. Let me see—that long picture gallery, just built, will, at all events, want furnishing. That would be a famous opportunity to get rid of the Indian jars, and the sofas, and the great Turkey carpet. How lucky that I should just have come in time to get the letter. Bet let me consider how I shall find out !—an advertisement in the paper ? Ah ! that's the plan. ‘ Alger non Mordaunt, Esq.: something greatly to his advantage—apply to Mr. Brown, etc.’ Ah ! that will do well, very well. The Turkey carpet won't be quite long enough. I wish I had discovered Mr. Mordaunt's address before, and lent him some money during the young gentleman's life ; it would have seemed more generous. However, I can offer it now, before I show the letter. Bless me, it's getting dark. Come, Dobbin, ye-up !” Such were the meditations of the faithful friend of the late Lady Waddilove, as he hastened to London, charged with the task of discovering Mordaunt, and with the delivery of the following epistle :

“You are now, sir, the heir to that property, which, some years ago, passed from your hands into mine. My son, for whom alone wealth, or, I may say life, was valuable to me, is no more. I only, an old, childless man, stand between you and the estates of Mordaunt. Do not wait for my death to enjoy them. I cannot live here, where everything reminds me of my great and irreparable loss. I shall remove next month into another home. Consider this, then, as once more yours. The house, I believe, you will find not disimproved by my alterations; the mortgages on the estate have been paid off; the former rental you will perhaps allow my steward to account to you for, and after my death the present one will be yours. I am informed that you are a proud man, and not likely to receive favors. Be it so, sir!—it is no favor you will receive, but justice—there are circumstances connected with my treaty with your father, which have of late vexed my conscience—and conscience, sir, must be satisfied at any loss. But we shall meet, perhaps, and talk over the past; at present I will not enlarge on it. If you have suffered by me, I am sufficiently punished, and my only hope is to repair your losses.

“I am, etc.,

“H. VAVASOUR MORDAUNT.”

Such was the letter, so important to Mordaunt, with which our worthy friend was charged. Bowed to the dust as Vavasour was by the loss of his son, and open to conscience as affliction had made him, he had lived too long for effect, not to be susceptible to its influence, even to the last. Amidst all his grief, and it was intense, there were some whispers of self-exaltation at the thought of the *éclat* which his generosity and abdication, would excite; and, with true worldly morality, the hoped-for plaudits of others gave a triumph, rather than humiliation, to his reconciliation with himself.

To say truth, there were indeed circumstances connected with his treaty with Mordaunt's father, calculated to vex his conscience. He knew that he had not only taken great advantage of Mr. Mordaunt's distress, but that, at his instigation, a paper which could forever have prevented Mr. Mordaunt's sale of the property had been destroyed. These circumstances, during the life of his son, he had endeavored to forget or to palliate. But grief is rarely deaf to remorse; and at the death of that idolized son, the voice at his heart grew imperious, and he lost the power, in losing the motive, of reasoning it away.

Mr. Brown's advertisement was unanswered ; and, with the zeal and patience of the Christian proselyte's tribe and calling, the good man commenced, in person, a most elaborate and painstaking research. For a long time, his endeavors were so ineffectual, that Mr. Brown, in despair, disposed of the two Indian jars for half their value and heaved a despondent sigh, whenever he saw the great Turkey carpet rolled up in his warehouse with as much obstinacy as if it never meant to unroll itself again.

At last, however, by dint of indefatigable and minute investigation, he ascertained that the object of his search had resided in London, under a feigned name ; from lodging to lodging, and corner to corner, he tracked him, till at length he made himself master of Mordaunt's present retreat. A joyful look did Mr. Brown cast at the great Turkey carpet, as he passed by it, on his way to his street door, on the morning of his intended visit to Mordaunt. "It is a fine thing to have a good heart," said he, in the true style of Sir Christopher Findlater, and he again eyed the Turkey carpet. "I really feel quite happy at the thought of the pleasure I shall give !"

After a walk through as many obscure and filthy *wynds*, and lanes, and alleys, and courts, as ever were threaded by some humble fugitive from justice, the patient Morris came to a sort of court, situated among the miserable hovels in the vicinity of the Tower. He paused, wonderingly, at a dwelling, in which every window was broken, and where the tiles, torn from the roof, lay scattered in forlorn confusion beside the door : where the dingy bricks looked crumbling away, from very age and rottenness, and the fabric, which was of great antiquity, seemed so rocking and infirm, that the eye looked upon its distorted and overhanging position with a sensation of pain and dread ; where the very rats had deserted their loathsome cells, from the insecurity of their tenure, and the ragged mothers of the abject neighborhood forbade their brawling children to wander under the threatening walls, lest they should keep the promise of their mouldering aspect, and, falling, bare to the obstructed and sickly day the secrets of their prison-house. Girt with the foul and reeking lairs of that extreme destitution which necessity urges irresistibly into guilt, and excluded by filthy alleys, and an eternal atmosphere of smoke and rank vapor, from the blessed sun and the pure air of Heaven, the miserable mansion seemed set apart for every disease to couch within—too perilous even for the hunted criminal—too dreary even for the beggar to prefer it to the bare hedge, or the inhospitable porch,

beneath whose mockery of shelter the frosts of winter had so often numbed him into sleep.

Thrice did the heavy and silver-headed cane of Mr. Brown resound upon the door, over which was a curious carving of a lion dormant, and a date of which only the two numbers 15 were discernible. Roused by a note so unusual, and an apparition so unwontedly smug as the worthy Morris, a whole legion of dingy and smoke-dried brats came trooping from the surrounding huts, and with many an elvish cry, and strange oath, and cabalistic word, which thrilled the respectable marrow of Mr. Brown, they collected in a gaping and, to his alarmed eye, a menacing group, as near to the house as their fears and parents would permit them.

"It is very dangerous," thought Mr. Brown, looking shiveringly up at the hanging and tottering roof, "and very appalling," as he turned to the ragged crowd of infant reprobates which began with every moment to increase. At last he summoned courage, and inquired, in a tone half soothing and half dignified, if they could inform him how to obtain admittance, or how to arouse the inhabitants.

An old crone leaning out of an opposite window, with matted hair hanging over a begrimed and shrivelled countenance, made answer. "No one," she said, in her peculiar dialect, which the worthy man scarcely comprehended, "lived there, or had done so for years"; but Brown knew better: and while he was asserting the fact, a girl put her head out of another hovel, and said that she had sometimes seen, at the dusk of the evening, a man leave the house, but whether any one else lived in it, she could not tell. Again Mr. Brown sounded an alarm, but no answer came forth, and in great fear and trembling he applied violent hands to the door; it required but little force; it gave way; he entered; and, jealous of the entrance of the mob without, reclosed and barred, as well as he was able, the shattered door. The house was *unnaturally* large for the neighborhood, and Brown was in doubt whether first to ascend a broken and perilous staircase, or search the rooms below; he decided on the latter; he found no one, and with a misgiving heart, which nothing but the recollection of the great Turkey carpet could have inspired, he ascended the quaking steps. All was silent. But a door was unclosed. He entered, and saw the object of his search before him.

Over a pallet bent a form, on which, though youth seemed withered, and even pride broken, the unconquerable soul left somewhat of grace and of glory, that sustained the beholder's

remembrance of better days—a child in its first infancy knelt on the nearer side of the bed, with clasped hands, and vacant eyes that turned towards the intruder with a listless and lacklustre gaze. But Glendower, or rather Mordaunt, as he bent over the pallet, spoke not, moved not; his eyes were riveted on one object; his heart seemed turned into stone, and his veins curdled into ice. Awed and chilled by the breathing desolation of the spot, Brown approached, and spoke, he scarcely knew what. "You are," he concluded his address, "the master of Mordaunt Court"; and he placed the letter in the hands of the person he thus greeted.

"Awake, hear me!" cried Algernon to Isabel, as she lay extended on the couch; and the messenger of glad tidings, for the first time seeing her countenance, shuddered, and knew that he was in the chamber of death.

"Awake my own, own love! Happy days are in store for us yet; our misery is past; you will live, live to bless me in riches, as you have done in want."

Isabel raised her eyes to his, and a smile, sweet, comforting, and full of love, passed the lips which were about to close for ever. "Thank Heaven," she murmured, "for your dear sake. It is pleasant to die now, and *thus!*" and she placed the hand that was clasped in her relaxing and wan fingers, within the bosom which had been, for anguished and hopeless years, his asylum and refuge, and which now, when fortune changed, as if it had only breathed in comfort to his afflictions, was, for the first time, and for ever, to be cold,—cold even to him!

"You will live—you will live!" cried Mordaunt, in wild and incredulous despair—"in mercy live! You who have been my angel of hope, do not—O God, O God! do not desert me now!"

But that faithful and loving heart was already deaf to his voice, and the film grew darkening and rapidly over the eye, which still, with undying fondness, sought him out through the shade and agony of death. Sense and consciousness were gone, and dim and confused images whirled around her soul, struggling a little moment before they sunk into the depth and silence where the past lies buried. But still mindful of *him*, and grasping as it were, at his remembrance, she clasped, closer and closer, the icy hand which she held, to her breast. "Your hand is cold, dearest—it is cold," said she faintly, "but I will warm it *here!*"—And so her spirit passed away, and Mordaunt felt afterward in a lone and surviving pilgrimage, that her last thought had been kindness to him, and her last act had spoken forgetfulness even of death, in the tenderness of love!

CHAPTER LIX.

“Change and time take together their flight.”—*Golden Violet.*

ONE evening in autumn, about three years after the date of our last chapter, a stranger on horseback, in deep mourning, dismounted at the door of “the Golden Fleece,” in the memorable town of W——. He walked into the tap-room, and asked for a private apartment and accommodation for the night. The landlady, grown considerably plumper than when we first made her acquaintance, just lifted up her eyes to the stranger’s face, and summoning a short, stout man (formerly the waiter, now the second helpmate of the comely hostess), desired him, in a tone which partook somewhat more of the authority indicative of their former relative situations than of the obedience which should have characterized their present, to “show the gentleman to the Griffin, No. Four.”

The stranger smiled as the sound greeted his ears, and he followed not so much the host as the hostess’s spouse into the apartment thus designated. A young lady, who some eight years ago little thought that she should still be in a state of single blessedness, and who always honored with an attentive eye the stray travellers who, from their youth, loneliness, or that ineffable air which usually designates the unmarried man, might be in the same solitary state of life, turned to the landlady, and said :

“Mother, did you observe what a handsome gentleman that was ?”

“No,” replied the landlady ; “I only observed that he brought no servant.”

“I wonder,” said the daughter, “if he is in the army ?—he has a military air !”

“I suppose he has dined,” muttered the landlady to herself, looking towards the larder.

“Have you seen Squire Mordaunt within a short period of time ?” asked, somewhat abruptly, a little thick-set man, who was enjoying his pipe and negus in a sociable way at the window-seat. The characteristics of this personage were, a spruce wig, a bottle nose, an elevated eyebrow, a snuff-colored skin and coat, and an air of that consequential self-respect which distinguishes the philosopher who agrees with the French sage, and sees “no reason in the world why a man should not esteem himself.”

“No, indeed, Mr. Bossolton,” returned the landlady ; “but

I suppose that, as he is now in the parliament-house, he will live less retired. It is a pity that the inside of that noble old hall of his should not be more seen—and after all the old gentleman's improvements, too! They say that the estate now, since the mortgages were paid off, is above ten thousand pounds a-year, clear!"

"And, if I am not induced into an error," rejoined Mr. Bossolton, refilling his pipe, "old Vavasour left a great sum of ready money besides, which must have been in aid, and an assistance, and an advantage, mark me, Mistress Merrylack, to the owner of Mordaunt Hall, that has escaped the calculation of your faculty,—and the—and the—faculty of your calculation!"

"You mistake, Mr. Boss," as, in the friendliness of diminutives, Mrs. Merrylack sometimes styled the grandiloquent practitioner—"You mistake: the old gentleman left all his ready money in two bequests—the one to the College of —, in the university of Cambridge, and the other to an hospital in London. I remember the very words of the will—they ran thus, Mr. Boss: 'And whereas my beloved son, had he lived, would have been a member of the College of —, in the university of Cambridge, which he would have adorned by his genius, learning, youthful virtue, and the various qualities which did equal honor to his head and heart, and would have rendered him alike distinguished as the scholar and the Christian—I do devise and bequeath the sum of thirty-seven thousand pounds sterling, now in the English funds,' etc., etc.; and then follows the manner in which he will have his charity vested and bestowed, and all about the prize which shall be for ever designated and termed 'The Vavasour Prize,' and what shall be the words of the Latin speech which shall be spoken when the said prize be delivered, and a great deal more to that effect: so, then, he passes to the other legacy, of exactly the same sum, to the hospital, usually called and styled —, in the city of London, and says, 'And whereas we are assured by the Holy Scriptures, which, in these days of blasphemy and sedition, it becomes every true Briton and member of the Established Church to support, that "charity doth cover a multitude of sins"—so I do give and devise,' etc., etc., 'to be for ever termed in the deeds,' etc., etc., 'of the said hospital, "The Vavasour Charity"; and always provided that, on the anniversary of the day of my death, a sermon shall be preached in the chapel attached to the said hospital, by a clergyman of the Established Church, on any text appropriate to the day and

deed so commemorated,—but the conclusion is most beautiful, Mr. Bossolton: ‘And now, having discharged my duties, to the best of my humble ability, to my God, my king, and my country, and dying in the full belief of the Protestant Church, as by law established, I do set my hand and seal,’ etc., etc.”

“A very pleasing, and charitable, and devout, and virtuous, testament or will, Mistress Merrylack,” said Mr. Bossolton; “and in a time when anarchy with gigantic strides does devastate, and devour, and harm, the good old customs of our ancestors and forefathers, and tramples with its poisonous breath the Magna Charta, and the glorious Revolution, it is beautiful—ay, and sweet—mark you, Mrs. Merrylack, to behold a gentleman of the aristocratic classes, or grades, supporting the institutions of his country with such remarkable energy of sentiments, and with—and with—Mistress Merrylack—with sentiments of such remarkable energy.”

“Pray,” said the daughter, adjusting her ringlets by a little glass which hung over the tap, “how long has Mr. Mordaunt’s lady been dead?”

“Oh! she died just before the squire came to the property,” quoth the mother. “Poor thing—she was so pretty. I am sure I cried for a whole hour when I heard it! I think it was three years last month, when it happened. Old Mr. Vavasour died about two months afterwards.”

“The afflicted husband” (said Mr. Bossolton, who was the victim of a most fiery Mrs. Boss at home) “went into foreign lands or parts, or, as it is vulgarly termed, the continent, immediately after an event, or occurrence, so fatal to the cup of his prosperity, and the sunshine of his enjoyment, did he not, Mrs. Merrylack?”

“He did. And you know, Mr. Boss, he only returned about six months ago.”

“And of what borough, or burgh, or town, or city, is he the member and representative?” asked Mr. Jeremiah Bossolton, putting another lump of sugar into his negus. “I have heard, it is true, but my memory is short; and in the multitude and multifariousness of my professional engagements, I am often led into a forgetfulness of matters less important in their variety, and less—less various in their importance.”

“Why,” answered Mr. Merrylack, “somehow or other, I quite forget too; but it is some distant borough. The gentleman wanted him to stand for the county, but he would not hear of it; perhaps he did not like the publicity of the thing, for he is mighty reserved.”

“Proud, haughty, arrogant, and assumptious!” said Mr. Bos-
solton, with a puff of unusual length.

“Nay, nay,” said the daughter (young people are always the
first to defend), “I’m sure he’s not proud—he does a mort of
good, and has the sweetest smile possible! I wonder if he’ll
marry again! He is very young yet, not above two or three-
and-thirty.” (The kind damsel would not have thought two or
three-and-thirty *very* young some years ago; but we grow
wonderfully indulgent to the age of other people as we grow
older ourselves!)

“And what an eye he has!” said the landlady. “Well, for
my part—but, bless me. Here, John—John—John—waiter—
husband, I mean—here’s a carriage and four at the door.
Lizzy, dear, is my cap right?”

And mother, daughter, and husband, all flocked, charged
with simper, courtesy, and bow, to receive their expected guests.

With a disappointment which we who keep not inns can but
very imperfectly conceive, the trio beheld a single personage—
a valet—descent from the box, open the carriage door, and
take out—a desk!—Of all things human, male or female, the
said carriage was utterly empty.

The valet bustled up to the landlady; “My master’s here,
ma’am, I think—rode on before!”

“And who is your master?” asked Mrs. Merrylack—a thrill
of alarm, and the thought of No. Four, coming across her at
the same time.

“Who!” said the valet rubbing his hands; “who!—why
Clarence Talbot Linden, Esq., of Scarsdale Park, county of
York, late Secretary of Legation at the Court of —, now M.
P., and one of his Majesty’s under Secretaries of State.”

“Mercy upon us!” cried the astounded landlady, “and No.
Four! only think of it. Run, John,—John—run—light a fire
(the night’s cold, I think)—in the Elephant, Number Sixteen
—beg the gentleman’s pardon—say it was occupied till now;
ask what he’ll have for dinner—fish, flesh, fowl, steak, joints,
chops, tarts—or, if it’s too late (but it’s quite early yet—you
may put back the day an hour or so), ask what he’ll have for
supper—run, John, run: what’s the oaf staying for—run, I tell
you!—Pray, sir, walk in (to the valet, our old friend Mr. Har-
rison)—you’ll be hungry after your journey, I think; no
ceremony, I beg.”

“He’s not so handsome as his master,” said Miss Elizabeth,
glancing at Harrison discontentedly—“but he does not look
like a married man, somehow. I’ll just step upstairs, and

change my cap ; it would be but civil if the gentleman's gentleman sups with us."

Meanwhile Clarence, having been left alone in the quiet enjoyment of No. Four, had examined the little apartment with an interest not altogether unmingled with painful reflections. There are few persons, however fortunate, who can look back to eight years of their life, and not feel somewhat of disappointment in the retrospect : few persons, whose fortunes the world envy, to whom the token of past time, suddenly obtruded on their remembrance, does not awaken hopes destroyed, and wishes deceived, which the world has never known. We tell our triumphs to the crowd, but our own hearts are the sole confidants of our sorrows. "Twice," said Clarence to himself, "twice before have I been in this humble room ; the first was when, at the age of eighteen, I was just launched into the world—a vessel which had for its only hope the motto of the chivalrous Sydney :

" 'Aut viam inveniam, aut faciam ;'*

yet, humble and nameless as I was, how well I can recall the exaggerated ambition, nay, the *certainly* of success, as well as its *desire*, which then burnt within me. I smile now at the overweening vanity of those hopes—some, indeed, realized, but how many nipped and withered forever ! seeds of which a few fell upon rich ground, and prospered, but of which how far the greater number were scattered, some upon the wayside, and were devoured by immediate cares, some on stony places, and when the sun of manhood was up, they were scorched, and because they had no root, withered away, and some among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. I am now rich, honored, high in the favor of courts, and not altogether unknown or unesteemed *arbitrio popularis auræ* : and yet I almost think I was happier when, in that flush of youth and inexperience, I looked forth into the wide world, and imagined that from every corner would spring up a triumph for my vanity, or an object for my affections. The next time I stood in this little spot, I was no longer the dependent of a precarious charity, or the idle adventurer who had no stepping-stone but his ambition. I was then just declared the heir of wealth, which I could not rationally have hoped for five years before, and which was in itself sufficient to satisfy the aspirations of ordinary men. But I was corroded with anxieties for the object of my love, and regret for the friend whom I had

* I will either find my way, or—make it.

lost ; perhaps the eagerness of my heart for the one rendered me, for the moment, too little mindful of the other ; but, in after-years, memory took ample atonement for that temporary suspension of her duties. How often have I recalled, in this world of cold ties and false hearts, that true and generous friend, from whose lessons my mind took improvement, and from whose warnings, example ; who was to me, living, a father, and from whose generosity, whatever worldly advantages I have enjoyed, or distinctions I have gained, are derived ! *Then* I was going with a torn, yet credulous, heart, to pour forth my secret and my passion to *her*, and, within one little week thence, how shipwrecked of all hope, object, and future happiness, I was ! Perhaps, at that time, I did not sufficiently consider the excusable cautions of the world—I should not have taken such umbrage at her father's letter—I should have revealed to him my birth, and accession of fortune—nor bartered the truth of certain happiness for the trials and manœuvres of romance. But it is too late to repent now. By this time my image must be wholly obliterated from her heart : she has seen me in the crowd, and passed me coldly by—her cheek is pale, but not for me ; and in a little—little while—she will be another's, and lost to me forever ! Yet have I never forgotten her through change or time—the hard and harsh projects of ambition—the labors of business, or the engrossing schemes of political intrigue. Never !—but this is a vain and foolish subject of reflection now.”

And not the *less* reflecting upon it for that sage and veracious recollection, Clarence turned from the window, against which he had been leaning, and drawing one of the four chairs to the solitary table, he sat down, moody and disconsolate, and leaning his face upon his hands, pursued the confused, yet not disconnected, thread of his meditations.

The door abruptly opened, and Mr. Merrylack appeared. “ Dear me, sir ! ” cried he, “ a thousand pities you should have been put here, sir ! Pray step upstairs, sir ; the front drawing-room is just vacant, sir ; what will you please to have for dinner, sir,” etc., etc., according to the instructions of his wife. To Mr. Merrylack's great dismay, Clarence, however, resolutely refused all attempts at locomotion, and contenting himself with entrusting the dinner to the discretion of the landlady, desired to be left alone until it was prepared.

Now when Mr. John Merrylack returned to the tap-room, and communicated the stubborn adherence to No. Four, manifested by its occupier, our good hostess felt exceedingly dis-

composed. "You are *so* stupid, John," cried she, "I'll go and expostulate like with him"; and she was rising for that purpose, when Harrison, who was taking particularly good care of himself, drew her back: "I know my master's temper better than you do, ma'am," said he; "and when he is in the humor to be stubborn, the very devil himself could not get him out of it. I dare say he wants to be left to himself: he is very fond of being alone now and then; state affairs, you know (added the valet, mysteriously touching his forehead), and even I dare not disturb him for the world: so make yourself easy and I'll go to him when *he* has dined and *I* supped. There is time enough for No. Four when we have taken care of number *one*.—Miss, your health!"

The landlady, reluctantly overruled in her design, reseated herself.

"Mr. Clarence Linden, M. P., did you say, sir?" said the learned Jeremiah: "surely, I have had that name, or appellation in my books, but I cannot, at this instant of time, recall to my recollection the exact date and circumstance of my professional services to the gentleman so designated, styled, or, I may say, termed."

"Can't say, I am sure, sir," said Harrison—"lived with my master many years—never had the pleasure of seeing you before, nor of travelling this road—a very hilly road it is, sir. Miss, this negus is as bright as your eyes, and as warm as my admiration."

"Oh, sir!"

"Pray," said Mr. Merrylack, who, like most of his tribe, was a bit of a politician; "is it the Mr. Linden who made that long speech in the House the other day?"

"Precisely, sir. He is a very eloquent gentleman, indeed: pity he speaks so little—never made but that one long speech since he has been in the House, and a capital one it was, too. You saw how the prime minister complimented him upon it. 'A speech,' said his lordship, 'which had united the graces of youthful genius, with the sound calculations of matured experience!'"

"Did the prime minister really so speak?" said Jeremiah: "what a beautiful, and noble, and sensible compliment! I will examine my books when I go home—'the graces of youthful genius, with the sound calculations of matured experience!'"

"If he is in the Parliament House," quoth the landlady, "I suppose he will know our Mr. Mordaunt, when the squire takes his seat, next—what do you call it—sessions?"

"Know Mr. Mordaunt!" said the valet. "It is to see him that *we* have come down here. We intended to have gone there to-night, but master thought it too late, and I saw he was in a melancholy humor; we therefore resolved to come here; and so master took one of the horses from the groom, whom we have left behind with the other, and came on alone. I take it, he must have been in this town before, for he described the inn so well.—Capital cheese this; as mild—as mild as your sweet smile, miss!"

"Oh, sir!"

"Pray, *Mistress Merrylack*," said Mr. Jeremiah Bossolton, depositing his pipe on the table, and awakening from a profound reverie in which, for the last five minutes, his senses had been buried—"pray, *Mistress Merrylack*, do you not call to your mind, or your reminiscence, or your—your recollection a young gentleman, equally comely in his aspect and blandiloquent (ehem!) in his address, who had the misfortune to have his arm severely contused and afflicted by a violent kick from Mr. Mordaunt's horse, even in the yard in which your stables are situated, and who remained for two or three days in your house, or tavern, or hotel? I do remember that you were grievously perplexed because of his name, the initials of which only he gave; or intrusted, or communicated to you, until you did exam—"

"I remember," interrupted Miss Elizabeth—"I remember well—a very beautiful young gentleman, who had a letter directed to be left here, addressed to him by the letters C. L., and who was afterwards kicked, and who admired your cap, mother, and whose name *was* Clarence Linden. You remember it well enough, mother, surely?"

"I *think* I do, Lizzy," said the landlady, slowly; for her memory, not so much occupied as her daughter's by beautiful young gentlemen, struggled slowly amidst dim ideas of the various travellers and visitors with whom her house had been honored, before she came, at last, to the reminiscence of Clarence Linden—"I *think* I do—and Squire Mordaunt was very attentive to him—and he broke one of the panes of glass in No. Eight, and gave me half a guinea to pay for it. I *do* remember, perfectly Lizzy. So that is Mr. Linden now here!—only think!"

"I should not have known him, certainly," said Miss Elizabeth; "he is grown so much taller, and his hair looks quite dark now, and his face is much thinner than it was; but he is very handsome still—is he not, sir?" turning to the valet.

"Ah! ah! well enough," said Mr. Harrison, stretching out

his right leg and falling away a little to the left, in the manner adopted by the renowned Gil Blas, in his address to the fair Laura—"well enough; but he's a little too tall and thin, I think."

Mr. Harrison's faults in shape were certainly not those of being too tall and thin.

"Perhaps so!" said Miss Elizabeth, who scented the vanity by a kindred instinct, and had her own reasons for pampering it—"Perhaps so!"

"But he is a great favorite with the ladies all the same; however, he only loves one lady. Ah, but I must not say who, though I know. However, she is so handsome; such eyes, they would go through you like a skewer, but not like yours, yours miss, which, I vow and protest, are as bright as a service of plate."

"Oh, sir!"

And amidst these graceful compliments the time slipped away, till Clarence's dinner, and his valet's supper, being fairly over, Mr. Harrison presented himself to his master, a perfectly different being in attendance to what he was in companionship—flippancy, impertinence, forwardness, all merged in the steady, sober, serious demeanor which characterizes the respectful and well-bred domestic.

Clarence's orders were soon given. They were limited to the appurtenances of writing; and as soon as Harrison reappeared with his master's writing-desk, he was dismissed for the night.

Very slowly did Clarence settle himself to his task, and attempt to escape the *ennui* of his solitude, or the restlessness of thought feeding upon itself, by inditing the following epistle:

“TO THE DUKE OF HAVERFIELD.

“I WAS very unfortunate, my dear Duke, to miss seeing you, when I called in Arlington Street, the evening before last, for I had a great deal to say to you—something upon public and a little upon private affairs. I will reserve the latter, since I only am the person concerned, for a future opportunity. With respect to the former,

* * * * *

“And now, having finished the political part of my letter, let me congratulate you most sincerely upon your approaching marriage with Miss Trevanion. I do not know her myself; but I remember that she was the bosom friend of Lady Flora Ardenne, whom I have often heard speak of her in the highest and most affectionate terms, so that I imagine her brother could not better atone to you for dishonestly carrying off the fair Julia

some three years ago, than by giving you his sister in honorable and orthodox exchange—the gold armor for the brazen.

“As for my lot, though I ought not, at this moment, to dim yours by dwelling upon it, you know how long, how constantly, how ardently I have loved Lady Flora Ardenne—how, for her sake, I have refused opportunities of alliance which might have gratified, to the utmost, that worldliness of heart which so many who saw me only in the crowd have been pleased to impute to me. You know that neither pleasure, nor change, nor the insult I received from her parents; nor the sudden indifference which I so little deserved from herself, have been able to obliterate her image. You will therefore sympathize with me, when I inform you that there is no longer any doubt of her marriage with Borodaile (or rather Lord Ulswater, since his father’s death), as soon as the sixth month of his mourning expires; to this period only two months remain.

“Heavens! when one thinks over the past, how incredulous one could become to the future: when I recall all the tokens of love I received from that woman, I cannot persuade myself that they are now all forgotten, or rather, all lavished upon another.

“But I do not blame her—may she be happier with him than she could have been with me! and that hope shall whisper peace to regrets which I have been foolish to indulge so long, and it is perhaps well for me that they are about to be rendered forever unavailing.

“I am staying at an inn, without books, companions, or any thing to beguile time and thought, but this pen, ink, and paper. You will see, therefore, a reason and an excuse for my scribbling on to you, till my two sheets are filled, and the hour of ten (one can’t well go to bed earlier) arrived.

“You remember having often heard me speak of a very extraordinary man whom I met in Italy, and with whom I became intimate. He returned to England some months ago; and on hearing it my desire of renewing our acquaintance was so great that I wrote to invite myself to his house. He gave me what is termed a very obliging answer, and left the choice of time to myself. You see now, most noble Festus, the reason of my journey hitherwards.

“His house, a fine old mansion, is situated about five or six miles from this town: and, as I arrived here late in the evening, and knew that his habits were reserved and peculiar, I thought it better to take ‘mine ease in my inn’ for this night, and defer my visit to Mordaunt Court till to-morrow morning.

In truth, I was not averse to renewing an old acquaintance—not, as you in your malice would suspect, with my hostess, but with her house. Some years ago, when I was eighteen, I first made a slight acquaintance with Mordaunt at this very inn, and now, at twenty-six, I am glad to have one evening to myself on the same spot, and retrace here all that has since happened to me.

“Now, do not be alarmed; I am not going to inflict upon you the unquiet retrospect with which I have just been vexing myself; no, I will rather speak to you of my acquaintance and host to be. I have said that I first met Mordaunt some years since at this inn—an accident, for which his horse was to blame, brought us acquainted—I spent a day at his house, and was much interested in his conversation; since then, we did not meet till about two years and a half ago, when we were in Italy together. During the intermediate interval Mordaunt had married—lost his property by a lawsuit—disappeared from the world (whither none knew) for some years—recovered the estate he had lost by the death of his kinsman’s heir, and shortly afterwards by that of the kinsman himself, and had become a widower, with one only child, a beautiful little girl of about four years old. He lived in perfect seclusion, avoided all intercourse with society, and seemed so perfectly unconscious of having ever seen me before, whenever in our rides or walks we met, that I could not venture to intrude myself on a reserve so rigid and unbroken as that which characterized his habits and life.

“The gloom and loneliness, however, in which Mordaunt’s days were spent, were far from partaking of that selfishness so common, almost so *necessarily* common, to recluses. Wherever he had gone in his travels through Italy, he had left light and rejoicing behind him. In his residence at —, while unknown to the great and gay, he was familiar with the outcast and the destitute. The prison, the hospital, the sordid cabins of want, the abodes (so frequent in Italy, that emporium of artists and poets) where genius struggled against poverty and its own improvidence—all these were the spots to which his visits were paid, and in which ‘the very stones prated of his whereabouts.’ It was a strange and striking contrast to compare the sickly enthusiasm of those who flocked to Italy, to lavish their sentiments on statues, and their wealth on the modern impositions palmed upon their taste as the masterpieces of ancient art—it was a noble contrast, I say, to compare that ludicrous and idle enthusiasm with the quiet and wholesome energy of mind and

heart which led Mordaunt, not to pour forth worship and homage to the unconscious monuments of the dead, but to console, to relieve, and to sustain the woes, the wants, the feebleness, of the living.

“Yet, while he was thus employed in reducing the miseries and enlarging the happiness of others, the most settled melancholy seemed to mark himself ‘as her own.’ Clad in the deepest mourning, a stern and unbroken gloom sat for ever upon his countenance. I have observed, that if in his walks or rides any one, especially of the better classes, appeared to approach, he would strike into a new path. He could not bear even the scrutiny of a glance or the fellowship of a moment: and his mien, high and haughty, seemed not only to repel others, but to contradict the meekness and charity which his own actions so invariably and unequivocally displayed. It must, indeed, have been a powerful exertion of principle over feeling, which induced him voluntarily to seek the abodes and intercourse of the rude beings he blessed and relieved.

“We met at two or three places to which my weak and imperfect charity had led me, especially at the house of a sickly and distressed artist; for in former life I had intimately known one of that profession; and I have since attempted to transfer to his brethren that debt of kindness which an early death forbade me to discharge to himself. It was thus that I first became acquainted with Mordaunt’s occupations and pursuits: for what ennobled his benevolence was the remarkable obscurity in which it was veiled. It was in disguise and in secret that his generosity flowed; and so studiously did he conceal his name, and hide even his features, during his brief visits to ‘the house of mourning,’ that only one, like myself, a close and minute investigator of whatever has once become an object of interest, could have traced his hand in the various works of happiness it had aided or created.

“One day, among some old ruins, I met him with his young daughter. By great good fortune I preserved the latter, who had wandered away from her father, from a fall of loose stones, which would inevitably have crushed her. I was myself much hurt by my effort, having received upon my shoulder a fragment of the falling stones; and thus our old acquaintance was renewed, and gradually ripened into intimacy; not, I must own, without great patience and constant endeavor on my part: for his gloom and lonely habits rendered him utterly impracticable of access to any (as Lord Aspeden would say) but a diplomatist. I saw a great deal of him during the six months I

remained in Italy, and—but you know already how warmly I admire his extraordinary powers, and venerate his character.— Lord Aspeden's recall to England separated us.

“A general election ensued. I was returned for——. I entered eagerly into domestic politics—your friendship, Lord Aspeden's kindness, my own wealth and industry, made my success almost unprecedentedly rapid. Engaged, heart and hand, in those minute yet engrossing labors for which the aspirant in parliamentary and state intrigue must unhappily forego the more enlarged though abstruser speculations of general philosophy, and of that morality which may be termed *universal* politics, I have necessarily been employed in very different pursuits from those to which Mordaunt's contemplations are devoted, yet have I often recalled his maxims, with admiration at their depth, and obtained applause for opinions which were only imperfectly filtered from the pure springs of his own.

“It is about six months since he has returned to England, and he has very lately obtained a seat in Parliament—so that we may trust soon to see his talents displayed upon a more public and enlarged theatre than they hitherto have been; and, though I fear his politics will be opposed to ours, I anticipate his public début with that interest which genius, even when adverse to one's self, always inspires. Yet I confess that I am desirous to see and converse with him once more in the familiarity and kindness of private intercourse. The rage of party, the narrowness of sectarian zeal, soon exclude from our friendship all those who differ from our opinions; and it is like sailors holding commune for the last time with each other, before their several vessels are divided by the perilous and uncertain sea, to confer in peace and retirement for a little while with those who are about to be launched with us on that same unquiet ocean, where any momentary caprice of the winds may disjoin us forever, and where our very union is only a sympathy in toil, and a fellowship in danger.

“Adieu, my dear Duke! it is fortunate for me that our public opinions are so closely allied, and that I may so reasonably calculate in private upon the happiness and honor of subscribing myself your affectionate friend, C. L.”

Such was the letter to which we shall leave the explanation of much that has taken place within the last three years of our tale, and which, in its tone, will serve to show the kindness and generosity of heart and feeling that mingled (rather in-

creased than abated by the time which brought wisdom) with the hardy activity and resolute ambition that characterized the mind of our "Disowned." We now consign him to such repose as the best bed-room in the Golden Fleece can afford, and conclude the chapter.

CHAPTER LX.

"Though the wilds of enchantment all vernal and bright,
 In the days of delusion by fancy combined
 With the vanishing phantoms of love and delight,
 Abandon my soul like a dream of the night,
 And leave but a desert behind.

Be hush'd, my dark spirit, for Wisdom condemns
 When the faint and the feeble deplore ;
 Be strong as the rock of the ocean that stems
 A thousand wild waves on the shore !"—CAMPBELL.

"SHALL I order the carriage round, sir?" said Harrison; "it is past one."

"Yes; yet stay; the day is fine; I will ride. Let the carriage come on in the evening; see that my horse is saddled; you looked to his mash last night?"

"I did, sir. He seems wonderfully fresh; would you please to have me stay here with the carriage, sir, till the groom comes on with the other horse?"

"Ay; do—I don't know yet how far strange servants may be welcome where I am going."

"Now, that's lucky!" said Harrison to himself as he shut the door; "I shall have a good five hours' opportunity of making my court here. Miss Elizabeth is really a very pretty girl, and might not be a bad match. I don't see any brothers; who knows but she may succeed to the inn—hem! A servant may be ambitious as well as his master, I suppose?"

So meditating, Harrison sauntered to the stables—saw (for he was an admirable servant, and could, at a pinch, dress a horse as well as its master) that Clarence's beautiful steed received the utmost nicety of grooming which the ostler could bestow—led it himself to the door—held the stirrup for his master, with the mingled humility and grace of his profession, and then strutted away, "pride on his brow and glory in his eye," to be the cynosure and oracle of the tap-room.

Meanwhile, Linden rode slowly onwards. As he passed that turn of the town by which he had for the first time entered it,

the recollection of the eccentric and would-be gipsy flashed upon him. "I wonder," thought he, "where that singular man is now—whether he still preserves his itinerant and woodland tastes :

" ' Si flumina sylvasque inglorius amet.' *"

or whether, as his family increased in age or number, he has turned from his wanderings, and at length found out 'the peaceful hermitage.' How glowingly the whole scene of that night comes across me—the wild tents, their wilder habitants, the mingled bluntness, poetry, honest good nature, and spirit of enterprise which constituted the chief's nature—the jovial meal and mirth round the wood fire, and beneath the quiet stars, and the eagerness and zest with which I then mingled in the merriment. Alas !—how ill the fastidiousness and refinement of after-days repay us for the elastic, buoyant, ready zeal with which our first youth enters into whatever is joyous, without pausing to ask if its cause and nature be congenial to our habits or kindred to our tastes. After all, there really *was* something philosophical in the romance of the jovial gipsy, childish as it seemed; and I should like much to know if the philosophy has got the better of the romance, or the romance, growing into habit, become commonplace, and lost both its philosophy and its enthusiasm. Well, after I leave Mordaunt, I will try and find out my old friend."

With this resolution, Clarence's thoughts took a new channel, and he soon entered upon Mordaunt's domain. As he rode through the park, where brake and tree were glowing in the yellow tints which Autumn, like Ambition, gilds ere it withers, he paused for a moment to recall the scene as he last beheld it. It was then Spring—Spring in its first and flushiest glory—when not a blade of grass but sent a perfume to the air—the happy air,

" Making sweet music while the young leaves danced " : .

when every cluster of the brown fern, that now lay dull and motionless around him, and amidst which the melancholy deer stood afar off, gazing upon the intruder, was vocal with the blithe melodies of the infant year—the sharp, yet sweet, voices of birds—and (heard at intervals) the chirp of the merry grasshopper, or the hum of the awakened bee. He sighed, as he now looked around, and recalled the change, both of time and season : and with that fondness of heart which causes man to knit his own little life to the varieties of Time, the signs

* If, unknown to fame, he love the streams and the woods.

of Heaven, or the revolutions of Nature, he recognized something kindred in the change of scene to the change of thought and feeling which years had wrought in the beholder.

Awaking from his reverie, he hastened his horse's pace, and was soon within sight of the house. Vavasour, during the few years he had possessed the place, had conducted and carried through improvements and additions to the old mansion, upon a scale equally costly and judicious. The heavy and motley magnificence of the architecture in which the house had been built remained unaltered; but a wing on either side, though exactly corresponding in style with the intermediate building, gave, by the long colonnade which ran across the one, and the stately windows which adorned the other, an air not only of grander extent, but more cheerful lightness to the massy and antiquated pile. It was, assuredly, in the point of view by which Clarence now approached it, a structure which possessed few superiors in point of size and effect; and harmonized so well with the noble extent of the park, the ancient woods, and the venerable avenues, that a very slight effort of imagination might have poured from the massive portals the pageantries of old days, and the gay galliard of chivalric romance with which the scene was in such accordance, and which in a former age it had so often witnessed.

Ah, little could any one who looked upon that gorgeous pile, and the broad lands which, beyond the boundaries of the park, swelled on the hills of the distant landscape, studded at frequent intervals with the spires and villages which adorned the wide baronies of Mordaunt—little could he who thus gazed around have imagined that the owner of all he surveyed had passed the glory and verdure of his manhood in the bitterest struggles with gnawing want, and rebellious pride, and urgent passion, without friend or aid but his own haughty and supporting virtue, sentenced to bear yet in his wasted and barren heart the sign of the storm he had resisted, and the scathed token of the lightning he had braved. None but Crauford, who had his own reasons for taciturnity, and the itinerant broker, easily bribed into silence, had ever known of the *extreme* poverty from which Mordaunt had passed to his rightful possessions. It was whispered, indeed, that he had been reduced to narrow and straitened circumstances; but the whisper had been only the breath of rumor, and the imagined poverty far short of the reality: for the pride of Mordaunt (the great, almost the sole failing in his character) could

not endure that all he had borne and baffled should be bared to the vulgar eye ; and by a rare anomaly of mind, indifferent as he was to renown, he was morbidly susceptible of shame.

When Clarence rung at the ivy-covered porch, and made inquiry for Mordaunt, he was informed that the latter was in the park, by the river, where most of his hours, during the daytime, were spent.

"Shall I send to acquaint him that you are come, sir?" said the servant.

"No," answered Clarence, "I will leave my horse to one of the grooms, and stroll down to the river in search of your master."

Suiting the action to the word, he dismounted, consigned his steed to the groom, and, following the direction indicated to him, bent his way to the "river."

As he descended the hill, the brook (for it did not deserve, though it received, a higher name) opened enchantingly upon his view. Amidst the fragrant reed and the wild flower, still sweet, though fading, and tufts of tedded grass, all of which, when crushed beneath the foot, sent a mingled tribute to its sparkling waves, the wild stream took its gladsome course, now contracted by gloomy firs, which, bending over the water, cast somewhat of their own sadness upon its surface—now glancing forth from the shade, as it "broke into dimples and laughed in the sun,"—now washing the gnarled and spreading roots of some lonely ash, which, hanging over it, still and droopingly, seemed, the hermit of the scene, to moralize on its noisy and various wanderings—now winding round the hill, and losing itself at last amidst thick copses, where day did never more than wink and glimmer, and where, at night, its waters, brawling through their stony channel, seemed like a spirit's wail, and harmonized well with the scream of the gray owl, wheeling from her dim retreat, or the moaning and rare sound of some solitary deer.

As Clarence's eyes roved admiringly over the scene before him, it dwelt at last upon a small building situated on the wildest part of the opposite bank : it was entirely overgrown with ivy, and the outline only remained to show the gothic antiquity of the architecture. It was a single square tower, built none knew when or wherefore, and, consequently, the spot of many vagrant guesses and wild legends among the surrounding gossips. On approaching yet nearer, he perceived, alone and seated on a little mound beside the tower, the object of his search.

Mordaunt was gazing with vacant yet earnest eye upon the waters beneath; and so intent was either his mood or look, that he was unaware of Clarence's approach. Tears fast and large were rolling from those haughty eyes, which men who shrunk from their indifferent glance little deemed were capable of such weak and feminine emotion. Far, far through the aching void of time were the thoughts of the reft and solitary mourner; they were dwelling, in all the vivid and keen intensity of grief which dies not, upon the day when, about that hour and on that spot, he sate, with Isabel's young cheek upon his bosom, and listened to a voice now only heard in dreams. He recalled the moment when the fatal letter, charged with change and poverty, was given to him, and the pang which had rent his heart as he looked around upon a scene over which spring had just then breathed, and which he was about to leave to a fresh summer and a new lord; and then that deep, fond, half-fearful gaze with which Isabel had met his eye, and the feeling, proud even in its melancholy, with which he had drawn towards his breast all that earth had left to him, and thanked God in his heart of hearts that *she* was spared.

"And I am once more master," (thought he) "not only of all I then held, but all which my wealthier forefathers possessed. But she who was the sharer of my sorrows and want—oh, where is she? Rather, ah! rather a hundredfold that her hand was still clasped in mine, and her spirit supporting me through poverty and trial, and her soft voice murmuring the comfort that steals away care, than to be thus heaped with wealth and honor, and *alone*—alone, where never more can come love, or hope, or the yearnings of affection, or the sweet fulness of a heart that seems fathomless in its tenderness, yet overflows! Had my lot, when she left me, been still the steepings of bitterness, the stings of penury, the moody silence of hope, the damp and chill of sunless and aidless years, which rust the very iron of the soul away: had my lot been thus, as it had been, I could have borne her death, I could have looked upon her grave, and wept not—nay, I could have comforted my own struggles with the memory of her escape; but thus, at the very moment of prosperity, to leave the altered and promising earth, 'to house with darkness and with death'; no little gleam of sunshine, no brief recompense for the agonizing past, no momentary respite between tears and the tomb. Oh, Heaven! what—what avail is a wealth which comes too late, when she, who could alone have made wealth bliss, is dust; and the light that should

have gilded many and happy days, flings only a ghastly glare upon the tomb?"

Starting from these reflections, Mordaunt half-unconsciously rose, and, dashing the tears from his eyes, was about to plunge into the neighboring thicket, when looking up, he beheld Clarence, now within a few paces of him. He started, and seemed for one moment irresolute whether to meet or shun his advance, but probably deeming it too late for the latter, he banished, by one of those violent efforts with which men of proud and strong minds vanquish emotion, all outward sign of the past agony; and hastening towards his guest, greeted him with a welcome which, though from ordinary hosts it might have seemed cold, appeared to Clarence, who knew his temper, more cordial than he had ventured to anticipate.

CHAPTER LXI.

"My father urged me sair,
But my mither did na speak,
Though she looked into my face,
Till my heart war like to break."—*Auld Robin Gray.*

"It is rather singular," said Lady Westborough to her daughter, as they sate alone one afternoon in the music-room at Westborough Park, "it is rather singular that Lord Ulswater should not have come yet. He said he should certainly be here before three o'clock."

"You know, mamma, that he has some military duties to detain him at W——," answered Lady Flora, bending over a drawing, in which she appeared to be earnestly engaged.

"True, my dear, and it was very kind in Lord —— to quarter the troop he commands in his native county; and very fortunate that W——, being his headquarters, should also be so near us. But I cannot conceive that any duty can be sufficiently strong to detain him from you," added Lady Westborough, who had been accustomed all her life to a devotion unparalleled in this age. "You seem very indulgent, Flora."

"Alas!—she should rather say very indifferent," thought Lady Flora; but she did not give her thought utterance—she only looked up at her mother for a moment, and smiled faintly.

Whether there was something in that smile, or in the pale cheek of her daughter, that touched her, we know not, but Lady Westborough *was* touched; she threw her arms round

Lady Flora's neck, kissed her fondly, and said, "You do not seem well to-day, my love—are you?"

"Oh!—very—very well," answered Lady Flora, returning her mother's caress, and hiding her eyes, to which the tears had started.

"My child," said Lady Westborough, "you know that both myself and your father are very desirous to see you married to Lord Ulswater—of high and ancient birth, of great wealth, young, unexceptional in person and character, and warmly attached to you—it would be impossible even for the sanguine heart of a parent to ask for you a more eligible match. But if the thought really does make you wretched—and yet, how can it?"

"I have consented," said Flora gently: "all I ask is, do not speak to me more of the—the event than you can avoid."

Lady Westborough pressed her hand, sighed, and replied not.

The door opened, and the marquis, who had within the last year become a cripple, with the great man's malady, *dura podagra*, was wheeled in on his easy-chair: close behind him followed Lord Ulswater.

"I have brought you," said the marquis, who piqued himself on a vein of dry humor, "I have brought you, young lady, a consolation for my ill humors. Few gouty old fathers make themselves as welcome as I do—eh, Ulswater!"

"Dare I apply to myself Lord Westborough's compliment?" said the young nobleman, advancing towards Lady Flora; and drawing his seat near her, he entered into that whispered conversation so significant of courtship. But there was little in Lady Flora's manner, by which an experienced eye would have detected the bride elect: no sudden blush, no downcast yet sidelong look, no trembling of the hand, no indistinct confusion of the voice, struggling with unanalyzed emotions. No—all was calm, cold, listless; her cheek changed not tint nor hue, and her words, clear and collected, seemed to contradict whatever the low murmurs of her betrothed might well be supposed to insinuate. But, even in *his* behavior, there was something which, had Lady Westborough been less contented than she was with the externals and surface of manner, would have alarmed her for her daughter. A cloud, sullen and gloomy, sate upon his brow, and his lip alternately quivered with something like scorn, or was compressed with a kind of stifled passion. Even in the exultation that sparkled in his eye, when he alluded to their approaching marriage, there was an expression that almost might have been termed fierce, and certainly was

as little like the true orthodox ardor of "gentle swain," as Lady Flora's sad and half-unconscious coldness resembled the diffident passion of the "blushing maiden."

"You have considerably passed the time in which we expected you, my lord," said Lady Westborough, who, as a beauty herself, was a little jealous of the deference due to the beauty of her daughter.

"It is true," said Lord Ulswater, glancing towards the opposite glass and smoothing his right eyebrow with his forefinger—"it is true, but I could not help it. I had a great deal of business to do with my troop—I have put them into a new manœuvre. Do you know, my Lord (turning to the marquis) I think it very likely the soldiers may have some work on the — of this month."

"Where, and wherefore?" asked Lord Westborough, whom a sudden twinge forced into the laconic.

"At W——. Some idle fellows hold a meeting there on that day; and if I may judge by bills and advertisements, chalkings on the walls, and, more than all, popular rumor, I have no doubt but what riot and sedition are intended—the magistrates are terribly frightened. I hope we shall have some cutting and hewing—I have no patience with the rebellious dogs."

"For shame—for shame!" cried Lady Westborough, who, though a worldly, was by no means an unfeeling, woman; "the people are misguided—they mean no harm."

Lord Ulswater smiled scornfully. "I never dispute upon politics, but at the head of my men," said he, and turned the conversation.

Shortly afterwards Lady Flora, complaining of indisposition, rose, left the apartment, and retired to her own room. There she sat, motionless and white as death, for more than an hour. A day or two afterwards Miss Trevanion received the following letter from her:

"Most heartily, most truly do I congratulate you, my dearest Eleanor, upon your approaching marriage. You may reasonably hope for all that happiness can afford: and though you do affect (for I do not think you *feel*) a fear lest you should not be able to fix a character, volatile and light, like your lover's; yet when I recollect his warmth of heart, and high sense, and your beauty, gentleness, charms of conversation, and purely disinterested love for one whose great worldly advantages might so easily bias or adulterate affection, I own that I have no dread for your future fate; no feeling that can at all darken

the brightness of anticipation. Thank you, dearest, for the delicate kindness with which you allude to *my* destiny—me, indeed, you cannot congratulate as I can you. But do not grieve for me, my own generous Eleanor: if not happy, I shall, I trust, be at least contented. My poor father implored me with tears in his eyes—my mother pressed my hand, but spoke not; and I—I whose affections were withered, and hopes strewn, should I not have been hard-hearted indeed, if they had not wrung from me a consent? And, oh! should I not be utterly lost if, in that consent which blessed them, I did not find something of peace and consolation?

“Yes, dearest, in two months, only two months, I shall be Lord Ulswater’s wife; and when we meet, you shall look narrowly at me, and see if he or you have any right to complain of me.

“Have you seen Mr. Linden lately? Yet, do not answer the question; I ought not to cherish still that fatal clinging interest for one who has so utterly forgotten me. But I do rejoice in his prosperity: and when I hear his praises, and watch his career, I feel proud that I should once have loved him! Oh, how could he be so false, so cruel, in the very midst of his professions of undying, unswerving faith to me, at the very moment when I was ill, miserable, wasting my very heart, for anxiety on his account—and such a woman too! And had he loved me, even though his letter was returned, would not his conscience have told him he deserved it, and would he not have sought me out in person, and endeavored to win from my folly his forgiveness. But without attempting to see me, or speak to me, or soothe a displeasure so natural, to leave the country in silence, almost in disdain; and when we met again, to greet me with coldness, and hauteur, and never betray by word, sign, or look, that he had ever been to me more than the merest stranger! Fool, fool, that I am, to waste another thought upon him; but I will not, and ought not to do so. In two months I shall not even have the privilege of remembrance.

“I wish, Eleanor—for I assure you that I have tried and tried—that I could find anything to like and esteem (since love is out of the question) in this man, who seems so great, and, to me, so unaccountable a favorite with my parents. His countenance and voice are so harsh and stern; his manner at once so self-complacent and gloomy; his sentiments so narrow, even in their notions of honor; his very courage so savage, and his pride so constant and offensive, that I in vain endeavor to persuade myself of his virtues, and recur, at least, to the

unwearying affection for me which he professes. It is true that he has been three times refused ; that I have told him that I cannot love him ; that I have even owned former love to another : he still continues his suit, and by dint of long hope has at length succeeded. But at times I could almost think that he married me from very hate, rather than love, there is such an artificial smoothness in his stern voice, such a latent meaning in his eye ; and when he thinks I have not noticed him, I have, on suddenly turning towards him, perceived so dark and lowering an expression upon his countenance that my heart has died within me for very fear.

“Had my mother been the least less kind, my father the least less urgent, I think, nay, I know, I could not have gained such a victory over myself as I have done in consenting to the day. But enough of this. I did not think I should have run on so long and so foolishly ; but we, dearest, have been children, and girls, and women together : we have loved each other with such fondness and unreserve that opening my heart to you seems only another phrase for thinking aloud.

“However, in two months I shall have no right even to thoughts—perhaps I may not even love you. Till then, dearest Eleanor, I am, as ever, your affectionate and faithful friend,
“F. A.”

Had Lord Westborough, indeed, been “less urgent,” or her mother “less kind,” nothing could ever have wrung from Lady Flora her consent to a marriage so ungenial and ill-omened.

Thrice had Lord Ulswater (then Lord Borodaile) been refused, before finally accepted ; and those who judge only from the ordinary effects of pride, would be astonished that he should have still persevered. But his pride was that deep-rooted feeling which, so far from being repelled by a single blow, fights stubbornly and doggedly onward, till the battle is over and its object gained. From the moment he had resolved to address Lady Flora Ardenne, he had also resolved to win her. For three years, despite of a refusal, first gently, then more peremptorily, urged, he fixed himself in her train. He gave out that he was her affianced. In all parties, in all places, he forced himself near her, unheeded alike of her frowns or indifference ; and his rank, his hauteur, his fierceness of mien, and acknowledged courage, kept aloof all the less arrogant and hardy pretenders to Lady Flora’s favor. For this, indeed, she rather thanked than blamed him ; and it was the only thing which in

the least reconciled her modesty to his advances or her pride to his presumption.

He had been prudent as well as bold. The father he had served, and the mother he had won. Lord Westborough, addicted a little to politics, a good deal to show, and devotedly to gaming, was often greatly and seriously embarrassed. Lord Ulswater, even during the life of his father (who was lavishly generous to him), was provided with the means of relieving his intended father-in-law's necessities; and caring little for money in comparison to a desired object, he was willing enough, we do not say to *bribe*, but to *influence* Lord Westborough's consent. These matters of arrangement were by no means concealed from the marchioness, who, herself ostentatious and profuse, was in no small degree benefited by them; and though they did not solely procure, yet they certainly contributed, to conciliate her favor.

Few people are designedly and systematically wicked; even the worst find good motives for bad deeds; and are as intent upon discovering glosses for conduct, to deceive themselves as to delude others. What wonder, then, that poor Lady Westborough, never too rigidly addicted to self-examination, and viewing all things through a very worldly medium, saw only in the alternate art and urgency employed against her daughter's real happiness, the various praiseworthy motives of permanently disentangling Lady Flora from an unworthy attachment, of procuring for her an establishment proportioned to her rank, and a husband whose attachment, already shown by such singular perseverance, was so likely to afford her everything which, in Lady Westborough's eyes, constituted felicity.

All our friends, perhaps, desire our happiness; but, then, it must invariably be in their own way. What a pity that they do not employ the same zeal in making us happy *in ours!*

CHAPTER LXII.

"If thou criest after Knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;
If thou seekest her as silver; and searchest for her as for hid treasures;
Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge
of God."

Proverbs, ch. ii., ver. 3, 4, 5.

WHILE Clarence was thus misjudged by one whose affections and conduct he, in turn, naturally misinterpreted—while Lady Flora was alternately struggling against and sub-

mitting to the fate which Lady Westborough saw approach with gladness—the father with indifference, and the bridegroom with a pride that partook less of rapture than revenge, our unfortunate lover was endeavoring to glean, from Mordaunt's conversation and example, somewhat of that philosophy so rare except in the theories of the civilized and the occasional practice of the barbarian, which though it cannot give us a charm against misfortune, bestows at least upon us the energy to support it.

We have said already, that when the first impression produced by Mordaunt's apparent pride and coldness wore away, it required little penetration to discover the benevolence and warmth of his mind. But none ignorant of his original disposition, or the misfortunes of his life, could ever have pierced the depth of his self-sacrificing nature, or measured the height of his lofty and devoted virtue. Many men may, perhaps, be found, who will give up to duty a cherished wish, or even a darling vice, but few will ever renounce to it their rooted *tastes*, or the indulgence of those habits which have almost become, by long use, their happiness itself. Naturally melancholy and thoughtful, feeding the sensibilities of his heart upon fiction, and though addicted to the cultivation of reason rather than fancy, having perhaps more of the deeper and acuter characteristics of the poet, than those calm and half-callous properties of nature supposed to belong to the metaphysician and the calculating moralist, Mordaunt was above all men fondly addicted to solitude, and inclined to contemplations less useful than profound.

The untimely death of Isabel, whom he had loved with that love which is the vent of hoarded and passionate musings, long nourished upon romance, and lavishing the wealth of a soul that overflows with secreted tenderness upon the *first* object that can bring reality to fiction—that event had not only darkened melancholy into gloom, but had made loneliness still more dear to his habits by all the ties of memory, and all the consecrations of regret. The companionless wanderings—the midnight closet—the thoughts which, as Hume said of his own, could not exist in the world, but were all busy with life in seclusion: these were rendered sweeter than ever to a mind for which the ordinary objects of the world were now utterly loveless; and the musings of solitude had become, as it were, a rightful homage and offering to the dead! We may form, then, some idea of the extent to which, in Mordaunt's character, principle predominated over inclination, and regard for others

over the love of self, when we see him tearing his spirit from its beloved retreats and abstracted contemplations, and devoting it to duties from which its fastidious and refined characteristics were particularly calculated to revolt. When we have considered his attachment to the hermitage, we can appreciate the virtue which made him among the most active citizens in the great world ; when we have considered the natural selfishness of grief, the pride of philosophy, the indolence of meditation, the eloquence of wealth, which says, "rest and toil not," and the temptation within, which says, "obey the voice";—when we have considered these, we can perhaps do justice to the man who, sometimes on foot and in the coarsest attire, travelled from inn to inn, and from hut to hut ; who made human misery the object of his search, and human happiness of his desire ; who, breaking aside an aversion to rude contact, almost feminine in its extreme, voluntarily sought the meanest companions, and subjected himself to the coarsest intrusions ; for whom the wail of affliction, or the moan of hunger, was as a summons which allowed neither hesitation nor appeal ; who seemed possessed of an ubiquity for the purposes of good, almost resembling that attributed to the wanderer in the magnificent fable of "Melmoth," for the temptations to evil ; who, by a zeal and labor that brought to habit and inclination a thousand martyrdoms, made his life a very hour-glass, in which each sand was a good deed or a virtuous design.

Many plunge into public affairs, to which they have had a previous distaste, from the desire of losing the memory of a private affliction ; but so far from wishing to heal the wounds of remembrance by the anodynes which society can afford, it was only in retirement that Mordaunt found the flowers from which balm could be distilled. Many are through vanity magnanimous, and benevolent from the selfishness of fame ; but, so far from seeking applause, where he bestowed favor, Mordaunt had sedulously shrouded himself in darkness and disguise. And by that increasing propensity to quiet, so often found among those addicted to lofty or abstruse contemplation, he had conquered the ambition of youth with the philosophy of a manhood that had forestalled the affections of age. Many, in short, have become great or good to the community by individual motives easily resolved into common and earthly elements of desire ; but they who inquire diligently into human nature have not often the exalted happiness to record a character like Mordaunt's, actuated purely by a systematic principle of love, which covered mankind, as heaven does earth, with an atmos-

phere of light extending to the remotest corners, and penetrating the darkest recesses.

It was one of those violent and gusty evenings, which give to an English autumn something rude, rather than gentle, in its characteristics, that Mordaunt and Clarence sate together,

“ And sowed the hours with various seeds of talk.”

The young Isabel, the only living relic of the departed one, sat by her father's side, upon the floor; and, though their discourse was far beyond the comprehension of her years, yet did she seem to listen with a quiet and absorbed attention. In truth, child as she was, she so loved, and almost worshipped, her father, that the very tones of his voice had in them a charm, which could always vibrate, as it were, to her heart, and hush her into silence; and that melancholy and deep, though somewhat low voice, when it swelled or trembled with *thought*—which in Mordaunt *was feeling*—made her sad, she knew not why; and when she heard it, she would creep to his side, and put her little hand on his, and look up at him with eyes in whose tender and glistening blue the spirit of her mother seemed to float. She was serious, and thoughtful, and loving, beyond the usual capacities of childhood; perhaps her solitary condition, and habits of constant intercourse with one so grave as Mordaunt, and who always, when not absent on his excursions of charity, loved her to be with him, had given to her mind a precocity of feeling, and tintured the simplicity of infancy with what ought to have been the colors of after-years. She was not inclined to the sports of her age—she loved, rather, and above all else, to sit by Mordaunt's side, and silently pore over some book, or feminine task, and to steal her eyes every now and then away from her employment, in order to watch his motions, or provide for whatever her vigilant kindness of heart imagined he desired. And often, when he saw her fairy form hovering about him, and attending on his wants, or her beautiful countenance glow with pleasure, when she fancied she supplied them, he almost believed that Isabel yet lived, though in another form, and that a love so intense and holy as hers had been might transmigrate, but could not perish.

The young Isabel had displayed a passion for music so early, that it almost seemed innate; and as, from the mild and wise education she received, her ardor had never been repelled on the one hand or overstrained on the other, so, though she had but just passed her seventh year, she had attained to a singular

proficiency in the art—an art that suited well with her lovely face, and fond feelings, and innocent heart; and it was almost heavenly, in the literal acceptance of the word, to hear her sweet, though childish voice swell along the still pure airs of summer, and her angelic countenance all rapt and brilliant with the enthusiasm which her own melodies created.

Never had she borne the bitter breath of unkindness, nor writhed beneath that customary injustice which punishes in others the sins of our own temper, and the varied fretfulness of caprice; and so she had none of the fears and meannesses, and *acted* untruths which so usually pollute and debase the innocence of childhood. But the promise of her ingenuous brow (over which the silken hair flowed, parted into two streams of gold) and of the fearless but tender eyes, and of the quiet smile which sat for ever upon the rosy mouth, like Joy watching Love, was kept in its fullest extent by the mind, from which all thoughts, pure, kind, and guileless flowed, like waters from a well, which a spirit has made holy for its own dwelling.

On this evening, we have said that she sat by her father's side, and listened, though she only in part drank in its sense, to his conversation with his guest.

The room was of great extent, and surrounded with books, over which, at close intervals, the busts of the departed Great and the immortal Wise looked down. There was the sublime beauty of Plato, the harsher and more earthly countenance of Tully, the only Roman (except Lucretius) who might have been a Greek. There the mute marble gave the broad front of Bacon (itself a world)—and there the features of Locke showed how the mind wears away the links of flesh with the file of thought. And over other departments of those works which remind us that man is made a little lower than the angels, the stern face of the Florentine who sung of hell, contrasted with the quiet grandeur enthroned on the fair brow of the English poet—"blind but bold,"—and there the glorious, but genial countenance of him who has found in all humanity a friend, conspicuous among sages and minstrels, claimed brotherhood with all.

The fire burned clear and high, casting a rich twilight (for there was no other light in the room) over that gothic chamber, and shining cheerily upon the varying countenance of Clarence, and the more contemplative features of his host. In the latter might you see that care and thought had been harsh, but not unhallowed companions. In the lines which crossed his ex-

pause of brow, time seemed to have buried many hopes; but his mien and air, if loftier, were gentler than in younger days; and though they had gained somewhat in dignity, had lost greatly in reserve.

There was in the old chamber, with its fretted roof and ancient "garniture," the various books which surrounded it, walls that the learned built to serve themselves, and in the marble likeness of those for whom thought had won eternity, joined to the hour, the breathing quiet, and the hearth-light, by whose solitary rays we love best in the eves of autumn to discourse on graver or subtler themes—there was in all this a spell which seemed particularly to invite and to harmonize with that tone of conversation, some portions of which we are now about to relate.

"How loudly," said Clarence, "that last gust swept by—you remember that beautiful couplet in Tibullus:

"Quam juvat immites ventos audire cubantem,
Et dominam tenero detinuisse sinu."*

"Ay," answered Mordaunt, with a scarcely audible sigh, "that is the feeling of the lover at the '*immites ventos*,' but *we* sages of the lamp make our mistress Wisdom, and when the winds rage without, it is to *her* that we cling. See how from the same object different conclusions are drawn! the most common externals of nature, the wind and the wave, the stars and the heavens, the very earth on which we tread, never excite in different bosoms the same ideas; and it is from our own hearts, and not from an outward source, that we draw the hues which color the web of our existence."

"It is true," answered Clarence. "You remember that in two specks of the moon the enamored maiden perceived two unfortunate lovers, while the ambitious curate conjectured that they were the spires of a cathedral? But it is not only to our *feelings*, but also to our *reasonings*, that we give the colors which they wear. The moral, for instance, which to one man seems atrocious, to another is divine. On the tendency of the same work what three people will agree? And how shall the most sanguine moralist hope to benefit mankind when he finds that, by the multitude, his wisest endeavors to instruct are often considered but as instruments to pervert?"

"I believe," answered Mordaunt, "that it is from our ignorance that our contentions flow; we debate with strife and with

* Sweet on our couch to hear the winds above,
And cling with closer heart to her we love.

wrath, with bickering and with hatred, but of the thing debated *upon* we remain in the profoundest darkness. Like the laborers of Babel, while we endeavor in vain to express our meaning to each other, the fabric by which, for a common end, we would have ascended to heaven from the ills of earth remains for ever unadvanced and incomplete. Let us hope that knowledge is the universal language which shall reunite us. As, in their sublime allegory, the Ancients signified that only through virtue we arrive at honor, so let us believe that only through knowledge can we arrive at virtue !”

“And yet,” said Clarence, “that seems a melancholy truth for the mass of the people who have no time for the researches of wisdom.”

“Not so much so as at first we might imagine,” answered Mordaunt ; “the few smooth all paths for the many. The precepts of knowledge it is difficult to extricate from error ; but, once discovered, they gradually pass into maxims ; and thus what the sage’s life was consumed in acquiring become acquisition of a moment to posterity. Knowledge is like the atmosphere,—in order to dispel the vapor and dislodge the frost, our ancestors felled the forest, drained the marsh, and cultivated the waste, and we now breathe without an effort in the purified air and the chastened climate, the result of the labor of generations and the progress of ages ! As to-day, the common mechanic may equal in science, however inferior in genius, the friar * whom his contemporaries feared as a magician, so the opinions which now startle as well as astonish may be received hereafter as acknowledged axioms, and pass into ordinary practice. We cannot even tell how far the sanguine † theories of certain philosophers deceive them when they anticipate for future ages, a knowledge which shall bring perfection to the mind, baffle the diseases of the body, and even protract to a date now utterly unknown the final destination of life ; for Wisdom is a palace of which only the vestibule has been entered ; nor can we guess what treasures are hid in those chambers, of which the experience of the past can afford us neither analogy nor clue.”

“It was, then,” said Clarence, who wished to draw his companion into speaking of himself, “it was, then, from your addiction to studies not ordinarily made the subject of acquisi-

* Roger Bacon.

† See Condorcet on the Progress of the Human Mind ; written some years after the supposed date of this conversation, but in which there is a slight but eloquent and affecting view of the philosophy to which Mordaunt refers.

tion that you date (pardon me) your generosity, your devotedness, your feeling for others, and your indifference to self?"

"You flatter me," said Mordaunt modestly (and we may be permitted to crave attention to his reply, since it unfolds the secret springs of a character so singularly good and pure); "you flatter me; but I will answer you as if you had put the question without the compliment; nor, perhaps, will it be wholly un instructive, as it will certainly be new, to sketch, without recurrence to events, or what I may call exterior facts, a brief and progressive History of One Human Mind.

"Our first era of life is under the influence of the primitive feelings; we are pleased and we laugh; hurt, and we weep; we vent our little passions the moment they are excited; and so much of novelty have we to *perceive* that we have little leisure to *reflect*. By-and-by fear teaches us to restrain our feelings; when displeased, we seek to revenge the displeasure, and are punished; we find the excess of our joy, our sorrow, our anger, alike considered criminal, and chidden into restraint. From harshness we become acquainted with deceit; the promise made is not fulfilled, the threat not executed, the fear falsely excited, and the hope wilfully disappointed: we are surrounded by systematized delusion, and we imbibe the contagion.

"From being forced into concealing the thoughts which we do conceive, we begin to affect those which we do not; so early do we learn the two main tasks of life, To Suppress and To Feign, that our memory will not carry us beyond that period of artifice to a state of nature when the twin principles of veracity and belief were so strong as to lead the philosophers of a modern school into the error of terming them innate.*

"It was with a mind restless and confused—feelings which were alternately chilled and counterfeited (the necessary results of my first tuition), that I was driven to mix with others of my age. They did not like me, nor do I blame them. *Les manières que l'on néglige comme de petites choses, sont souvent ce qui fait que les hommes décident de vous en bien ou en mal.*† Manner is acquired so imperceptibly that we have given its origin to nature, as we do the origin of all else for which our ignorance can find no other source. Mine was unprepossessing; I was disliked, and I returned the feeling; I sought not, and I was shunned. Then I thought that all were unjust to me, and I grew bitter, and sullen, and morose: I cased myself in the

* Reid on the Human Mind.

† Those manners which one neglects as trifling, are often the cause of the opinion, good or bad, formed of you by men.

stubbornness of pride, I pored over the books which spoke of the worthlessness of man, and I indulged the discontent of myself by brooding over the frailties of my kind.

“My passions were strong, they told me to *suppress* them. The precept was old, and seemed wise—I attempted to enforce it. I had already begun, in early infancy, the lesson: I had now only to renew it. Fortunately I was diverted from this task, or, my mind, in conquering its passions, would have conquered its powers. I learnt, in after-lessons, that the passions are not to be suppressed—they are to be directed; and when directed, rather to be strengthened than subdued.

“Observe how a word may influence a life; a man whose opinion I esteemed, made of me the casual and trite remark, that ‘my nature was one of which it was impossible to augur evil or good, it might be extreme in either.’ This observation roused me into thought: could I indeed be all that was good or evil? had I the choice, and could I hesitate which to choose? but what was good and what was evil? that seemed the most difficult inquiry.

“I asked and received no satisfactory reply; in the words of Erasmus—*totius negotii caput ac fontem ignorant, divinant, ac delirant omnes* :* so I resolved myself to inquire and to decide. I subjected to my scrutiny the moralist and the philosopher; I saw that on all sides they disputed, but I saw that they *grew virtuous in the dispute*; they uttered much that was absurd about the origin of good, but much more that was exalted in its praise: and I never rose from any work which treated ably upon morals, whatever were its peculiar opinions, but I felt my breast enlightened, and my mind ennobled by my studies. The professor of one sect commanded me to avoid the dogmatist of another, as the propagator of moral poison; and the dogmatist retaliated on the professor; but I avoided neither: I read both, and turned all ‘into honey and fine gold.’ No inquiry into wisdom, however superficial, is undeserving attention. The vagaries of the idlest fancy will often chance, as it were, upon the most useful discoveries of truth, and serve as a guide to after and to slower disciples of wisdom; even as the peckings of birds in an unknown country indicate to the adventurous seaman the best and the safest fruits.

“From the *works* of men I looked into their *lives*, and I found that there was a vast difference (though I am not aware that it has before been remarked) between those who cultivate a *talent*, and those who cultivate *the mind*; I found that the

* All ignore, guess, and rave about the head and fountain of the whole question at issue,

mere men of genius were often erring or criminal in their lives ; but that vice or crime in the disciples of philosophy was strikingly unfrequent and rare. The extremest culture of reason had not, it is true, been yet carried far enough to preserve the laborer from follies of opinion, but a moderate culture had been sufficient to deter him from the vices of life. And only to the sons of Wisdom, as of old to the sages of the East, seemed given the unerring star, which, through the travail of Earth and the clouds of Heaven, led them at the last to their God !

“When I gleaned this fact from biography, I paused, and said—‘Then must there be something excellent in Wisdom, if it can, even in its most imperfect disciples, be thus beneficial to morality.’ Pursuing this sentiment I redoubled my researches, and behold the object of my quest was won ! I had before sought a satisfactory answer to the question, ‘What is Virtue ?’ from men of a thousand tenets, and my heart had rejected all I had received. ‘Virtue,’ said some, and my soul bowed reverently to the dictate, ‘Virtue is religion.’ I heard and humbled myself before the Divine Book. Let me trust that I did not humble myself in vain ! But the dictate satisfied less than it awed ; for either it limited Virtue to the mere belief, or, by extending it to the practice, of Religion, it extended also inquiry to the method in which the practice should be applied. But with the first interpretation of the dictate, who could rest contented?—for, while in the perfect enforcement of the tenets of our faith all virtue may be found, so in the passive and the mere belief in its divinity, we find only an engine as applicable to evil as to good : the torch which should illumine the altar has also lighted the stake, and the zeal of the persecutor has been no less sincere than the heroism of the martyr. Rejecting, therefore, this interpretation, I accepted the other : I felt in my heart, and I rejoiced as I felt it, that in the practice of Religion the body of all virtue could be found. But in that conviction, had I at once an answer to my inquiries?—Could the mere desire of good be sufficient to attain it—and was the *attempt* at virtue synonymous with *success* ? On the contrary, have not those most desirous of obeying the precepts of God often sinned the most against their spirit, and has not zeal been frequently the most ardent when crime was the most rife.* But what, if neither sincerity nor

* There can be no doubt that they who exterminated the Albigenses, established the Inquisition, lighted the fires at Smithfield, were actuated, not by a desire to do evil, but (monstrous as it may seem) to do good ; not to counteract, but to enforce what they believed the wishes of the Almighty ; so that a good intention, without the enlightenment

zeal was sufficient to constitute goodness—what, if in the breasts of the best intentioned, crime had been fostered, the more dangerously because the more disguised—what ensued?—That the religion which they professed, they believed, they adored, *they had also misunderstood*; and that the precepts to be drawn from the Holy Book, they had darkened by their ignorance, or perverted by their passions! Here, then, at once my enigma was solved: here then, at once, I was led to the goal of my inquiry!—Ignorance, and the perversion of passion, are but the same thing—though under different names; for, only by our ignorance are our passions perverted. Therefore, what followed?—that, if by ignorance the greatest of God's gifts had been turned to evil, Knowledge alone was the light by which even the pages of Religion should be read. It followed that the Providence that knew that the nature it had created should be constantly in exercise, and that only through labor comes improvement, had wisely ordained that we should toil even for the blessing of its holiest and clearest laws. It had given us, in Religion, as in this magnificent world, treasures and harvests which might be called forth in incalculable abundance; but had decreed that through our exertions only *should* they be called forth; a palace more gorgeous than the palace of enchantment was before us, but its chambers were a labyrinth which required a clue.

“What was that clue? Was it to be sought for in the corners of earth, or was it not beneficently centred in ourselves? Was it not the exercise of a power easy for us to use, if we would dare to do so? Was it not the simple exertion of the discernment granted to us for all else? Was it not the exercise of our reason? ‘Reason!’ cried the Zealot, ‘pernicious and hateful instrument, it is fraught with peril to yourself and to others; do not think for a moment of employing an engine so fallacious and so dangerous.’ But I listened not to the Zealot: could the steady and bright torch which, even where the Star of Bethlehem had withheld its diviner light, had guided some patient and unwearied steps to the very throne of Virtue, become but a deceitful meteor to him who kindled it *for the aid of Religion*, and in an eternal cause! Could it be perilous to task our reason, even to the utmost, in the investigation of the true utility and hidden wisdom of the works of God, when God himself had ordained that only through *some* exertion of our reason

to direct it to a fitting object, may be as pernicious to human happiness as one of the most fiendish. We are told of a whole people who used to murder their guests, not from ferocity or interest, but from the pure and praiseworthy motive of *obtaining the good qualities*, which they believed, by the murder of the deceased, devolved upon them.

should we know either from Nature or Revelation that He himself existed? 'But,' cried the Zealot again, 'but mere mortal wisdom teaches men presumption, and presumption, doubt.' 'Pardon me,' I answered, 'it is not Wisdom, but Ignorance, which teaches men presumption; *Genius* may be sometimes arrogant, but nothing is so diffident as *Knowledge*.' 'But,' resumed the Zealot, 'those accustomed to subtle inquiries may dwell only on the minutiae of faith—inexplicable, because useless to explain, and argue from those minutiae against the grand and universal truth.' 'Pardon me again: it is the petty, not the enlarged, mind, which prefers casuistry to conviction; it is the confined and short sight of Ignorance which, unable to comprehend the great bearings of truth, pries only into its narrow and obscure corners, occupying itself in scrutinizing the atoms of a part, while the eagle eye of Wisdom contemplates, in its widest scale, the luminous majesty of the whole. Survey our faults, our errors, our vices—fearful and fertile field; trace them to their causes—all those causes resolve themselves into *one*—Ignorance!—For, as we have already seen, that from this source flow the abuses of Religion, so, also, from this source flow the abuses of all other blessings—of talents, of riches, of power; for we abuse things, either because we know not their real use, or because, with an equal blindness, we imagine the abuse more adapted to our happiness. But as ignorance, then, is the sole spring of evil—so, as the antidote to ignorance is knowledge, *it necessarily* follows that, were we *consummate* in knowledge, we should be perfect in good. He therefore who retards the progress of intellect countenances crime—nay, to a state, is the greatest of criminals; while he who circulates that mental light more precious than the visual, is the holiest improver, and the surest benefactor, of his race! Nor let us believe, with the dupes of a shallow policy, that there exists upon the earth *one* prejudice that can be called salutary, or *one* error beneficial to perpetuate. As the petty fish, which is fabled to possess the property of arresting the progress of the largest vessel to which it clings, even so may a single prejudice, unnoticed or despised, more than the adverse blast, or the dead calm, delay the barque of Knowledge in the vast seas of Time.'

"It is true that the sanguineness of philanthropists may have carried them too far; it is true (for the experiment has not yet been made) that God *may* have denied to us, in this state, the consummation of knowledge, and the consequent perfection in good; but because we cannot be perfect, are we to resolve we

will be evil? One step in Knowledge is one step from sin; one step from sin is one step nearer to Heaven. Oh! never let us be deluded by those, who, for *political* motives, would adulterate the divinity of *religious* truths: never let us believe that our Father in Heaven rewards most the one talent unemployed, or that prejudice, and indolence, and folly, find the most favor in His sight! The very heathen has bequeathed to us a nobler estimate of his nature; and the same sentence which so sublimely declares 'TRUTH IS THE BODY OF GOD,' declares also 'AND LIGHT IS HIS SHADOW.'*

"Persuaded, then, that knowledge contained the key to virtue, it was to knowledge that I applied. The first grand lesson which it taught me was the solution of a phrase most hackneyed, least understood, viz., '*common sense*.' † It is in the Portico of the Greek sage that that phrase has received its legitimate explanation; it is there we are taught that '*common sense*' signifies '*the sense of the common interest*.' Yes! it is the most beautiful truth in morals that we have no such thing as a distinct or divided interest from our race. In their welfare is ours; and, by choosing the broadest paths to effect their happiness, we choose the surest and the shortest to our own. As I read and pondered over these truths, I was sensible that a great change was working a fresh world out of the former materials of my mind. My passions, which before I had checked into uselessness, or exerted to destruction, now started forth in a nobler shape, and prepared for a new direction: instead of urging me to individual aggrandizement, they panted for universal good, and coveted the reward of Ambition, only for the triumphs of Benevolence.

"This is one stage of virtue—I cannot resist the belief that there is a higher: it is when we begin to love virtue, not for its objects, but itself. For there are in knowledge these two excellences: first, that it offers to every man, the most selfish and the most exalted, his peculiar inducement to good. It says to the former '*Serve mankind, and you serve yourself*'; to the latter, '*In choosing the best means to secure your own happiness, you will have the sublime inducement of promoting the happiness of mankind*.'

"The second excellence of Knowledge is that even the selfish man, when he has once begun to love Virtue from little motives, loses the motives as he increases the love; and at last worships the deity, where before he only coveted the gold upon

*Plato.

† Κοινωνομοσίγη—Sensus communis.

its altar. And thus I learned to love Virtue solely for its own beauty. I said with one who, among much dross, has many particles of ore, 'If it be not estimable in itself, I can see nothing estimable in following it for the sake of a bargain.'*

"I looked round the world, and saw often Virtue in rags, and Vice in purple : the former conduces to happiness, it is true, but the happiness lies *within*, and not in externals. I contemned the deceitful folly with which writers have termed it poetical justice to make the good ultimately prosperous in wealth, honor, fortunate love, or successful desires. Nothing false, even in poetry, can be just ; and that pretended moral is, of all, the falsest. Virtue is not more exempt than Vice from the ills of fate, but it contains within itself always an energy to resist them, and sometimes an anodyne to soothe—to repay your quotation from Tibullus :

“ ‘ Crura sonant ferro—sed canit inter opus ! ’ †

“When in the depths of my soul I set up that divinity of this nether earth, which Brutus never really understood, if, because unsuccessful in its efforts, he doubted its existence, I said in the proud prayer with which I worshipped it : ‘ Poverty may humble my lot, but it shall not debase thee ; Temptation may shake my nature, but not the rock on which thy temple is based ; Misfortune may wither all the hopes that have blossomed around thine altar, but I will sacrifice dead leaves when the flowers are no more. Though all that I have loved perish—all that I have coveted fade away, I may murmur at fate, but I will have no voice but that of homage for thee ! Nor, while thou smilest upon my way, would I exchange with the loftiest and happiest of thy foes ! ’ More bitter than aught of what I then dreamed have been my trials, *but I have fulfilled my vow !*

“I believe that alone to be a true description of Virtue, which makes it all-sufficient to itself—that alone a just portrait-ure of its excellence, which does not lessen its internal power by exaggerating its outward advantages, nor degrade its nobility by dwelling only on its rewards. The grandest moral of ancient lore has ever seemed to me that which the picture of Prometheus affords : in whom neither the shaking earth, nor the rending heaven, nor the rock without, nor the vulture within, could cause regret for past benevolence, or terror for future evil, or envy, even amidst tortures, for the dishonorable

*Lord Shaftesbury.

† The chains clank on its limbs, but it sings amidst its tasks.

prosperity of his insulter!* Who that has glowed over this exalted picture will tell us that we must make Virtue prosperous in order to allure to it, or clothe Vice with misery in order to revolt us from its image! Oh! who, on the contrary, would not learn to adore Virtue, from the bitterest sufferings of such a votary, a hundred-fold more than he would learn to love Vice from the gaudiest triumphs of its most fortunate disciples?"

Something there was in Mordaunt's voice and air, and the impassioned glow of his countenance, that, long after he had ceased, thrilled in Clarence's heart, "like the remembered tone of a mute lyre." And when a subsequent event led him at rash moments to doubt whether Virtue was indeed the chief good, Linden recalled the words of that night, and the enthusiasm with which they were uttered, repented that in his doubt he had wronged the truth, and felt that there *is* a power in the deep heart of man to which even Destiny is submitted!

CHAPTER LXIII.

Will you bear the letter?

* * * *

This is the motley-minded gentleman that I have before met in the forest.

—*As You Like It.*

A MORNING or two after the conversation with which our last chapter concluded, Clarence received the following letter from the Duke of Haverfield:

"Your letter, my dear Linden, would have been answered before, but for an occurrence which is generally supposed to engross the whole attention of the persons concerned in it. Let me see—ay, *three*—yes, I have been *exactly* three days married! Upon my honor, there is much less in the event than one would imagine; and the next time it happens I will not put myself to such amazing trouble and inconvenience about it. But one buys wisdom only by experience. Now, however, that I have communicated to you the fact, I expect you, in the first place, to excuse my negligence for not writing before; for (as I know you are fond of the *literæ humaniores*, I will give the sentiment the dignity of a quotation)—

“ ‘Un véritable amant ne connaît point d'amis;’ †

and though I have been three days married, I am still a lover

* Mercury.—See the Prometheus of Æschylus.

† A true lover recognizes no friends.—CORNEILLE.

In the second place, I expect you to be very grateful that, all things considered, I write to you *so soon*; it would indeed not be an ordinary inducement that could make me 'put pen to paper'—(Is not that the true vulgar, commercial, academical, metaphorical epistolary style?) so shortly after the fatal ceremony. So, had I nothing to say but in reply to your comments on state affairs—(hang them!)—or in applause of your Italian friend, of whom I say, as Charles II. said of the honest yeoman—'I can admire virtue, though I can't imitate it!' I think it highly probable that your letter might still remain in a certain box of tortoise-shell and gold (formerly belonging to the great Richelieu, and now in my possession), in which I at this instant descry, 'with many a glance of woe and boding dire,' sundry epistles in manifold handwritings, all classed under the one fearful denomination—'unanswered.'

"No, my good Linden, my heart is inditing of a better matter than this. Listen to me, and then stay at your host's or order your swiftest steed, as seems most meet to you.

"You said rightly that Miss Trevanion, now her Grace of Haverfield, was the intimate friend of Lady Flora Ardenne. I have often talked to her—viz., Eleanor, not Lady Flora—about you, and was renewing the conversation yesterday, when your letter, accidentally lying before me, reminded me of you. Sundry little secrets passed in due conjugal course, from her possession into mine. I find that you have been believed, by Lady Flora, to have played the perfidious with La Meronville—that she never knew of your application to her father, and his reply—that, on the contrary, she accused you of indifference in going abroad without attempting to obtain an interview, or excuse your supposed infidelity—that her heart is utterly averse to an union with that odious Lord Boro—Bah—I mean Lord Ulswater; and that—prepare, Linden—she still cherishes your memory, even through time, change, and fancied desertion, with a tenderness which—deuce take it, I never could write sentiment—but you understand me; so I will not conclude the phrase. 'Nothing in oratory,' said my cousin D—, who was, *entre nous*, more honest than eloquent, 'like a break!'—'down! you should have added,' said I.

"I now, my dear Linden, leave you to your fate. For my part, though I own Lord Ulswater is a lord whom ladies in love with the etcæteras of married pomp might well desire, yet I do think it would be no difficult matter for you to eclipse him! I cannot, it is true, advise you to run away with Lady Flora. *Gentlemen* don't run away with the daughters of gentle-

men ; but, without running away, you may win your betrothed and Lord Ulswater's intended. A distinguished member of the House of Commons, owner of Scarsdale, and representative of the most ancient branch of the Talbots—*mon Dieu!* you might marry a queen dowager and decline settlements!

“And so, committing thee to the guidance of that winged god, who, if three days afford any experience, has made thy friend to forsake pleasure only to find happiness, I bid thee, most gentle Linden, farewell. HAVERFIELD.”

Upon reading this letter, Clarence felt as a man suddenly transformed! From an exterior of calm and apathy, at the bottom of which lay one bitter and corroding recollection, he passed at once into a state of emotion, wild, agitated, and confused; yet, *amidst* all, was foremost a burning and intense hope, which for long years he had not permitted himself to form.

He descended into the breakfast parlor. Mordaunt, whose hours of *appearing*, though not of rising, were much later than Clarence's, was not yet down; and our lover had full leisure to form his plans, before his host made his *entrée*.

“Will you ride to-day?” said Mordaunt: “there are some old ruins in the neighborhood well worth the trouble of a visit.”

“I grieve to say,” answered Clarence, “that I must take my leave of you. I have received intelligence, this morning, which may greatly influence my future life, and by which I am obliged to make an excursion to another part of the country, nearly a day's journey, on horseback.”

Mordaunt looked at his guest, and conjectured by his heightened color, and an embarrassment which he in vain endeavored to conceal, that the journey might have some cause for its suddenness and dispatch which the young senator had his peculiar reasons for concealing. Algernon contented himself, therefore, with expressing his regret at Linden's abrupt departure, without incurring the indiscreet hospitality of pressing a longer sojourn beneath his roof.

Immediately after breakfast, Clarence's horse was brought to the door, and Harrison received orders to wait with the carriage at W——, until his master returned. Not a little surprised, we trow, was the worthy valet at his master's sudden attachment to equestrian excursions. Mordaunt accompanied his visitor through the park, and took leave of him with a warmth which sensibly touched Clarence, in spite of the absence and

excitement of his thoughts ; indeed, the unaffected and simple character of Linden, joined to his acute, bold, and cultivated mind, had taken strong hold of Mordaunt's interest and esteem.

It was a mild autumnal morning, but thick clouds in the rear prognosticated rain ; and the stillness of the wind, the low flight of the swallows, and the lowing of the cattle, slowly gathering towards the nearest shelter within their appointed boundaries, confirmed the inauspicious omen. Clarence had passed the town of W——, and was entering into a road singularly hilly, when he “was aware,” as the quaint old writers of former days expressed themselves, of a tall stranger, mounted on a neat, well trimmed galloway, who had for the last two minutes been advancing towards a closely parallel line with Clarence, and had, by sundry glances and hems, denoted a desire of commencing acquaintance and conversation with his fellow traveller.

At last he summoned courage, and said, with a respectful, though somewhat free, air, “That is a very fine horse of yours, sir—I have seldom seen so fast a walker : if all his other paces are equally good, he must be quite a treasure.”

All men have their vanities. Clarence's was as much in his horse's excellences as his own ; and gratified even with the compliment of a stranger, he replied to it by joining in the praise, though with a modest and measured forbearance, which the stranger, if gifted with penetration, could easily have discerned was more affected than sincere.

“And yet, sir,” resumed Clarence's new companion, “my little palfrey might perhaps keep pace with your steed ; look—I lay the rein on his neck—and, you see, he rivals—by heaven, he *outwalks* yours !”

Not a little piqued and incensed, Linden also relaxed his rein, and urged his horse to a quicker step ; but the lesser competitor not only sustained, but increased his superiority ; and it was only by breaking into a trot that Linden's impatient and spirited steed could overtake him. Hitherto Clarence had not honored his new companion with more than a rapid and slight glance ; but rivalry, even in trifles, begets respect, and our defeated hero now examined him with a more curious eye.

The stranger was between forty and fifty—an age in which, generally, very little of the boy has survived the advance of manhood ; yet there was a hearty and frank exhilaration in the manner and look of the person we describe which is rarely found beyond the first stage of youth. His features were

comely and clearly cut, and his air and appearance indicative of a man who might equally have belonged to the middle or the upper orders. But Clarence's memory, as well as attention, was employed in his survey of the stranger; and he recognized, in a countenance on which time had passed very lightly, an old and oft-times recalled acquaintance. However, he did not immediately make himself known. "I will first see," thought he, "whether he can remember his young guest in the bronzed stranger, after eight years' absence."

"Well," said Clarence, as he approached the owner of the palfrey, who was laughing with childish glee at his conquest—"well, you have won, sir: but the tortoise might beat the hare in walking, and I content myself with thinking that at a trot or a gallop the result of a race would have been very different."

"I am not so sure of that, sir," said the sturdy stranger, patting the arched neck of his little favorite; "if you would like to try either, I should have no objection to venture a trifling wager on the event."

"You are very good," said Clarence, with a smile in which urbanity was a little mingled with contemptuous incredulity; "but I am not now at leisure to win your money: I have a long day's journey before me, and must not tire a faithful servant; yet I do candidly confess that I think" (and Clarence's recollection of the person he addressed made him introduce the quotation), "that my horse

'Excels a common one
In shape, in courage, color, *pace*, and bone.'

"Eh, sir," cried our stranger, as his eyes sparkled at the verses: "I would own that your horse were worth all the horses in the kingdom, if you brought Will Shakspeare to prove it. And I am also willing to confess that your steed does fairly merit the splendid praise which follows the lines you have quoted:

'Round hoofed, short jointed, fetlocks shag and long,
Broad breast, full eyes, small head, and nostril wide,
High crest, short ears, straight legs, and passing strong,
Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide.'

"Come," said Clarence, "your memory has atoned for your horse's victory, and I quite forgive your conquest, in return for your compliment; but suffer me to ask how long you have commenced cavalier. The Arab's *tent* is, if I err not, more a badge of your profession than the Arab's *steed*."

King Cole (for the stranger was no less a person) looked at

his companion in surprise. "So, you know me, then, sir? Well, it is a hard thing for a man to turn honest, when people have so much readier a recollection of his sins than his reform."

"Reform!" quoth Clarence, "am I then to understand that your majesty has abdicated your dominions under the green-wood tree?"

"You are," said Cole, eyeing his acquaintance inquisitively; "you are.

"I fear no more the heat of the sun
Nor the furious winter's rages;
I my worldly task have done,
Home am gone and ta'en my wages."

"I congratulate you," said Clarence; "but only in part—for I have often envied your past state, and do not know enough of your present to say whether I should equally envy *that*."

"Why," answered Cole, "after all, we commit a great error in imagining that it is the living wood or the dead wall which makes happiness. 'My *mind* to me a kingdom is'—and it is that which you must envy, if you honor anything belonging to me with that feeling."

"The precept is both good and old," answered Clarence; "yet I think it was not a very favorite maxim of yours some years ago. I remember a time when you thought no happiness could exist out of 'dingle and bosky dell.' If not very intrusive on your secrets, may I know how long you have changed your sentiments and manner of life! The reason of the change I dare not presume to ask."

"Certainly," said the quondam gypsy, musingly—"certainly I have seen your face before, and even the tone of your voice strikes me as not wholly unfamiliar; yet I cannot, for the life of me, guess whom I have the honor of addressing. However, sir, I have no hesitation in answering your questions. It was just five years ago, last summer, when I left the 'Tents of Kedar.' I now reside about a mile hence. It is but a hundred yards off the high road, and if you would not object to step aside and suffer a rasher, or aught else, to be 'the shoeing-horn to draw on a cup of ale,' as our plain forefathers were wont wittily to say, why, I shall be very happy to show you my habitation. You will have a double welcome, from the circumstance of *my* having been absent from home for the last three days."

Clarence, mindful of his journey, was about to decline the

invitation, when a few heavy drops falling, began to fulfil the cloudy promise of the morning. "Trust," said Cole, "one who has been for years a watcher of the signs and menaces of the weather—we shall have a violent shower immediately. You have now no choice but to accompany me home."

"Well," said Clarence, yielding with a good grace, "I am glad of so good an excuse for intruding on your hospitality :

"O sky!

Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day,
And make me travel forth without my cloak!"

"Bravo!" cried the ex-chief, too delighted to find a comrade so well acquainted with Shakspeare's sonnets, to heed the little injustice Clarence had done the sky, in accusing it of a treachery its black clouds had by no means deserved. "Bravo, sir; and *now*, my palfrey against your steed—trot—eh—or gallop?"

"Trot, if it must be so," said Clarence superciliously; "but I am a few paces before you."

"So much the better," cried the jovial chief. "Little John's mettle will be the more up—on with you, sir—he who breaks into a canter loses—on!"

And Clarence slightly touching his beautiful steed, the race was begun. At first his horse, which was a remarkable *stepper*, as the modern Messrs. Anderson and Dyson would say, greatly gained the advantage. "To the right," cried the *ci-devant* gypsy, as Linden had nearly passed a narrow lane which led to the domain of the ex-king. The turn gave "Little John" an opportunity which he seized to advantage; and, to Clarence's indignant surprise, he beheld Cole now close behind—now beside—and now—now—*before!* In the heat of the moment he put spurs rather too sharply to his horse, and the spirited animal immediately passed his competitor—*but*—in a canter!

"Victoria," cried Cole, keeping back his own steed—"Victoria—confess it!"

"Pshaw," said Clarence, petulantly.

"Nay, sir, never mind it," quoth the retired sovereign; "perhaps it was but a venial transgression of your horse—and on other ground I should not have beat you."

It is very easy to be generous when one is *quite* sure one is the victor. Clarence felt this, and, muttering out something about the sharp angle in the road, turned abruptly from all farther comment on the subject by saying, "We are now, I suppose, entering your territory. Does not this white gate lead to your new (at least new to me) abode?"

"It does," said Cole, opening the said gate, and pausing as if to suffer his guest and rival to look around and admire.

The house, in full view, was of red brick, small and square, faced with stone copings, and adorned in the centre with a gable roof, on which was a ball of glittering metal. A flight of stone steps led to the porch, which was of fair size and stately, considering the proportions of the mansion—over the door was a stone shield of arms, surmounted by a stag's head; and above this heraldic ornament was a window of great breadth, compared to the other conveniences of a similar nature. On either side of the house ran a slight iron fence, the protection of sundry plots of gay flowers and garden shrubs, while two peacocks were seen slowly stalking towards the enclosure to seek a shelter from the increasing shower. At the back of the building, thick trees and a rising hill gave a meet defence from the winds of winter; and in front, a sloping and small lawn afforded pasture for a few sheep, and two pet deer. Towards the end of this lawn were two large fishponds, shaded by rows of feathered trees. On the margin of each of these, as if emblematic of ancient customs, was a common tent; and in the intermediate space was a rustic pleasure-house, fenced from the encroaching cattle, and half hid by surrounding laurel, and the parasite ivy.

All together there was a quiet and old-fashioned comfort, and even luxury, about the place, which suited well with the eccentric character of the abdicated chief; and Clarence, as he gazed around, really felt that he might, perhaps, deem the last state of the owner *not* worse than the first.

Unmindful of the rain, which now began to pour fast and full, Cole suffered "Little John's" rein to fall over his neck, and the spoiled favorite to pluck the smooth grass beneath, while he pointed out to Clarence the various beauties of his seat.

"There, sir," said he, "by those ponds in which, I assure you, old Isaac might have fished with delight, I pass many a summer's day. I was always a lover of the angle, and the farthest pool is the most beautiful bathing place imaginable; as Geoffrey Chaucer says:

'The gravel's gold; the water pure as glass,
The banks round the well enviroing;
And softè as velvet the youngè grass
That thereupon lustily come springing.'

"And in that arbor, Lucy—that is, my wife—sits in the summer evenings with her father and our children; and then—ah! see our pets come to welcome me"—pointing to the deer, who

had advanced within a few yards of him, but intimidated by the stranger, would not venture within reach—"Lucy loved choosing her favorites among animals which had formerly been wild, and faith I loved it too. But you observe the house, sir—it was built in the reign of Queen Anne : it belonged to my mother's family, but my father sold it, and his son five years ago rebought it. Those arms belong to my maternal ancestry. Look—look at the peacocks creeping along—poor pride theirs that can't stand the shower! But, egad, that reminds me of the rain. Come, sir, let us make for shelter." And, resuming their progress, a minute more brought them to the old-fashioned porch. Cole's ring summoned a man, not decked in "livery gay," but, "clad in serving frock," who took the horses with a nod, half familiar, half respectful, at his master's injunctions of attention and hospitality to the stranger's beast; and then our old acquaintance, striking through a small, low hall, ushered Clarence into the chief sitting-room of the mansion.

CHAPTER LXIV.

"We are not poor; although we have
 No roofs of cedar, nor our brave
 Baize, nor keep
 Account of such a flock of sheep,
 Nor bullocks fed
 To lard the shambles; barbles bred
 To kiss our hands; nor do we wish
 For Pollio's lampries in our dish.

"If we can meet and so confer
 Both by a shining salt-cellar,
 And have our roof,
 Although not arch'd, yet weather-proof :
 And ceiling free
 From that cheap candle-bawdery ;
 We'll eat our bean with that full mirth
 As we were lords of all the earth."

HERRICK, *from* HORACE.

ON entering the room, Clarence recognized Lucy, whom eight years had converted into a sleek and portly matron of about thirty-two, without stealing from her countenance its original expression of mingled modesty and good nature. She hastened to meet her husband, with an eager and joyous air of welcome seldom seen on matrimonial faces after so many years of wedlock.

A fine stout boy, of about eleven years old, left a cross-bow, which, on his father's entrance, he had appeared earnestly employed in mending, to share with his mother the salutations of the Returned. An old man sate in an armchair by the fire, gazing on the three with an affectionate and gladdening eye, and playfully detaining a child of about four years old, who was struggling to escape to dear "papa!"

The room was of oak wainscot, and the furniture plain, solid, and strong, and cast in the fashion still frequently found in those country houses which have remained unaltered by innovation since the days of George II.

Three rough-coated dogs, of a breed that would have puzzled a connoisseur, gave themselves the rousing shake, and, deserting the luxurious hearth, came in various welcome to their master. One rubbed himself against Cole's sturdy legs, murmuring soft rejoicings: he was the grandsire of the canine race, and his wick of life burnt low in the socket. Another sprung up, almost to the face of his master, and yelled his very heart out with joy: that was the son, exulting in the vigor of matured *doghood!*—and the third scrambled and tumbled over the others, uttering his pæans in a shrill treble, and chiding most snappishly at his two progenitors for interfering with his pretensions to notice: that was the infant dog, the little reveller in puppy childishness! Clarence stood by the door, with his fine countenance smiling benevolently at the happiness he beheld, and congratulating himself that for one moment, the group had forgot that he was a stranger.

As soon as our gypsy friend had kissed his wife, shaken hands with his eldest hope, shaken his head at his youngest, smiled his salutation at the father-in-law, and patted into silence the canine claimants of his favor, he turned to Clarence, and saying, half bashfully, half good-humoredly, "See what a troublesome thing it is to return home, even after three days' absence. Lucy, dearest, welcome a new friend!" he placed a chair by the fire-side for his guest, and motioned him to be seated.

The chief expression of Clarence's open and bold countenance was centred in the eyes and forehead; and as he now doffed his hat, which had hitherto concealed that expression, Lucy and her husband recognized him simultaneously.

"I am sure, sir," cried the former, "that I am glad to see you once more!"

"Ah! my young guest under the gypsy-awning!" exclaimed the latter, shaking him heartily by the hand: "where were my eyes, that they did not recognize you before?"

"Eight years," answered Clarence, "have worked more change with me and my friend here" (pointing to the boy whom he had left last so mere a child), "than they have with you and his blooming mother. The wonder is, not that you did not remember me before, but that you remember me now!"

"You *are* altered, sir, certainly," said the frank chief. "Your face is thinner, and far graver: and the smooth cheeks of the boy (for, craving your pardon, you were little more then) are somewhat darkened by the bronzed complexion with which time honors the man."

And the good Cole sighed, as he contrasted Linden's ardent countenance and elastic figure, when he had last beheld him, with the serious and thoughtful face of the person now before him: yet did he inly own that years, if they had in some things deteriorated from, had in others improved, the effect of Clarence's appearance: they had brought decision to his mien, and command to his brow, and had enlarged, to an ampler measure of dignity and power the proportions of his form. Something too there was in his look, like that of a man who had stemmed fate, and won success; and the omen of future triumph, which our fortune-telling chief had drawn from his features when first beheld, seemed already, in no small degree, to have been fulfilled.

Having seen her guest stationed in the seat of honor opposite her father, Lucy withdrew for a few moments, and when she reappeared, was followed by a neat-handed sort of Phillis for a country-maiden, bearing such kind of "savory messes" as the house might be supposed to afford.

"At all events, mine host," said Clarence, "you did not desert the flesh-pots of Egypt when you forsook its tents."

"Nay," quoth the worthy Cole, seating himself at the table, "either under the roof or the awning, we may say in the words of the old epilogue: *

' We can but bring you meat and set you stools,
And to our best cheer say, You all are welcome.'

We are plain people still; but if you can stay till dinner, you shall have a bottle of such wine as our fathers' honest souls would have rejoiced in."

"I am truly sorry that I cannot tarry with you, after so fair a promise," replied Clarence; "but before night I must be many miles hence."

Lucy came forward timidly. "Do you remember this ring,

* To the play of "All Fools," by Chapman.

sir?" said she (presenting one), "you dropt it in my boy's frock, when we saw you last."

"I did so," answered Clarence. "I trust that he will not now disdain a stranger's offering—May it be as ominous of good luck to him as my night in your caravan has proved to me."

"I am heartily glad to hear that you have prospered," said Cole—"now, let us fall to."

CHAPTER LXV.

"Out of these convertites

There is much matter to be heard and learned."—SHAKSPEARE.

"If you are bent upon leaving us so soon," said the honest Cole, as Clarence, refusing all farther solicitation to stay, seized the opportunity which the cessation of the rain afforded him, and rose to depart: "if you are bent upon leaving us so soon, I will accompany you back again into the main road, as in duty bound."

"What, immediately on your return?" said Clarence—"no, no—not a step. What would my fair hostess say to me if I suffered it?"

"Rather what would she say to me if I neglected such a courtesy? Why, sir, when I meet one who knows Shakspeare's sonnets, to say nothing of the lights of the lesser stars, as well as you, only once in eight years, do you not think I would make the most of him? Besides, it is but a quarter of a mile to the road, and I love walking after a shower."

"I am afraid, Mrs. Cole," said Clarence, "that I must be selfish enough to accept the offer." And Mrs. Cole blushing and smiling her assent and adieu, Clarence shook hands with the whole party, grandfather and child included, and took his departure.

As Cole was now a pedestrian, Linden threw the rein over his arm, and walked on foot by his host's side.

"So," said he, smiling, "I must not inquire into the reasons of your retirement?"

"On the contrary," replied Cole; "I have walked with you the more gladly from my desire of telling them to you, for we all love to seem consistent, even in our chimeras. About six years ago, I confess that I began to wax a little weary of my wandering life; my child, in growing up, required playmates;

shall I own that I did not like him to find them among the children of my own comrades? The old scamps were good enough for me, but the young ones were a little too bad for my son. Between you and me only be it said, my juvenile hope was already a little corrupted. The dog Mim—you remember Mim, sir,—secretly taught him to filch as well as if he had been a bantling of his own; and, faith, our smaller goods and chattels, especially of an edible nature, began to disappear, with a rapidity and secrecy that our itinerant palace could very ill sustain. Among us (*i.e.*, gypsies) there is a law by which no member of the gang may steal from another; but my little heaven-instructed youth would by no means abide by that distinction; and so boldly designed and well executed were his rogueries that my paternal anxiety saw nothing before him but Botany Bay on the one hand, and Newgate Courtyard on the other.”

“A sad prospect for the heir apparent!” quoth Clarence.

“It was so!” answered Cole, “and it made me deliberate. Then, as one gets older one’s romance oozes out a little in rheums and catarrhs. I began to perceive that, though I had been bred, I had not been educated, as a gypsy; and, what was worse, Lucy, though she never complained, felt that the walls of our palace were not exempt from the damps of winter, nor our royal state from the Caliban curses of

‘Cramps and
Side stitches that do pen our breath up.’

She fell ill; and during her illness I had sundry bright visions of warm rooms and coal fires, a friend with whom I could converse upon Chaucer, and a tutor for my son, who would teach him other arts than those of picking pockets and pilfering larders. Nevertheless, I was a little ashamed of my own thoughts; and I do not know whether they would have been yet put into practice, but for a trifling circumstance which converted doubt and longing into certainty.

“Our crank cuffs had for some time looked upon me with suspicion and coldness; my superior privileges and comforts they had at first forgiven, on account of my birth and my generosity to them; but by degrees they lost respect for the one and gratitude for the other; and as I had in a great measure ceased from participating in their adventures, or, during Lucy’s illness, which lasted several months, joining in their festivities, they at length considered me as a drone in a hive, by no means compensating by my services as an ally for my admittance

into their horde as a stranger. You will easily conceive, when this once became the state of their feelings towards me, with how ill a temper they brooked the lordship of my stately caravan, and my assumption of superior command. Above all, the women, who were very much incensed at Lucy's constant seclusion from their orgies, fanned the increasing discontent; and, at last, I verily believe that no eyesore could have been more grievous to the Egyptians than my wooden habitation and the smoke of its single chimney.

"From ill-will, the rascals proceeded to ill-acts; and one dark night, when we were encamped on the very same ground as that which we occupied when we received you, three of them, Mim at their head, attacked me in mine own habitation. I verily believe, if they had mastered me, they would have robbed and murdered us all except perhaps my son, whom they thought I ill-used, by depriving him of Mim's instructive society. Howbeit, I was still stirring when they invaded me, and by the help of the poker, and a tolerably strong arm, I repelled the assailants; but that very night I passed from the land of Egypt, and made with all possible expedition to the nearest town, which was, as you may remember, W——.

"Here the very next day, I learnt that the house I now inhabit was to be sold. It had (as I before said) belonged to my mother's family, and my father had sold it a little before his death. It was the home from which I had been stolen, and to which I had been returned: often in my star-lit wanderings had I flown to it in thought; and now it seemed as if Providence itself, in offering to my age the asylum I had above all others coveted for it, was interested in my retirement from the empire of an ungrateful people, and my atonement, in rest for my past sins in migration.

"Well, sir, in short, I became the purchaser of the place you have just seen, and I now think that, after all, there is more happiness in reality than romance; like the laverock, here will I build my nest:

' Here give my weary spirit rest,
And raise my low-pitched thoughts above
Earth, or what poor mortals love.' "

"And your son," said Clarence, "has he reformed?"

"Oh, yes," answered Cole. "For my part I believe the mind is less evil than people say it is; its great characteristic is imitation, and it will imitate the good as well as the bad, if we will set the example. I thank Heaven, sir, that my boy

now might go from Dan to Beersheba, and not filch a groat by the way."

"What do you intend him for?" said Clarence

"Why, he loves adventure, and, faith, I can't break him of that, for I love it, too, so I think I shall get him a commission in the army, in order to give him a fitting and legitimate sphere wherein to indulge his propensities."

"You could not do better," said Clarence. "But your fine sister, what says she to your amendment?"

"Oh! she wrote me a long letter of congratulation upon it; and every other summer, she is graciously pleased to pay me a visit of three months long; at which time, I observe, that poor Lucy is unusually smart and uncomfortable. We sit in the best room, and turn out the dogs; my father-in-law smokes his pipe in the arbor, instead of the drawing-room; and I receive sundry hints, all in vain, on the propriety of dressing for dinner. In return for these attentions on our part, my sister invariably brings my boy a present of a pair of white gloves, and my wife a French ribbon of the newest pattern; in the evening, instead of my reading Shakspeare, she tells us anecdotes of high life, and, when she goes away, she gives us, in return for our hospitality, a very general and very gingerly invitation to her house. Lucy sometimes talks to me about accepting it; but I turn a deaf ear to all such overtures, and so we continue much better friends than we should be if we saw more of each other."

"And how long has your father-in-law been with you?"

"Ever since we have been here. He gave up his farm, and cultivates mine for me; for I know nothing of those agricultural matters. I made his coming a little surprise, in order to please Lucy; you should have witnessed their meeting."

"I think I have now learned all particulars," said Clarence; "it only remains for me to congratulate you; but are you, in truth, never tired of the monotony and sameness of domestic life?"

"Yes!—and then I do, as I have just done—saddle Little John, and go on an excursion of three or four days, or even weeks, just as the whim seizes me; for I never return till I am driven back by the yearning for home, and the feeling that, after all one's wanderings, there is no place like it. Whether in private life, or public, sir, in parting with a little of one's liberty one gets a great deal of comfort in exchange."

"I thank you truly for your frankness," said Clarence; "it

has solved many doubts with respect to you, that have often occurred to me. And now we are in the main road, and I must bid you farewell ; we part, but our paths lead to the same object—you return to happiness, and I *seek* it."

"May *you* find it, and *I* not lose it, sir," said the wanderer reclaimed ; and shaking hands, the pair parted.

CHAPTER LXVI.

"Quicquid agit Rufus, nihil est, nisi Nævia Rufo,
Si gaudet, si flet, si tacet, hanc, loquitur ;
Cœnat, propinat, poscit, negat, annuit, una est
Nævia ; si non sit Nævia, mutus erit.
Scriberet hesternæ patri cum luce salutem
Nævia lux, inquit, Nævia numen, ave."*—MART.

"THE last time," said Clarence to himself, "that I travelled this road, on exactly the same errand that I travel now, I do remember that I was honored by the company of one, in all respects the opposite to mine honest host ; for, whereas in the latter there is a luxuriant and wild eccentricity, an open and blunt simplicity, and a shrewd sense, which looks not after pence, but peace ; so in the mind of the friend of the late Lady Waddilove, there was a flat and wedged-in primness and narrowness of thought—an enclosure of bargains and profits of all species,—mustard-pots, rings, monkeys, chains, jars, and plum-colored velvet inexpressibles, his ideas, with the true alchemy of trade, turned them all into gold ; yet was he also as shrewd and acute as he with whose character he contrasts—equally with him seeking comfort and gladness, and an asylum for his old age. Strange that all tempers should have a common object, and never a common road to it. But, since I have begun the contrast, let me hope that it may be extended in its omen unto me ; let me hope that, as my encountering with the mercantile Brown brought me ill-luck in my enterprise, thereby signifying the crosses and vexations of those who labor in the cheateries and over-reachings which constitute the vocation of the world ; so my meeting with the philosophical Cole, who has, both in vagrancy and rest, found cause to boast of happiness, authorities from his studies to favor his inclination to

*Whatever Rufus does is nothing, except Nævia be at his elbow. Be he joyful or sorrowful, be he even silent, he is still harping upon her. He eats, he drinks, he asks, he denies, he assents.—Nævia is his sole theme ; no Nævia, and he's dumb. Yesterday at daybreak, he would fain write a letter of salutation, to his father ; "Hail, Nævia, light of my eyes," quoth he ; "hail, Nævia, my divine one."

each, and reason to despise what he, with Sir Kenelm Digby, would wisely call,

‘The fading blossoms of the earth’;

so my meeting with him may prove a token of good speed to mine errand, and thereby denote prosperity to one who seeks not riches, nor honor, nor the conquest of knaves, nor the good word of fools, but happy love, and the bourne of its quiet home.”

Thus, half meditating, half moralizing, and drawing, like a true lover, an omen of fear or hope from occurrences in which plain reason could have perceived neither type nor token, Clarence continued, and concluded, his day’s journey. He put up at the same little inn he had visited three years ago, and watched his opportunity of seeing Lady Flora alone. More fortunate in that respect, than he had been before, such opportunity the very next day presented to him.

CHAPTER LXVII.

Duke.—Sir Valentine!

Thur.—Yonder is Silvia, and Silvia’s mine.

Val.—Thurio, give back.—*The Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

“I THINK mamma,” said Lady Flora to her mother, “that, as the morning is so beautiful, I will go into the pavilion to finish my drawing.”

“But Lord Ulswater will be here in an hour, or perhaps less—may I tell him where you are, and suffer him to join you.”

“If you will accompany him,” answered Lady Flora coldly, as she took up her *portefeuille* and withdrew.

Now the pavilion was a small summer-house of stone, situated in the most retired part of the grounds belonging to Westborough Park. It was a favorite retreat with Lady Flora, even in the winter months, for warm carpeting, a sheltered site, and a fireplace, constructed more for comfort than economy, made it scarcely less adapted to that season than to the more genial suns of summer.

The morning was so bright and mild that Lady Flora left open the door as she entered; she seated herself at the table, and, unmindful of her pretended employment, suffered the *portefeuille* to remain unopened. Leaning her check upon her

hand, she gazed vacantly on the ground, and scarcely felt the tears which gathered slowly to her eyes, but, falling not, remained within the fair lids, chill and motionless, as if the thought which drew them there was born of a sorrow less agitated than fixed and silent.

The shadow of a man darkened the threshold, and there paused.

Slowly did Flora raise her eyes, and the next moment Clarence Linden was by her side, and at her feet.

"Flora," said he, in a tone trembling with its own emotions—"Flora, have years indeed separated us forever—or dare I hope that we have misconstrued each other's hearts, and that at this moment they yearn to be united with more than the fondness and fidelity of old?—Speak to me, Flora, one word."

But she had sunk on the chair overpowered, surprised, and almost insensible; and it was not for some moments that she could utter words, rather rung from, than dictated by, her thoughts.

"Cruel and insulting—for what have you come?—is it at such a time that you taunt me with the remembrance of my past folly, or your—your," (she paused for a moment, confused and hesitating, but presently recovering herself, rose and added, in a calmer tone)—"Surely, you have no excuse for this intrusion—you will suffer me to leave you."

"No!" exclaimed Clarence, violently agitated—"no! Have you not wronged me, stung me, wounded me to the core by your injustice!—and will you not hear now how differently I have deserved from you?—On a bed of fever and pain I thought only of you; I rose from it animated by the hope of winning you! Though, during the danger of my wound, and my consequent illness, your parents alone, of all my intimate acquaintances, neglected to honor with an inquiry the man whom you professed to consecrate with your regard, yet scarcely could my hand trace a single sentence before I wrote to you requesting an interview, in order to disclose my birth, and claim your plighted faith! That letter was returned to me unanswered, unopened. My friend and benefactor, whose fortune I now inherit, promised to call upon your father and advocate my cause. Death anticipated his kindness. As soon as my sorrow for his loss permitted me, I came to this very spot. For three days I hovered about your house, seeking the meeting that you would fain deny me now. I could not any longer bear the torturing suspense I endured—I wrote to you—your father answered the letter. Here—here I have it still: read!

note well the cool, the damning insult of each line! I see that you knew not of this: I rejoice at it! Can you wonder that, on receiving it, I subjected myself no more to such affronts? I hastened abroad. On my return I met you! Where? In crowds—in the glitter of midnight assemblies—in the whirl of what the vain call pleasure! I observed your countenance, your manner; was there in either a single token of endearing or regretful remembrance? None! I strove to harden my heart; I entered into politics, business, intrigue—I hoped, I longed, I burned to forget you, but in vain!

“At last I heard that Rumor, though it had long preceded, had not belied, the truth, and that you were to be married—married to Lord Ulswater! I will not say what I suffered, or how idly I summoned pride to resist affection! But I would not have come now to molest you, Flora—to trouble your nuptial rejoicings with one thought of me, if, forgive me, I had not suddenly dreamt that I had cause to hope you had mistaken, not rejected, my heart; that—you turn away, Flora!—you blush!—you weep!—Oh, tell me, by one word, one look, that I was not deceived!”

“No, no, Clarence,” said Flora, struggling with her tears; “it is too late, too late now! Why, why did I not know this before? I have promised, I am pledged?—in less than two months I shall be the wife of another!”

“Never,” cried Clarence, “never! You promised on a false belief; they will not bind you to such a promise. Who is he that claims you? I am his equal in birth—in the world’s name—and oh, by what worlds his superior in love! I will advance my claim to you in his very teeth—nay, I will not stir from these domains till you, your father, and my rival, have repaired my wrongs.”

“Be it so, sir!”—cried a voice behind, and Clarence turned and beheld Lord Ulswater! His dark countenance was flushed with rage, which he in vain endeavored to conceal; and the smile of scorn that he strove to summon to his lip made a ghastly and unnatural contrast with the lowering of his brow, and the fire of his eyes—“Be it so, sir,” he said, slowly advancing, and confronting Clarence. “You will dispute my claims to the hand Lady Flora Ardenne has long promised to one who, however unworthy of the gift, knows, at least, how to defend it. It is well; let us finish the dispute elsewhere. It is not the first time we shall have met, if not as rivals, as foes.”

Clarence turned from him without reply, for he saw Lady Westborough had just entered the pavilion, and stood mute

and transfixed at the door, with surprise, fear, and anger depicted upon her regal and beautiful countenance.

"It is to you, madam," said Clarence, approaching towards her, "that I venture to appeal. Your daughter and I, four long years ago, exchanged our vows; you flattered me with the hope that those vows were not displeasing to you; since then, a misunderstanding, deadly to my happiness and to hers, divided us. I come now to explain it. My birth may have seemed obscure; I come to clear it: my conduct doubtful; I come to vindicate it. I find Lord Ulswater my rival. I am willing to compare my pretensions to his. I acknowledge that he has titles which I have not,—that he has wealth, to which mine is but competence—but titles and wealth, as the means of happiness, are to be referred to your daughter, to none else. You have only, in an alliance with me, to consider my character and my lineage: the latter flows from blood as pure as that which warms the veins of my rival; the former stands already upon an eminence to which Lord Ulswater, in his loftiest visions, could never aspire. For the rest, madam, I adjure you, solemnly, as you value your peace of mind, your daughter's happiness, your freedom from the agonies of future remorse, and unavailing regret—I adjure you not to divorce those whom God, who speaks in the deep heart, and the plighted vow, has already joined. This is a question in which your daughter's permanent woe or lasting happiness, from this present hour to the last sand of life, is concerned. It is to her that I refer it—let her be the judge."

And Clarence moved from Lady Westborough, who, agitated, confused, awed by the spell of a power and a nature of which she had not dreamed, stood pale and speechless, vainly endeavoring to reply—he moved from her towards Lord Flora, who leant, sobbing and convulsed with contending emotions, against the wall: but Lord Ulswater, whose fiery blood was boiling with passion, placed himself between Clarence and the unfortunate object of the contention.

"Touch her not, approach her not!" he said, with a fierce and menacing tone. "Till you have proved your pretensions superior to mine, unknown, presuming, and probably base-born, as you are, you will only pass over my body to your claims."

Clarence stood still for one moment, evidently striving to master the wrath which literally swelled his form beyond its ordinary proportions; and Lady Westborough, recovering herself in the brief pause, passed between the two, and, taking her daughter's arm, led her from the pavilion.

"Stay, madam, for one instant!" cried Clarence, and he caught hold of her robe.

Lady Westborough stood quite erect and still, and drawing her stately figure to its full height, said with that quiet dignity by which a woman so often stills the angrier passions of men, "I lay the prayer and command of a mother upon you, Lord Ulswater, and on you, sir, whatever be your real rank and name, not to make mine and my daughter's presence the scene of a contest which dishonors both. Still farther, if Lady Flora's hand and my approval be an object of desire to either, I make it a peremptory condition, with both of you, that a dispute already degrading to her name pass not from word to act. For you, Mr. Linden, if so I may call you, I promise that my daughter shall be left free and unbiased to give that reply to your singular conduct which I doubt not her own dignity and sense will suggest!"

"By Heaven!" exclaimed Lord Ulswater, utterly beside himself with rage which, suppressed at the beginning of Lady Westborough's speech, had been kindled into double fury by its conclusion, "you will not suffer Lady Flora, no, nor any one but her affianced bridegroom, her only legitimate defender, to answer this arrogant intruder! You cannot think that her hand, the hand of my future wife, shall trace line or word to one who has so insulted her with his addresses and me with his rivalry."

"Man!" cried Clarence, abruptly, and seizing Lord Ulswater fiercely by the arm, "there are some causes which will draw fire from ice—beware—beware how you incense me to pollute my soul with the blood of a ——"

"What!" exclaimed Lord Ulswater.

Clarence bent down and whispered one word in his ear.

Had that word been the spell with which the sorcerers of old disarmed the fiend, it could not have wrought a greater change upon Lord Ulswater's mien and face. He staggered back several paces; the glow of his swarthy cheek faded into a death-like paleness; the word which passion had conjured to his tongue died there in silence; and he stood with eyes dilated and fixed on Clarence's face, on which their gaze seemed to force some unwilling certainty.

But Linden did not wait for him to recover his self-possession; he hurried after Lady Westborough, who, with her daughter, was hastening home.

"Pardon me, Lady Westborough," he said (as he approached), with a tone and air of deep respect, "pardon me—but will

you suffer me to hope that Lady Flora and yourself will, in a moment of greater calmness, consider over all I have said!—and—that she—that you, Lady Flora (added he, changing the object of his address), will vouchsafe one line of unprejudiced, unbiased reply, to a love which, however misrepresented and calumniated, has in it, I dare to say, nothing that can disgrace her to whom, with an enduring constancy, and undimmed, though unhoping, ardor, it has been inviolably dedicated.”

Lady Flora, though she spoke not, lifted her eyes to his, and in that glance was a magic which made his heart burn with a sudden and flashing joy that atoned for the darkness of years.

“I assure you, sir,” said Lady Westborough, touched, in spite of herself, with the sincerity and respect of Clarence’s bearing, “that Lady Flora will reply to any letter of explanation or proposal; for myself, I will not even see her answer. Where shall it be sent to you?”

“I have taken my lodgings at the inn, by your park gates. I shall remain there till—till—”

Clarence paused, for his heart was full; and, leaving the sentence to be concluded as his listeners pleased, he drew himself aside from their path, and suffered them to proceed.

As he was feeding his eyes with the last glimpse of their forms, ere a turn in the ground snatched them from his view, he heard a rapid step behind, and Lord Ulswater, approaching, laid his hand upon Linden’s shoulder, and said calmly:

“Are you furnished with proof to support the word you uttered?”

“I am!” replied Clarence haughtily.

“And will you favor me with it?”

“At your leisure, my lord,” rejoined Clarence.

“Enough!—name your time, and I will attend you.”

“On Tuesday: I require till then to produce my witnesses.”

“So be it—yet stay: on Tuesday I have military business at W——, some miles hence—the next day let it be—the place of meeting where you please.”

“Here, then, my lord,” answered Clarence; “you have insulted me grossly before Lady Westborough and your affianced bride, and before them my vindication and answer should be given.”

“You are right,” said Lord Ulswater; “be it here, at the hour of twelve.” Clarence bowed his assent, and withdrew.

Lord Ulswater remained on the spot, with downcast eyes, and a brow on which thought had succeeded passion.

“If true,” said he aloud, though unconsciously, “if this be

true, why then I owe him reparation, and he shall have it at my hands. I owe it to him on my account, and that of one now no more. Till we meet, I will not again see Lady Flora; after that meeting perhaps I may resign her forever."

And with these words the young nobleman, who, in despite of many evil and overbearing qualities, had, as we have said, his redeeming virtues, in which a capricious and unsteady generosity was one, walked slowly to the house—wrote a brief note to Lady Westborough, the purport of which the next chapter will disclose; and then, summoning his horse, flung himself on its back, and rode hastily away.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

"We will examine if those accidents,
Which common fame call injuries, happen to him
Deservedly or no."—*The New Inn.*

FROM LORD ULSWATER TO LADY WESTBOROUGH.

"FORGIVE me, dearest Lady Westborough, for my violence—you know and will allow for the infirmities of my temper. I have to make you and Lady Flora one request, which I trust you will not refuse me.

"Do not see, or receive any communication from, Mr. Linden till Wednesday; and on that day, at the hour of twelve, suffer me to meet him at your house. I will then either prove him to be the basest of impostors, or, if I fail in this, and Lady Flora honors my rival with one sentiment of preference, I will, without a murmur, submit to her decree and my rejection. Dare I trust that this petition will be accorded to one who is, with great regard and esteem, Etc., etc., etc."

"This is fortunate," said Lady Westborough gently to her daughter, who, leaning her head on her mother's bosom, suffered hopes, the sweeter for their long sleep, to divide, if not wholly to possess, her heart. "We shall have now time well and carefully to reflect over what will be best for your future happiness. We owe this delay to one to whom you have been affianced. Let us, therefore, now merely write to Mr. Linden, to inform him of Lord Ulswater's request; and to say that if he will meet his lordship at the time appointed, we, that is *I*, shall be happy to see him."

Lady Flora sighed, but she saw the reasonableness of her mother's proposal, and, pressing Lady Westborough's hand, murmured her assent.

"At all events," thought Lady Westborough, as she wrote to Clarence, "the affair can but terminate to advantage. If Lord Ulswater proves Mr. Linden's unworthiness, the suit of the latter is, of course, at rest for ever; if not, and Mr. Linden be indeed all that he asserts, my daughter's choice cannot be an election of reproach; Lord Ulswater promises peaceably to withdraw his pretensions; and though Mr. Linden may not possess his rank or fortune, he is certainly one with whom, if of ancient blood, any family would be proud of an alliance."

Blending with these reflections a considerable share of curiosity and interest in a secret which partook so strongly of romance, Lady Westborough dispatched her note to Clarence. The answer returned was brief, respectful, and not only acquiescent in, but grateful for, the proposal.

With this arrangement both Lady Westborough and Lady Flora were compelled, though with very different feelings, to be satisfied; and an agreement was established between them, to the effect that if Linden's name passed unblemished through the appointed ordeal, Lady Flora was to be left to, and favored in, her own election; while, on the contrary, if Lord Ulswater succeeded in the proof he had spoken of, his former footing in the family was to be fully re-established, and our unfortunate adventurer forever discarded.

To this Lady Flora readily consented; for with a sanguine and certain trust in her lover's truth and honor, which was tenfold more strong for her late suspicions, she would not allow herself a doubt as to the result; and with an impatience, mingled with a rapturous exhilaration of spirit, which brought back to her the freshness and radiancy of her youngest years, she counted the hours and moments to the destined day.

While such was the state of affairs at Westborough Park, Clarence was again on horseback, and on another excursion. By the noon of the day following that which had seen his eventful meeting with Lady Flora, he found himself approaching the extreme boundaries of the county in which Mordaunt Court, and the memorable town of W——, were situated. The characteristics of the country were now materially changed from those which gave to the vicinity of Algernon's domains its wild and uncultivated aspect.

As Clarence slowly descended a hill of considerable steepness and length, a prospect of singular and luxurious beauty

opened to his view. The noblest of England's rivers was seen through "turfs and shades and flowers," pursuing "its silver-winding way." On the opposite banks lay, embosomed in the golden glades of autumn, the busy and populous town that from the height seemed still and lifeless as an enchanted city, over which the mid-day sun hung like a guardian spirit. Behind, in sweeping diversity, stretched wood and dale, and fields despoiled of their rich harvest, yet still presenting a yellow surface to the eye; and ever and anon some bright patch of green, demanding the gaze as if by a lingering spell from the past spring; while, here and there, spire and hamlet studded the landscape, or some lowly cot lay, backed by the rising ground or the silent woods, white and solitary, and sending up its faint tribute of smoke in spires to the altars of Heaven. The river was more pregnant of life than its banks: barge and boat were gliding gayly down the wave, and the glad oar of the frequent and slender vessels consecrated to pleasure was seen dimpling the water, made by distance smoother than glass.

On the right side of Clarence's road, as he descended the hill, lay wide plantations of fir and oak, divided from the road by a park paling, the uneven sides of which were covered with brown moss, and which, at rare openings in the young wood, gave glimpses of a park, seemingly extending over great space, the theatre of many a stately copse and oaken grove, which might have served the Druids with fane and temple meet for the savage sublimity of their worship.

Upon these unfrequent views, Clarence checked his horse, and gazed, with emotions sweet yet bitter, over the pales, along the green expanse which they contained. And once, when through the trees he caught a slight glimpse of the white walls of the mansion they adorned, all the years of his childhood seemed to rise on his heart, thrilling to its farthest depths with a mighty and sorrowful, yet sweet, melody, and

"Singing of boyhood back—the voices of his home."

Home! yes, amidst those groves had the April of his life lavished its mingled smiles and tears! There was the spot hallowed by his earliest joys! and the scene of sorrows still more sacred than joys!—and now, after many years, the exiled boy came back, a prosperous and thoughtful man, to take but one brief glance of that home which to him had been less hospitable than a stranger's dwelling, and to find a witness, among those who remembered him, of his very birth and identity!

He wound the ascent at last, and entering a small town at

the foot of the hill, which was exactly facing the larger one on the opposite shore of the river, put up his horse at one of the inns : and then, with a beating heart, remounted the hill, and, entering the park by one of its lodges, found himself once more in the haunts of his childhood.

CHAPTER LXIX.

“Oh, the steward, the steward—I might have guessed as much.”

Tales of the Crusaders.

THE evening was already beginning to close, and Clarence was yet wandering in the park, and retracing, with his heart's eye, each knoll, and tree, and tuft, once so familiar to his wanderings.

At the time we shall again bring him personally before the reader, he was leaning against an iron fence that, running along the left wing of the house, separated the pleasure-grounds from the park, and gazing, with folded arms and wistful eyes, upon the scene on which the dusk of twilight was gradually gathering.

The house was built originally in the reign of Charles II. : it had since received alteration and additions, and now presented to the eye a vast pile of Grecian, or rather Italian, architecture, heterogeneously blended with the massive window, the stiff coping, and the heavy roof which the age immediately following the Revolution introduced. The extent of the building, and the grandeur of the circling demesnes, were sufficient to render the mansion imposing in effect ; while, perhaps, the style of the architecture was calculated to conjoin a stately comfort with magnificence, and to atone in solidity for any deficiency in grace. At a little distance from the house, and placed on a much more commanding site, were some ancient and ivy-grown ruins, now scanty indeed, and fast mouldering into decay, but sufficient to show the antiquarian the remains of what once had been a hold of no ordinary size and power. These were the wrecks of the old mansion, which was recorded by tradition to have been reduced to this state by accidental fire, during the banishment of its loyal owner in the time of the Protectorate. Upon his return the present house was erected.

As Clarence was thus stationed, he perceived an elderly man approach towards him. “This is fortunate,” said he to him-

self—"the very person I have been watching for. Well years have passed lightly over old Wardour: still the same precise garb—the same sturdy and slow step—the same upright form."

The person thus designated now drew near enough for parlance; and in a tone a little authoritative, though very respectful, inquired if Clarence had any business to transact with him.

"I beg pardon," said Clarence, slouching his hat over his face, "for lingering so near the house at this hour: but I have seen it many years ago, and indeed, been a guest within its walls; and it is rather my interest for an old friend, than my curiosity to examine a new one, which you are to blame for my trespass."

"Oh, sir," answered Mr. Wardour, a short and rather stout man, of about sixty-four, attired in a chocolate coat, gray breeches, and silk stockings of the same dye, which, by the waning light, took a sombrier and sadder hue—"Oh, sir—pray make no apology. I am only sorry the hour is so late, that I cannot offer to show you the interior of the house: perhaps, if you are staying in the neighborhood, you would like to see it to-morrow. You were here, I take it, sir, in my old lord's time?"

"I was!—upon a visit to his second son—we had been boys together."

"What! Master Clinton?" cried the old man, with extreme animation; and then suddenly changing his voice, added, in a subdued and saddened tone, "Ah! poor young gentleman, I wonder where he is now?"

"Why—is he not in this country?" asked Clarence.

"Yes—no—that is, I can't exactly say where he is—I wish I could—poor Master Clinton—I loved him as my own son."

"You surprise me," said Clarence. "Is there anything in the fate of Clinton L'Estrange that calls forth your pity! If so, you would gratify a much better feeling than curiosity if you would inform me of it. The fact is, that I came here to seek him; for I have been absent from the country many years, and on my return, my first inquiry was for my old friend and schoolfellow. None knew anything of him in London, and I imagined, therefore, that he might have settled down into a country gentleman. I was fully prepared to find him marshalling the fox-hounds or beating the preserves; and you may consequently imagine my mortification on learning, at my inn, that he had not been residing here for many years; further I know not!"

"Ay—ay—sir," said the old steward, who had listened

very attentively to Clarence's detail, "had you pressed one of the village gossips a little closer, you would doubtless have learned more! But 'tis a story I don't much love telling, although formerly I could have talked of Master Clinton by the hour together, to any one who would have had the patience to listen to me."

"You have really created in me a very painful desire to learn more," said Clarence; "and if I am not intruding on any family secrets, you would oblige me greatly by whatever information you may think proper to afford to an early and attached friend of the person in question."

"Well, sir, well," replied Mr. Wardour, who, without imputation on his discretion, loved talking as well as any other old gentleman of sixty-four, "if you will condescend to step up to my house, I shall feel happy and proud to converse with a friend of my dearyoung master's; and you are heartily welcome to the information I can give you."

"I thank you sincerely," said Clarence; "but suffer me to propose, as an amendment to your offer, that you accompany me for an hour or two to my inn."

"Nay, sir," answered the old gentleman, in a piqued tone, "I trust you will not disdain to honor me with your company. Thank Heaven, I can afford to be hospitable now and then."

Clarence, who seemed to have his own reasons for the amendment he had proposed, still struggled against this offer, but was at last, from fear of offending the honest steward, obliged to accede.

Striking across a path, which led through a corner of the plantation, to a space of ground containing a small garden, quaintly trimmed in the Dutch taste, and a brick house of moderate dimensions, half overgrown with ivy and jessamine, Clarence and his invitor paused at the door of the said mansion, and the latter welcomed his guest to his abode.

"Pardon me," said Clarence, as a damsel in waiting opened the door, "but a very severe attack of rheumatism obliges me to keep on my hat; you will, I hope, indulge me in my rudeness."

"To be sure—to be sure, sir. I myself suffer terribly from rheumatism in the winter—though you look young, sir, very young, to have an old man's complaint. Ah, the people of my day were more careful of themselves, and that is the reason we are such stout fellows in our age."

And the worthy steward looked complacently down at legs which very substantially filled their comely investments.

"True, sir," said Clarence, laying his hand upon that of the steward, who was just about to open the door of an apartment; "but suffer me at least to request you not to introduce me to any of the ladies of your family. I could not, were my very life at stake, think of affronting them by not doffing my hat. I have the keenest sense of what is due to the sex, and I must seriously entreat you, for the sake of my health during the whole of the coming winter, to suffer our conversation not to take place in their presence."

"Sir—I honor your politeness," said the prim little steward: "I, myself, like every true Briton, reverence the ladies; we will, therefore, retire to my study. Mary, girl," turning to the attendant, "see that we have a nice chop for supper, in half an hour: and tell your mistress that I have a gentleman of quality with me upon particular business, and must not be disturbed."

With these injunctions, the steward led the way to the farther end of the house, and, having ushered his guest into a small parlor, adorned with sundry law-books, a great map of the estate, a print of the late owner of it, a rusty gun slung over the fireplace, two stuffed pheasants, and a little mahogany buffet—having, we say, led Clarence to this sanctuary of retiring stewardship, he placed a seat for him and said:

"Between you and me, sir, be it respectfully said, I am not sorry that our little confabulation should pass alone. Ladies are very delightful—very delightful, certainly; but they won't let one tell a story one's own way—they are fidgetty, you know, sir—fidgetty—nothing more; 'tis a trifle, but it is unpleasant; besides, my wife was Master Clinton's foster-mother, and she can't hear a word about him, without running on into a long rigmarole of what he did as a baby, and so forth. I like people to be chatty, sir, but not garrulous; I can't bear garrulity—at least in a female. But, suppose, sir, we defer our story till after supper? A glass of wine or warm punch makes talk glide more easily; besides, sir, I want something to comfort me when I talk about Master Clinton. Poor gentleman, he was so comely, so handsome!"

"Did you think so?" said Clarence, turning towards the fire.

"Think so?" ejaculated the steward, almost angrily; and forthwith he launched out into an encomium on the perfections, personal, moral, and mental, of Master Clinton, which lasted till the gentle Mary entered to lay the cloth. This reminded the old steward of the glass of wine which was so efficacious in making talk glide easily; and, going to the buffet before men-

tioned, he drew forth two bottles, both of port. Having carefully and warily decanted both, he changed the subject of his praise; and, assuring Clarence that the wine he was about to taste was, at least, as old as Master Clinton, having been purchased in joyous celebration of the young gentleman's birthday, he whiled away the minutes with a glowing eulogy on its generous qualities, till Mary entered with the supper.

Clarence, with an appetite sharpened, despite his romance, by a long fast, did ample justice to the fare; and the old steward, warming into familiarity with the virtues of the far-famed port, chatted and laughed in a strain half simple and half shrewd.

The fire being stirred up to a free blaze, the hearth swept, and all the tokens of supper, save and except the kingly bottle and its subject glasses, being removed, the steward and his guest drew closer to each other, and the former began his story

CHAPTER LXX.

“The actors are at hand, and by their shew,
You shall know all that you are like to know.”

—*Midsummer Night's Dream.*

“You know, probably, sir, that my late lord was twice married: by his first wife he had three children, only one of whom, the youngest, though now the present earl, survived the first period of infancy. When Master Francis, as we always called him, in spite of his accession to the title of viscount, was about six years old, my lady died, and a year afterwards my lord married again. His second wife was uncommonly handsome: she was a Miss Talbot (a Catholic), daughter of Colonel Talbot, and niece to the celebrated beau, Squire Talbot, of Scarsdale Park. Poor lady! they say that she married my lord though a momentary pique against a former lover. However that may be, she was a fine, high-spirited creature—very violent in temper, to be sure, but generous and kind when her passion was over; and, however haughty to her equals, charitable and compassionate to the poor.

“She had but one son, Master Clinton. Never, sir, shall I forget the rejoicings that were made at his birth; for my lord doted on his second wife, and had disliked his first, whom he had married for her fortune; and it was therefore natural that he should prefer the child of the present wife to Master Francis.

Ah, it is sad to think how love can change ! Well, sir, my lord seemed literally to be wrapt up in the infant : he nursed it, and fondled it, and hung over it, as if he had been its mother rather than its father. My lady desired that it might be christened by one of her family names ; and my lord consenting, it was called Clinton.—(The wine is with you, sir ! Do observe that it has not changed color in the least, notwithstanding its age !)

“ My lord was fond of a quiet, retired life ; indeed, he was a great scholar, and spent the chief part of his time among his books. Dr. Latinas, the young gentleman’s tutor, said his lordship made Greek verses better than Dr. Latinas could make English ones, so you may judge of his learning. But my lady went constantly to town, and was among the gayest of the gay ; nor did she often come down here without bringing a whole troop of guests. Lord help us, what goings on there used to be at the great house !—such dancing and music, and dining, and supping, and shooting-parties, fishing-parties, gypsy-parties ; you would have thought all England was merry-making there.

“ But my lord, though he indulged my lady in all her whims and extravagance, seldom took much share in them himself. He was constantly occupied with his library and children, nor did he ever suffer either Master Francis or Master Clinton to mix with the guests. He kept them very close at their studies, and when the latter was six years old, I do assure you, sir, he could say his *Propria quæ maribus* better than I can.—(You don’t drink, sir.) When Master Francis was sixteen, and Master Clinton eight, the former was sent abroad on his travels with a German tutor, and did not return to England for many years afterwards ; meanwhile Master Clinton grew up to the age of fourteen, increasing in comeliness and goodness. He was very fond of his studies, much more so than Master Francis had been, and was astonishingly forward for his years. So my lord loved him better and better, and would scarcely ever suffer him to be out of his sight.

“ When Master Clinton was about the age I mentioned, viz., fourteen, a gentleman of the name of Sir Clinton Manners became a constant visitor at the house. Report said that he was always about my lady in London, at Ranelagh, and the ball-rooms and routs, and all the fine places—and certainly he was scarcely ever from her side in the pleasure parties at the park. But my lady said that he was a cousin of her’s, and an old playmate in childhood, and so he was—and, unhappily for her, something more too. My lord, however, shut up in his library, did not pay any attention to my lady’s intimacy with Sir Clinton ;

on the contrary, as he was a cousin and friend of her's, his lordship seemed always happy to see him, and was the only person in the neighborhood who had no suspicion of what was going on.

"Oh, sir, it is a melancholy story, and I can scarcely persuade myself to tell it. (It is really delicious wine this—six-and-twenty years old last *birthday*—to say nothing of its age before I bought it—Ah!)—Well, sir, the blow came at last like a thunder-clap—my lady, finding disguise was in vain, went off with Sir Clinton. Letters were discovered which showed that they had corresponded for years—that he was her lover before marriage—that she, in a momentary passion with him, had accepted my lord's offer—that she had always repented her precipitation—and that she had called her son after his name—all this, and much more, sir, did my lord learn, as it were, at a single blow.

"He obtained a divorce, and Sir Clinton and my lady went abroad. But from that time my lord was never the same man. Always proud and gloomy, he now became intolerably violent and morose. He shut himself up, saw no company of any description, rarely left the house, and never the park—and, from being one of the gayest places in the country, sir, the mansion became as dreary and deserted as if it had been haunted. (It is for you to begin the second bottle, sir.)

"But the most extraordinary change in my lord was in his conduct to Master Clinton—from doating upon him, to a degree that would have spoilt any temper less sweet than my poor young master's, he took the most violent aversion to him. From the circumstance of his name, and the long intimacy existing between my lady and her lover, his lordship would not believe that Master Clinton was his own child: and indeed I must confess there seemed good ground for his suspicions. Besides this, Master Clinton took very much after his mother. He had her eyes, hair, and beautiful features, so that my lord could never see him without being reminded of his disgrace: therefore whenever the poor young gentleman came into his presence, he would drive him out, with oaths and threats which rung through the whole house. He could not even bear that he should have any attendance or respect from the servants, for he considered him quite as an alien like, and worse than a stranger; and his lordship's only delight seemed to consist in putting upon him every possible indignity and affront. But Master Clinton was a high, spirited young gentleman, and after having in vain endeavored to soothe my lord by compliance

and respect, he at last utterly avoided his lordship's presence.

He gave up his studies in a great measure, and wandered about the park and woods all day, and sometimes even half the night ; his mother's conduct, and his father's unkindness seemed to prey upon his health and mind, and, at last, he grew almost as much altered as my lord. From being one of the merriest boys possible, full of life and spirits, he became thoughtful and downcast, his step lost its lightness, and his eye all the fire which used once quite to warm one's heart when one looked at it ; in short, sir, the sins of the mother were visited as much upon the child as the husband. (Not the least tawny, sir, you see, though it is so old !)

"My lord at first seemed to be glad that he now never saw his son ; but, by degrees, I think, he missed the pleasure of venting his spleen upon him ; and so he ordered my young master not to stir out without his leave, and confined him closer than ever to his studies. Well, sir (if it were not for this port I could not get out another sentence!), there used then to be sad scenes between them : my lord was a terribly passionate man, and said things sharper than a two-edged sword, as the psalms express it ; and though Master Clinton was one of the mildest and best tempered boys imaginable, yet he could not at all times curb his spirit ; and, to my mind, when a man is perpetually declaring he is not your father, one may now and then be forgiven in forgetting that you are to behave as his son.

"Things went on in this way sadly enough for about three years and a half, when Master Clinton was nearly eighteen. One evening, after my lord had been unusually stormy, Master Clinton's spirit warmed, I suppose, and, from word to word, the dispute increased, till my lord, in a furious rage, ordered in the servants, and told them to horsewhip his son. Imagine sir, what a disgrace to that noble house ! But there was not one of them who would not rather have cut off his right hand than laid a finger upon Master Clinton, so greatly was he beloved ; and, at last, my lord summoned his own gentleman, a German, six feet high, entirely devoted to his lordship, and commanded him upon pain of instant dismissal, to make use, in his presence, of a horsewhip which he put into his hand.

"The German did not dare refuse, so he approached Master Clinton. The servants were still in the room, and perhaps they would have been bold enough to rescue Master Clinton, had there been any need of their assistance ; but he was a tall

youth, as bold as a hero, and, when the German approached, he caught him by the throat, threw him down, and very nearly strangled him ; he then, while my lord was speechless with rage, left the room, and did not return all night. (What a body it has, sir—Ah !)

“The next morning I was in a little room adjoining my lord’s study, looking over some papers and maps. His lordship did not know of my presence, but was sitting alone at breakfast, when Master Clinton suddenly entered the study ; the door leading to my room was ajar, and I heard all the conversation that ensued.

“My lord asked him very angrily how he had dared absent himself all night : but Master Clinton making no reply to this question, said, in a very calm, loud voice, which I think I hear now,—‘My lord, after the insult you have offered to me, it is perhaps unnecessary to observe that nothing could induce me to remain under your roof, I come, therefore, to take my last leave of you.’

“He paused, and my lord (probably, like me, being taken by surprise) making no reply, he continued : ‘You have often told me, my lord, that I am not your son : if this be possible, so much the more must you rejoice at the idea of ridding your presence of an intruder.’ ‘And how, sir, do you expect to live, except upon my bounty?’ exclaimed my lord. ‘You remember,’ answered my young master, ‘that a humble dependent of my mother’s family, who had been our governess in childhood, left me, at her death, the earnings of her life. I believe they amount to nearly a thousand pounds—I look to your lordship’s honor either for the principal or the yearly interest as may please you best : farther I ask not from you.’ ‘And do you think, sir,’ cried my lord, almost screaming with passion, ‘that upon that beggarly pittance you shall go forth to dishonor, more than it is yet dishonored, the name of my ancient house! Do you think, sir, that that name to which you have no pretension, though the law iniquitously grants it you, shall be sullied either with trade or robbery? for to one or the other you must necessarily be driven.’ ‘I foresaw your speech, my lord, and am prepared with an answer. Far be it from me to thrust myself into any family, the head of which thinks proper to reject me—far be it from me to honor my humble fortunes with a name which I am as willing as yourself to disown ; I purpose, therefore, to adopt a new one ; and whatever may be my future fate, that name will screen me both from your remembrance and the world’s knowledge. Are you satisfied now, my lord?’”

“His lordship did not answer for some minutes ; at last, he said sneeringly : ‘Go, boy, go ! I am delighted to hear you have decided so well. Leave word with my steward where you wish your clothes to be sent to you : Heaven forbid I should rob you either of your wardrobe, or your princely fortune. Wardour will transmit to you the latter, even to the last penny, by the same conveyance as that which is honored by the former. And now good-morning, sir ; yet stay, and mark my words—never dare to re-enter my house, or to expect an iota more of fortune or favor from me. And, hark you, sir—if you dare violate your word, if you dare, during my life, at least, assume a name which you were born to sully, my curse, my deepest, heartiest, eternal curse be upon your head in this world and the next !’ ‘Fear not, my lord, my word is pledged,’ said the young gentleman ; and the next moment I heard his parting step in the hall.

“Sir, my heart was full (your glass is empty !), and my head spun round as if I were on a precipice ; but I was determined my young master should not go till I had caught another glimpse of his dear face, so I gently left the room I was in, and hastening out of the house by a private entrance, met Master Clinton in the park, not very far from the spot where I saw you, sir, just now. To my surprise, there was no sign of grief or agitation upon his countenance ; I had never seen him look so proud, or for years, so happy.

“‘Wardour,’ said he, in a gay tone, where he saw me, ‘I was going to your house : my father has at last resolved that I should, like my brother, commence my travels, and I wish to leave with you the address of the place to which my clothes etc., will be sent.’

“I could not contain any longer when I heard this, sir ; I burst into tears, confessed that I had accidentally heard his conversation with my lord, and besought him not to depart so hastily, and with so small a fortune ; but he shook his head, and would not hear me. ‘Believe me, my good Wardour,’ said he, ‘that since my unhappy mother’s flight, I have never felt so elated or so happy as I do now : one should go through what I have done, to learn the rapture of independence.’ He then told me to have his luggage sent to him, under his initials of C. L., at the Golden Fleece, the principal inn in the town of W——, which, you know, sir, is at the other end of the county, on the road to London ; and then, kindly shaking me by the hand, he broke away from me ; but he turned back before he had got three paces, and said (and then, for the first

time, the pride of his countenance fell, and the tears stood in his eyes), 'Wardour, do not divulge what you have heard: put as good a face upon my departure as you can, and let the blame, if any, fall upon me, not upon your lord: after all, he is to be pitied, not blamed, and I can never forget that he once loved me.' He did not wait for my answer, perhaps he did not like to show me how much he was affected, but hurried down the park, and I soon lost sight of him. My lord that very morning sent for me, demanded what address his son had left, and gave me a letter, enclosing, I suppose, a bill for my poor young master's fortune, ordering it to be sent with the clothes immediately.

"Sir, I have never seen or heard aught of the dear gentleman since; you must forgive me, I cannot help tears, sir—(the wine is with you.)"

"But the mother, the mother!" said Clarence earnestly, "what became of her? she died abroad, two years since, did she not?"

"She did, sir," answered the honest steward, refilling his glass. "They say that she lived very unhappily with Sir. Clinton, who did not marry her; till all of a sudden she disappeared, none knew whither."

Clarence redoubled his attention.

"At last," resumed the steward, "two years ago a letter came from her to my lord; she was a nun in some convent (in Italy, I think), to which she had, at the time of her disappearance, secretly retired. The letter was written on her death-bed, and so affectingly, I suppose, that even my stern lord was in tears for several days after he received it. But the principal passage in it was relative to her son: it assured my lord (for so with his own lips he told me just before he died, some months ago), that Master Clinton was in truth his son, and that it was not till she had been tempted many years after her marriage, that she had fallen; she implored my lord to believe this 'on the word of one for whom earth and earth's objects were no more'; those were her words.

"Six months ago, when my lord lay on the bed from which he never rose, he called me to him, and said: 'Wardour, you have always been the faithful servant of our house, and warmly attached to my second son; tell my poor boy, if ever you see him, that I did at last open my eyes to my error, and acknowledge him as my child; tell him that I have desired his brother (who was then, sir, kneeling by my lord's side), as he values my blessing, to seek him out and repair the wrong I have done

him; and add that my best comfort in death was the hope of his forgiveness.' ”

“Did he, did he say *that* ?” exclaimed Clarence, who had been violently agitated during the latter part of this recital, and now sprung from his seat—“My father, my father! would that I had borne with thee more!—mine—mine was the fault—from *thee* should have come the forgiveness !”

The old steward sate silent and aghast. At that instant his wife entered, with a message of chiding at the lateness of the hour upon her lip, but she started back, when she saw Clarence's profile, as he stood leaning against the wall; “Good Heavens!” cried she, “is it, is it—yes, it is my young master, my own foster-son !”

Rightly had Clarence conjectured, when he had shunned her presence. Years had, indeed, wrought a change in his figure and face: acquaintance, servant, friend, relation,—the remembrance of his features had passed from all; but she who had nursed him as an infant on her lap, and fed him from her breast, she who had joined the devotion of clanship to the fondness of a mother, knew him at a glance.

“Yes,” cried he, as he threw himself into her withered and aged arms, “it is I, the child *you* reared, come, after many years, to find too late, when a father is no more, that he had a right to a father's home.”

CHAPTER LXXI.

“Let us go in,
And charge us there upon interrogatories.”—SHAKSPEARE.

“BUT did not any one recognize you in your change of name!” said the old foster mother, looking fondly upon Clarence, as he sate the next morning by her side. “How could any one forget so winsome a face who had once seen it ?”

“You don't remember,” said Clarence (as we will yet continue to call our hero), smiling, “that your husband had forgotten it.”

“Ay, sir,” cried the piqued steward, “but that was because you wore your hat slouched over your eyes; if you had taken off *that*, I should have known you directly.”

“However that may be,” said Clarence, unwilling to dwell

longer on an occurrence which he saw hurt the feelings of the kind Mr. Wardour, "it is very easy to explain how I preserved my incognito. You recollect that my father never suffered me to mix with my mother's guests : so I had no chance of their remembering me, especially as, during the last three years and a half, no stranger had ever entered our walls. Add to this, that I was in the very time of life in which a few years work the greatest change, and on going to London, I was thrown entirely among people who could never have seen me before. Fortunately for me, I became acquainted with my mother's uncle—circumstances subsequently led me to disclose my birth to him, upon a promise that he would never call me by any other name than that which I had assumed. He, who was the best, the kindest, the most generous of human beings, took a liking to me. He insisted not only upon his relationship to me, as my grand uncle, but upon the justice of repairing to me the wrongs his unhappy niece had caused me. The delicacy of his kindness—the ties of blood—and an accident which had enabled me to be of some service to him, all prevented my resisting the weight of obligation with which he afterwards oppressed me. He procured me an appointment abroad : I remained there four years. When I returned, I entered, it is true, into very general society ; but four years had, as you may perceive, altered me greatly ; and even had there previously existed any chance of my being recognized, that alteration would, probably, have been sufficient to ensure my secret."

"But your brother—my present lord—did you never meet him, sir?"

"Often, my good mother ; but you remember that I was a little more than six years old when he left England, and when he next saw me I was about two-and twenty : it would have been a miracle, or at least, would have required the eyes of love like yours to have recalled me to memory after such an absence.

"Well—to return to my story—I succeeded, partly as his nearest relation, but principally from an affection dearer than blood, to the fortune of my grand uncle, Mr. Talbot. Fate prospered with me : I rose in the world's esteem and honor, and soon became prouder of my borrowed appellation than of all the titles of my lordly line. Circumstances occurring within the last week, which it will be needless to relate, but which may have the greatest influence over my future life, made it necessary to do what I had once resolved I would never do—prove my identity and origin. Accordingly I came here to seek you."

"But why did not my honored young master disclose himself last night?" asked the steward.

"I might say," answered Clarence, "because I anticipated great pleasure in a surprise; but I had another reason—it was this: I had heard of my poor father's death, and I was painfully anxious to learn if at the last he had testified any relenting towards me—and yet more so to ascertain the manner of my unfortunate mother's fate. Both abroad and in England, I had sought tidings of her everywhere, but in vain: in mentioning my mother's retiring into a convent, you have explained the reason why my efforts were so fruitless. With these two objects in view, I thought myself more likely to learn the whole truth as a stranger than in my proper person; for in the latter case I deemed it probable that your delicacy and kindness might tempt you to conceal whatever was calculated to wound my feelings, and to exaggerate anything that might tend to flatter or to soothe them. Thank Heaven, I now learn that I have a right to the name my boyhood bore, that my birth is not branded with the foulest of private crimes, and that in death my father's heart yearned to his too hasty but repentant son. Enough of this—I have now only to request you, my friend, to accompany me, before daybreak, on Wednesday morning, to a place several miles hence. Your presence there will be necessary to substantiate the proof for which I came hither."

"With all my heart, sir," cried the honest steward: "and after Wednesday you will, I trust, resume your rightful name?"

"Certainly," replied Clarence; "since I am no longer 'the Disowned.'"

Leaving Clarence now for a brief while to renew his acquaintance with the scenes of his childhood, and to offer the tribute of his filial tears to the ashes of a father whose injustice had been but "the stinging of a heart the world had stung"—we return to some old acquaintances in the various conduct of our drama.

CHAPTER LXXII.

"Upon his couch the veil'd Mokanna lay."—*The Veiled Prophet.*

THE autumn sun broke through an apartment in a villa in the neighborhood of London, furnished with the most prodigal, yet not tasteless, attention to luxury and show, within which, beside a table strewed with newspapers, letters, and accounts, lay Richard Crauford, extended carelessly upon a sofa which might almost have contented the Sybarite, who quarrelled with a rose-leaf. At his elbow was a bottle half-emptied, and a wine-glass just filled. An expression of triumph and enjoyment was visible upon his handsome, but usually inexpressive, countenance.

"Well," said he, taking up a newspaper, "let us read this paragraph again. What a beautiful sensation it is to see one's name in print!—'We understand that Richard Crauford, Esq. M.P. for —, is to be raised to the dignity of the peerage. There does not, perhaps, exist in the country a gentleman more universally beloved and esteemed.'—(mark that, Dicky Crauford)—'The invariable generosity with which his immense wealth has been employed—his high professional honor—the undeviating and consistent integrity of his political career'—(Ay, to be sure, it is only your honest fools who are inconsistent: no man can deviate who has one firm principle, self-interest)—'his manly and energetic attention to the welfare of religion' (he—he—he!), 'conjoined to a fortune almost incalculable, render this condescension of our gracious sovereign no less judicious than deserved! We hear that the title proposed for the new peer is that of Viscount Innisdale, which, we believe, was formerly in the noble family of which Mr. Crauford is a distant branch.'

"He! he! he! Bravo! bravo! Viscount Innisdale!—noble family—distant branch—the devil I am! What an ignoramus my father was, not to know that! Why, rest his soul, he never knew who his grandfather was; but the world shall not be equally ignorant of that important point. Let me see, who shall be Viscount Innisdale's great-grandfather? Well, well, whoever he is, here's long life to his great-grandson! 'Incalculable fortune!' Ay, ay, I hope, at all events, it will never be calculated. But now for my letters. Bah—this wine is a thought too acid for the cellars of Viscount Innisdale! What, another from mother H——! Dark eyes, small mouth—sings like an angel—eighteen! Pish! I am too old for such follies

now; 'tis not pretty for Viscount Innisdale. Humph!—Lisbon—seven hundred pounds five shillings and seven pence—halfpenny, is it, or farthing? I must note that down. Loan for King of Prussia. Well, must negotiate that to-morrow. Ah, Hockit, the wine-merchant—pipe of claret in the docks—vintage of 17—. Bravo! all goes smooth for Viscount Innisdale! Pish!—from my damnable wife! What a pill for my lordship! What says she?

“Dawlish, Devonshire.

“You have not, my dearest Richard, answered my letters for months. I do not, however, presume to complain of your silence: I know well that you have a great deal to occupy your time, both in business and pleasure. But one little line, dear Richard—one little line, surely, that is not too much now and then. I am most truly sorry to trouble you again about money; and you must know that I strive to be as saving as possible;”—[Pish!—curse the woman—sent her twenty pounds three months ago!]

—‘but I really am so distressed, and the people here are so pressing; and at all events, I cannot bear the thought of your wife being disgraced. Pray, forgive me, Richard, and believe how painful it is in me to say so much. I know you will answer this! and, oh, do, do tell me how you are.

“Ever your affectionate wife,

“CAROLINE CRAUFORD.

“Was there ever poor man so plagued? Where’s my notebook? Mem.—Send Car. to-morrow £20 to last her the rest of the year. Mem.—Send Mother H— £100. Mem.—Pay Hockit’s bill £830. Bless me, what shall I do with Viscountess Innisdale? Now, if I were not married, I would be son-in-law to a duke. Mem.—Go down to Dawlish, and see if she won’t die soon. Healthy situation, I fear—devilish unlucky—must be changed. Mem.—Swamps in Essex. Who’s that?”

A knock at the door disturbed Mr. Crauford in his meditations. He started up, hurried the bottle and glass under the sofa, where the descending drapery completely hid them; and, taking up a newspaper, said in a gentle tone, “Come in.” A small, thin man, bowing at every step, entered.

“Ah! Bradley, is it you, my good fellow?” said Crauford—“glad to see you—a fine morning; but what brings you from town so early?”

“Why, sir,” answered Mr. Bradley, very obsequiously, “something unpleasant has—”

"Merciful Heaven!" cried Crauford, blanched into the whiteness of death, and starting up from the sofa with a violence which frightened the timid Mr. Bradley to the other end of the room—"the counting house—the books—all safe?"

"Yes, sir, yes, *at present*—but—"

"But what, man?"

"Why, honored sir," resumed Mr. Bradley, bowing to the ground, "your partner, Mr. Jessopp, has been very inquisitive about the accounts. He says, Mr. Da Costa, the Spanish merchant, has been insinuating very unpleasant hints, and that he must have a conversation with you at your earliest convenience; and when, sir, I ventured to remonstrate about the unreasonableness of attending to what Mr. Da Costa said, Mr. Jessopp was quite abusive, and declared that there seemed some very mysterious communication between you (begging your pardon, sir) and me, and that he did not know what business I, who had no share in the firm, had to interfere."

"But," said Crauford, "you were civil to him—did not reply hotly—eh—my good Bradley!"

"Lord forbid, sir—Lord forbid, that I should not know my place better, or that I should give an unbecoming word to the partner of my honored benefactor. But, sir, if I dare venture to say so, I think Mr. Jessopp is a little jealous, or so, of you; he seemed quite in a passion at a paragraph in the paper, about my honored master's becoming a lord."

"Right, honest Bradley, right; he is jealous—we must soothe him. Go, my good fellow—go to him with my compliments, and say, that I will be with him by one. Never fear, this business will be easily settled."

And bowing himself out of the room, Bradley withdrew.

Left alone, a dark cloud gathered over the brow of Mr. Crauford.

"I am on a precipice," thought he; "but if my own brain does not turn giddy with the prospect, all yet may be safe. Cruel necessity, that obliged me to admit another into the business, that foiled me of Mordaunt, and drove me upon this fawning rascal. So, so—I almost think there is a Providence, now that Mordaunt has grown rich; but then his wife died—ay—ay—God saved *him*, but the devil killed *her*.* He—he—he! But, seriously—seriously, there is danger in the very air I breathe! I must away to that envious Jessopp instantly; but first let me finish the bottle."

* Voltaire,—"*Dieu a puni ce fripon, le diable a noyé les autres.*"—*Candide*.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

“A strange harmonious inclination
Of all degrees to reformation.”—*Hudibras*.

ABOUT seven miles from W——, on the main road from ——, there was in 17— a solitary public-house, which, by-the-by, is now a magnificent hotel. Like many of its brethren in the more courtly vicinity of the metropolis, this *amœnum hospitium peregrinæ gentis* then had its peculiar renown for certain dainties of the palate; and various in degree and character were the numerous parties from the neighboring towns and farms, which upon every legitimate holiday were wont to assemble at the mansion of mine host of “the Jolly Angler,” in order to feast upon eel-pie, and grow merry over the true Herefordshire cider.

But upon that especial day on which we are about to introduce our reader into the narrow confines of its common parlor, the said hostelry was crowded with persons of a very different description from the peaceable idlers who were ordinarily wont to empty mine host’s larder, and forget the price of corn over the divine inspirations of pomarial nectar. Instead of the indolent satisfied air of the saturnalian merry-maker, the vagrant angler, or the gentleman farmer, with his comely dame who “walked in silk attire, and siller had to spare”; instead of the quiet yet glad countenances of such hunters of pleasure and eaters of eel-pie, or the more obstreperous joy of urchins let loose from school to taste some brief and perennial recreation, and mine host’s delicacies at the same time; instead of these, the little parlor presented a various and perturbed group, upon whose features neither eel-pie nor Herefordshire cider had wrought the relaxation of a holiday, or the serenity of a momentary content.

The day to which we now refer was the one immediately preceding that appointed for the far-famed meeting at W——; and many of the patriots, false or real, who journeyed from a distance to attend that rendezvous, had halted at our host’s of the Jolly Angler; both as being within a convenient space from the appointed spot, and as a tabernacle where promiscuous intrusion, and (haply) immoderate charges, were less likely to occur than at the bustling and somewhat extortionary hotels and inns of the town of W——.

The times in which this meeting was held were those of great

popular excitement and discontent; and the purport of the meeting proposed was to petition Parliament against the continuance of the American war, and the king against the continuance of his ministers.

Placards of an unusually inflammatory and imprudent nature had given great alarm to the more sober and well-disposed persons in the neighborhood of W—; and so much fear was felt or assumed upon the occasion, that a new detachment of Lord Ulswater's regiment had been especially ordered into the town; and it was generally rumored that the legal authorities would interfere, even by force, for the dispersion of the meeting in question. These circumstances had given the measure a degree of general and anxious interest which it would not otherwise have excited; and while everybody talked of the danger of attending the assembly, everybody resolved to thrust himself into it.

It was about the goodly hour of noon, and the persons assembled were six in number, all members of the most violent party, and generally considered by friend and foe as embracers of republican tenets. One of these, a little, oily, corpulent personage, would have appeared far too sleek and well fed for a disturber of things existing, had not a freckled, pimpled, and fiery face, a knit brow, and a small black eye of intolerable fierceness, belied the steady and contented appearance of his frame and girth. This gentleman, by name Christopher Culpepper, spoke in a quick, muffled, shuffling sort of tone, like the pace of a Welsh pony, somewhat lame, perfectly broken-winded, but an exemplary ambler for all that.

Next to him sate, with hands clasped over his knees, a thin, small man, with a countenance prematurely wrinkled, and an air of great dejection. Poor Castleton! his had been indeed the bitter lot of a man, honest but weak, who attaches himself, heart and soul, to a public cause which, in his life at least, is hopeless. Three other men were sitting by the open window, disputing with the most vehement gestures upon the character of Wilkes; and at the other window, alone, silent, and absorbed, sat a man whose appearance and features were singularly calculated to arrest and to concentrate attention. His raven hair, grizzled with the first advance of age, still preserved its strong, wiry curl and luxuriant thickness. His brows, large, bushy, and indicative of great determination, met over eyes which, at that moment, were fixed upon vacancy with a look of thought and calmness very unusual to their ordinary restless and rapid glances. His mouth, that great seat of character, was firmly and

obstinately shut ; and though, at the first observation, its downward curve and iron severity wore the appearance of unmitigated harshness, disdain, and resolve, yet a more attentive deducer of signs from features would not have been able to detect in its expression anything resembling selfishness or sensuality, and in that absence would have found sufficient to redeem the more repellent indications of mind which it betrayed.

Presently the door was opened, and the landlord, making some apology to both parties for having no other apartment unoccupied, introduced a personage whose dress and air, as well as a kind of saddle-bag, which he would not entrust to any other bearer than himself, appeared to denote him as one rather addicted to mercantile than political speculations. Certainly he did not seem much at home among the patriotic reformers, who, having glared upon him for a single moment, renewed, without remark, their several attitudes or occupations.

The stranger, after a brief pause, approached the solitary reformer whom we last described ; and making a salutation, half timorous and half familiar, thus accosted him :

"Your servant, Mr. Wolfe, your servant. I think I had the pleasure of hearing you a long time ago at the Westminster election : very eloquent you were, sir, very !"

Wolfe looked up for an instant at the face of the speaker, and, not recognizing it, turned abruptly away, threw open the window, and, leaning out, appeared desirous of escaping from all further intrusion on the part of the stranger : but that gentleman was by no means of a nature easily abashed.

"Fine day, sir, for the time of year—very fine day, indeed. October is a charming month, as my lamented friend and customer, the late Lady Waddilove, was accustomed to say. Talking of that sir, as the winter is now approaching, do you not think it would be prudent, Mr. Wolfe, to provide yourself with an umbrella ? I have an admirable one which I might dispose of : it is from the effects of the late Lady Waddilove. 'Brown,' said her ladyship, a short time before her death—'Brown, you are a good creature ; but you ask too much for the Dresden vase. We have known each other for a long time—you must take fourteen pounds ten shillings, and you may have that umbrella, in the corner, into the bargain.' Mr. Wolfe, the bargain was completed, and the umbrella became mine—it may now be yours."

And so saying, Mr. Brown, depositing his saddle-bag on the ground, proceeded to unfold an umbrella of singular antiquity and form—a very long stick, tipped with ivory, being sur-

mounted with about a quarter of a yard of sea-green silk, somewhat discolored by time and wear.

"It is a beautiful article, sir," said Mr. Brown, admiringly surveying it—"is it not?"

"Pshaw!" said Wolfe impatiently—"what have I to do with your goods and chattels—go and palm the cheatings and impositions of your pitiful trade upon some easier gull."

"Cheatings and impositions, Mr. Wolfe!" cried the slandered Brown, perfectly aghast: "I would have you to know, sir, that I have served the first families in the country, ay, and in this county too, and never had such words applied to me before. Sir, there was the late Lady Waddilove, and the respected Mrs. Minden, *and her nephew the ambassador*, and the Duchess of Pugadale, and Mr. Mordaunt of Mordaunt Court, poor gentleman—though he is poor no more," and Mr. Brown proceeded to enumerate the long list of his customers.

Now, we have stated that Wolfe, though he had never known the rank of Mordaunt, was acquainted with his real name; and, as the sound caught his ear, he muttered "Mordaunt—Mordaunt—ay, but not my former acquaintance—not him who was called Glendower. No, no—the man cannot mean him."

"Yes, sir, but I do mean him," cried Brown, in a rage. "I do mean that Mr. Glendower, who afterwards took another name, but whose real appellation is Mr. Algernon Mordaunt, of Mordaunt Court, in this county, sir."

"What description of man is he?" said Wolfe; "rather tall, slender, with an air and mien like a king's, I was going to say—but better than a king's—like a free man's?"

"Ay, ay,—the same," answered Mr. Brown sullenly; "but why should I tell you—'cheating and imposition,' indeed!—I am sure my word can be of no avail to you—and I shant stay here any longer to be insulted, Mr. Wolfe—which, I am sure, talking of freemen, no freeman ought to submit to; but as the late Lady Waddilove once very wisely said to me, 'Brown, never have anything to do with those republicans, they are the worst tyrants of all.' Good morning, Mr. Wolfe—gentlemen, your servant—'cheating and imposition,' indeed!"—and Mr. Brown banged the door as he departed.

"Wolfe," said Mr. Christopher Culpepper, "who is that man?"

"I know not," answered the republican laconically, and gazing on the ground, apparently in thought.

"He has the air of a slave," quoth the free Culpepper; "and

slaves cannot bear the company of freemen ; therefore he did right to go—whe-w!—Had we a proper, and thorough, and efficient reform, human nature would not be thus debased by trades, and callings, and barter, and exchange, for all professions are injurious to the character and the dignity of men—whe-w! but as I shall prove upon the hustings tomorrow, it is in vain to hope for any amendment in the wretched state of things until the people of these realms are fully, freely, and fairly represented—whe-w!—Gentlemen, it is past two, and we have not ordered dinner—whe-w!” —(N. B. This ejaculation denotes the kind of snuffle which lent peculiar energy to the dicta of Mr. Culpepper.)

“Ring the bell, then, and summon the landlord,” said, very pertinently, one of the three disputants upon the character of Wilkes.

The landlord appeared ; dinner was ordered.

“Pray,” said Wolfe, “has that man, Mr. Brown, I think he called himself, left the inn !”

“He has, sir, for he was mightily offended at something which—”

“And,” interrupted Wolfe, “how far hence does Mr. Mor-daunt live ?”

“About five miles on the other side of W——,” answered mine host.

Wolfe rose, seized his hat, and was about to depart.

“Stay, stay,” cried citizen Christopher Culpepper ; “you will not leave us till after dinner ?”

“I shall dine at W——,” answered Wolfe, quitting the room.

“Then our reckoning will be heavier,” said Culpepper. “It is not handsome in Wolfe to leave us—whe-w!—Really I think that our brother in the great cause has of late relaxed in his attentions and zeal to the goddess of our devotions—whe-w !”

“It is human nature !” cried one of the three disputants upon the character of Wilkes.

“It is not human nature !” cried the second disputant, folding his arms doggedly, in preparation for a discussion.

“Contemptible human nature !” exclaimed the third disputant, soliloquizing with a supercilious expression of hateful disdain.

“Poor human nature !” murmured Castleton, looking upward, with a sigh ; and though we have not given to that gentleman other words than these, we think they are almost sufficient to let our readers into his character.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

“*Silvis, ubi passim
Palantes error certo de tramite pellit,
Ille sinisterum hic dextorsum abit; unus utrique
Error, sed variis illudit partibus.*” *—HORAT.

As Wolfe strode away from the inn, he muttered to himself—
“Can it be that Mordaunt has suddenly grown rich? If so, I rejoice at it. True, that he was not for our cause, but he had the spirit and the heart which belonged to it. Had he not been bred among the prejudices of birth, or had he lived in stormier times, he might have been the foremost champion of freedom. As it is, I rather lament than condemn. Yet I would fain see him once more. Perhaps prosperity may have altered his philosophy. But can he, indeed, be the same Mordaunt of whom that trading itinerant spoke? Can he have risen to the pernicious eminence of a landed aristocrat? Well, it is worth the journey; for if he have power in the neighborhood, I am certain that he will exert it for our protection; and at the worst, I shall escape from the idle words of my compatriots. Oh! if it were possible that the advocates could debase the glory of the cause, how long since should I have flinched from the hardship and the service to which my life is devoted! Self-interest, Envy, that snarls at all above it, without even the beast’s courage to bite—Folly, that knows not the substance of freedom, but loves the glitter of its name—Fear, that falters—Crime, that seeks in licentiousness an excuse—Disappointment, only craving occasion to rail—Hatred—Sourness, boasting of zeal, but only venting the blackness of rancor and evil passion—all these make our adherents, and give our foes the handle and the privilege to scorn and to despise. But man chooses the object, and Fate only furnishes the tools. Happy for our posterity, that when the object is once gained, the frailty of the tools will be no more!”

Thus soliloquizing, the republican walked rapidly onwards, till a turn of the road brought before his eye the form of Mr. Brown, seated upon a little rough pony, and “whistling as he went, for want of thought.”

Wolfe quickened his pace, and soon overtook him.

“You must forgive me, my good man,” said he soothingly, “I meant not to impeach your honesty or your calling. Per-

* Wandering in those woods where error evermore forces life’s stragglers from the beaten path—this one deflects to the left—his fellow chooses the exact contrary. The fault is all the same in each, but it excuses itself by a thousand different reasons.

haps I was hasty and peevish ; and, in sad earnest, I have much to tease and distract me."

"Well, sir, well," answered Mr. Brown, greatly mollified : "I am sure no Christian can be more forgiving than I am ; and, since you are sorry for what you were pleased to say, let us think no more about it. But touching the umbrella, Mr. Wolfe—have you a mind for that interesting and useful relic of the late Lady Waddilove ?"

"Not at present, I thank you," said Wolfe mildly : "I care little for the inclemencies of the heavens, and you may find many to whom your proffered defence from them may be more acceptable. But tell me if the Mr. Mordaunt you mentioned was ever residing in town, and in very indifferent circumstances ?"

"Probably he was," said the cautious Brown, who, as we before said, had been bribed into silence, and who now grievously repented that passion had betrayed him into the imprudence of candor ; "but I really do not busy myself about other people's affairs. 'Brown,' said the late Lady Waddilove to me—'Brown, you are a good creature, and never talk of what does not concern you.' Those, Mr. Wolfe, were her Ladyship's own words !"

"As you please," said the reformer, who did not want shrewdness, and saw that his point was already sufficiently gained ; "as you please. And now, to change the subject, I suppose we shall have your attendance at the meeting at W—— to-morrow ?"

"Ay," replied the worthy Brown ; "I thought it likely I should meet many of my old customers in the town on such a busy occasion ; so I went a little out of my way home to London, in order to spend a night or two there. Indeed, I have some valuable articles for Mr. Glumford, the magistrate, who will be in attendance to-morrow."

"They say," observed Wolfe, "that the magistrates, against all law, right, and custom, will dare to interfere with, and resist the meeting. Think you report says true ?"

"Nay," returned Brown prudently, "I cannot exactly pretend to decide the question ! All I know is that Squire Glumford said to me, at his own house, five days ago, as he was drawing on his boots—'Brown,' said he, 'Brown, mark my words, we shall do for those rebellious dogs !'"

"Did he say so ?" muttered Wolfe between his teeth. "Oh, for the old times, or those yet to come, when our answer would have been, or shall be—the sword !"

"And you know," pursued Mr. Brown, "that Lord Ulswater and his regiment are in the town, and have even made great preparations against the meeting a week ago."

"I *have* heard this," said Wolfe; "but I cannot think that any body of armed men dare interrupt or attack a convocation of peaceable subjects, met solely to petition Parliament against famine for themselves and slavery for their children."

"Famine!" quoth Mr. Brown. "Indeed it is very true—very!—times are dreadfully bad. I can scarcely get my own living—Parliament certainly ought to do something; but you must forgive me, Mr. Wolfe, it may be dangerous to talk with you on these matters: and, now I think of it, the sooner I get to W—— the better—good morning—a shower's coming on:—You won't have the umbrella, then?"

"They dare not," said Wolfe to himself, "no, no,—they dare not attack us—they dare not"; and clenching his fist, he pursued, with a quicker step, and a more erect mien, his solitary way.

When he was about the distance of three miles from W——, he was overtaken by a middle-aged man, of a frank air and a respectable appearance. "Good day, sir," said he; "we seem to be journeying the same way—will it be against your wishes to join company?"

Wolfe assented, and the stranger resumed:

"I suppose, sir, you intend to be present at the meeting at W—— to-morrow. There will be an immense concourse, and the entrance of a new detachment of soldiers, and the various reports of the likelihood of their interference with the assembly, make it an object of some interest and anxiety to look forward to."

"True—true," said Wolfe slowly, eyeing his new acquaintance with a deliberate and scrutinizing attention. "It will, indeed, be interesting to see how far an evil and hardy government will venture to encroach upon the rights of the people, which it ruins while it pretends to rule."

"Of a truth," rejoined the other, "I rejoice that I am no politician. I believe my spirit is as free as any cooped in the narrow dungeon of earth's clay can well be; yet I confess that it has drawn none of its liberty from book, pamphlet, speech, or newspaper, of modern times."

"So much the worse for you, sir," said Wolfe sourly: "the man who has health and education can find no excuse for supineness or indifference to that form of legislation by which his country decays or prospers."

"Why," said the other gayly, "I willingly confess myself less of a patriot than a philosopher; and as long as I am harmless, I strive very little to be useful, in a public capacity; in a private one, as a father, a husband, and a neighbor, I trust I am not utterly without my value."

"Pish!" cried Wolfe; "let no man who forgets his public duties, prate of his private merits. I tell you, man, that he who can advance by a single hair's-breadth the happiness or the freedom of mankind has done more to save his own soul than if he had paced every step of the narrow circle of his domestic life with the regularity of clock-work."

"You may be right," quoth the stranger carelessly; "but I look on things in the mass, and perhaps see only the superficies, while you, I perceive already, are a lover of the abstract. For my part, Harry Fielding's two definitions seem to me excellent. 'Patriot—a candidate for a place!' 'Politics—the art of getting such a place!' Perhaps, sir, as you seem a man of education, you remember the words of our great novelist."

"No!" answered Wolfe, a little contemptuously—"I cannot say that I burthen my memory with the deleterious witticisms and shallow remarks of writers of fancy. It has been a mighty and spreading evil to the world, that the vain fictions of the poets or the exaggerations of novelists have been hitherto so welcomed and extolled. Better had it been for us if the destruction of the lettered wealth at Alexandria had included all the lighter works which have floated, from their very levity, down the stream of time, an example and a corruption to the degraded geniuses of later days."

The eyes of the stranger sparkled. "Why, you outgoth the Goth!" exclaimed he sharply. "But you surely preach against what you have not studied. Confess that you are but slightly acquainted with Shakspeare, and Spenser, and noble Dan Chaucer. Ay, if you knew them as well as I do, you would, like me, give

'To hem faith and full credence,
And in your heart have hem in reverence.'

"Pish!" again muttered Wolfe; and then rejoined aloud, "It grieves me to see time so wasted, and judgment so perverted, as yours appears to have been; but it fills me with pity and surprise, as well as grief, to find that, so far from shame at the effeminacy of your studies, you appear to glory and exult in them."

"May the Lord help me, and lighten thee," said Cole—for it was he. "You are at least not a novelty in human wisdom,

whatever you may be in character ; for you are far from being the only one proud of being ignorant, and pitying those who are not so."

Wolfe darted one of his looks of fire at the speaker, who nothing abashed, met the glance with an eye, if not as fiery, at least as bold.

"I see," said the republican, "that we shall not agree upon the topics you have started. If you still intrude your society upon me, you will, at least, choose some other subject of conversation."

"Pardon me," said Cole, whose very studies, while they had excited, in their self-defence, his momentary warmth, made him habitually courteous and urbane—"pardon me for my hastiness of expression. I own myself in fault." And, with this apology, our ex-king slid into the new topics which the scenery and weather afforded him.

Wolfe, bent upon the object of his present mission, made some inquiries respecting Mordaunt ; and though Cole only shared the uncertain information of the country gossips, as to the past history of that person, yet the little he did know was sufficient to confirm the republican in his belief of Algernon's identity ; while the ex-gypsy's account of his rank and reputation in the country made Wolfe doubly anxious to secure, if possible, his good offices and interference on behalf of the meeting. But the conversation was not always restricted to neutral and indifferent ground, but, ever and anon, wandered into various allusions or opinions, from the one, certain to beget retort or controversy in the other.

Had we time, and our reader patience, it would have been a rare and fine contrast to have noted more at large the differences of thought and opinion between the companions ; each in his several way so ardent for liberty, and so impatient of the control and customs of society ; each so enthusiastic for the same object, yet so coldly contemptuous to the enthusiasm of the other. The one guided only by his poetical and erratic tastes, the other solely by dreams, seeming to the world no less baseless, yet, to his own mind, bearing the name of stern judgment and inflexible truth. Both men of active and adventurous spirits, to whom forms were fetters, and ceremonies odious ; yet, deriving from that mutual similarity only pity for mutual perversion, they were memorable instances of the great differences congeniality itself will occasion, and of the never-ending varieties which minds rather under the influence of imagination than judgment will create.

CHAPTER LXXV.

“*Gratis anhelans, multa agendo, nihil agens.*” *—PHÆDRUS.

UPON entering the town, the streets displayed all the bustle and excitement which the approaching meeting was eminently calculated to create in a place ordinarily quiescent and undisturbed; groups of men were scattered in different parts conversing with great eagerness; while here and there, some Demosthenes of the town, impatient of the coming strife, was haranguing his little knot of admiring friends, and preparing his oratorical organs by petty skirmishing for the grand battle of the morrow. Now and then the eye roved upon the gaunt forms of Lord Ulswater's troopers, as they strolled idly along the streets, in pairs, perfectly uninterested by the great event which set all the more peaceable inmates of the town in a ferment, and returning, with a slighting and supercilious glance, the angry looks and muttered anathemas which, ever and anon, the hardier spirits of the petitioning party liberally bestowed upon them.

As Wolfe and his comrade entered the main street, the former was accosted by some one of his compatriots, who, seizing him by the arm, was about to apprise the neighboring idlers, by a sudden exclamation, of the welcome entrance of the eloquent and noted republican. But Wolfe perceived, and thwarted his design.

“Hush!” said he, in a low voice; “I am only now on my way to an old friend, who seems a man of influence in these parts, and may be of avail to us on the morrow; keep silence, therefore, with regard to my coming till I return. I would not have my errand interrupted.”

“As you will,” said the brother-spirit; “but whom have you here—a fellow laborer?” and the reformer pointed to Cole, who, with an expression of shrewd humor, blended with a sort of philosophical compassion, stood at a little distance waiting for Wolfe, and eyeing the motley groups assembled before him.

“No,” answered Wolfe; “he is some vain and idle sower of unprofitable flowers; a thing who loves poetry, and, for aught I know, writes it; but that reminds me that I must rid myself of his company; yet stay—do you know this neighborhood sufficiently to serve me as a guide?”

“Ah,” quoth the other; “I was born within three miles of the town.”

* Panting and laboring in vain; doing much—effecting nothing.

"Indeed!" rejoined Wolfe; "then, perhaps you can tell me if there is any way of reaching a place called Mordaunt Court, without passing through the more public and crowded thoroughfares."

"To be sure," rejoined the brother-spirit; "you have only to turn to the right up yon hill, and you will in an instant be out of the purlieus and precincts of W——, and on your shortest road to Mordaunt Court; but surely it is not to its owner that you are bound?"

"And why not?" said Wolfe.

"Because," replied the other, "he is the wealthiest, the highest, and, as report says, the haughtiest aristocrat of these parts."

"So much the better, then," said Wolfe, "can he aid us in obtaining a quiet hearing to-morrow, undisturbed by those liveried varlets of hire, who are termed, in sooth, Britain's defence! Much better, when we think of all they cost us to pamper and to clothe, should they be termed Britain's ruin; but farewell for the present; we shall meet to-night; your lodgings—?"

"Yonder," said the other, pointing to a small inn opposite; and Wolfe, nodding his adieu, returned to Cole, whose vivacious and restless nature had already made him impatient of his companion's delay.

"I must take my leave of you now," said Wolfe, "which I do with a hearty exhortation that you will change your studies, fit only for effeminate and enslaved minds."

"And I return the exhortation," answered Cole. "Your studies seem to me ten-fold more crippling than mine: mine takes all this earth's restraint from me, and yours seem only to remind you that all earth *is* restraint: mine show me whatever worlds the fondest fancy could desire; yours only the follies and chains of this. In short, while 'my mind to me a *kingdom* is,' yours seems to consider the whole universe itself nothing but a great meeting for the purpose of abusing ministers and demanding reform!"

Not too well pleased by this answer, and at the same time indisposed to delay of further reply, Wolfe contented himself with an iron sneer of disdain, and, turning on his heel, strode rapidly away in the direction his friend had indicated.

Meanwhile, Cole followed him with his eye, till he was out of sight, and then muttered to himself—"Never was there a fitter addition to old Barclay's 'Ship of Fools!' I should not wonder if this man's patriotism leads him from despising the

legislature into breaking the law ; and faith, the surest way to the gallows is less through vice than discontent ; yet, I would fain hope better things for him—for, methinks, he is neither a common declaimer nor an ordinary man."

With these words the honest Cole turned away, and, strolling towards the Golden Fleece, soon found himself in the hospitable mansion of Mistress and Mister Merrylack.

While the ex-king was taking his ease at his inn, Wolfe proceeded to Mordaunt Court. The result of the meeting that there ensued was a determination on the part of Algernon to repair immediately to W——.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

"The commons here in Kent are up in arms."—*Second Part of Henry VI.*

WHEN Mordaunt arrived at W——, he found that the provincial deities (who were all assembled at dinner with the principal inhabitants of the town), in whose hands the fate of the meeting was placed, were in great doubt and grievous consternation. He came in time, first to balance the votes, and ultimately to decide them. His mind, prudent and acute, when turned to worldly affairs, saw in a glance the harmless, though noisy, nature of the meeting ; and he felt that the worst course the government or the county could pursue would be to raise into importance, by violence, what otherwise would meet with ridicule from most, and indifference from the rest.

His large estates, his ancient name, his high reputation for talent, joined to that manner, half eloquent and half commanding, which rarely fails of effect when deliberation only requires a straw on either side to become decision—all these rendered his interference of immediate avail ; and it was settled that the meeting should, as similar assemblies had done before, proceed and conclude, undisturbed by the higher powers, so long as no positive act of sedition to the government or danger to the town was committed.

Scarcely was this arrangement agreed upon, before Lord Ulswater, who had hitherto been absent, entered the room in which the magisterial conclave was assembled. Mr. Glumford (whom our readers will possibly remember as the suitor to Isabel St. Leger, and who had at first opposed, and then re-

luctantly subscribed to, Mordaunt's interference) bustled up to him.

"So, so, my lord," said he, "since I had the honor of seeing your lordship, quite a new sort of trump has been turned up."

"I do not comprehend your metaphorical elegancies of speech, Mr. Glumford," said Lord Ulswater.

Mr. Glumford explained. Lord Ulswater's cheek grew scarlet. "So Mr. Mordaunt has effected this wise alteration," said he.

"Nobody else, my lord, nobody else; and I am sure, though your lordship's estates are at the other end of the county, yet they are much larger than his; and since your lordship has a troop at your command, and that sort of thing, I would not, if I were your lordship, suffer any such opposition to your wishes."

Without making a reply to this harangue, Lord Ulswater stalked haughtily up to Mordaunt, who was leaning against the wainscot, and conversing with those around him.

"I cannot but conceive, Mr. Mordaunt," said he, with a formal bow, "that I have been misinformed in the intelligence I have just received."

"Lord Ulswater will perhaps inform me to what intelligence he alludes."

"That Mr. Mordaunt, the representative of one of the noblest families in England, has given the encouragement and influence of his name and rank to the designs of a seditious and turbulent mob."

Mordaunt smiled slightly, as he replied: "Your lordship *rightly* believes that you are misinformed. It is precisely because I would *not* have the mob you speak of seditious or turbulent, that I have made it my request that the meeting of tomorrow should be suffered to pass off undisturbed."

"Then, sir," cried Lord Ulswater, striking the table with a violence which caused three reverend potentates of the province to start back in dismay, "I cannot but consider such interference on your part to the last degree impolitic and uncalled for: these, sir, are times of great danger to the state, and in which it is indispensably requisite to support and strengthen the authority of the law."

"I waive at present," answered Mordaunt, "all reply to language neither courteous nor appropriate. I doubt not but that the magistrates will decide as is most in accordance with the spirit of that law which in this, and in all times, should be supported."

"Sir," said Lord Ulswater, losing his temper more and more,

as he observed that the by-standers, whom he had been accustomed to awe, all visibly inclined to the opinion of Mordaunt, "sir, if your name has been instrumental in producing so unfortunate a determination on the part of the magistrates, I shall hold you responsible to the government for those results which ordinary prudence may calculate upon."

"When Lord Ulswater," said Mordaunt sternly, "has learned what is due, not only to the courtesies of society, but to those legitimate authorities of his country, who (he ventures to suppose) are to be influenced contrary to their sense of duty, by any individual, then he may, perhaps, find leisure to make himself better acquainted with the nature of those laws which he now so vehemently upholds."

"Mr. Mordaunt, you will consider yourself answerable to me for those words," said Lord Ulswater, with a tone of voice unnaturally calm; and the angry flush of his countenance gave place to a livid paleness. Then, turning on his heel, he left the room.

As he repaired homeward, he saw one of his soldiers engaged in a loud and angry contest with a man, in the plain garb of a peaceful citizen; a third person, standing by, appeared ineffectually endeavoring to pacify the disputants. A rigid disciplinarian, Lord Ulswater allowed not even party feeling, roused as it was, to conquer professional habits. He called off the soldier, and the man with whom the latter had been engaged immediately came up to Lord Ulswater, with a step as haughty as his own. The third person, who had attempted the peacemaker, followed him.

"I presume, sir," said he, "that you are an officer of this man's regiment."

"I am the commanding officer, sir," said Lord Ulswater, very little relishing the air and tone of the person who addressed him.

"Then," answered the man (who was, indeed, no other than Wolfe, who, having returned to W—— with Mordaunt, had already succeeded in embroiling himself in a dispute)—"then, sir, I look to you for his punishment, and my redress"; and Wolfe proceeded, in his own exaggerated language, to detail a very reasonable cause of complaint. The fact was, that Wolfe, meeting one of his compatriots, and conversing with him somewhat loudly, had uttered some words which attracted the spleen of the soldier, who was reeling home very comfortably intoxicated; and the soldier had most assuredly, indulged in a copious abuse of the d—d rebel, who could not walk the streets without chattering sedition.

Wolfe's friend confirmed the statement.

The trooper attempted to justify himself ; but Lord Ulswater saw his intoxication in an instant, and, secretly vexed that the complaint was not on the other side, ordered the soldier to his quarters, with a brief but sure threat of punishment on the morrow. Not willing, however, to part with the "d—d rebel," on terms so flattering to the latter, Lord Ulswater, turning to Wolfe, with a severe and angry air, said :

"As for you, fellow, I believe the whole fault was on your side ; and if you dare give vent again to your disaffected ravings, I shall have you sent to prison, to tame your rank blood upon bread and water. Begone, and think yourself fortunate to escape now !"

The fierce spirit of Wolfe was in arms on the instant—and his reply, in subjecting him to Lord Ulswater's threat, might at least have prevented his enlightening the public on the morrow, had not his friend, a peaceable, prudent man, seized him by the arm, and whispered—"What are you about?—Consider for what you are here—another word may rob the assembly of your presence. A man bent on a public cause must not, on the eve of its trial, enlist in a private quarrel."

"True, my friend, true," said Wolfe, swallowing his rage, and eyeing Lord Ulswater's retreating figure with a menacing look ; "but the time may yet come when I shall have license to retaliate on the upstart."

"So be it," quoth the other—"he is our bitterest enemy. You know, perhaps, that he is Lord Ulswater, of the — regiment ? it has been at his instigation that the magistrates proposed to disturb the meeting. He has been known publicly to say that all who attended the assembly ought to be given up to the swords of his troopers."

"The butchering dastard !—to dream even of attacking unarmed men ; but enough of him—I must tarry yet in the street to hear what success our intercessor has obtained." And as Wolfe passed the house in which the magisterial conclave sat, Mordaunt came out and accosted him.

"You have sworn to me that your purpose is peaceable," said Mordaunt.

"Unquestionably," answered Wolfe.

"And you will pledge yourself that no disturbance, that can either be effected, or counteracted, by yourself and friends, shall take place ?"

"I will."

"Enough !" answered Mordaunt. "Remember that if you

commit the least act that can be thought dangerous, I may not be able to preserve you from the military. As it is, your meeting will be unopposed."

Contrary to Lord Ulswater's prediction, the meeting went off as quietly as an elderly maiden's tea-party. The speakers, even Wolfe, not only took especial pains to recommend order and peace, but avoided for the most part all inflammatory enlargement upon the grievances of which they complained. And the sage foreboders of evil, who had locked up their silver spoons, and shaken their heads very wisely for the last week, had the agreeable mortification of observing rather an appearance of good-humor upon the countenances of the multitude than that ferocious determination against the lives and limbs of the well-affected which they had so sorrowfully anticipated.

As Mordaunt (who had been present during the whole time of the meeting) mounted his horse and quitted the ground, Lord Ulswater, having just left his quarters, where he had been all day in expectation of some violent act of the orators or the mob, demanding his military services, caught sight of him; with a sudden recollection of his own passionate threat. There had been nothing in Mordaunt's words which would, in our times, have justified a challenge; but in that day duels were fought upon the slightest provocation. Lord Ulswater therefore rode up at once to a gentleman with whom he had some intimate acquaintance, and briefly saying that he had been insulted, both as an officer and gentleman, by Mr. Mordaunt, requested his friend to call upon that gentleman and demand satisfaction.

"To-morrow," said Lord Ulswater, "I have the misfortune to be unavoidably engaged. The next day you can appoint place and time of meeting."

"I must first see the gentleman to whom Mr. Mordaunt may refer me," said the friend prudently; "and perhaps your honor may be satisfied without any hostile meeting at all."

"I think not," said Lord Ulswater carelessly, as he rode away, "for Mr. Mordaunt is a gentleman, and gentlemen never apologize."

Wolfe was standing unobserved near Lord Ulswater while the latter thus instructed his proposed second. "Man of blood," muttered the republican; "with homicide thy code of honor, and massacre thine interpretation of law, by violence wouldst thou rule, and by violence mayst thou perish!"

CHAPTER LXXVII.

“*Jam te premet nox, fabulæque Manes
Et domus exilis Plutonia.*” *—HOR.

THE morning was dull and heavy, as Lord Ulswater mounted his horse, and, unattended, took his way towards Westborough Park. His manner was unusually thoughtful and absent; perhaps two affairs upon his hands, either of which seemed likely to end in bloodshed, were sufficient to bring reflection even to the mind of a cavalry officer.

He had scarcely got out of the town before he was overtaken by our worthy friend Mr. Glumford. As he had been a firm ally of Lord Ulswater in the contest respecting the meeting, so, when he joined and saluted that nobleman, Lord Ulswater, mindful of past services, returned his greeting with an air rather of condescension than hauteur. To say truth, his lordship was never very fond of utter loneliness, and the respectful bearing of Glumford, joined to that mutual congeniality which sympathy in political views always occasions, made him more pleased with the society than shocked with the intrusion of the squire; so that when Glumford said, “If your lordship’s way lies along this road for the next five or six miles, perhaps you will allow me the honor of accompanying you,” Lord Ulswater graciously signified his consent to the proposal, and carelessly mentioning that he was going to Westborough Park, slid into that conversation with his new companion which the meeting and its actors afforded.

Turn we for an instant to Clarence. At the appointed hour he had arrived at Westborough Park, and, bidding his companion, the trusty Wardour, remain within the chaise which had conveyed them, he was ushered, with a trembling heart, but a mien erect and self-composed, into Lady Westborough’s presence; the marchioness was alone.

“I am sensible, sir,” said she, with a little embarrassment, “that it is not exactly becoming to my station and circumstances to suffer a meeting of the present nature between Lord Ulswater and yourself to be held within this house; but I could not resist the request of Lord Ulswater, conscious, from his character, that it could contain nothing detrimental to the—to the consideration and delicacy due to Lady Flora Ardenne,”

Clarence bowed. “So far as I am concerned,” said he, “I

* This very hour Death shall overcome thee, and the fabled Manes, and the shadowy Plutonian realms receive thee.

feel confident that Lady Westborough will not repent of her condescension."

There was a pause.

"It is singular," said Lady Westborough, looking to the clock upon an opposite table, "that Lord Ulswater is not yet arrived."

"It is," said Clarence, scarcely conscious of his words, and wondering whether Lady Flora would deign to appear.

Another pause. Lady Westborough felt the awkwardness of her situation.

Clarence made an effort to recover himself.

"I do not see," said he, "the necessity of delaying the explanation I have to offer to your ladyship till my Lord Ulswater deems it suitable to appear. "Allow me at once to enter upon a history, told in a few words, and easily proved."

"Stay," said Lady Westborough, struggling with her curiosity; "it is due to one who has stood in so peculiar a situation in our family to wait yet a little longer for his coming. We will, therefore, till the hour is completed, postpone the object of our meeting."

Clarence again bowed, and was silent. Another and a longer pause ensued; it was broken by the sound of the clock striking—the hour was completed.

"Now,"—began Clarence—when he was interrupted by a sudden and violent commotion in the hall. Above all was heard a loud and piercing cry, in which Clarence recognized the voice of the old steward. He rose abruptly, and stood motionless and aghast: his eyes met those of Lady Westborough, who, pale and agitated, lost for the moment all her habitual self-command. The sound increased: Clarence rushed from the room into the hall; the open door of the apartment revealed to Lady Westborough, as to him, a sight which allowed her no further time for hesitation. She hurried after Clarence into the hall, gave one look, uttered one shriek of horror, and fainted.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Idem.—But thou wilt brave me in these saucy terms.

Cade.—Brave thee! ay, by the best blood that ever was broached,
and beard thee too.—SHAKSPEARE.

“You see, my lord,” said Mr. Glumford to Lord Ulswater, as they rode slowly on, “that as long as those rebellious scoundrels are indulged in their spoutings and meetings, and that sort of thing, that—that there will be no bearing them.”

“Very judiciously remarked, sir,” replied Lord Ulswater. “I wish all gentlemen of birth and consideration viewed the question in the same calm, dispassionate, and profound light that you do. Would to heaven it were left to me to clear the country of these mutinous and dangerous rascals—I would make speedy and sure work of it.”

“I am certain you would, my lord—I am certain you would. It is a thousand pities that pompous fellow, Mordaunt, interfered yesterday, with his moderation, and policy, and all that sort of thing—so foolish, you know, my lord—mere theory, and romance, and that sort of thing: we should have had it all our own way, if he had not.”

Lord Ulswater played with his riding-whip, but did not reply. Mr. Glumford continued:

“Pray, my lord, did your lordship see what an ugly, ill-dressed set of dogs those *meetings* were—that Wolfe, above all? Oh, he’s a horrid-looking fellow. By-the-by, he left the town this very morning; I saw him take leave of his freinds in the street just before I set out. He is going to some other meeting—on foot, too. Only think of the folly of talking about the policy, and prudence, and humanity, of sparing such a pitiful poor fellow as that—can’t afford a chaise, or a stage-coach even, my lord—positively can’t.”

“You see the matter exactly in its true light, Mr. Glumford,” said his lordship, patting his fine horse, which was somewhat impatient of the slow pace of its companion.

“A very beautiful animal of your lordship’s,” said Mr. Glumford, spurring his own horse—a heavy, dull quadruped, with an obstinate ill-set tail, a low shoulder, and a Roman nose. “I am very partial to horses myself, and love a fine horse as well as anybody.”

Lord Ulswater cast a glance at his companion’s steed, and seeing nothing in its qualities to justify this assertion of at-

tachment to fine horses, was silent ; Lord Ulswater never flattered even his mistress, much less Mr. Glumford.

“ I will tell you, my lord,” continued Mr. Glumford, “ what a bargain this horse was ” ; and the squire proceeded, much to Lord Ulswater’s discontent, to detail the history of his craft in making the said bargain.

The riders were now entering a part of the road, a little more than two miles from Westborough Park, in which the features of the neighboring country took a bolder and ruder aspect than they had hitherto worn. On one side of the road, the view opened upon a descent of considerable depth, and the dull sun looked drearily over a valley in which large fallow fields, a distant and solitary spire, and a few stunted and withering trees, formed the chief characteristics. On the other side of the road a narrow foot-path was separated from the highway by occasional posts ; and on this path Lord Ulswater — (how the minute and daily occurrences of life show the grand pervading principles of character) — was, at the time we refer to, riding, in preference to the established thoroughfare for equestrian and aurigal travellers. The side of this path farthest from the road was bordered by a steep declivity of stony and gravelly earth, which almost deserved the dignified appellation of a precipice ; and it was with no small exertion of dexterous horsemanship that Lord Ulswater kept his spirited and susceptible steed upon the narrow and somewhat perilous path, in spite of its frequent starts at the rugged descent below.

“ I think, my lord, if I may venture to say so,” said Mr. Glumford, having just finished the narration of his bargain, “ that it would be better for you to take the high road just at present ; for the descent from the foot-path is steep and abrupt, and deuced crumbling ; so that if your lordship’s horse shied or took a wrong step, it might be attended with unpleasant consequences — a fall, or that sort of thing.”

“ You are very good, sir,” said Lord Ulswater, who, like most proud men, conceived advice an insult : “ but I imagine myself capable of guiding my horse, at least upon a road so excellent as this.”

“ Certainly, my lord, certainly ; I beg your pardon : but — bless me, who is that tall fellow in black, talking to himself yonder, my lord ? The turn of the road hides him from *you* just at present ; but I see him well. Ha-ha ! what gestures he uses ! I dare say he is one of the petitioners, and — yes, my lord, by Jupiter, it is Wolfe himself ! You had better (excuse

me, my lord) come down from the foot-path—it is not wide enough for two people — and Wolfe, I dare say, a d—d rascal, would not get out of the way for the devil himself! He's a nasty, black, fierce-looking fellow; I would not for something meet him in a dark night, or that sort of thing!"

"I do not exactly understand, Mr. Glumford," returned Lord Ulswater, with a supercilious glance at that gentleman, "what peculiarities of temper you are pleased to impute to me, or from what you deduce the supposition that I shall move out of my way for a person like Mr. Woolt, or Wolfe, or whatever be his name."

"I beg your pardon, my lord, I am sure," answered Glumford; "of course your lordship knows best, and if the rogue is impertinent, why, I'm a magistrate, and will commit him; though, to be sure," continued our righteous Daniel, in a lower key, "he has a right to walk upon the foot-path without being ridden over, or that sort of thing."

The equestrians were now very near Wolfe, who turning hastily round, perceived, and immediately recognized Lord Ulswater. "Ah-ha," muttered he to himself, "here comes the insolent thirster for blood, grudging *us*, seemingly, even the meagre comfort of the path which his horse's hoofs are breaking up—yet, thank Heaven," added the republican, looking with a stern satisfaction at the narrowness of the footing, "he cannot very well pass me, and the free lion does not move out of his way for such pampered kine as those to which this creature belongs."

Actuated by this thought, Wolfe almost insensibly moved entirely into the middle of the path, so that what with the posts on one side, and the abrupt and undefended precipice, if we may so call it, on the other, it was quite impossible for any horseman to pass the republican, unless over his body.

Lord Ulswater marked the motion, and did not want penetration to perceive the cause. Glad of an opportunity to wreak some portion of his irritation against a member of a body so offensive to his mind, and which had the day before obtained a sort of triumph over his exertions against them; and rendered obstinate in his intention by the pique he had felt at Glumford's caution, Lord Ulswater, tightening his rein, and humming, with apparent indifference, a popular tune, continued his progress till he was within a foot of the republican. Then, checking his horse for a moment, he called, in a tone of quiet arrogance, to Wolfe to withdraw himself on one side till he had passed.

The fierce blood of the republican, which the least breath of oppression sufficed to kindle, and which yet boiled with the remembrance of Lord Ulswater's threat to him two nights before, was on fire at this command. He stopped short, and turning half round, stood erect in the strength and power of his singularly tall and not ungraceful form. "Poor and proud fool," said he, with a voice of most biting scorn, and fixing an eye eloquent of ire and menaced danger upon the calmly contemptuous countenance of the patrician—"Poor and proud fool, do you think that your privileges have already reached so pleasant a pitch that you may ride over men like dust? Off, fool—the basest peasant in England, degraded as he is, would resist, while he ridiculed your arrogance."

Without deigning any reply, Lord Ulswater spurred his horse; the spirited animal bounded forward, almost on the very person of the obstructor of the path; with uncommon agility Wolfe drew aside from the danger, seized, with a powerful grasp, the bridle, and abruptly arresting the horse, backed it fearfully towards the descent. Enraged beyond all presence of mind, the fated nobleman, raising his whip, struck violently at the republican. The latter, as he felt the blow, uttered a single shout of such ferocity that it curdled the timorous blood of Glumford, and with a giant and iron hand he backed the horse several paces down the precipice. The treacherous earth crumbled beneath the weight, and Lord Ulswater, spurring his steed violently at the same instant that Wolfe so sharply and strongly curbed it, the affrighted animal reared violently, forced the rein from Wolfe, stood erect for a moment of horror to the spectator, and then, as its footing and balance alike failed it, fell backward and rolled over and over its unfortunate and helpless rider.

"Good Heavens!" cried Glumford, who had sat quietly upon his dozing horse, watching the result of the dispute—"what have you done? you have killed his lordship—positively killed him—and his horse, too, I dare say. You shall be hanged for this, sir, as sure as I am a magistrate and that sort of thing."

Unheeding this denunciation, Wolfe had made to the spot where rider and horse lay blent together at the foot of the descent; and assisting the latter to rise, bent down to examine the real effect of his violence. "Methinks," said he, as he looked upon the hueless, but still defying, features of the horseman—"methinks I have seen that face years before—but where? perhaps my dreams have foretold me this."

Lord Ulswater was utterly senseless; and as Wolfe raised him, he saw that the right side of the head was covered with blood, and that one arm seemed crushed and broken. Meanwhile a carriage had appeared—was hailed by Glumford—stopped; and, on being informed of the circumstance, and the rank of the sufferer, the traveller, a single gentleman, descended, assisted to raise the unhappy nobleman—placed him in the carriage, and, obeying Glumford's instructions, proceeded slowly to Westborough Park.

"But the ruffian—the rebel—the murderer!" said Mr. Glumford, both querulously and inquiringly, looking towards Wolfe, who, without having attempted to assist his victim, stood aloof with arms folded, and an expression of sated ferocity upon his speaking features.

"Oh! as to him," quoth the traveller, stepping into his carriage, in order to support the mangled man—"You, sir, and my valet can bring him along with you, or take him to the next town, or do, in short, with him just as you please, only be sure he does not escape—drive on, postboy, very gently." And poor Mr. Glumford found the muscular form of the stern Wolfe consigned to the sole care of himself and a very diminutive man in pea-green silk stockings, who, however excellently well he might perform the office of valet, was certainly by no means calculated in physical powers for the detention of a criminal.

Wolfe saved the pair a world of trouble and anxiety.

"Sir," said he gravely, turning to Glumford, "you beheld the affray, and whatever its consequences, will do me the common justice of witnessing as to the fact of the first aggressor; it will, however, be satisfactory to both of us to seize the earliest opportunity of putting the matter upon a legal footing, and I shall, therefore, return to W—, to which town you will doubtless accompany me."

"With all my heart!" cried Mr. Glumford, feeling as if a mountain of responsibility were taken from his breast. "And I wish to Heaven you may be transported instead of hanged."

CHAPTER LXXIX.

“ But gasping heaved the breath that Lara drew.
And dull the film along his dim eye grew.”—BYRON.

THE light broke partially through the half-closed shutters of the room in which lay Lord Ulswater—who, awakened to sense and pain by the motion of the carriage, had now relapsed into insensibility. By the side of the sofa on which he was laid, knelt Clarence, bathing one hand with tears violent and fast ; on the opposite side leant over, with bald front, and an expression of mingled fear and sorrow upon his intent countenance, the old steward ; while, at a little distance, Lord Westborough, who had been wheeled into the room, sat mute in his chair, aghast with bewilderment and horror, and counting every moment to the arrival of the surgeon, who had been sent for. The stranger to whom the carriage belonged stood by the window, detailing, in a low voice, to the chaplain of the house, what particulars of the occurrence he was acquainted with, while the youngest scion of the family, a boy of about ten years, and who, in the general confusion, had thrust himself unnoticed into the room, stood close to the pair, with open mouth and thirsting ears, and a face on which childish interest at a fearful tale was strongly blent with the more absorbed feeling of terror at the truth.

Slowly Lord Ulswater opened his eyes—they rested upon Clarence.

“ My brother—my brother !” cried Clarence, in a voice of powerful anguish—“ is it thus—thus that you have come hither to—” He stopped in the gushing fulness of his heart. Extricating from Clarence the only hand he was able to use, Lord Ulswater raised it to his brow, as if in the effort to clear remembrance ; and then, turning to Wardour, seemed to ask the truth of Clarence’s claim—at least so the old man interpreted the meaning of his eye, and the faint and scarce intelligible words which broke from his lips.

“ It is—it is, my honored lord,” cried he, struggling with his emotion—“ it is your brother—your lost brother, Clinton L’Estrange. And as he said these words, Clarence felt the damp chill hand of his brother press his own, and knew by that pressure and the smile—kind, though brief from exceeding pain—with which the ill-fated nobleman looked upon him, that the claim long unknown was at last acknowledged, and the ties long broken united, though in death.

The surgeon arrived—the room was cleared of all but Clar-

ence—the first examination was sufficient. Unaware of Clarence's close relationship to the sufferer, the surgeon took him aside—"A very painful operation," said he, "might be performed, but it would only torture, in vain, the last moments of the patient; no human skill can save, or even protract his life."

The doomed man who, though in great pain, was still sensible, stirred. His brother flew towards him. "Flora," he murmured, "let me see *her*, I implore."

Curbing, as much as he was able, his emotion, and conquering his reluctance to leave the sufferer even for a moment, Clarence flew in search of Lady Flora. He found her: in rapid and hasty words, he signified the wish of the dying man, and hurried her, confused, trembling, and scarce conscious of the melancholy scene she was about to witness, to the side of her affianced bridegroom.

I have been by the death-beds of many men, and I have noted that shortly before death, as the frame grows weaker and weaker, the fiercer passions yield to those feelings better harmonizing with the awfulness of the hour. Thoughts soft and tender, which seemed little to belong to the character in the health and vigor of former years, obtain then an empire, brief, indeed, but utter for the time they last—and this is the more impressive, because (as in the present instance I shall have occasion to portray) in the moments which succeed and make *the very* latest of life, the ruling passion, suppressed for an interval by such gentler feelings, sometimes again returns to take its final triumph over that frail clay which, through existence, it has swayed, agitated, and moulded like wax unto its will.

When Lord Ulswater saw Flora approach and bend weepingly over him, a momentary softness stole over his face. Taking her hand, he extended it towards Clarence; and, turning to the latter, faltered out—"Let this—my—brother—atone—for—" apparently unable to finish the sentence, he then relaxed his hold and sunk upon the pillow: and so still, so apparently breathless, did he remain for several minutes, that they thought the latest agony was over.

As yielding to this impression, Clarence was about to withdraw the scarce conscious Flora from the chamber, words less tremulous and indistinct than aught which he had yet uttered, broke from Lord Ulswater's lips. Clarence hastened to him; and, bending over his countenance, saw that, even through the rapid changes and shades of death, it darkened with the peculiar characteristics of the unreleased soul within: the brow was

knit into more than its wonted sternness and pride ; and in the eye, which glared upon the opposite wall, the light of the waning life bröke into a momentary blaze—that flash, so rapid and so evanescent, before the air drinks in the last spark of the being it has animated, and night—the starless and eternal—falls over the extinguished lamp ! The hand of the right arm (which was that unshattered by the fall) was clenched and raised ; but, when the words which came upon Clarence’s ear had ceased, it fell heavily by his side, like a clod of that clay which it had then become. In those words, it seemed as if, in the confused delirium of passing existence, the brave soldier mingled some dim and bewildered recollection of former battles, with that of his last most fatal, though most ignoble strife.

“Down, down with them,” he muttered between his teeth, though in a tone startlingly deep and audible ; “down with them. No quarter to the infidels—strike for England and Effingham. Ha !—who strives for flight there !—kill him—no mercy, I say—none !—there—there—I have despatched him—ha !—ha !—What, still alive ?—off, slave, off !—Oh, slain—slain in a ditch, by a base-born hind—oh—bitter—bitter—bitter !” And with these words, of which the last, from their piercing anguish and keen despair, made a dread contrast with the fire and defiance of the first, the jaw fell—the flashing and fierce eye glazed and set—and all of the haughty and bold patrician which the earth retained was—dust !

CHAPTER LXXX.

“Il n’est jamais permis de détériorer une âme humaine pour l’avantage des autres, ni de faire un scélérat pour le service des honnêtes gens*.—ROUSSEAU.

As the reader approaches the termination of this narrative, and looks back upon the many scenes he has passed, perhaps, in the mimic representation of human life, he may find no unfaithful resemblance to the true.

As, amongst the crowd of characters jostled against each other in their course, some drop off at the first, the second, or the third stage, and leave a few only continuing to the last, while Fate chooses her agents and survivors among those whom the by-stander, perchance, least noticed as the objects of her selection—and they who, haply, seemed to him at first among the most conspicuous as characters, sink, some abruptly, some

* It is not permitted us to degrade one single soul, for the sake of conferring advantage on others, nor to make a rogue, for the good of the honest.

gradually, into actors of the least importance in events ; as the reader notes the same passion, in different strata, producing the most opposite qualities, and gathers from that notice some estimate of the vast perplexity in the code of morals, deemed by the shallow so plain a science, when he finds that a similar and single feeling will produce both the virtue we love and the vice we detest, the magnanimity we admire and the meanness we despise ; as the feeble hands of the author force into contrast ignorance and wisdom, the affectation of philosophy and its true essence, coarseness, and refinement, the lowest vulgarity of sentiment with an exaltation of feeling approaching to morbidity, the reality of virtue with the counterfeit, the glory of the Divinity with the hideousness of the Idol, sorrow and eager joy, marriage and death, tears and their young successors, smiles ; as all, blent together, these varieties of life form a single yet many-colored web, leaving us to doubt whether in fortune, the bright hue or the dark—in character, the base material or the rich, predominate—the workman of the web could almost reconcile himself to his glaring and great deficiency in art, by the fond persuasion that he has, at least in his choice of tint and texture, caught something of the likeness of Nature : but he knows, to the abasement of his vanity, that these enumerated particulars of resemblance to life are common to all, even to the most unskilful of his brethren ; and it is not the mere act of copying a true original, but the rare circumstance of force and accuracy in the copy, which can alone constitute a just pretension to merit, or flatter the artist with the hope of a moderate success.

The news of Lord Ulswater's untimely death soon spread around the neighborhood, and was conveyed to Mordaunt by the very gentleman whom that nobleman had charged with his hostile message. Algernon repaired at once to W——, to gather from Wolfe some less exaggerated account of the affray than that which the many tongues of Rumor had brought to him.

It was no difficult matter to see the precise share of blame to be attached to Wolfe ; and, notwithstanding the biased account of Glumford, and the strong spirit of party then existing in the country, no rational man could, for a moment, term the event of a sudden fray a premeditated murder, or the violence of the aggrieved the black offence of a wilful criminal. Wolfe, therefore, soon obtained a release from the confinement to which he had been at first committed ; and, with a temper still more exasperated by the evident disposition of his auditors to

have treated him, had it been possible, with the utmost rigor, he returned to companions well calculated, by their converse and bent of mind, to inflame the fester of his moral constitution.

It happens, generally, that men very vehement in any particular opinion choose their friends, not for a general similarity of character, but in proportion to their mutual congeniality of sentiment on that particular opinion; it happens, also, that those most *audibly* violent, if we may so speak, on *any* opinion, moral or political, are rarely the wisest or the purest of their party. Those, with whom Wolfe was intimate were men who shared none of the nobler characteristics of the republican: still less did they participate, or even comprehend, the enlightened and benevolent views for which the wise and great men of that sect—a sect to which all philanthropy is, perhaps too fondly, inclined to lean—have been so conspicuously eminent. On the contrary, Wolfe's comrades, without education, and consequently without principle, had been driven to disaffection by desperate fortunes and ruined reputations, acting upon minds polluted by the ignorance and hardened among the dross of the populace. But the worst can, by constant intercourse, corrupt the best; and the barriers of good and evil, often confused in Wolfe's mind by the blindness of his passions, seemed, as his intercourse with these lawless and ruffian associates thickened, to be at last utterly broken down and swept away.

Unhappily too—soon after Wolfe's return to London—the popular irritation showed itself in mobs, perhaps rather to be termed disorderly than seditious; the ministers, however, thought otherwise; the military were summoned, and much injury, resulting, it is to be hoped, from accident, not design, ensued to many of the persons assembled. Some were severely wounded by the swords of the soldiers—others maimed and trampled upon by the horses, which 'shared the agitation or irritability of their riders; and a few, among whom were two women and three children, lost their lives. Wolfe had been one of the crowd—and the scene, melancholy as it really was, and appearing to his temper unredeemed and inexcusable on the part of the soldiers—left on his mind a deep and burning impression of revenge. Justice (as they termed it) was demanded by strong bodies of the people upon the soldiers; but the administration, deeming it politic rather to awe than to conciliate, so far from censuring the military, approved their exertions

From that time, Wolfe appears to have resolved upon the execution of a design, which he had long imperfectly and confusedly meditated.

This was no less a crime (and to him did conscientiously seem no less a virtue), than to seize a favorable opportunity for assassinating the most prominent member of the administration, and the one who, above all the rest, was the most odious to the disaffected. It must be urged, in extenuation of the atrocity of this design, that a man perpetually brooding over one scheme, which to him has become the very sustenance of existence, and which scheme, perpetually frustrated, grows desperate by disappointment, acquires a heat of morbid and oblique enthusiasm, which may not be unreasonably termed insanity; and that at the very time Wolfe reconciled it to his conscience to commit the murder of his fellow-creature, he would have moved out of his path for a worm. Assassination, indeed, seemed to him justice; and a felon's execution the glory of martyrdom. And yet, O Fanatic, thou didst anathematize the Duellist as the Man of blood—what is the Assassin?

CHAPTER LXXXI.

“And thou that, silent at my knee,
 Dost lift to mine thy soft, dark, earnest eyes,
 Fill'd with the love of childhood, which I see
 Pure through its depths—a thing without disguise.
 Thou that hast breathed in slumber on my breast,
 When I have check'd its throbs to give thee rest,
 Mine own, whose young thoughts fresh before me rise,
 Is it not much that I may guide thy prayer,
 And circle thy young soul with free and healthful air.”—HEMANS.

THE events we have recorded, from the time of Clarence's visit to Mordaunt to the death of Lord Ulswater, took place within little more than a week. We have now to pass in silence over several weeks; and as it was the commencement of autumn when we introduced Clarence and Mordaunt to our reader, so it is the first opening of winter in which we will resume the thread of our narrative.

Mordaunt had removed to London; and, although he had not yet taken any share in public business, he was only watching the opportunity to commence a career, the brilliancy of which, those who knew aught of his mind began already to foretell. But he mixed little, if at all, with the gayer occupants of the world's prominent places. Absorbed alternately in his

studies and his labors of good, the halls of pleasure were seldom visited by his presence; and they who, in the crowd, knew nothing of him but his name and the lofty bearing of his mien, recoiled from the coldness of his exterior, and, while they marvelled at his retirement and reserve, saw in both but the moroseness of the student, and the gloom of the misanthropist.

But the nobleness of his person—the antiquity of his birth—his wealth, his unblemished character, and the interest thrown over his name by the reputation of talent, and the unpenetrated mystery of his life, all powerfully spoke in his favor to those of the gentler sex, who judge us not only from what we are to others, but from what they imagine we can be to them. From such allurements, however, as from all else, the mourner turned only the more deeply to cherish the memory of the dead; and it was a touching and holy sight to mark the mingled excess of melancholy and fondness with which he watched over that treasure in whose young beauty and guileless heart his departed Isabel had yet left the resemblance of her features and her love. There seemed between them to exist even a dearer and closer tie than that of daughter and sire! for, in both, the objects which usually divide the affections of the man or the child had but a feeble charm; Isabel's mind had expanded beyond her years, and Algernon's had outgrown his time; so that neither the sports natural to her age, nor the ambition ordinary to his, were sufficient to wean or to distract the unity of their love. When, after absence, his well-known step trod lightly in the hall, her ear, which had listened, and longed, and thirsted for the sound, taught her fairy feet to be the first to welcome his return; and when the slightest breath of sickness menaced her slender frame, it was his hand that smoothed her pillow, and his smile that cheered away her pain; and when she sunk into sleep she knew that a father's heart watched over her through the long but untiring night—that a father's eye would be the first which, on waking, she would meet.

“Oh! beautiful, and rare as beautiful,” was that affection; in the parent no earthlier or harder sternness in authority, nor weakness in doating, nor caprice in love—in the child no fear-debasing reverence, yet no familiarity diminishing respect. But Love, whose pride is in serving, seemed to make at once soft and hallowed the offices mutually rendered—and Nature, never counteracted in her dictates, wrought, without a visible effort, the proper channels into which those offices should flow; and that Charity, which not only covers sins, but lifts the veil from virtues whose beauty might otherwise have lain concealed,

flinked them closer and closer, and threw over that link the sanctity of itself. For it was Algernon's sweetest pleasure to make her young hands the ministers of good to others, and to drink, at such times, from the rich glow of her angel countenance, the purified selfishness of his reward. And when after the divine joy of *ölessing*, which, perhaps, the youngest taste yet more vividly than their sires, she threw her arms around his neck, and thanked him with glad tears for the luxury he had bestowed upon her, how could they, in that gushing overflow of heart, help loving each other the more, or feeling that in that love there was something which justified the excess?

Nor have we drawn with too exaggerating a pencil, nor, though Isabel's *mind* was older than her years, extended that prematureness to her *heart*. For, where we set the example of benevolence, and see that the example is in nought corrupted, the milk of human kindness will flow not the least readily from the youngest breast, and out of the mouths of babes will come the wisdom of charity and love!

Ever since Mordaunt's arrival in town, he had sought out Wolfe's abode, for the purpose of ministering to the poverty under which he rightly conjectured that the republican labored. But the habitation of one, needy, distressed, seldom living long in one place, and far less notorious of late than he had formerly been, was not easy to discover; nor was it till after long and vain search that he ascertained the retreat of his singular acquaintance. The day in which he effected this object we shall have hereafter occasion to specify. Meanwhile we return to Mr. Crauford.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

"Plot on thy little hour, and skein on skein
Weave the vain mesh, in which thy subtle soul
Broods on its venom! Lo! behind, before,
Around thee, like an armament of cloud,
The black Fate labors onward!"—ANON.

THE dusk of a winter's evening gathered over a room in Crauford's house in town, only relieved from the closing darkness by an expiring and sullen fire, beside which Mr. Bradley sat with his feet upon the fender, apparently striving to coax some warmth into the icy palms of his spread hands. Crauford himself was walking up and down the room with a changeful step, and ever and anon glancing his bright, shrewd

eye at the partner of his fraud, who, seemingly unconscious of the observation he underwent, appeared to occupy his attention solely with the difficulty of warming his meagre and withered frame.

"Ar'n't you very cold there, sir?" said Bradley, after a long pause, and pushing himself farther into the verge of the dying embers, "may I not ring for some more coals?"

"Hell and the —; I beg your pardon, my good Bradley, but you vex me beyond patience; how can you think of such trifles when our very lives are in so imminent a danger?"

"I beg your pardon, my honored benefactor, they are indeed in danger!"

"Bradley, we have but one hope—fidelity to each other. If we persist in the same story, not a tittle can be brought home to us—not a tittle, my good Bradley; and, though our characters may be a little touched, why, what is a character? Shall we eat less, drink less, enjoy less, when we have lost it? Not a whit. No, my friend, we will go abroad; leave it to me to save from the wreck of our fortunes enough to live upon like princes."

"If not like *peers*, my honored benefactor."

"Sdeath!—yes, yes, very good—he! he! he! if not peers. Well, all happiness is in the senses, and Richard Crauford has as many senses as Viscount Innisdale; but had we been able to protract inquiry another week, Bradley, why, I should have been my Lord, and you Sir John."

"You bear your losses like a hero, sir," said Mr. Bradley.

"To be sure; there *is* no loss, man, but life—none; let us preserve that, and it will be our own fault if we don't, and the devil take all the rest. But bless me, it grows late, and, at all events, we are safe for some hours; the inquiry won't take place till twelve to-morrow, why should not we feast till twelve to-night. Ring, my good fellow, dinner must be nearly ready."

"Why, honored sir," said Bradley, "I want to go home to see my wife, and arrange my house. Who knows but I may sleep in Newgate to-morrow?"

Crauford, who had been still walking, to and fro, stopped abruptly at this speech, and his eye, even through the gloom, shot out a livid and fierce light before which the timid and humble glance of Mr. Bradley quailed in an instant.

"Go home!—no, my friend, no, I can't part with you to-night, no, not for an instant. I have many lessons to give you. How are we to learn our parts for to-morrow, if we don't rehearse them beforehand? Do you not know that a single blunder may turn what I hope may be a farce, into a tragedy? Go home!—pooh, pooh—why, man, I have not seen *my* wife,

nor put *my* house to rights, and if you do but listen to me, I tell you again and again that not a hair of our heads can be touched."

"You know best, honored sir; I bow to your decision."

"Bravo, honest Brad! and now for dinner. I have the most glorious champagne that ever danced in foam to your lip. No counsellor like the bottle, believe me!"

And the servant entering to announce dinner, Crauford took Bradley's arm and, leaning affectionately upon it, passed through an obsequious and liveried row of domestics to a room blazing with light and plate. A noble fire was the first thing which revived Bradley's spirit, and, as he spread his hands over it before he sat down to the table, he surveyed, with a gleam of gladness upon his thin cheeks, two vases of glittering metal formerly the boast of a king, in which were immersed the sparkling genii of the grape.

Crauford, always a *gourmand*, ate with unusual appetite, and pressed the wine upon Bradley with an eager hospitality, which soon somewhat clouded the senses of the worthy man. The dinner was removed, the servants retired, and the friends were alone.

"A pleasant trip to France!" cried Crauford, filling a bumper. "That's the land for hearts like ours. I tell you what, little Brad, we will leave our wives behind us, and take with a new country, and new names, a new lease of life. What will it signify to men making love at Paris what fools say of them in London? Another bumper, honest Brad—a bumper to the girls! What say you to that, eh?"

"Lord sir, you are so facetious—so witty! It must be owned that a black eye is a great temptation—Lira-lira, la-la!" And Mr. Bradley's own eyes rolled joyously.

"Bravo, Brad!—a song, a song! but treason to King Burgundy! Your glass is—"

"Empty, honored sir, I know it!—Lira-lira la!—but it is easily filled! We who have all our lives been pouring from one vessel into another, know how to keep it up to the last!

"Courage then, cries the knight, we may yet be forgiven,
Or at worst buy the bishop's reversion in heaven;
Our frequent escapes in this world show how true 'tis,
That gold is the only *Elixir Salutis*.

Derry down, derry down.

All you, who to swindling conveniently creep,
Ne'er piddle—by thousands the treasury sweep,
Your safety depends on the weight of the sum.
For no rope was yet made that could tie up a plum.

Derry down, etc."*

* From a ballad called "The Knight and the Prelate."

“Bravissimo, little Brad!—you are quite a wit! See what it is to have one’s faculties called out. Come, a toast to old England, the land in which no man ever wants a farthing who has wit to steal it—‘Old England for ever!’—your rogue is your only true patriot!”—and Crauford poured the remainder of the bottle, nearly three parts full, into a beaker, which he pushed to Bradley. That convivial gentleman emptied it at a draught, and, faltering out, “Honest Sir John—room for my Lady Bradley’s carriage,” dropped down on the floor insensible.

Crauford rose instantly, satisfied himself that the intoxication was genuine, and, giving the lifeless body a kick of contemptuous disgust, left the room, muttering—“The dull ass, did he think it was on his back that I was going to ride off!—He!—he!—he! But stay, let me feel my pulse. Too fast by twenty strokes! One’s never sure of the mind if one does not regulate the body to a hair! Drank too much—must take a powder before I start.”

Mounting by a back staircase to his bed-room, Crauford unlocked a chest, took out a bundle of clerical clothes, a large shovel hat, and a large wig. Hastily, but not carelessly, inducing himself in these articles of disguise, he then proceeded to stain his fair cheeks with a preparation which soon gave them a swarthy hue. Putting his own clothes in the chest, which he carefully locked (placing the key in his pocket), he next took from a desk on his dressing-table a purse; opening this, he extracted a diamond of great size and immense value, which, years before, in preparation of the event that had now taken place, he had purchased.

His usual sneer curled his lip as he gazed at it. “Now,” said he, “is it not strange that this little stone should supply the mighty wants of that grasping thing, man! Who talks of religion, country, wife, children? This petty mineral can purchase them all! Oh, what a bright joy speaks out in your white cheek, my beauty? What are all human charms to yours? Why, by your spell, most magical of talismans, my years may walk, gloating and revelling, through a lane of beauties, till they fall into the grave! Pish!—that grave is an ugly thought—a very, very ugly thought! But come, my sun of hope, I must eclipse you for a while! Type of myself—while you hide, I hide also; and when I once more let you forth to the day, *then* shine out Richard Crauford—shine out!” So saying, he sewed the diamond carefully in the folds of his shirt; and re-arranging his dress, took the cooling powder, which he weighed out to a grain, with a scrupulous and untrembling hand—descended the

back stairs—opened the door, and found himself in the open street.

The clock struck ten as he entered a hackney-coach and drove to another part of London. "What, so late!" thought he: "I must be at Dover in twelve hours—the vessel sails then. Humph!—some danger yet! What a pity that I could not trust that fool. He!—he!—he!—what will he think to-morrow, when he wakes and finds that only *one* is destined to swing."

The hackney-coach stopped, according to his direction, at an inn in the city. Here Crauford asked if a note had been left for Dr. Stapylton. One (written by himself) was given to him. "Merciful Heaven!" cried the false doctor, as he read it, "my daughter is on a bed of death!"

The landlord's look wore anxiety—the doctor seemed for a moment paralyzed by silent woe. He recovered, shook his head piteously, and ordered, a post-chaise and four on to Canterbury without delay.

"It is an ill wind that blows nobody good!" thought the landlord, as he issued the order into the yard.

The chaise was soon out—the doctor entered—off went the post-boys—and Richard Crauford, feeling his diamond, turned his thoughts to safety and to France.

A little, unknown man, who had been sitting at the bar for the last two hours, sipping brandy and water, and who, from his extreme taciturnity and quiet, had been scarcely observed, now rose. "Landlord," said he, "do you know who that gentleman is?"

"Why," quoth Boniface, "the letter to him was directed, 'For the Rev. Dr. Stapylton—will be called for.'"

"Ah!" said the little man, yawning—"I shall have a long night's work of it—Have you another chaise and four in the yard?"

"To be sure, sir, to be sure!" cried the landlord in astonishment.

"Out with it then! Another glass of brandy and water—a little stronger—no sugar!"

The landlord stared—the bar-maid stared—even the head-waiter, a very stately person, stared too.

"Harkye," said the little man, sipping his brandy and water, "I am a deuced good-natured fellow, so I'll make you a great man to-night; for nothing makes a man so great as being let into a great secret. Did you ever hear of the rich Mr. Crauford?"

"Certainly—who has not?"

"Did you ever see him?"

"No! I can't say I ever did."

"You lie, landlord—you saw him to-night."

"Sir!" cried the landlord, bristling up.

The little man pulled out a brace of pistols, and very quietly began priming them out of a small powder-flask.

The landlord started back—the head-waiter cried "rape," and the bar-maid "murder."

"Who the devil are you, sir?" cried the landlord.

"Mr. Tickletrout, the celebrated officer—thief-taker, as they call it. Have a care, Ma'am, the pistols are loaded. I see the chaise is out—there's the reckoning, landlord."

"O Lord! I'm sure I don't want any reckoning—too great an honor for my poor house to be favored with your company; but (following the little man to the door) whom did you please to say you were going to catch!"

"Mr. Crauford, alias Dr. Stapylton."

"Lord! Lord!—to think of it—how shocking! What has he done?"

"Swindled, I believe."

"My eyes! And why, sir, did not you catch him when he was in the bar?"

"Because then I should not have got paid for my journey to Dover. Shut the door, boy; first stage on to Canterbury."

And, drawing a woollen night-cap over his ears, Mr. Tickletrout resigned himself to his nocturnal excursion.

On the very day on which the patent for his peerage was to have been made out—on the very day on which he had afterwards calculated on reaching Paris—on that very day was Mr. Richard Crauford lodged in Newgate, fully committed for a trial of life and death.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

"There, if, O gentle love! I read aright

The utterance that sealed thy sacred bond:

'Twas listening to those accents of delight

She hid upon his breast those eyes—beyond

Expression's power to paint—all languishingly fond."—CAMPBELL.

"AND you will positively leave us for London," said Lady Flora tenderly—"and to-morrow, too!" This was said to one who, under the name of Clarence Linden, has played the

principal part in our drama, and who now, by the death of his brother, succeeding to the honors of his house, we present to our reader as Clinton L'Estrange, Earl of Ulswater.

They were alone in the memorable pavilion ; and though it was winter, the sun shone cheerily into the apartment ; and through the door, which was left partly open, the evergreens, contrasting with the leafless boughs of the oak and beech, could be just descried, furnishing the lover with some meet smile of love, and deceiving the eyes of those willing to be deceived with a resemblance to the departed summer. The unusual mildness of the day seemed to operate genially upon the birds—those children of light and song ; and they grouped blithely beneath the window and round the door, where the hand of the kind young spirit of the place had so often ministered to their wants. Every now and then, too, you might hear the shrill glad note of the blackbird keeping measure to his swift and low flight, and sometimes a vagrant hare from the neighboring preserves sauntered fearlessly by the half-shut door, secure, from long experience, of an asylum in the vicinity of one who had drawn from the breast of Nature a tenderness and love for all its offspring.

Her lover sat at Flora's feet ; and, looking upward, seemed to seek out the fond and melting eyes which, too conscious of their secret, turned bashfully from his gaze. He had drawn her arm over his shoulder ; and clasping that small and snowy hand, which, long coveted with a miser's desire, was at length won, he pressed upon it a thousand kisses—sweeter beguilers of time than even words. All had been long explained—the space between their hearts annihilated—doubt, anxiety, mis-construction, those clouds of love, had passed away, and left not a wreck to obscure its heaven.

“And you will leave us to-morrow—must it be to-morrow?”

“Ah ! Flora, it must ; but see, I have your lock of hair—your beautiful, dark hair, to kiss, when I am away from you, and I shall have your letters, dearest—a letter every day ; and oh ! more than all, I shall have the hope, the certainty, that when we meet again, you will be mine forever.”

“And I, too, must, by seeing it in your handwriting, learn to reconcile myself to your new name. Ah ! I wish you had been still Clarence—only Clarence. Wealth, rank, power—what are all these but rivals to poor Flora?”

Lady Flora sighed, and the next moment blushed ; and, what with the sigh and the blush, Clarence's lip wandered from

the hand to the cheek, and thence to a mouth on which the west wind seemed to have left the sweets of a thousand summers.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

“A Houndsditch man, one of the devil’s near kinsmen—a broker.”

—*Every Man in his Humor.*

“We have here discovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.”—*Much Ado about Nothing.*

IT was an evening of mingled rain and wind, the hour about nine, when Mr. Morris Brown, under the shelter of that admirable umbrella of sea-green silk, to which we have before had the honor to summon the attention of our readers, was, after a day of business, plodding homeward his weary way. The obscure streets through which his course was bent were at no time very thickly thronged, and at the present hour the inclemency of the night rendered them utterly deserted. It is true that now and then a solitary female, holding up with one hand garments already piteously bedraggled, and with the other thrusting her umbrella in the very teeth of the hostile winds, might be seen crossing the intersected streets, and vanishing amid the subterranean recesses of some kitchen area, or tramping onward amidst the mazes of the metropolitan labyrinth, till, like the cuckoo, “heard,” but no longer “seen,” the echo of her retreating patters made a dying music to the reluctant ear; or indeed, at intervals of unfrequent occurrence, a hackney vehicle jolted, rumbling, bumping over the uneven stones, as if groaning forth its gratitude to the elements for which it was indebted for its fare. Sometimes also a chivalrous gallant of the feline species ventured its delicate paws upon the streaming pavement, and shook, with a small but dismal cry, the rain-drops from the pyramidal roofs of its tender ears.

But, save these occasional infringements on its empire, solitude, dark, comfortless, and unrelieved, fell around the creaking footsteps of Mr. Morris Brown. “I wish,” soliloquized the worthy broker, “that I had been able advantageously to dispose of this cursed umbrella of the late Lady Waddilove; it is very little calculated for any but a single lady of slender shape, and though it certainly keeps the rain off my hat, it only sends it with a double dripping upon my shoulders. Pish, deuce take the umbrella, I shall catch my death of cold.”

These complaints of an affliction that was assuredly sufficient

to irritate the naturally sweet temper of Mr. Brown, only ceased, as that industrious personage paused at the corner of the street, for the purpose of selecting the driest part through which to effect the miserable act of crossing to the opposite side. Occupied in stretching his neck over the kennel, in order to take the fullest survey of its topography which the scanty and agitated lamps would allow, the unhappy wanderer, lowering his umbrella, suffered a cross and violent gust of wind to rush, as if on purpose, against the interior. The rapidity with which this was done, and the sudden impetus, which gave to the inflated silk the force of a balloon, happening to occur exactly at the moment Mr. Brown was stooping with such wistful anxiety over the pavement, that gentleman, to his inexpressible dismay, was absolutely lifted, as it were, from his present footing, and immersed in a running rivulet of liquid mire, which flowed immediately below the pavement. Nor was this all—for the wind, finding itself somewhat imprisoned in the narrow receptacle it had thus abruptly entered, made so strenuous an exertion to extricate itself, that it turned Lady Waddilove's memorable relic utterly inside out; so that when Mr. Brown, aghast at the calamity of his immersion, lifted his eyes to heaven, with a devotion that had in it more of expostulation than submission, he beheld, by the melancholy lamps, the apparition of his umbrella, the exact opposite to its legitimate conformation, and seeming, with its lengthy stick and inverted summit, the actual and absolute resemblance of a gigantic wine-glass.

"Now," said Mr. Brown, with that ironical bitterness so common to intense despair, "now, that's what I call pleasant."

As if the elements were guided and set on by all the departed souls of those whom Mr. Brown had, at any time, overreached in his profession, scarcely had the afflicted broker uttered this brief sentence, before a discharge of rain, tenfold more heavy than any which had yet fallen, tumbled down in literal torrents upon the defenceless head of the itinerant.

"This won't do," said Mr. Brown, plucking up courage, and splashing out of the little rivulet, once more, into *terra firma*, "this won't do—I must find a shelter somewhere.—Dear, dear, how the wet runs down me. I am for all the world like the famous dripping well in Derbyshire. What a beast of an umbrella!—I'll never buy one again of an old lady—hang me if I do."

As the miserable Morris uttered these sentences, which gushed out, one by one, in a broken stream of complaint, he

looked round and round—before—behind—beside—for some temporary protection or retreat. In vain—the uncertainty of the light only allowed him to discover houses, in which no portico extended its friendly shelter, and where even the doors seemed divested of the narrow ledge wherewith they are, in more civilized quarters, ordinarily crowned.

“I shall certainly have the rheumatism all this winter,” said Mr. Brown, hurrying onward as fast as he was able. Just then, glancing desperately down a narrow lane, which crossed his path, he perceived the scaffolding of a house, in which repair or alteration had been at work. A ray of hope flashed across him; he redoubled his speed, and, entering the welcome haven, found himself entirely protected from the storm. The extent of scaffolding was, indeed, rather considerable; and, though the extreme narrowness of the lane, and the increasing gloom of the night, left Mr. Brown in almost total darkness, so that he could not perceive the exact peculiarities of his situation, yet he was perfectly satisfied with the shelter he had obtained; and after shaking the rain from his hat—squeezing his coat sleeves and lappets, satisfying himself that it was only about the shoulders that he was thoroughly wetted, and thrusting two pocket-handkerchiefs between his shirt and his skin, as preventives to the dreaded rheumatism, Mr. Brown leant luxuriously back against the wall in the farthest corner of his retreat, and busied himself with endeavoring to restore his insulted umbrella to its original utility of shape.

Our wanderer had been about three minutes in this situation, when he heard the voices of two men, who were hastening along the lane.

“But do stop,” said one; and these were the first words distinctly audible to the ear of Mr. Brown—“do stop, the rain can’t last much longer, and we have a long way yet to go.”

“No, no,” said the other, in a voice more imperious than the first, which was evidently plebeian, and somewhat foreign in its tone, “no, we have no time. What signify the inclemencies of weather to men feeding upon an inward and burning thought, and made, by the workings of the mind, almost callous to the contingencies of the frame?”

“Nay, my very good friend,” said the first speaker with positive, though not disrespectful, earnestness, “that may be all very fine for you, who have a constitution like a horse; but I am quite a—what call you it—an invalid—eh! and have a devilish cough ever since I have been in this d—d country—beg your pardon, no offence to it—so I shall just step under

cover of this scaffolding for a few minutes, and if you like the rain so much, my very good friend, why there is plenty of room in the lane too—(ugh—ugh—ugh) to enjoy it.”

As the speaker ended, the dim light, just faintly glimmering at the entrance of the friendly shelter, was obscured by his shadow, and presently afterwards, his companion, joining him, said :

“Well, if it must be so ; but how can you be fit to brave all the perils of our scheme, when you shrink, like a palsied crone, from the sprinkling of a few water-drops ?”

“A few water-*drops*, my very good friend,” answered the other, “a few—what call you them—ay—water-*falls* rather—(ugh—ugh) ; but let me tell you, my brother citizen, that a man may not like to get his skin wet with water, and would yet thrust his arm up to the very elbow in blood !—(ugh—ugh).”

“The devil !” mentally ejaculated Mr. Brown, who at the word “scheme,” had advanced one step from his retreat, but who now, at the last words of the intruder, drew back as gently as a snail into his shell ; and although his person was far too much enveloped in shade to run the least chance of detection, yet the honest broker began to feel a little tremor vibrate along the chords of his thrilling frame, and a new anathema against the fatal umbrella rise to his lips.

“Ah !” quoth the second, “I trust that it may be so ; but to return to our project—are you quite sure that these two identical ministers are in the *regular* habit of *walking* homeward from that parliament which their despotism has so degraded ?”

“Sure—ay, that I am ; Davidson swears to it !”

“And you are also sure of their persons, so that, even in the dusk, you can recognize them ? for, you know, I have never seen them.”

“Sure as five-pence !” returned the first speaker, to whose mind the lives of the persons referred to were of considerable less value than the sum elegantly specified in his metaphorical reply.

“Then,” said the other, with a deep, stern determination of tone—“then shall this hand, by which one of the proudest of our oppressors has already fallen, be made a still worthier instrument of the wrath of Heaven !”

“You are a d—d pretty shot, I believe,” quoth the first speaker, as indifferently as if he were praising the address of a Norfolk squire.

“Never yet did my eye misguide me, or my aim swerve a

hair's-breadth from its target! I thought once, when I learnt the art as a boy, that in battle, rather than in the execution of a single criminal, that skill would avail me."

"Well, we shall have a glorious opportunity to-morrow night?" answered the first speaker; "that is, if it does not rain so infernally as it does this night: but we shall have a watch of many hours, I dare say."

"That matters but little," replied the other conspirator; "nor even if, night after night, the same vigil is renewed and baffled, so that it bring its reward at last."

"Right," quoth the first; "I long to be at it!—ugh! ugh!—what a confounded cough I have: it will be my death soon, I'm thinking."

"If so," said the other, with a solemnity which seemed ludicrously horrible, from the strange contrast of the words and object—"die at least with the sanctity of a brave and noble deed upon your conscience and your name!"

"Ugh! ugh!—I am but a man of color, but I am a patriot, for all that, my good friend! See, the violence of the rain has ceased: we will proceed": and with these words the worthy pair left the place to darkness and Mr. Brown.

"Oh, Lord!" said the latter, stepping forth, and throwing, as it were, a whole weight of suffocating emotion from his chest, "what bloody miscreants! Murder his Majesty's ministers!—'shoot them like pigeons!'—'d—d pretty shot!' indeed. O Lord! what *would* the late Lady Waddilove, who always hated even the Whigs so cordially, say if she were alive! But how providential that I should have been here; who knows but I may save the lives of the whole administration, and get a pension, or a little place in the post-office! I'll go to the prime minister directly—this very minute! Pish! ain't you right now, you cursed thing?" upbraiding the umbrella, which, half-right and half-wrong, seemed endued with an instinctive obstinacy for the sole purpose of tormenting its owner.

However, losing this petty affliction in the greatness of his present determination, Mr. Brown issued out of his lair, and hastened to put his benevolent and loyal intentions into effect.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

“ When laurelled ruffians die, the Heaven and Earth,
And the deep Air give warning. Shall the good
Perish and not a sign ! ”—ANON.

IT was the evening after the event recorded in our last chapter : all was hushed and dark in the room where Mordaunt sat alone, the low and falling embers burnt dull in the grate, and through the unclosed windows the high stars rode pale and wan in their career. The room, situated at the back of the house, looked over a small garden, where the sickly and hoar shrubs, overshadowed by a few wintry poplars and grim firs, saddened in the dense atmosphere of fog and smoke, which broods over our island city. An air of gloom hung comfortless and chilling over the whole scene externally and within. The room itself was large and old, and its far extremities, mantled as they were with dusk and shadow, impressed upon the mind that involuntary and vague sensation, not altogether unmixed with awe, which the eye, resting upon a view that it can but dimly and confusedly define, so frequently communicates to the heart. There was a strange oppression at Mordaunt's breast, with which he in vain endeavored to contend. Ever and anon, an icy but passing chill, like the shivers of a fever, shot through his veins, and a wild and unearthly and objectless awe stirred through his hair, and his eyes filled with a glassy and cold dew, and sought, as by a self-impulse, the shadowy and unpenetrated places around, which momentarily grew darker and darker. Little addicted by his peculiar habits to an over-indulgence of the imagination, and still less accustomed to those absolute conquests of the physical frame over the mental, which seem the usual sources of that feeling we call presentiment, Mordaunt rose, and, walking to and fro along the room, endeavored by the exercise to restore to his veins their wonted and healthful circulation. It was past the hour in which his daughter retired to rest ; but he was often accustomed to steal up to her chamber, and watch her in her young slumbers ; and he felt this night a more than usual desire to perform that office of love : so he left the room and ascended the stairs. It was a large old house that he tenanted. The staircase was broad, and lighted from above by a glass dome ; and as he slowly ascended, and the stars gleamed down still and ghastly upon his steps, he fancied—but he knew not why—that there was an omen in their gleam. He

entered the young Isabel's chamber ; there was a light burning within ; he stole to her bed, and putting aside the curtain, felt, as he looked upon her peaceful and pure beauty, a cheering warmth gather round his heart. How lovely is the sleep of childhood ! What worlds of sweet, yet not utterly sweet, associations does it not mingle with the envy of our gaze ! What thoughts, and hopes, and cares, and forebodings does it not excite ! There lie in that yet ungrieved and unsullied heart what unnumbered sources of emotion ! what deep fountains of passion and woe ! Alas ! whatever be its earlier triumphs, the victim must fall at last ! As the hart which the jackals pursue, the moment its race is begun, the human prey is fore-doomed for destruction, not by the *single* sorrow, but the *thousand* cares ; it may baffle one race of pursuers, but a new succeeds ; as fast as some drop off exhausted, others spring up to renew and to perpetuate the chase ; and the fated, though flying victim, never escapes—but in death. There was a faint smile upon his daughter's lip, as Mordaunt bent down to kiss it ; the dark lash rested on the snowy lid—ah, that tears had no well beneath its surface !—and her breath stole from her rich lips with so regular and calm a motion, that like the "forest leaves," it "seemed stirred with prayer !"* One arm lay over the coverlid, the other pillowed her head, in the unrivalled grace of infancy.

Mordaunt stooped once more, for his heart filled as he gazed upon his child, to kiss her cheek again, and to mingle a blessing with the kiss. When he rose—upon that fair smooth face there was one bright and glistening drop ; and Isabel stirred in sleep, and, as if suddenly vexed by some painful dream, she sighed deeply as she stirred. It was the last time that the cheek of the young and predestined orphan was ever pressed by a father's kiss, or moistened by a father's tear ! He left the room silently ; no sooner *had* he left it, than, as if without the precincts of some charmed and preserving circle, the chill and presentiment at his heart returned. There is a feeling which perhaps all have in a momentary hypochondria felt at times ; it is a strong and shuddering impression which Coleridge has embodied in his own dark and supernatural verse, *that something not of earth is behind us*—that if we turned our gaze backward we should behold that which would make the heart as a bolt of ice, and the eye shrivel and parch within its socket. And so intense is the fancy that, *when* we turn, and all is void, from that very void we could shape a spectre,

* " And yet the forest leaves seemed stirred with prayer."—BYRON.

as fearful as the image our terror had foredrawn ! Somewhat such feeling had Mordaunt now, as his steps sounded hollow and echoless on the stairs, and the stars filled the air around him with their shadowy and solemn presence. Breaking by a violent effort from a spell of which he felt that a frame somewhat overtasked of late was the real enchanter, he turned once more into the room which he had left to visit Isabel. He had pledged his personal attendance at an important motion in the House of Commons for that night, and some political papers were left upon his table, which he had promised to give to one of the members of his party. He entered the room, purposing to stay only a minute ; an hour passed before he left it ; and his servant afterwards observed that, on giving him some orders as he passed through the hall to the carriage, his cheek was as white as marble, and that his step, usually so haughty and firm, reeled and trembled, like a fainting man's. Dark and inexplicable Fate ! weaver of wild contrasts, demon of this hoary and old world, that movest through it, as a spirit moveth over the waters, filling the depths of things with a solemn mystery and an everlasting change ! thou sweetest over our graves, and Joy is born from the ashes ; thou sweetest over Joy, and lo, it is a grave ! Engine and tool of the Almighty, whose years cannot fade, thou changest the earth as a garment, and as a vesture it is changed ; thou makest it one vast sepulchre and womb united, swallowing and creating life ! and reproducing, over and over, from age to age, from the birth of creation to the creation's doom, the same dust and atoms *which were* our fathers, and which are the sole heirlooms that through countless generations they bequeath and perpetuate to their sons.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

“ Methinks, before the issue of our fate,
A spirit moves within us, and impels
The passion of a prophet to our lips.”—ANON.

“ O vitæ philosophia dux, virtutis indagatrix !—CIC.*

UPON leaving the House of Commons, Mordaunt was accosted by Lord Ulswater, who had just taken his seat in the Upper House. Whatever abstraction or whatever weakness Mordaunt might have manifested before he had left his home, he had now entirely conquered both ; and it was with his

* O Philosophia. — Succress of life—searcher after virtue !

usual collected address that he replied to Lord Ulswater's salutations, and congratulated him on his change of name, and accession of honors.

It was a night of uncommon calm and beauty ; and, although the moon was not visible, the frosty and clear sky, " clad in the lustre of its thousand stars," † seemed scarcely to mourn either the hallowing light, or the breathing poesy of her presence ; and, when Lord Ulswater proposed that Mordaunt should dismiss his carriage, and that they should walk home, Algernon consented not unwillingly to the proposal. He felt, indeed, an unwonted relief in companionship ; and the still air, and the deep heavens, seemed to woo him from more unwelcome thoughts, as with a softening and a sister's love.

" Let us, before we return home," said Lord Ulswater, " stroll for a few moments, towards the bridge ; I love looking at the river on a night like this."

Whoever inquires into human circumstances will be struck to find how invariably a latent current of fatality appears to pervade them. It is the turn of the atom in the scale which makes our safety, or our peril ; our glory, or our shame ; raises us to the throne or sinks us to the grave. A secret voice at Mordaunt's heart prompted him to dissent from this proposal, trifling as it seemed, and welcome as it was to his present and peculiar mood : he resisted the voice—the moment passed away, and the last seal was set upon his doom—they moved onward towards the bridge. At first, both were silent, for Lord Ulswater used the ordinary privilege of a lover, and was absent and absorbed, and his companion was never the first to break a taciturnity natural to his habits. At last Lord Ulswater said, " I rejoice that you are now in the sphere of action most likely to display your talents—you have not spoken yet, I think ; indeed, there has been no fitting opportunity, but you will soon, I trust."

" I know not," said Mordaunt, with a melancholy smile, " whether you judge rightly in thinking the sphere of political exertion one the most calculated for me : but I feel at my heart a foreboding that my planet is not fated to shine in *any* earthly sphere. Sorrow and misfortune have dimmed it in its birth, and now it is waning towards its decline."

" Its decline !" repeated his companion — " no, rather its meridian. You are in the vigor of your years, the noon of your prosperity, the height of your intellect and knowledge : you re-

quire only an effort to add to these blessings the most lasting of all—Fame!”

“Well,” said Mordaunt, and a momentary light flashed over his countenance, “the effort *will* be made. I do not pretend not to have felt ambition. No man should make it his boast, for it often gives to our frail and earth-bound virtue both its weapon and its wings; but when the soil is exhausted, its produce fails; and when we have forced our hearts to too great an abundance, whether it be of flowers that perish, or of grain that endures, the seeds of after hope bring forth but a languid and scanty harvest. My earliest idol was ambition; but then came others, love and knowledge, and afterwards the desire to bless. That desire you may term ambition; but we will suppose them separate passions; for by the latter I would signify the thirst for glory, either in evil or in good; and the former teaches us, though by little and little, to gain its object, no less in secrecy than for applause; and Wisdom, which opens to us a world, vast, but hidden from the crowd, establishes also over that world an arbiter of its own, so that its disciples grow proud, and communing with their own hearts, care for no louder judgment than the still voice within. It is thus that indifference, not to the welfare, but to the report, of others grows over us; and often, while we are the most ardent in their cause, we are the least anxious for their esteem.”

“And yet,” said Lord Ulswater, “I have thought the passion for esteem is the best guarantee for deserving it.”

“Nor without justice—other passions may supply its place, and produce the same effects; but the love of true glory is the most legitimate agent of extensive good, and you do right to worship and enshrine it. For me it is dead: it survived—ay, the truth shall out!—poverty, want, disappointment, baffled aspirations—all, all, but the deadness, the lethargy of regret: when no one was left upon this altered earth to animate its efforts, to smile upon its success, then the last spark quivered and died; and—and—but forgive me—on this subject I am not often wont to wander. I would say that ambition is for me no more—not so are its effects; but the hope of serving that race whom I have loved as brothers, but who have never known me—who, by the exterior (and here something bitter mingled with his voice), pass sentence on the heart—in whose eyes I am only the cold, the wayward, the haughty, the morose—the hope of serving them is to me, now, a far stronger passion than ambition was heretofore; and, whatever for that end the love

of fame would have dictated, the love of mankind will teach me still more ardently to perform."

They were now upon the bridge : Pausing, they leant over, and looked along the scene before them. Dark and hushed, the river flowed sullenly on, save where the reflected stars made a tremulous and broken beam on the black surface of the water, or the lights of the vast City which lay in shadow on its banks, scattered, at capricious intervals, a pale but unpiercing wanness, rather than lustre, along the tide ; or, save where the stillness was occasionally broken by the faint oar of the boatman, or the call of his rude voice, mellowed almost into music by distance and the element.

But behind them as they leant, the feet of passengers, on the great thoroughfare, passed not oft—but quick ; and that sound, the commonest of earth's, made rarer and rarer by the advancing night, contrasted, rather than destroyed, the quiet of the heaven and the solemnity of the silent stars.

"It is an old, but a just comparison," said Mordaunt's companion, "which has likened life to a river such as we now survey, gliding alternately in light or in darkness, in sunshine or in storm, to that great ocean in which all waters meet."

"If," said Algernon, with his usual thoughtful and pensive smile, "we may be allowed to vary that simile, I would, separating the universal and eternal course of Destiny from the fleeting generations of human life, compare the river before us to *that* course, and not *it*, but the city scattered on its banks, to the varieties and mutability of life. There (in the latter) crowded together in the great chaos of social union, we herd in the night of ages, flinging the little lustre of our dim lights over the sullen tide which rolls beside us—seeing the tremulous ray glitter on the surface, only to show us how profound is the gloom which it cannot break, and the depths which it is too faint to pierce. There Crime stalks, and Woe hushes her moan, and Poverty couches, and Wealth riots—and Death, in all and each, is at his silent work. But the stream of Fate unconscious of our changes and decay, glides on to its engulfing bourne ; and, while it mirrors the faintest smile or the lightest frown of Heaven, beholds, without a change upon its surface, the generations of earth perish, and be renewed, along its banks !"

There was a pause ; and by an involuntary and natural impulse, they turned from the waves beneath, to the heaven, which, in its breathing contrast, spread all eloquently, yet hushed, above. They looked upon the living and intense stars, and felt palpably at their hearts that spell—wild, but mute—

which nothing on or of earth can inspire ; that pining of the imprisoned soul, that longing after the immortality on high, which is perhaps no imaginary type of the immortality ourselves are heirs to.

“It is on such nights as these,” said Mordaunt, who first broke the silence, but with a low and soft voice, “that we are tempted to believe that in Plato’s divine fancy there is as divine a truth—that ‘our souls are *indeed* of the same essence as the stars,’ and that the mysterious yearning, the impatient wish which swells and soars within us to mingle with their glory, is but the instinctive and natural longing to re-unite the divided *portion* of an immortal spirit, stored in these cells of clay, with the original lustre of the heavenly and burning *whole!*”

“And *hence* then,” said his companion, pursuing the idea, “might we also believe in that wondrous and wild influence which the stars have been fabled to exercise over our fate ; hence might we shape a visionary clue to their imagined power over our birth, our destinies, and our death.”

“Perhaps,” rejoined Mordaunt, and Lord Ulswater has since said that his countenance, as he spoke, wore an awful and strange aspect, which lived long and long afterwards in the memory of his companion, “perhaps they *are* tokens and signs between the soul and the things of Heaven which do not wholly shame the doctrine of *him** from whose bright wells Plato drew (while he colored with his own gorgeous errors) the waters of his sublime lore.” As Mordaunt thus spoke, his voice changed : he paused abruptly, and, pointing to a distant quarter of the heavens, said :

“Look yonder ; do you see, in the far horizon, one large and solitary star, that, at this very moment, seems to wax pale and paler, as my hand points to it?”

“I see it—it shrinks and soars, while we gaze into the farther depths of heaven, as if it were seeking to rise to some higher orbit.”

“And do you see,” rejoined Mordaunt, “yon fleecy, but dusk cloud which sweeps slowly along the sky towards it ! What shape does that cloud wear to your eyes ?”

“It seems to me,” answered Lord Ulswater, “to assume the exact semblance of a funeral procession—the human shape appears to me as distinctly moulded in the thin vapors as in ourselves ; nor would it perhaps ask too great indulgence from our fancy to imagine among the darker forms in the centre of the cloud one bearing the very appearance of a *bier*—the plume,

* Socrates, who taught the belief in omens.

and the caparison, and the steeds, and the mourners ! Still, as I look, the likeness seems to me to increase !”

“Strange,” said Mordaunt musingly, “how strange is this thing which we call the mind ! Strange that the dreams and superstitions of childhood should cling to it with so inseparable and fond a strength ! I remember, years since, that I was affected even as I am now, to a degree which wiser men might shrink to confess, upon gazing on a cloud exactly similar to that which at this instant we behold. But see—that cloud has passed over the star ; and, now, as it rolls away, look, the star itself has vanished into the heavens.”

“But I fear,” answered Lord Ulswater, with a slight smile, “that we can deduce no omen, either from the cloud or the star : would, indeed, that Nature *were* more visibly knit with our individual existence ! Would that in the heavens there *were* a book, and in the waves a voice, and on the earth a token of the mysteries and enigmas of our fate !”

“And yet,” said Mordaunt slowly, as his mind gradually rose from its dreamlike oppression to its wonted and healthful tone, “yet, in truth, we want neither sign nor omen from other worlds to teach us all that it is the end of existence to fulfil in this ; and that seems to me a far less exalted wisdom which enables us to solve the *ridales*, than that which elevates us above the *chances*, of the future.”

“But *can* we be placed above those chances—can we become independent of that fate to which the ancients taught that even their deities were submitted ?”

“Let us not so wrong the ancients,” answered Mordaunt ; “their poets taught it, not their philosophers. Would not virtue be a dream, a mockery indeed, if it were, like the herb of the field, a thing of blight and change, of withering and renewal, a minion of the sunbeam and the cloud ? Shall calamity deject it ? Shall prosperity pollute ? *then* let it not be the object of our aspiration, but the by-word of our contempt. No : let us rather believe, with the great of old, that when it is based on wisdom, it is throned above change and chance ! throned above the things of a petty and sordid world ! throned above the Olympus of the heathen ! throned above the Stars which fade, and the Moon which waneth in her course ! Shall *we* believe less of the divinity of Virtue than an Athenian Sage ? Shall *we*, to whose eyes have been revealed, without a cloud, the blaze and the glory of Heaven, make Virtue a slave to those chains of earth which the Pagan subjected to her feet ? But if *her* we can trample on the ills of life, are we not, a hundred-

fold more, by her, the vanquishers of death? All creation lies before us; shall we cling to a grain of dust? All immortality is our heritage: shall we gasp and sicken for a moment's breath? What if we perish within an hour?—what if already the black cloud lowers over us—what if from our hopes and projects, and the fresh woven ties which we have knit around our life, we are abruptly torn, shall we be the creatures or the conquerors of fate? Shall we be the exiled from a home, or the escaped from a dungeon? Are we not as birds which look into the Great Air only through a barred cage? Shall we shrink and mourn when the cage is shattered and all space spreads around us—our element and our empire? No; it was not for this that in an elder day, Virtue and Valor received but a common name! The soul into which *that* spirit has breathed its glory is not only above Fate—it profits by her assaults! Attempt to weaken it and you nerve it with a new strength—to wound it, and you render it more invulnerable—to destroy it and you make it immortal. This indeed is the Sovereign whose realm every calamity increases—the Hero whose triumph every invasion augments!—standing on the last sands of life, and encircled by the advancing waters of Darkness and Eternity, it becomes in its expiring effort *doubly* the Victor and the King!"

Impressed, by the fervor of his companion, with a sympathy almost approaching to awe, Lord Ulswater pressed Mordaunt's hand, but offered no reply; and both, excited by the high theme of their conversation, and the thoughts which it produced, moved in silence from their post, and walked slowly homeward.

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

"Is it possible?

Is't so? I *can* no longer what I *would*;

No longer draw back at my liking! I

Must do the deed because I thought of it.

* * * * *

What is thy enterprise—thy aim, thy object?

Hast honestly confessed it to thyself?

* * * * *

O bloody, frightful deed!

* * * * *

Was that my purpose when we parted?

O God of Justice!"—COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein*.

WE need scarcely say that one of the persons overheard by Mr. Brown was Wolfe, and the peculiar tone of oratorical ex-

aggeration, characteristic of the man, has already informed the reader with which of the two he is identified.

On the evening after the conversation—the evening fixed for the desperate design on which he had set the last hazard of his life—the republican, parting from the companions with whom he had passed the day, returned home to compose the fever of his excited thoughts, and have a brief hour of solitary meditation, previous to the committal of that act which he knew must be his immediate passport to the gaol and the gibbet. On entering his squalid and miserable home, the woman of the house, a blear-eyed and filthy hag, who was holding to her withered breast an infant, which, even in sucking the stream that nourished its tainted existence, betrayed upon its haggard countenance the polluted nature of the mother's milk, from which it drew at once the support of life and the seeds of death—this woman, meeting him in the narrow passage, arrested his steps, to acquaint him that a gentleman had that day called upon him, and left a letter in his room, with strict charge of care and speed in its delivery. The visitor had not, however, communicated his name, though the curiosity excited by his mien and dress had prompted the crone particularly to demand it.

Little affected by this incident, which to the hostess seemed no unimportant event, Wolfe pushed the woman aside, with an impatient gesture, and, scarcely conscious of the abuse which followed this motion, hastened up the sordid stairs to his apartment. He sate himself down upon the foot of his bed, and, covering his face with his hands, surrendered his mind to the tide of contending emotions which rushed upon it.

What was he about to commit? Murder!—murder in its coldest and most premeditated guise! “No!” cried he aloud, starting from the bed, and dashing his clenched hand violently against his brow—“no—no—no! it is not murder, it is justice! Did not they, the hirelings of Oppression, ride over their crushed and shrieking countrymen, with drawn blades and murderous hands? Was I not among them at the hour? Did I not with these eyes see the sword uplifted, and the smiter strike? Were not my ears filled with the groans of their victims and the savage yells of the trampling dastards!—yells which rung in triumph over women and babes and weaponless men? And shall there be no vengeance? Yes, it shall fall, not upon the tools, but the master—not upon the slaves, but the despot! Yet,” said he, suddenly pausing, as his voice sank into a whisper, “assassination! in another hour, perhaps; a deed irrevocable—

a seal set upon two souls—the victim's and the judge's! Fetters and the felon's cord before me!—the shouting mob—the stigma!—no, no, it will *not* be the stigma; the gratitude, rather, of future times, when motives will be appreciated and party hushed! Have I not wrestled with wrong from my birth?—have I not rejected all offers from the men of an impious power?—have I made a moment's truce with the poor man's foes?—have I not thrice purchased free principles with an imprisoned frame!—have I not bartered my substance, and my hopes, and the pleasures of this world for my unmovable, unswerving faith in the Great Cause?—am I not about to crown all by one blow—one lightning blow, destroying at once myself and a criminal too mighty for the law?—and shall not history do justice to this devotedness—this absence from all self, hereafter—and admire, even if it condemn?"

Buoying himself with these reflections, and exciting the jaded current of his designs once more into an unnatural impetus, the unhappy man ceased, and paced with rapid steps the narrow limits of his chamber; his eye fell upon something bright, which glittered amidst the darkening shadows of the evening. At that sight his heart stood still for a moment; it was the weapon of intended death: he took it up, and as he surveyed the shining barrel, and felt the lock, a more settled sternness gathered at once over his fierce features and stubborn heart. The pistol had been bought and prepared for the purpose with the utmost nicety, not only for use but show; nor is it unfrequent to find, in such instances of premeditated ferocity in design, a fearful kind of coxcombry lavished upon the means.

Striking a light, Wolfe re-seated himself deliberately, and began, with the utmost care, to load the pistol; that scene would not have been an unworthy sketch for those painters who possess the power of giving to the low a force almost approaching to grandeur, and of augmenting the terrible by a mixture of the ludicrous; the sordid chamber, the damp walls, the high window, in which a handful of discolored paper supplied the absence of many a pane; the single table of rough oak, the rush-bottomed and broken chair, the hearth unconscious of a fire, over which a mean bust of Milton held its tutelary sway—while the dull rushlight streamed dimly upon the swarthy and strong countenance of Wolfe, intent upon his work—a countenance in which the deliberate calmness that had succeeded the late struggle of feeling had in it a mingled power of energy and haggardness of languor, the one of the

desperate design, the other of the exhausted body, while in the knit brow, and the iron lines, and even in the settled ferocity of expression, there was yet something above the stamp of the vulgar ruffian—something eloquent of the motive no less than the deed, and significant of that not ignoble perversity of mind which diminished the guilt, yet increased the dreadfulness of the meditated crime, by mocking it with the name of virtue.

As he had finished his task, and, hiding the pistol in his person, waited for the hour in which his accomplice was to summon him to the fatal deed he perceived, close by him on the table, the letter which the woman had spoken of, and which, till then, he had, in the excitement of his mind, utterly forgotten. He opened it mechanically—an inclosure fell to the ground. He picked it up—it was a bank-note of considerable amount. The lines in the letter were few, anonymous, and written in a hand evidently disguised. They were calculated peculiarly to touch the republican, and reconcile him to the gift. In them the writer professed to be actuated by no other feeling than admiration for the unbending integrity which had characterized Wolfe's life, and the desire that sincerity in any principles, however they might differ from his own, should not be rewarded only with indigence and ruin.

It is impossible to tell how far, in Wolfe's mind, his own desperate fortunes might, insensibly, have mingled with the motives which led him to his present design : certain is it that, wherever the future is hopeless, the mind is easily converted from the rugged to the criminal ; and equally certain it is that we are apt to justify to ourselves many offences in a cause where we have made great sacrifices : and, perhaps, if this unexpected assistance had come to Wolfe a short time before, it might, by softening his heart, and reconciling him in some measure to fortune, have rendered him less susceptible to the fierce voice of political hatred and the instigation of his associates. Nor can we, who are removed from the temptations of the poor—temptations to which ours are as breezes which woo, to storms which “tumble towers”—nor can we tell how far the acerbity of want, and the absence of wholesome sleep, and the contempt of the rich, and the rankling memory of better fortunes, or even the mere fierceness which absolute hunger produces in the humors and veins of all that hold nature's life—nor can we tell how far these madden the temper, which is but a minion of the body, and plead in irresistible excuse for the crimes which our wondering vir-

tue—haughty because unsolicited—stamps with its loftiest reprobation!

The cloud fell from Wolfe's brow, and his eye gazed, musingly and rapt, upon vacancy. Steps were heard ascending—the voice of a distant clock tolled with a distinctness which seemed like strokes palpable as well as audible to the senses; and as the door opened, and his accomplice entered, Wolfe muttered, "Too late—too late!"—and first crushing the note in his hands, then tore it into atoms, with a vehemence which astonished his companion, who, however, knew not its value.

"Come," said he, stamping his foot violently upon the floor, as if to conquer by passion all internal relenting—"come, my friend, not another moment is to be lost; let us hasten to our holy deed!"

"I trust," said Wolfe's companion, when they were in the open street, "that we shall not have our trouble in vain; it is a brave night for it! Davidson wanted us to throw grenades into the ministers' carriages, as the best plan; and, faith, we can try that if all else fails!"

Wolfe remained silent—indeed he scarcely heard his companion; for a sullen indifference to all things around him had wrapt his spirit—that singular feeling, or rather absence from feeling, common to all men, when bound on some exciting action, upon which their minds are already and wholly bent; which renders them utterly without thought, when the superficial would imagine they were the most full of it, and leads them to the threshold of that event which had before engrossed all their most waking and fervid contemplation with a blind and mechanical unconsciousness, resembling the influence of a dream

They arrived at the place they had selected for their station, sometimes walking to and fro, in order to escape observation, sometimes hiding behind the pillars of a neighboring house, they awaited the coming of their victims. The time passed on—the streets grew more and more empty; and, at last, only the visitation of the watchman—or the occasional steps of some homeward wanderer, disturbed the solitude of their station.

At last, just after midnight, two men were seen approaching towards them, linked arm in arm, and walking very slowly.

"Hist—hist," whispered Wolfe's comrade—"there they are at last—is your pistol cocked?"

"Ay," answered Wolfe, "and yours: man—collect yourself—your hand shakes."

"It is with the cold, then," said the ruffian, using uncon-

sciously, a celebrated reply—"Let us withdraw behind the pillar."

They did so—the figures approached them; the night, though star-lit, was not sufficiently clear to give the assassins more than the outline of their shapes, and the characters of their height and air.

"Which," said Wolfe, in a whisper—for as he had said, he had never seen either of his intended victims—"which is *my* prey?"

"Oh, the nearest to you," said the other, with trembling accents; "you know his d—d proud walk, and erect head—that is the way he answers the people's petitions, I'll be sworn. The taller and farther one, who stoops more in his gait, is mine."

The strangers were now at hand.

"You know you are to fire first, Wolfe," whispered the nearer ruffian, whose heart had long failed him, and who was already meditating escape.

"But you are sure—quite sure of the identity of our prey?" said Wolfe, grasping his pistol.

"Yes, yes," said the other; and, indeed, the air of the nearest person approaching them bore, in the distance, a strong resemblance to that of the minister it was supposed to designate. His companion, who appeared much younger, and of a mien equally patrician, but far less proud, seemed listening to the supposed minister with the most earnest attention. Apparently occupied with their conversation, when about twenty yards from the assassins, they stood still for a few moments.

"Stop, Wolfe, stop," said the republican's accomplice, whose Indian complexion, by fear, and the wan light of the lamps and skies, faded into a jaundiced and yellow hue, while the bony whiteness of his teeth made a grim contrast with the glare of his small, black, sparkling eyes. "Stop, Wolfe—hold your hand. I see, now, that I was mistaken; the farther one is a stranger to me, and the nearer one is much thinner than the minister: pocket your pistol—quick—quick—and let us withdraw."

Wolfe drop ed his hand, as if dissuaded from his design; but, as he looked upon the trembling frame and chattering teeth of his terrified accomplice, a sudden, and not unnatural, idea darted across his mind that he was wilfully deceived by the fears of his companion; and that the strangers, who had now resumed their way, were indeed what his accomplice had first reported them to be. Filled with this impression, and acting upon the momentary spur which it gave, the infatuated

and fated man pushed aside his comrade, with a muttered oath at his cowardice and treachery, and taking a sure and steady, though quick, aim at the person, who was now just within the certain destruction of his hand, he fired the pistol. The stranger reeled, and fell into the arms of his companion.

"Hurra!" cried the murderer, leaping from his hiding-place, and walking with rapid strides towards his victim—"hurra! for liberty and England!"

Scarce had he uttered those prostituted names, before the triumph of misguided zeal faded suddenly and forever from his brow and soul.

The wounded man leaned back in the supporting arms of his chilled and horror-stricken friend; who, kneeling on one knee to support him, fixed his eager eyes upon the pale and changing countenance of his burthen, unconscious of the presence of the assassin.

"Speak, Mordaunt, speak! how is it with you?" he said.

Recalled from his torpor by the voice, Mordaunt opened his eyes, and muttering "My child, my child," sunk back again; and Lord Ulswater (for it was he) felt, by his increased weight, that death was hastening rapidly on its victim.

"Oh!" said he, bitterly, and recalling their last conversation; "Oh! where—where—when this man—the wise, the kind, the innocent, almost the perfect, falls thus in the very prime of existence, by a sudden blow from an obscure hand—unblest in life, inglorious in death—oh! where—where is this boasted triumph of Virtue, or where is its reward?"

True to his idol at the last, as these words fell upon his dizzy and receding senses, Mordaunt raised himself by a sudden, though momentary, exertion; and fixing his eyes full upon Lord Ulswater, his moving lips (for his voice was already gone) seemed to shape out the answer, "*It is here!*"

With this last effort, and with an expression upon his aspect which, seemed at once to soften and to hallow the haughty and calm character which in life it was wont to bear, Algernon Mordaunt fell once more back into the arms of his companion, and immediately expired.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

“Come, Death, these are thy victims, and the axe
 Waits those who claimed the chariot—Thus we count
 Our treasures in the dark, and when the light
 Breaks on the cheated eye, we find the coin
 Was skulls.—

* * * * *

“Yet the while
 Fate links strange contrasts, and the scaffold’s gloom.
 Is neighbored by the altar.”—ANON.

WHEN Crauford’s guilt and imprisonment became known ; when Inquiry developed, day after day, some new maze in the mighty and intricate machinery of his sublime dishonesty ; when houses of the most reputed wealth and profuse splendor, whose affairs Crauford had transacted, were discovered to have been for years utterly undermined and beggared, and only supported by the extraordinary genius of the individual by whose extraordinary guilt, now no longer concealed, they were suddenly and irretrievably destroyed ; when it was ascertained that, for nearly the fifth part of a century, a system of villainy had been carried on throughout Europe, in a thousand different relations, without a single breath of suspicion, and yet which a single breath of suspicion could at once have arrested and exposed ; when it was proved that a man whose luxury had exceeded the pomp of princes, and whose wealth was supposed more inexhaustible than the enchanted purse of Fortunatus, had for eighteen years been a penniless pensioner upon the prosperity of others ; when the long scroll of this almost incredible fraud was slowly, piece by piece, unrolled before the terrified curiosity of the public, an invading army at the Temple gates could scarcely have excited such universal consternation and dismay.

The mob, always the first to execute justice, in their own inimitable way, took vengeance upon Crauford, by burning the house no longer his, and the houses of the partners, who were the worst and most innocent sufferers for his crime. No epithet of horror and hatred was too severe for the offender ; and serious apprehension for the safety of Newgate, his present habitation, was generally expressed. The more saintly members of that sect to which the hypocrite had ostensibly belonged held up their hands, and declared that the fall of the Pharisee was a judgment of Providence. Nor did they think it worth while to make, for a moment, the trifling inquiry, how

far the judgment of Providence was also implicated in the destruction of the numerous and innocent families he had ruined!

But, whether from that admiration for genius, common to the vulgar, which forgets all crime in the cleverness of committing it, or from that sagacious disposition peculiar to the English, which makes a hero of any person eminently wicked, no sooner did Crauford's trial come on than the tide of popular feeling experienced a sudden revulsion. It became, in an instant, the fashion to admire and to pity a gentleman so *talented* and so *unfortunate*. Likenesses of Mr. Crauford appeared in every print-shop in town—the papers discovered that he was the very fac-simile of the great King of Prussia. The laureate made an ode upon him, which was set to music; and the public learnt, with tears of compassionate regret at so romantic a circumstance, that pigeon-pies were sent daily to his prison made by the delicate hands of one of his former mistresses. Some sensation, also, was excited by the circumstance of his poor wife (who soon afterwards died of a broken heart) coming to him in prison, and being with difficulty torn away; but then, conjugal affection is so very commonplace, and—there was something so engrossingly pathetic in the anecdote of the pigeon-pies!

It must be confessed that Crauford displayed singular address and ability upon his trial; and fighting every inch of ground, even to the last, when so strong a phalanx of circumstances appeared against him, that no hope of a favorable verdict could for a moment have supported him—he concluded the trial with a speech delivered by himself—so impressive, so powerful, so dignified, yet so impassioned, that the whole audience, hot as they were, dissolved into tears.

Sentence was passed—Death! But such was the infatuation of the people, that every one expected that a pardon, for crime more complicated and extensive than half the Newgate Calendar could equal, would of course be obtained. Persons of the highest rank interested themselves in his behalf: and up to the night before his execution, expectations, almost amounting to certainty, were entertained by the criminal, his friends, and the public. On that night was conveyed to Crauford the positive and peremptory assurance that there was no hope. Let us now enter his cell, and be the sole witnesses of his solitude.

Crauford was, as we have seen, a man in some respects of great *moral* courage, of extraordinary daring in the formation of schemes, of unwavering resolution in supporting them, and of a temper which rather rejoiced in, than shunned, the brav-

ing of a distant danger for the sake of an adequate reward. But this courage was supported and fed solely by the self-persuasion of consummate genius, and his profound confidence both in his good fortune, and the inexhaustibility of his resources. *Physically* he was a coward! *immediate* peril to be confronted by the *person*, not the *mind*, had ever appalled him like a child. He had never dared to back a spirited horse. He had been known to remain for days in an obscure alehouse in the country, to which a shower had accidentally driven him, because it had been idly reported that a wild beast had escaped from a caravan, and been seen in the vicinity of the inn. No dog had ever been allowed in his household, lest it *might* go mad. In a word, Crauford was one to whom life and sensual enjoyments were everything—the supreme blessings—the only blessings.

As long as he had the hope, and it was a sanguine hope, of *saving* life, nothing had disturbed his mind from its serenity. His gaiety had never forsaken him; and his cheerfulness and fortitude had been the theme of every one admitted to his presence. But when this hope was abruptly and finally closed—when Death, immediate and unavoidable—Death—the extinction of existence—the *cessation of sense*, stood bare and hideous before him, his genius seemed at once to abandon him to his fate, and the inherent weakness of his nature to gush over every prop and barrier of his art.

“No hope!” muttered he, in a voice of the keenest anguish—“no hope—merciful God—none—none! What, I—*I*—who have shamed kings in luxury—I to die on the gibbet, among the reeking, gaping, swinish crowd with whom—Oh God, that I were one of *them* even! that I were the most loathsome beggar that ever crept forth to taint the air with sores!—that I were a toad immured in a stone, sweltering in the atmosphere of its own venom!—a snail crawling on these very walls, and tracking his painful path in slime!—anything—anything, but death! And *such* death—the gallows—the scaffold—the halter—the fingers of the hangman paddling round the neck where the softest caresses have clung *and sated*. To die—die—die! What, *I* whose pulse now beats so strongly—whose blood keeps so warm and vigorous a motion!—in the very prime of enjoyment and manhood—all life’s million paths of pleasure before me—to die—to swing to the winds—to hang—ay—ay—to hang!—to be cut down, distorted and hideous—to be thrust into the earth with worms—to rot, or—or—hell! is there a hell?—*better that even, than annihilation!*”

“Fool—fool!—damnable fool that I was (and in his sudden rage he clenched his own flesh till the nails met in it); had I but got to France one day sooner! Why don't you save me—save me—you whom I have banquetted, and feasted, and lent money to!—one word from you might have saved me—I will not die! I don't deserve it!—I am innocent!—I tell you Not guilty, my lord—not guilty! Have you no heart, no consciences?—murder—murder—murder!” and the wretched man sunk upon the ground, and tried with his hands to grasp the stone floor, as if to cling to it from some imaginary violence.

Turn we from him to the cell in which another criminal awaits also the awful coming of his latest morrow.

Pale, motionless, silent—with his face bending over his bosom, and hands clasped tightly upon his knees, Wolfe sat in his dungeon, and collected his spirit against the approaching consummation of his turbulent and stormy fate—his bitterest punishment had been already past; mysterious Chance, or rather the Power above chance, had denied to him the haughty triumph of self-applause. No sophistry, now, could compare his doom to that of Sidney, or his deed to the act of the avenging Brutus.

Murder—causeless—objectless—universally execrated—rested, and would rest (till oblivion wrapt it) upon his name. It had appeared, too, upon his trial, that he had, in the information he had received, been the mere tool of a spy, in the ministers' pay; and that, for weeks before his intended deed, his design had been known, and his conspiracy only not bared to the public eye, because political craft awaited a riper opportunity for the disclosure. He had not then merely been the blind dupe of his own passions, but, more humbling still, an instrument in the hands of the very men whom his hatred was sworn to destroy. Not a wreck—not a straw, of the vain glory, for which he had forfeited life, and risked his soul, could he hug to a sinking heart, and say “This is my support.”

The remorse of gratitude embittered his cup still farther. On Mordaunt's person had been discovered a memorandum of the money anonymously enclosed to Wolfe on the day of the murder; and it was couched in words of esteem which melted the fierce heart of the republican into the only tears he had shed since childhood. From that time, a sullen, silent spirit fell upon him. He spoke to none—heeded none: he made no defence in trial—no complaint of severity—no appeal from judgment. The iron had entered into his soul—but it supported, while it tortured. Even now, as we gaze upon his inflexible and dark countenance, no transitory emotion—no

natural spasm of sudden fear for the catastrophe of the morrow—no intense and working passions, struggling into calm—no sign of internal hurricanes, rising, as it were, from the hidden depths, agitate the surface, or betray the secrets of the unfathomable world within. The mute lip—the rigid brow—the down-cast eye—a heavy and dread stillness, brooding over every feature—these are all we behold !

Is it that thought sleeps, locked in the torpor of a senseless and rayless dream ; or that an evil incubus weighs upon it, crushing its risings, but deadening not its pangs ? Does Memory fly to the green fields and happy home of his childhood, or the lonely studies of his daring and restless youth, or his earliest homage to that Spirit of Freedom which shone bright, and still, and pure, upon the solitary chamber of him who sung of heaven ; * or (dwelling on its last and most fearful object) rolls it only through one tumultuous and convulsive channel—Despair ? Whatever be within the silent and deep heart—pride, or courage, or callousness, or that stubborn firmness which, once principle has grown habit, covers all as with a pall ; and the stung nerves and the hard endurance of the human flesh, sustain what the immortal mind perhaps quails beneath, in its dark retreat, but once dreamt that it would exult to bear.

The fatal hour had come ! and, through the long, dim passages of the prison, four criminals were led forth to execution. The first was Crauford's associate, Bradley. This man prayed fervently ; and, though he was trembling and pale, his mien and aspect bore something of the calmness of resignation.

It has been said that there is no friendship among the wicked. I have examined this maxim closely, and believe it, like most popular proverbs, false. In wickedness there is peril—and mutual terror is the strongest of ties. At all events, the wicked can, not unoften, excite an attachment in their followers denied to virtue. Habitually courteous, caressing, and familiar, Crauford had, despite his own suspicions of Bradley, really touched the heart of one, whom weakness and want, not nature, had gained to vice ; and it was not till Crauford's guilt was by other witnesses undeniably proved that Bradley could be tempted to make any confession tending to implicate him.

He now crept close to his former partner, and frequently clasped his hand, and besought him to take courage, and to pray. But Crauford's eye was glassy and dim, and his veins seemed filled with water—so numbed and cold and white was his cheek. Fear, in him, had passed its paroxysms, and was

* Milton,

now insensibility; it was only when they urged him to pray that a sort of benighted consciousness strayed over his countenance and his ashen lips muttered something which none heard.

After him came the Creole, who had been Wolfe's accomplice. On the night of the murder he had taken advantage of the general loneliness, and the confusion of the few present, and fled. He was found, however, fast asleep, in a garret, before morning, by the officers of justice; and, on trial, he had confessed all. This man was in a rapid consumption. The delay of another week would have given to nature the termination of his life. He, like Bradley, seemed earnest and absorbed in prayer.

Last came Wolfe, his tall, gaunt frame worn, by confinement and internal conflict, into a gigantic skeleton; his countenance, too, had undergone a withering change; his grizzled hair seemed now to have acquired only the one hoary hue of age; and, though you might trace in his air and eye the sternness, you could no longer detect the fire, of former days. Calm, as on the preceding night, no emotion broke over his dark, but not defying features. He rejected, though not irreverently, all aid from the benevolent priest, and seemed to seek, in the pride of his own heart, a substitute for the resignation of Religion.

"Miserable man!" at last said the good clergyman, in whom zeal overcame kindness, "have you at this awful hour no prayer upon your lips?"

A living light shot then for a moment over Wolfe's eye and brow. "I have!" said he; and raising his clasped hands to heaven, he continued in the memorable words of Sidney—"Lord, defend thy own cause, and defend those who defend it! Stir up such as are faint; direct those that are willing; confirm those that waver; give wisdom and integrity to all; order all things so as may most redound to thine own glory!"

"I had once hoped," added Wolfe, sinking in his tone—"I had once hoped that I might with justice have continued that holy prayer; * but—" he ceased abruptly; the glow passed from his countenance, his lip quivered, and the tears stood in his eyes; and that was the only weakness he betrayed, and those were his last words.

Crauford continued, even while the rope was put round him,

* "Grant that I may die glorifying thee for all thy mercies, and that at the last thou hast permitted me to be singled out as a witness of thy truth, and even by the confession of my opposers for that OLD CAUSE in which I was from my youth engaged, and for which thou hast often and wonderfully declared thyself."—ALGERNON SIDNEY,

mute and unconscious of everything. It was said that his pulse (that of an uncommonly strong and healthy man on the previous day), had become so low and faint that, an hour before his execution, it could not be felt. He and the Creole were the only ones who struggled; Wolfe died, seemingly, without a pang.

From these feverish and fearful scenes, the mind turns, with a feeling of grateful relief, to contemplate the happiness of one whose candid and high nature, and warm affections, Fortune, long befriending, had at length blest.

It was on an evening in the earliest flush of returning spring, that Lord Ulswater, with his beautiful bride, entered his magnificent domains. It had been his wish and order, in consequence of his brother's untimely death, that no public rejoicings should be made on his marriage; but the good old steward could not persuade himself entirely to enforce obedience to the first order of his new master; and as the carriage drove into the park-gates, crowds on crowds were assembled, to welcome and to gaze.

No sooner had they caught a glimpse of their young lord, whose affability and handsome person had endeared him to all who remembered his early days, and of the half-blushing, half-smiling, countenance beside him, than their enthusiasm could be no longer restrained. The whole scene rang with shouts of joy—and through an air filled with blessings, and amidst an avenue of happy faces, the bridal pair arrived at their home.

"Ah! Clarence (for so I *must* still call you)," said Flora, her beautiful eyes streaming with delicious tears, "let us never leave these kind hearts; let us live amongst them, and strive to repay and deserve the blessings which they shower upon us! Is not Benevolence, dearest, better than Ambition?"

"Can it not rather, my own Flora, be Ambition itself?"

CONCLUSION.

"So rest you, merry gentlemen."—*Monsieur Thomas.*

THE Author has now only to take his leave of the less important characters whom he has assembled together; and then, all due courtesy to his numerous guests being performed, to retire himself to repose.

First, then, for Mr. Morris Brown; In the second year of

Lord Ulswater's marriage, the worthy broker paid Mrs. Minden's nephew a visit, in which he persuaded that gentleman to accept, "as presents," two admirable fire screens, the property of the late Lady Waddilove: the same may be now seen in the housekeeper's room, at Borodaile Park, by any person willing to satisfy his curiosity and—the housekeeper. Of all farther particulars respecting Mr. Morris Brown history is silent.

In the obituary for 1792, we find the following paragraph: Died at his house in Putney, aged seventy-three, Sir Nicholas Copperas, Knt., a gentleman well known on the Exchange for his facetious humor. Several of his *bons-mots* are still recorded in the Common Council. When residing, many years ago, in the suburbs of London, this worthy gentleman was accustomed to go from his own house to the Exchange in a coach called 'the Swallow,' that passed his door just at breakfast-time; upon which occasion he was wont wittily to observe to his accomplished spouse—"And now, Mrs. Copperas, having swallowed in the roll, I will e'en roll in the Swallow!" His whole property is left to Adolphus Copperas, Esq., Banker."

And in the next year we discover:

"Died, on Wednesday last, at her jointure house, Putney, in her sixty-eighth year, the amiable and elegant Lady Copperas, relict of the late Sir Nicholas, Knt."

Mr. Trollop, having exhausted the whole world of metaphysics, died, like Descartes, "in believing he had left nothing unexplained."

Mr. Callythorpe entered the House of Commons at the time of the French Revolution. He distinguished himself by many votes in favor of Mr. Pitt, and one speech which ran thus: "Sir, I believe my right honorable friend who spoke last (Mr. Pitt), designs to ruin the 'country; but I will support him through all; honorable gentlemen may laugh—but I'm a true Briton, and will not serve my friend the less because I scorn to flatter him."

Sir Christopher Findlater lost his life by an accident arising from the upset of his carriage; his good heart not having suffered him to part with a drunken coachman.

Mr. Glumford turned miser in his old age; and died of want, and an extravagant son.

Our honest Cole and his wife were always among the most welcome visitors at Lord Ulswater's. In his extreme old age the ex-King took a journey to Scotland, to see the Author of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel." Nor should we do justice to the chief's critical discernment if we neglected to record that,

from the earliest dawn of that great luminary of our age, he predicted its meridian splendor. The eldest son of the gypsy monarch inherited his father's spirit, and is yet alive, a general, and G.C.B.

Mr. Harrison married Miss Elizabeth, and succeeded to the Golden Fleece.

The Duke of Haverfield and Lord Ulswater continued their friendship through life; and the letters of our dear Flora to her correspondent, Eleanor, did not cease even with that critical and perilous period to all maiden correspondence—marriage. If we may judge from the subsequent letters which we have been permitted to see, Eleanor never repented her brilliant nuptials, nor discovered (as the Duchess of — once said from experience), “that dukes are as intolerable for husbands as they are delightful for matches.”

— And Isabel Mordaunt?—Ah! not in these pages shall *her* history be told even in epitome. Perhaps for some future narrative her romantic and eventful fate may be reserved. Suffice it for the present, that the childhood of the young heiress passed in the house of Lord Ulswater, whose proudest boast, through a triumphant and prosperous life, was to have been her father's friend; and that as she grew up, she inherited her mother's beauty and gentle heart, and seemed to bear in her deep eyes and melancholy smile some remembrance of the scenes in which her infancy had been passed.

But for him, the husband and the father, whose trials through this wrong world I have portrayed—for him let there be neither murmurs at the blindness of Fate; nor sorrow at the darkness of his doom. Better that the lofty and bright spirit should pass away before the petty business of life had bowed it, or the sordid mists of this low earth breathed a shadow on its lustre! Who would have asked *that* spirit to have struggled on for years in the intrigues—the hopes—the objects of meaner souls? Who would have desired that the heavenward and impatient heart should have grown inured to the chains and toil of this enslaved state, or hardened into the callousness of age? Nor would we claim the vulgar pittance of compassion for a lot which is exalted *above* regret? Pity is for our weaknesses—to our weaknesses only be it given. It is the aliment of love—it is the wages of ambition—it is the rightful heritage of error! But why should pity be entertained for the soul which never fell?—for the courage which never quailed?—for the majesty never humbled?—for the wisdom which, from the rough things of the common world, raised an empire above earth and destiny?—

for the stormy life?—it was a triumph!—for the early death?—it was immortality!

I have stood beside Mordaunt's tomb : his will had directed that he should sleep not in the vaults of his haughty line—and his last dwelling is surrounded by a green and pleasant spot. The trees shadow it like a temple ; and a silver, though fitful brook wails with a constant, yet not ungrateful dirge, at the foot of the hill on which the tomb is placed. I have stood there in those ardent years when our wishes know no boundary, and our ambition no curb ; yet, even then, I would have changed my wildest vision of romance for that quiet grave, and the dreams of the distant spirit whose relics reposed beneath it.

THE END.



UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 001 002 428 9

