THE

MONEYED MAN,

OR,

THE LESSON OF A LIFE.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

It may be right to premise that the following little work does not purport to be a Novel running on in a continuous stream of narrative, and developing a great variety of characters through the medium of a regular plot, but an Autobiographical Memoir of an imaginary personage, deriving whatever interest it may possess from the fidelity with which it seeks to record the successive changes of a single mind, from youth to old age. Spoilt by the joint indulgence of a weak mother and an ease-loving father, and educated in a blind idolatry of wealth, not as a means only, but as an end, the ductile mind of Mark Hawkwood was warped from its natural bias by the circumstances in which he was originally placed, while it was deeply imbued with the narrow prejudices and blind hatreds which, at the period of his youth, had tainted large classes of his contemporaries, literally frightened out of their wits by the horrors of the French Revolution. From this thraldom, passing through many ordeals which quickened the correction of his errors, and the maturing of his judgment, he gradually emancipated himself; and if the reader, unrevolted by the intense selfishness and conceit so unconsciously exhi-

bited in his earlier pages, will patiently peruse them to the end, it is to be hoped that he will not only be reconciled to the Auto-biographer, but that he will more fully understand the whole scope of the work, and the motives that have led to its publication.

THE MONEYED MAN.

CHAPTER I.

1790.

"Crown me, shadow me with laurels" more redundant than those which concealed the baldness of the victorious Cæsar—salute me with pæans louder than the choral shout that glorified Apollo after his destruction of the Python—build me a triumphal arch loftier than that set up by Saul upon Mount Carmel, when he had exterminated the Amalekites: for have I not achieved the great conquest of primogeniture—have I not overcome the Python and the Typhon of the heir—his hated nonage? Am I not a partner in the first banking-house of the first city in the world—Hawkwood, Poole, and Hawkwood? What magic is there in the sound of that last euphonious *addendum!* Am I not the heir-at-law, I say, and the partner of the wealthiest man in London, the Crœsus of the city, the fortune-favored, gold-glutted, money-making, and many-worshipped banker, Alderman Hawkwood? Yes, yes, good father mine! your modest disclaimers, your affected complaints of the perils of the banking trade, your disinterested advice (oh, *how* disinterested!) that I should not launch my bark of Fortune upon so treacherous a sea, but betake myself to some profession, as a resource from that idleness which is so hazard-

ous to all, and to none more than to the young and the opulent; these exhortations might deceive others, but me they cannot cajole—me they cannot hoodwink. I am not easily imposed upon. While others are beguiled by words, I scrutinize motives, penetrate minds; and I have fathomed my worthy father's. If I be not a partner, he can keep all his enormous fortune in his own hands, until, at the inevitable touch of the grisly conjurer—hey! presto! pass!—it shall be transferred into mine: and so shall he hold me in financial subjection so long as it pleaseth him to prosecute his earthly pilgrimage to the shrine of Mammon. But this suiteth not me. I would have present power and independence, to console me for the delay of prospective wealth. The drudgery of the banking-house I willingly resign to the respected author of my being, for, methinks, I am not fashioned for such plebeian Helotism; but the profits, the weight, the homage which such a partnership will secure to me—these I am not such a dotard as to forego.

Thus did I argue to myself in answer to the insidious dissuasives of my father, as often as they were repeated (which was by no means seldom), for I have that proper reliance upon my own good judgment and shrewdness which, in weaker minds, might be termed obstinacy and conceit, while in my own case it is only a just confidence. I carried my point, as indeed I have ever done in all contests with my parents—and, behold! I have earned my reward.

On the day of my majority, the partnership articles were signed, sealed, and delivered, and a new brass plate was affixed to the door of the banking-house in Threadneedle Street, bearing upon it, in legible characters, the proud and auspicious inscription of the new firm—Hawkwood, Poole, and Hawkwood.

Owing partly to my mother's temporary absence at Bath on account of ill health, and my good father's objection to all displays that are not celebrated in honor of himself, the festivities usual upon such joyous occasions were enacted "with maimed rites." A gratuity of ten guineas was presented to each of the clerks; a grand dinner, to which the principal friends of the house were invited, was given in

Threadneedle Street; and roast beef and plum-pudding, followed by games and bon-fires at night, rejoiced the rustics in the neighborhood of Beddington Park, my father's residence in Surrey. In these common-place rejoicings I bore my part with a becoming humility, for I knew that the interested celebrators sought to gratify themselves rather than the ostensible hero of the day; while I perused with a laudable patience and perseverance some scores of congratulatory letters, penned by a set of hollow knaves and designing women, most devotedly attached to the young heir, because they think they can make a gull of him, and turn him to account. Let them try! let them try! If I am elated at having attained an eminence which might well make a weak head giddy, it is not that I inhale with any gratification the fumes of this incense, it is not that I am tickled with the sounds of flattery, emptier than the tinkling cymbal; but I do feel a little vain of my sagacity when I reflect that I can detect the selfish motives of those who are waving the censer beneath my nostrils, and pouring this calculating adulation into mine ears. Even from my childhood upwards have both my parents sedulously instilled into my expanding mind a distrust of my fellow-creatures. For this caution I thank them, since it has taught me to look with a due suspicion upon their own motives; but I needed it not, for, if I know any thing of myself, I am naturally keen and penetrative. With such instructors, corroborating my own intuitive propensities, I flatter myself that I am not *very* likely to be duped by the Judas kisses of the prosperity-worshippers.

Well! the short apotheosis of my majority is over—the golden halo that bickers around my head has failed to dazzle me, and I may be allowed to repeat that the parasites, the toad-eaters, the designing satellites, by whom I have been surrounded, have failed in a single instance to deceive or to entrap me. Were I disposed to be conceited, I might make a boast of this. And now what is my first measure? It has been predicted, I understand, by some of my good-natured friends (precious friends, truly!) that I should signalize the attainment of my majority by some act of vanity, ostentation, or extravagance; that I should show I had

come to years of discretion by some flagrant indiscretion. Thanks, gentlemen, for your good opinion, and be assured that I reciprocate it most cordially. How stands the fact? My anticipated outbreak of folly resolves itself into a determination to imitate some of the most eminent and learned men of modern times—Thuanus, Buchanan, Boetius, Bayle, and others, who have been their own historians—to keep, in short, an occasional record—not a diary or regular journal—*that* would be too laborious, even had I materials for its pages—but such a register of occurrences, thoughts, and impressions, as may not only tend to the refreshment of my memory, and the improvement of my mind in after years, but may supply authentic *data*, should I eventually determine on publishing a regular autobiography, or leave the task of writing my life to some competent successor. This is my first youthful indiscretion ! !

That my future career should render either of these projects a desideratum on the part of the public, may, perhaps, be thought questionable, a doubt which I myself should share, if I were simply to be governed by my own estimate of my personal claims; for, whatever may be my defects, I cannot accuse myself of egotism or vain-gloriousness. No; I am in this instance influenced by the opinion of others, and, considering the general envy and illiberality of the world, one may safely believe it when it does unwilling justice to merit by a favorable prognostication. Over and over again have I been assured by parties who had no interest in the augury, and were well able to judge, that, with the unbounded wealth which I must one day inherit, with the conspicuous station I am destined to occupy, with the great natural talents, and more especially the ready eloquence which I possess—an eloquence which, as Counsellor Bearcroft himself declared at the last meeting of the Ciceronians, must have ensured my success had I been bred to the bar, and must command distinction, should I seek opportunities for its display in the senate—with these requisites, with this rare union of financial and intellectual power, it has been maintained that I must inevitably become a conspicuous character in the present æra, and perhaps furnish materials for future history. In all humility, I

must confess that I myself see no absolute certainty of this pre-eminence, nor, indeed, am I very solicitous to attain it. If it prove a false prophecy of the aforesaid seers, it is their mistake, not mine; if true, I am abundantly justified, without any imputation of presumption, in securing myself against misrepresentation by becoming the impartial recorder of my own adventures, acts, and opinions.

Life does not commence with mere vitality, but with physical and mental maturity—with the accomplishment of independence, and the means of enjoying it. I have had an animal existence for twenty-one years, but I consider myself to be beginning the world in this present year of grace, 1790. Nevertheless, I must say something, however slight, of the circumstances of my birth, as well as of my long and tedious minority. Oh! that I could have passed as rapidly as I shall dismiss it.

Thank Heaven! I am not superstitious. In auguries and omens, in dreams, visions, and portents, I have no faith, not I; nor am I weak enough to imagine, with Owen Glendower, that the unusual manifestations which may accompany a man's birth are to be interpreted as celestial prefigurations of his future destiny. To render such signs indisputable, we must await the "dignus vindice nodus" of Horace. Yet the circumstances that attended my nativity, and others of a similar tendency which have marked different stages of my youth, *are* extraordinary, to say the least of them. Owing to a civic tumult, occasioned by the decision of the house of commons, which confirmed the election of Mr. Luttrell, and rejected the notorious demagogue, Wilkes, I was ushered into this brawling world a month before my due time. My father, a stanch Tory, having incurred the displeasure of the mob by his successful opposition to the popular Alderman Sawbridge, the "Liberty boys," as they termed themselves, took every opportunity of insulting him, and nightly covered the whole tangible front of the banking-house with huge chalk figures of 45, the number of the libellous North Briton for which their idol was so justly expelled the House.

This obnoxious inscription being replaced as often as it was expunged, my father at length ordered that it should

be suffered to remain; and thus had it continued for several days, until a voluntary champion presented himself in the person of an enthusiast, called Crazy Cruden, who, in his zeal for decorum, and his profound hatred of factious democracy, perambulated the streets with a large wet sponge, obliterating all scrawlings that were offensive to good manners, and showing no mercy to the chalkings of the offensive No. 45.

With gross abuse and angry menaces some of the passing rabblement ordered him to desist; several of my father's clerks and servants sallied forth to support the stout expunger, who was too solicitious for the honor of martyrdom to be easily daunted; others of the mob gathered to their comrades, a clamerous scuffle ensued, missiles flew about, the windows of the banking-house were broken, my mother was frightened by the uproar, and I was somewhat prematurely hastened into this "miserable vale of tears," as Crazy Cruden would have called it,* amid the crash of broken glass, and the clamor of a brutal populace. Fortunately I was no sufferer by this hasty summons into existence, for I proved to be a large and healthy infant, and grew as regularly in strength as in years. My mother, indeed, attributed the mental precocity, for which I was always remarkable, to the circumstances of my birth; but I should rather have inferred a contrary deduction as the most likely result from such premises.

A later period witnessed another imminent peril of my minority. I had been to see the Leverian Museum in Blackfriars Road, and was crossing the bridge on my return, when the progress of the numerous waggons, carriages, and passengers, was suddenly arrested by the closing of the gates at either end, and, ere I could ask a question

* It will hardly be suspected that the party thus disrespectfully designated as "Crazy Cruden" was the compiler of one of the most laborious, accurate, and useful works in the English language, the "Concordance of the Bible." After having been three times in confinement for insanity, and treated, if we may credit his own account, with an unnecessary severity, he carried on business as a bookseller under the Royal Exchange; but, becoming embarrassed in his affairs, he sank into despondency, which gradually deepened into a strange hallucination. Imagining himself to be divinely commissioned, and to be clearly prefigured in the books of prophecy, he assumed the title of Alexander the Corrector, and, among other eccentric occupations, all indicative of a pure and benevolent mind, he betook himself to the street reformation mentioned in the text. He died in 1770.—*Ed.*

as to the cause of this blockade, I was surrounded and hustled by a *melée* of furious and vociferous combatants, armed with clubs, staves, cutlasses, and other weapons. After a short but fierce conflict, one of the parties gave way, and I was running off in an opposite direction, when a horseman, hurrying to escape from the conflict, knocked me down and rode over me.

Stunned for the moment, I might perhaps have been trampled to death, but for the interference of a tall, thin, fashionably attired man, who, with great presence of mind, darted into the road, and dragged me to one of the recesses of the Bridge, where, having ascertained that none of my bones were broken, although I was severely bruised, he recommended me to remain till the hubbub was over, and hurried away to effect his own escape before I had expressed half the gratitude I felt for the assistance he had so opportunely rendered me. As soon as the gates were again opened, I made the best of my way home, when I discovered that I had been robbed, doubtless in the first hustling, of my watch and my purse.

The excise officers, as I afterwards learned, having received intelligence that a numerous gang of smugglers, with a train of carts and waggons from the coast, might be expected to cross the bridge at a certain hour, mustered a strong force for the purpose of intercepting them, and had no sooner caught them in the trap, than they closed the gates to prevent escape, and proceeded to seize their spoil. Well armed and accustomed to desperate encounters, the smugglers defended their contraband wares, but were quickly compelled to fly, for a small detachment of soldiers had been provided to support the excisemen, so that the scuffle ended more quickly, and with less mischief, than might have been anticipated. It was one of the smuggling rascals that rode over me, and I have had an instinctive horror of the whole tribe ever since.

Of these sinister omens and premonitions, as a credulous man might think them, the most awful is now developing itself, for lo! my non-age expires amid all the horrors of the French Revolution—horrors which are the natural, I might almost say the *merited*, result of a mis-placed lenity

and forbearance. Had the first demagogues of the pro cial and metropolitan parliaments been gagged and sen prison to keep company with all the seditious scribblet the press, a corrective for which the constitution had n express provision by the salutary power of the *lettre cachet*, had the laws been rigorously enforced, had the s fold and the gibbet been kept in constant activity bot the capital and the provinces, had the tumultuous ass blages of the Parisian and other mobs been unsparingly to pieces by the sabres of loyal cavalry, the bayonets of faithful Swiss, and repeated discharges of grape-shot f a well-served artillery, we should never have witnessed sanguinary enormities which have converted France in vast slaughter-house, and make us shudder every time we take up a newspaper. The miseries of that cou might easily have been foreseen by any enlightened obs er of her history for the last ten or twenty years; but some strange infatuation, kings and ministers seem nev take warning till it is too late.

That the dangers to which my youth was thus suc sively exposed, dangers so different in the mode of t occurrence, and yet so similar in their source, were spe manifestations of any divine purpose connected with future fate, I do not venture to assert; but most willi and thankfully do I accept them as warnings against spurious patriotism of demagogues, against popular tu lence, factious, democratical insolence, and all that poli licentiousness which arrays the lower orders against t superiors, if they be not rigorously kept within their pr limits, and bound down, hand and foot, by the stern l tures of law. My education has taught me to abhor in ordination, disaffection, revolutionary clamor, upstart tensions on the part of the rabble, and all relaxation of restraints which our glorious constitution (the envy and miration of surrounding nations) has provided for the finement of the ignorant classes to their proper sphe lessons which have been indelibly impressed upon my n by the perils I have just been describing, all of which c inated with the "profanum vulgus," or their still more testable leaders.

CHAPTER II.

1790.—CONTINUED.

WHAT trifles, what frivolous inanities, have some *petit-maître* biographers thought it worth their while to commit to paper! How has it availed the world to know that Cæsar was bald, that Alexander was wry-necked, that Cromwell had a wart upon his cheek? The historian of Cujas, the celebrated lawyer, enlightens us by the information that he was remarkable for two things—first, that he studied, lying on a carpet; secondly, that his perspiration diffused an agreeable odor; a peculiarity which he shared with the "Emathian madman."—Baillet has recorded the all-important fact that Descartes was very particular about his wigs, of which he always kept four, manufactured at Paris—that he wore green taffety in France, and broadcloth in Holland—and, though last, not least, that he was very fond of omelets! De Wit's biographer is, perhaps, excusable for the little personality by which we are apprized that he was careful of his health and negligent of his life; though the assertion may possibly have been made for the sake of the antithesis, a point being of more importance than a fact to many writers. It is positively maintained by Ménage's historian—and we have no reason to doubt the averment—that he wore a great many stockings; and we have recently acquired the momentous knowledge that Dr. Johnson was accustomed to cut his nails to the quick!

Autobiographers, as might have been expected, have been still more prone to this besetting sin. One, after thanking God that he was born a Catholic and a Frenchman, a man, and not a woman, proceeds to give his readers a minute description of his person, and to describe the feats of agility that he performed at school. Montesquieu rivals

his countrymen in these personal details; and Rousseau, rather than not talk of himself, favors us with a full, true, and particular account of all his vices, a subject which, in his case, was not easily exhausted. Lord Herbert of Cherbury was vain enough to believe that he received a special revelation from Heaven, commanding him to publish a book, stuffed full of fantastic egotism and false opinions. Were I tainted with any of this overweening self-conceit, how easily might it be indulged, merely by recording the cackling boasts of my parents; for my father, himself a short man, and, therefore, the more amazed at a moderate degree of procerity in his offspring, seemed never tired of announcing to his friends that I was nearly six feet high; while my good mother was not less dogmatical than incessant in her assertions that, as I was in my prospects one of the first young men in the city, so was I in appearance one of the handsomest and most fashionable. In these moods, indeed, she would not hesitate to aver that I was quite as elegant and as well-dressed as the Prince of Wales, that I carried my *chapeau bras* as gracefully, and that I decidedly possessed a finer-looking head of hair, especially when it had been curled and powdered by Monsieur Maubert, who was occasionally summoned from Bury Street for that especial purpose. How little do parents suspect that upon these occasions all their bragadocios are but self-love at second-hand! Vanity assumes so many disguises that it sometimes requires no small share of penetration to detect it. Fathers and mothers, one would think, might easily see, that to praise their own children is somewhat akin to the disinterested eulogy of authors upon their own works.

To do my father justice, he mostly confined his vaunts to my personal altitude, attaching but little importance to the accademical distinctions which I achieved at the Charter House. For this omission, however, my mother made ample amends, publishing to every visitant, and proclaiming to every correspondent, the prizes I gained for Latin and Greek exercises—the noise I had made by a ridiculous satire, written when I was only thirteen years of age, and by various epigrams and short poems which I composed some few years afterwards. Some of these juvenile productions

appeared in the St. James's Chronicle, others in the Morning Herald, and the Whitehall Evening Post; but, as several years have elapsed since their publication, and many inaccurate copies are circulating among my mother's friends, I think it right to insert them here in their correct form, as originally written.*

Beyond the distinctions and prizes to which I have already alluded as an inexhaustible subject of boasting with my mother, (for I myself should hardly have thought them worth recording), I need not make much reference to my school days. The low, gloomy buildings of the Charter House; its dull, old-fashioned, silent, square; the discolored, sickly-looking trees; the dingy sparrows hoping mournfully among the smoke-dried leaves, however well they might have assorted with the Carthusian Friars of the olden times, were but melancholy objects for a schoolboy, confined to a strict discipline amid their murkey precincts. Nor was it particularly exhilarating to reflect that the playground had originally been a cemetry, wherein fifty thousand persons had been interred at the time of the great plague, and over whose bones we were trundling our hoops, or playing at leapfrog. One sometimes hears a grave old Polonius, after shaking his empty head, declare that his school days were the happiest of his life. What cant and humbug! These dotards, these *laudatores temporis acti*, only praise the past that they may have an excuse for ungratefully decrying the present. If I thought my future course were not to be happier than my school experiences, I should not desiderate a very lengthened lease of existence.

And yet few victims to the hateful privations, the sickening annoyances, the hardships, the trials, the tyranny and sufferings, and toils and drudgeries, that form the usual doom of a schoolboy, possessed more redeeming advantages than myself. The head-master, an old friend of our family, being often involved in pecuniary difficulties, generally betook himself to my father for some temporary accommodation, never forgetting to grant me a few indulgen-

* Although these Juvenilia indicate a certain degree of precocity, and might have possessed some temporary interest, they present so little attraction for the reader of the present day, that I have not hesitated to suppress them. *Ed.*

ces, so as to bespeak my favourable report, and to send me home for a few hours beforehand, as a pretended reward for my proficiency in my studies, or my good conduct. When the cunning pedagogue found my father intractable and unmollified by all his coaxing eulogies upon my quick mental advancement, he would allude to the rapidity of my growth, and express, not without a due look of amazement and awe, a conscientious conviction that I should be six feet high; a *coup de maître* that generally carried his point. Should he still fail, he would seek my mother, and, after enlarging upon my natural elegance and innate gentility of deportment, would contrast these qualities with the incurable vulgarity and born boorishness of my cousin, Matthew Plummer, another of his scholars, of whom he spoke with a contemptuous pity, as dull in capacity, and totally unpolishable in manners. This was touching the right chord. My father's sister, having demeaned herself by marrying a tobacconist in the Borough, was not visited by her family; and my mother, who had really some excuse for the feeling, since she had noble blood in her veins, had imbibed such an absolute hatred of the Plummers, on account of their comparatively humble station, that she could hardly bear the mention of their names. Guess her indignation, then—her incredulity at first, and subsequently her rankling wrath, when she learnt that these despised tobacconists had presumed to send *their* son to associate with *her* son at the Charter House!

Her first impulse was to remove me from the school; but, as they might wear the appearance of yielding the field of battle, and as she reflected, moreover, that my unwelcome relative might follow me to another seminary, she turned her thoughts towards the possibility of procuring my cousin's expulsion, and actually sounded the master upon the subject. The pedagogue, however, had no wish to lose a scholar whose half yearly bills were paid with the utmost punctuality; but, by hinting that her wishes might be gratified, whenever a fair opportunity occurred, and by playing upon her double foible of partiality for her son, and dislike, not to say hatred, of her nephew, he invariably succeeded in obtaining, through her influence with my father,

cash for his note of hand, at a long date, for three or four hundred pounds. Little did my good mother suspect, as she suffered these circumstances to transpire in my hearing, that, young as I then was, I had penetration enough to detect the hidden motives of all parties, and to laugh in my sleeve at the insight thus obtained into the craftiness and the foibles of poor human nature.

Foremost among the reconciling circumstances of my school-days, much as I detested that period in general, must be reckoned the command of money which I constantly enjoyed, through the kindness of my mother. It was her opinion, and a sound one, too, that wealth and noble birth should be made to challenge respect, even from our earliest days, as the most likely mode of counteracting that spirit of insolence, insubordination, and equality, which is now producing such dire effects in France, and which traitors and brawling demagogues are laboring to introduce into this free and happy country. Often have I heard her observe that the velvet caps and gold tufts of our college aristocracy exercise an extensive influence in securing a due reverence for their order, and thus contribute to the stability of our institutions, the peace of the community, and the maintenance of our unrivaled constitution.

On my mother's side, I had a claim, although a somewhat remote one, to noble birth—on my father's, to unquestionable wealth; and, however the former might be ridiculed by my schoolfellows, they were by no means insensible to the latter distinction, especially when they saw my purse so well prepared to support my claims. The gratifications, amusements, and little distinctions which money can procure, being the only ones adapted to the taste of boys, they are naturally worshippers of Mammon: the homage, therefore, that I obtained by the startling display of my guineas was at first unbounded, and I took good care to exact the full measure of their deference while my pockets were full, for I invariably found that their friendship and their respect began to wane when it was ascertained that I had changed my last piece of gold; so sordid and calculating were the majority of my young companions! I saw through their mean motives, and despised them accordingly.

My command of money procured me, however, two most essential and lasting gratifications. It enabled me to purchase an early exemption from the system of fagging, and to procure a master's right over my cousin Plummer, whom I hated, as in filial duty bound, with all the bitterness of my parents. Even now I know not what other motive to assign for my instinctive antipathy, for I must confess that he never gave me any very serious cause of offence, save that he would obstinately persist in calling me "cousin," an appellation tending, as I thought, to lower my dignity, and to degrade me in the eyes of my companions. We were Antipodean, moreover, in all our tastes, aspects, and qualities, for Plummer was a dull, plain, vulgar-looking, plodding, mechanical fellow, without a spark of genius, imagination, poetry, or vivacity; acquitting himself of his tasks by mere diligence; never quarrelling, from the phlegmatic coldness of his disposition; and never getting into scrapes, from a total deficiency in the spirit of enterprize. The young democrat, too, was a Foxite, a Dissenter, an advocate for the repeal of the Test Acts, and for the abolition of the Slave Trade, as well as a stubborn maintainer of other pestilent and new-fangled doctrines, such as the factious mob-orators and jacobins are for ever sputtering forth. Nay, though he condemned the horrors, he even went so far as to justify the principle, of the French revolution!

Strange that ideas like these should ever enter the head of such a John Trot, obtuse dullard; but I suppose they had been instilled into him by his low father. Boys as we were, we participated in all the political bitterness of our elders, and I have often headed a battle array of loyal Pittites against a school faction of disaffected Foxites, whom we were generally numerous enough to master, and whom we never suffered to escape without personal marks of our victory. My hatred of Plummer has confirmed me, I am happy to say, in my political principles, for I should scorn to belong to a party of which *he* was a member. It is no bad thing to have our convictions thus ratified by our feelings, although I am not apt to be wrong in my judgments, either of men or things.

As a proof of the detestation in which I held the opinions

entertained by my cousin, I must confess that I treated him with harshness—severity, perhaps, I might say, with occasional cruelty ; but surely it was right to show my scorn of democratic vulgarity. It operated as a salutary example upon others. He himself bore my tyranny with a most provoking fortitude, aggravating instead of appeasing me by constantly reminding me that he was my cousin, and had done nothing whatever to merit such harsh treatment. Cousin, indeed! Could not the blockhead see that this was the worst offence he could perpetrate? Not merited it, forsooth! What had *I* done to deserve the oppression to which I had been obliged to submit, when I myself was a fag? It is the best defence of the system that there can be little or no injustice in it, for every boy may take his full revenge by inflicting upon another, when he comes to be a master, the sufferings and wrongs of his own days of slavery. How easy is it for a tolerably clear intellect to vindicate a practice hallowed for many ages by the approved wisdom of our ancestors, and to rebut the preposterous assertion that it is only calculated to produce slaves and tyrants. This spirit of daring innovation delights to attack all our most ancient and revered institutions.

Since I left the Charter House, I have seen nothing of my quondam *fag*. Doubtless he has been pursuing his daily travels from his paternal abode in the Borough to the Royal Tobacco Warehouses upon Tower Hill. Dull as he is, he has wit enough not to court a scornful rebuff by knocking at the door of the banking-house. There are no jacobins and levellers, thank God! in *our* family; we are all advocates for the due subordination and separation of ranks and classes: we know what is due to ourselves as well as to others, and I, for one, will take due care that this worthy first cousin of mine shall be, socially speaking, a cousin *once removed*.

It had been my wish, on leaving the Charter House, to go to Oxford, for I had received so tempting an account of the life of idleness and jovial dissipation led by the collegians, that I longed to take a degree among them, and to qualify myself for the pleasant office of master of the revels; but my father objected that it was not customary for

the sons of citizens, unless intended for one of the professions, to betake themselves to the University; adding, that all the professors and doctors put together could not give me such an insight into the banking business as I should obtain by a six months' attendance in the counting-house; and concluding with the unanswerable argument that he himself had never been to college, and had never felt the want of it. Perhaps not; but it might have been difficult to prove that he had never *shown* the want of it, for my strict regard to veracity compels me to acknowledge that he possesses but little scholarship, although the reserve and solemnity of his manner have procured him a certain reputation of that nature, of which he is not slow to take advantage. This assumption, however, he exercises with a due discretion, having doubtless discovered that a man may safely set up for a Solomon among simpletons, who would be set down for a simpleton among wise men. This I mention rather in his praise than disparagement, for, whatever may be my other defects, I flatter myself I am never deficient in filial respect. La Bruyère says, "*L'on ne vaut dans ce monde que ce qui l'on veut valoir.*" Men are generally taken at their own valuation, provided it be not *too* high—a fact which will always prevent me, I trust, from being partial and overweening in forming a self-estimate. There is no weakness that renders a man so ridiculous and unpopular as egotism.

My mother was equally opposed to my going to college. Born as I was to wealth, and sure to occupy one of the most conspicuous stations in the city, what need, she asked, had I of academical acquirements and distinctions beyond those I had already achieved. To those who had their way to make in the world they might be a benefit; to me they could be no advantage in this respect, while they might be detrimental in others, for she knew several instances in which young men had ruined their constitutions, or acquired incurable habits of tippling, from the constant excesses of a college life! and she attached too much importance to the morals of her son to expose him to unnecessary temptation. Bless us! how pure we all become when the path of virtue is the road to self-gratification!

My mother was both proud and fond of me; she wished to have my society at home, or these conscientious scruples, I suspect, would never have occurred to her, for, to do her justice, she is totally free from all sanctimonious and puritanical austerity. I saw through her motives, which were natural enough; and as I should the sooner become my own master by not going to Oxford, my sense of filial duty made me assent, without much difficulty, to the wishes of my parents.

My father, however, deeming me still too young for a clerkship in the banking-house, I was placed, for the completion of my education, with a clergyman residing at Wallington, close to our country residence of Beddington Park, an arrangement by which my mother was enabled to see me, or to have me home as often as she pleased. Mr. Hoffman, such was the name of my preceptor, was a very singular person; and, as the circumstance of my having been his pupil may occasion some future research as to his character, I may as well say a few words concerning him, especially as he neither expects nor wishes ever to emerge from his present obscure and humble station. Not the least of his eccentricities is the resignation and even cheerfulness with which he lives upon a miserable pittance of £150 or £200 a year, refusing, even when a better preferment was offered him, to quit the parishioners and a neighborhood that have become endeared to him.

No mean proficient himself at cricket and quoits, he delights to encourage and participate in all the rustic sports of his secluded neighborhood; but his strangest characteristic is the mental amalgamation by which he renders a firm belief in the truths, and an undeviating practice of the duties, of Christianity compatible with an enthusiasm for all the creations of the old classical mythology, which has taken such possession of his imagination as almost to amount to an actual credence in their reality. It might be said that he has two religions, one the result of his sober reason and unwavering faith, his guide here and his hope hereafter—the reality, in short, which makes him a sound practical Christian; the other an insubstantial fume of his excitable imagination, the *ignis fatuus* which, deluding him over hill

and dale, through woods and pastures, prompting his reveries by day, and his dreams by night, renders him a classical visionary and enthusiast—I had almost said a semi-pagan. And yet this infatuation, the romance and the delight of his existence, never interferes with higher and more sacred claims. Miserable as is his curacy, ignorant and clownish as are the generality of his humble flock, his clerical duties are discharged not only with strict punctuality and cheerfulness, but with a pious zeal which exhibits in full lustre all the beauty of holiness.

Many a hearty laugh have I enjoyed at his monomania, at his fits of absence, and his musings in company—at his over-heard soliloquies and impassioned ejaculations when he wanders amid groves and meadows, gesticulating and pouring forth Greek and Latin quotations in the midst of a heavy rain, or wading across the shallows of the river Wandle, in apparent unconsciousness of all elemental annoyances. Laugh as I might, I could not help esteeming him, for his eccentricities are redeemed by a thorough simplicity and guilelessness of character. He may be compared to Don Quixote, who, being a perfect gentleman and a good Christian, in the midst of all his crack-brained knight-errantry, never forfeits our respect, although he is constantly incurring our ridicule.

From the strange idiosyncrasy of my preceptor it will easily be divined that I gained little in my studies except a more perfect apprehension and a keener enjoyment of the classics, in which, however, I was already well versed. We parted upon excellent terms—rather an unusual occurence between tutor and pupil—and I still occasionally ride or drive over to see him, when I am staying at Beddington Park, for I can respect and even visit a man, though he be living upon a pittance less than the income of a banker's clerk.

Hoffman's acumen as a critic is only to be equalled by his singular candor and liberality, in which qualities, rare as is their conjunction, I have often thought that I bear small resemblance to him. Some latent jealousy, howe must have warped his mind when he declared that I had no talent whatever for mathematics, merely because I had

not chosen to prosecute that department of study. Here I may claim, without vanity, a superior degree of fairness, for I am quite willing to admit his proficiency in the classics, although he thinks proper to deny me all aptitude for the exact sciences.

CHAPTER III.

1790.—CONTINUED.

HAD I been born in Potosi or Peru, ere their Pactolian treasures had been ransacked by the Spaniards; had I been reared in some actual Eldorado, richer than ever was conjured up by the dreams of avarice, I should not have better claim to golden tastes and visions than I might urge from the scenes and experience of my whole nonage, for I was nursed, as it were, in the temple of Plutus, and my father might be deemed the high-priest of the wealth-dispensing deity. Yes; from my earliest youth have I breathed an auriferous atmosphere, and the meanest sounds that pampered mine ear have been argentine.

How well do I recollect my mingled awe and admiration at first sight of the great business-room in the banking-house. My father, an austere-looking, reserved man, who rarely condescended to unbend, even in the bosom of his own family, assumed an additional air of solemn importance when seated on his banking throne, an elevated high-backed chair, and surrounded by his silent deferential clerks. His cinnamon-colored suit, his gold knee and shoe-buckles, the gold-headed cane beside him, his powdered hair, aggrandized by two large cannon curls on either side, and surmounted by the cocked hat which he invariably wore, when he was thus enthroned, as the distinguishing crown and badge of his sovereignty, could not be viewed by a young and unaccustomed eye without a certain reverence, especially when the feeling was seen to be shared by all the adult worshippers of Mammon.

Mr. Poole, his partner, shone, as became a minor luminary, with a less resplendant light. His head and whiskers were profusely powdered, the whitened pomatum being carefully brought down to a point upon his brown forehead; but he wore no hat, his buckles were silver, and his manner, when addressing his superior in the firm, was subdued and obsequious, a constraint for which he indemnified himself by a burly, magesterial air towards the clerks. The crowd of busy, bustling, anxious-looking moneychangers who passed in and out all day long, many of them bearing large leathern cases, which could hardly be clasped from the swelling of the precious bank-notes within them; the profound homage of the merchants, brokers, and others, whose countenances, as they addressed my father or Mr. Poole, wore an ingratiating and favor-bespeaking expression; the plodding industry of the numerous clerks, some perked up behind huge ledgers, others turning over and entering piles of bills and notes, or ministering at the ever-crowded counter; the glittering heaps of gold carelessly turned over with shovels, or tossed about in heavy bags, as if they were of no more value than the shingle-balast of a fishing-smack: all this hourly, daily, yearly display of countless opulence could not fail to make a profound impression on the imagination of a youth, who had been tutored to believe that all grandeur, all happiness, all earthly distinctions, were centered in the possession of wealth.

These feelings were heightened into a mingled sensation of fear and awe when, as a child, I was taken down into the subterranean strong room, a large fire-proof vault, entirely built of stone. The darkness of the brick stairs by which we descended, the dim light shed by the lamp upon the frowning arch above, the numerous safes and chests below, some filled to the brim with labelled bags of gold and silver, or piles of ticketed bank-notes, others containing the plate of the wealthier citizens, deposited here as a place of unquestioned security—these buried hoards of wealth, seen in a species of sepulchre by the glare of a lamp, immediately after leaving the broad light of noon, made my young heart beat almost audibly against my bosom, and recalled to my mind some of the golden and mysterious tales

I had been reading in the Arabian Nights. So nearly did fancy myself in the enchanted cave of one of the genii, especially when, in returning, the harsh grating of the triple-locked iron portal echoed hoarsely from the treasure-vault, that I remember to have looked timidly up to the face of my conductor, almost expecting to see the hideous features of an afrit or a magician.

The transit, however, from silence and darkness to daylight and the bustle of business quickly reassured me, and I distinctly recollect, after the first of these visits, my whispering into the ear of the old bald-headed clerk who had escorted me, "Mr. Davis! Mr. Davis! will all that gold and silver ever be mine?" and his replying, "Ay, Master Mark! all of it, and perhaps twice as much, some of these days;" an answer which turned my young head at the time, though I can now look upon these matters with a philosophic indifference.

If my parents wished to train up their child in the way he should go, they had indisputably chalked out for me a golden path. Well, I shall be enabled to walk in it steadily. These are not the vulgar distinctions that will make me giddy. Why should I feel any undue exultation, since Fortune is a blind goddess? To my thanks she is welcome, but I cannot surrender to her by freedom, for I am old enough, ay, and wise enough, to know that gold, though a good servant, is a bad master.

And yet these foreshadowings of future splendor were not confined, by any means, to my London experiences. At Beddington Park every thing wore a similar aspect of ostentatious wealth. The mansion itself, an ancient seat of the Carew family, with its spacious oaken hall, its panelled rooms, and casemented windows, diffused around it a certain air of venerable grandeur, which was well sustained by the noble park, adorned with avenues of alternate chestnut and walnut trees, beneath whose boughs the dappled deer were generally grazing or reposing, and whence it was my boyish summer pastime to chase them with my bow and arrow, that I might send them careering into the distance of the demesne.

But perhaps our greatest state was put forth when we went to church to forswear the pomps and vanities of

this wicked world. On these occasions the ponderous coach, gorgeous with polished silver mouldings, and large embossed arms of the same precious metal, was drawn by four sleek black horses, whose long tails were turned up and secured by straps and plated buckles. By their slow and stately pace the pampered animals seemed to be conscious that they ought to put forth their energies on the appointed day of rest with a dignified nonchalance. The substantial coachman, his close wig surmounted by a flat three-cornered hat, and the clustering footmen behind, all in showy liveries, gave a certain pomp to the procession; while the young squire, as I was generally called by the rustics, caracoled around the vehicle on a Shetland pony, in all the pride of scarlet tunic, feathered hat, and velvet housings.

An awe-stricken beadle escorted us to the large, curtained, and carpeted pew beside the pulpit, whence, when the service was over, we were ushered back, through a little crowd of bowing and curtseying villagers, to our carriage. On our arrival at the hall, the solid silver arms, which had once been wrenched from the panel and stolen, and had since been made removable, where unhooked and carried to the coachman's room; in recording which trifling circumstance I may as well mention that our family arms are —argent, on a chevron azure, between three griffins' heads, gules, as many hawks, proper—for Hawkwood—empaling —azure, three boars' heads erased, or, for Gordon, which was my mother's maiden name. For myself, I look down with supreme indifference, not to say contempt, upon all the feudal foolery of the heralds; but, as there are many who still attach importance to these playthings of civilization's childhood, it would be ill-nature on my part were I to refuse them a gratification so easily accorded.

I have said that my father is an austere, reserved man, devoted to money-getting, having little turn for pleasures of any other sort, and making little allowance for tastes or pursuits that differ from his own. Yet has he one recreation in which he occasionally indulges—he belongs to a bowling club at Islington Spa, whither, when in a gracious mood, he has sometimes taken me, that I might pick up his bowls for him, either his dignity, or the touches of lumbago to which he is subject, not allowing him to stoop without

discomposing his feelings. Even upon these occasions I found that he appreciated his associates entirely by their supposed wealth, and, whenever I testified my boyish admiration of the best player, he would point to a little awkward man, who invariably went wide of the jack, and tell me in a tone of reverence that he was richer than any three of the whole party.*

I think it will be admitted that, if ever a young man had excuse for the pride of purse, and a blind reverence for wealth, I am that individual; yet am I bound to assert, in simple justice to myself, that I have passed through the ordeal of these temptations unscathed by their corrupting influences. From the infection of vulgar purse-pride I have perchance been saved by a nobler self-estimate. To some men it is indispensable to be worth money, for without it they would be worth nothing. Vanity apart, I may safely say that this observation would be little applicable to my case. If I know myself, I have personal recommendations and mental acquirements *rather* more valuable than the paltry dross upon which others pique themselves, and which I myself possess, or shall possess, to a greater extent than nine-tenths of them, though I scorn to make it my boast, or the standard of my worth.

Before I dismiss the subject of my nonage, I may as well record a few of the memorabilia still fresh in my memory, which may probably be soon effaced by the busy and brilliant career I am now about to enjoy. These reminiscences may be trifling in themselves, but, if measured by the importance attached to them at the time, they become interesting as developing the state and progress of the youthful mind.

My earliest childish recollection is of a visit to Cox's

* As illustrating the civic-manners of the day, the Editor, who was also a boyish visitant now and then to the club in question, may perhaps be allowed to state that it consisted chiefly of the leading members of the medical profession, although others were gradually admitted. Their post-prandial meetings were restricted to the summer months, and the earliness of the prevalent dinner hour allowed them to assemble at six o'clock, when, after pursuing their pastime till dusk, they took their tea in an alcove of the bowling green, and separated before it was dark. At the period in question, several of the professional members retained their gold-headed canes, nor were pig-tailed wigs and cocked-hats altogether discontinued. Contrast this simple, healthful, and economical recreation, (for no betting was practised) enjoyed by some of the most eminent citizens of that day, with the costly and luxurious clubs of the present era.—*Ed.*

museum, in which the object that most absorbed my attention was an immense barometer, a pretty satisfactory refutation of Mr. Hoffman's strange notion that I have no natural turn for scientific pursuits.

It must have been about the seventh year of my age that our friend, Alderman Brook Watson, took me to Drury Lane Theatre, to see Garrick's last appearance on the stage, upon which occasion the house was crowded with persons of distinction. The character chosen was Don Felix, in The Wonder, and I doubt not that the acting was worthy of the performer's exalted reputation, though it made less impression upon me than a circumstance which occurred as we were leaving the house. The Alderman's leg having been bitten off by a shark while he was bathing in the West Indies, its place had been supplied by a wooden one, which in the lobby, he inadvertently placed upon the foot of a stranger, a fashionably-dressed man, who instantly pushed back the unintentional aggressor, exclaiming, with a look and in a tone of great anguish, "Zooks! Sir, you have crushed my toe."

The alderman expressed his sorrow for the accident, when the stranger, with a polite bow that shook the scented palvilio from his hair, apologized for his own hasty ejaculation, which he attributed to the agony of the moment, and, with another graceful obeisance, limped away.

"One of the most polite and elegant gentlemen I have seen for an age," said the alderman.

"And how exquisitely dressed!" I added.

"I have no recollection of his figure, and yet I cannot help thinking that I have heard his voice before. Its tone is particularly melodious."

"If I am not very much mistaken," observed a bystander, "that elegant gentleman with the melodious voice is no other than the celebrated, or rather the notorious, Mr. Barrington, the pickpocket."

"The pickpocket!" ejaculated the alderman, at the same time putting his hand to his fob, and exclaiming—"By heavens! my gold repeater is gone! the villain *must* have taken it, for I heard it strike only a minute before he fell against me."

"And in that minute," responded his colloquist, "he must have concocted and executed the whole scheme for

getting possession of it. What promptitude! what presence of mind! You have at least the consolation of knowing that you have been robbed by a man of genius."

So far from finding any comfort in this reflection, the infuriated alderman was about to rush forward in pursuit of the thief, when he was reminded, by the same party, that a man of genius never keeps his booty about him, but immediately hands it over to some unknown and unsuspected confederate. My plundered companion, nevertheless, stumped forward in pursuit with all the energy that his wooden leg would permit; but it is scarcely necessary to add that he got no further glimpse of the "polite and elegant gentleman."

My first visit to the gallery of the House of Commons was made eight or nine years ago, when Mr. Pitt, then out of office, brought forward a motion in favor of Parliamentary Reform, which was very properly negatived. By a beneficent dispensation of Providence he is now the minister, I may say the main pillar, safeguard, and glory, the *decus et tutamen* of this beleaguered country, for whose salvation, in a financial sense, he devised the enlightened and felicitous scheme of the Sinking Fund. I was in the gallery when he propounded it, and never, never shall I forget the enthusiasm with which it was received, nor the glowing eloquence with which, in the proud consciousness that his great discovery would immortalize him, he expatiated on its inappreciable importance to the nation.

"By the simple operation of compound interest," said this great and consummate statesman, "the one million which I propose to set apart for this purpose, will, in twenty-eight years, produce four millions per annum, so that, in a comparatively trifling period of time, we shall have so far diminished the public debt as to prevent its ever reaching, in any future wars, its present enormous amount of more than two hundred millions. This is, indeed, a subject both of general and of individual exultation; nor will I deny that I feel an intense, and, I trust, an honest pride, in inscribing my name on the indestructible column now about to be erected to national faith and to public prosperity."

This peroration, delivered with all the effect of a sonorous voice, and of a confident, peremptory manner that

seemed to challenge implicit assent to his positions, electrified the whole House, for the thinly-occupied opposition benches were hardly of sufficient importance to be deemed an exception.

Of my first visit to Ranelagh I will say nothing, but I bught perhaps to notice a more recent occurrence connected with distinguished and fashionable amusements—I mean my introduction to the City Assembly.* Upon this occasion my father, who was treasurer and manager of the institution, wore his court-dress,† and assumed an additional air of importance and gravity. While I was looking around me for the pretty faces, which seemed to be rather scarce, he was carefully indicating to me the great heiresses in possession or expectation, of whom there was no deficiency whatever, and I was astonished at the accuracy with which he gave me the exact money-weight of every girl that passed us.

In vain did I object that some of the parties, thus pointed out to my admiration, were ugly, or deformed, or vulgar. "Ugly! vulgar!" re-echoed my father, in a tone of indignant surprise, "why, first and last, that girl cannot have less than a plum!"

Considering the purse-pride which had been so carefully instilled into me by my whole education, I may claim some merit for the indifference with which I received this information, as well as for the independence I asserted in selecting for my partner in a minuet, and afterwards in a country-dance, the winning, the retiring, the bashful Fanny Hartopp, although I was repeatedly and even angrily warned that her father was only junior partner in an inferior Russia-house of but little credit.

Nor was this altogether a pure condescension on my part,

* This civic Almacks, devoted to the aristocracy of commerce, and still more rigidly exclusive in its laws than its modern successor of Willis's Rooms, was held in Haberdashers' Hall, a mean-looking building, in a narrow street in the immediate vicinity of Cheapside. No person not in business on his own account, no broker, no man standing behind a counter, or paying the shop tax (with the special exception of bankers) could be admitted among the elect of that high caste circle, so innate in the English character is the love of exclusiveness. The excluded took refuge in another assembly, called "The London," which was held in the tavern of that name, where they revenged themselves by adopting still more jealous defences against the intrusion of the class beneath them. Both were given up soon after the citizens commenced their western migration.—*Ed.*

† In those days the leading citizens occasionally attended the levees.—*Ed.*

so I will not claim any merit in this apparent humility. Perhaps there was a spice of malice in my preference, for I could not be blind to the sensation excited by the presence of the young heir of Hawkwood—the future partner in the great banking-house; I could not be insensible of the anxious bustle among the mammas, and the bridling and fluttering of the daughters whenever I approached, and I determined to baulk all their calculating manœuvres by repelling their advances, and seeking the only girl in the room who exhibited no wish to be sought. Surely there was something indelicate as well as sordid in such forwardness, whether it be attributed to my personal recommendations, or my brilliant prospects.

Some people would have been inflated by all this courting and coaxing, but I cannot say that it had any such effect upon myself. After all, I again ask, what is my enviable and unrivalled position in the city, or what my natural gifts and advantages but a caprice of fate and fortune. I myself am the last person to attach importance either to the one or the other; and I only mention these circumstances to show the parasitical, tuft-hunting spirit of the world at large.

It was upon this first visit, as I recollect, that I was made acquainted with a little foible of my mother's, by hearing an old lady exclaim, "So, here comes Mrs. Alderman Hawkwood, and, see, her diamond ague is worse than ever."

My good mother, it seems, being inordinately vain of her diamonds, which were considered the most costly in the city after Lady Baring's, generally affected, upon these occasions, to have a nervous twitch, or to be shuddering with cold, in order that, by the tremulous motion of her head, she might display her brilliants to more advantage—an imaginary ailment, to which her neighbors, detecting its motive, had applied the nickname I have stated. That there was a large share of woman's weakness in this unworthy artifice, I cannot deny. Baubles, trinkets, and gewgaws, however valuable, form but a sorry ground of distinction. Nevertheless, it was absurd, not to say insolent, in my friend, Harry Kennet, to pretend that my mother's jewels were not so handsome as Mrs. Aaron Levi's, and I can-

not regret my having quarrelled with him, and given up his acquaintance in consequence.

Enough of these reminiscences of my nonage. I am a man now. One of the glorious and golden three—Hawkwood, Poole, and Hawkwood.

CHAPTER IV.

1790 CONTINUED.

Of an easy rather than a good temper, my father's accommodating disposition springs from indifference more than a wish to oblige. Ever ready to concede in order to get rid of importunity, and not taking sufficient interest in others to be either ruffled by their reverses, or exhilarated by their success, his want of sympathy makes him calm and equable. Not that he ever compromises himself by two facile an acquiescence. Oh, no! His concessions must always appear to be the result of his own conviction or benevolence, not of your persuasions; never is he more dignified, and even stern, than when yielding a point. And yet, well as he preserves his equanimity where the affairs of others are concerned, he is irritable, not to say choleric, in all that affects the two ruling passions of his soul—his love of money—I mean money-making, not money-saving—and his sense of his own civic importance. Oh! how he fumed when his aldermanic election was opposed by the brawling, spouting democrat, Higgins the Drysalter! And how have I seen his countenance distorted with rage, though he rarely gave it vent, when he has been taken in, or has suffered loss in any banking transaction.

Such a disposition is not formed for intimacies, and, with a larger circle of acquaintance than most of the city magnates, my father can scarcely be said to possess a single friend. Even for myself I can hardly venture to claim an exception; but the fault assuredly does not rest with me. I have never possessed his confidence—he has never

sought mine. Seldom has he opposed, as I must freely confess, any of my little pleasures and gratifications; but his jealousy of power or of wealth would have excluded me from the banking-house, under the shallow pretext that I have no talents for business. Upon many occasions, indeed, he has shown a disposition to undervalue my abilities as a practical man, and to sneer at my ignorance of the world. Even if this were true, which I do not by any means admit, it is not the province of a father to point out any little defects or foibles in the character of his son.

On the morning that the partnership articles were signed, my father took me up stairs to the back drawing-room, and, with an air of more than usual gravity, thus addressed me. "I hope you are now satisfied, *Sir!* (I seldom received any more endearing appellation than this.) You are my partner—a partner in the first banking-house in the city; and, as you cannot have much knowledge of the higher departments of this very intricate and precarious business, although you may have acquired a certain insight of its details from your probation as a clerk, I wish to have an understanding with you, both as to the nature of this great establishment, and as to the share which I mean to allow you in its management. A banker, sir, surrounded as he generally is with all the glories of opulence, is certainly a great, an important, an enviable object; but he cannot achieve, and still less maintain, this distinction, without more cares, dangers, struggles, and sacrifices than are suspected by the vulgar gazers at his greatness. From these perils I would have saved you by putting you in some liberal profession, or less hazardous employment; but you were headstrong, obstinate, and you must take the consequences."

I could not help smiling as I replied that I was quite willing to take my share both of the risk and the anxiety, though I could not exactly see where they were to be encountered.

"Which only confirms your total ignorance of the business," resumed my father. "Where they are to be encountered! Go, sir! dress yourself in gold lace, let all your pockets be manifestly stuffed with guineas, wear a watch and a *fausse montre*, each with glittering chains, place diamond rings upon your fingers, valuable buckles in your shoes, a brooch of brilliants in your frill, and, thus tempt-

ingly accoutred, plant yourself in Field Lane or Smithfield, among all the thieves, rogues, and vagabonds of a district that has few other inhabitants—wretches, who, if they cannot plunder you by fraud or cunning, will do it by force, and you will be almost in as great jeopardy, and nearly in as good company, as a city banker in these tricking times. Such a man must live in a constant sense of danger, an incessant state of warfare with his neighbors, nay, with the whole world. You see that string of cringing creatures who smile and bow themselves every morning into my private counting-house. They are all rogues who come to plunder and rob me by procuring discount of bad bills, loans upon damaged or unsaleable goods, or advances upon worthless securities. I am aware of their knavery, and it is my business to circumvent it; for, if I do not cheat them, they will cheat me. If I succeed, I gather the honey which is my profit from thorns and poison-flowers; if I fail, I am not only plundered, but probably laughed at as a dupe; if I refuse to accommodate them at all, I make them mine enemies, and place the credit of a banking-house, which is not less sensitive than the honor of a woman, in the power of liars and malignants, who will strive to whisper away my reputation because they have failed to pick my pocket. Now, sir, it is against this swarm, this gang of tricksters and cozeners, that I wish to put you on your guard. Cunning as foxes, and hungry as wolves, they will beleaguer you in a thousand different ways, cajoling, flattering, fawning, bullying, imploring, or weeping, according to their different moods, but ever with the same insidious object of making you their gull, their dupe, their prey, their victim, their bubble, and then their laughing stock!"

Doubtful whether this exaggerated tirade, and the indignant energy with which it was delivered, proceeded from some recent loss and fraud under which he was smarting, or was really intended to warn me against the occasional rogueries of the civic world, I contented myself with replying that I was thankful for his admonitions, that I was aware of the knavery of mankind, and would take good care not to compromise the house by the smallest act of imprudence.

"Sir, you can never escape," was his reply, "if once you let these sharpers discover that you have any power or influ-

ence in dispensing pecuniary accommodation ; or, if you do escape, it can only be by a painful and incessant series of quarrels, to which, at your age, it would be really cruel to expose you. You have a right to a few years of comparative tranquillity and enjoyment. To secure to you this respite, to save you from the anxieties and annoyances that I have enumerated, let it be distinctly understood between us that the department of discounts, loans, advances, and accommodations of all sorts, is to be left entirely to me and to Mr. Poole, to whom you are to refer all applicants for assistance."

The murder was now out, and all this paternal anxiety for my peace of mind resolved itself into a domineering wish to usurp the whole administrative power of the bank ; for I knew Mr. Poole to be a mere nonentity as to the control of its affairs. However, as I was really not sorry to be absolved from the wrangling and huckstering portion of the business, I signified my present assent to the proposition, adding, nevertheless, my hope that, as the restriction would be soon found wholly unnecessary, it would be speedily removed.

"A banker, sir," continued my father, "is the depository of as many secrets as a Catholic confessor, and would be deemed equally culpable were he to violate his trust. Now, there are many ancient clients of our house, who would be loth to extend to so young a man as yourself the confidence which, for so many years, they have reposed in me and Mr. Poole. This may be a prejudice, but still it must be conciliated, for we have many rivals who would gladly alienate our friends, if they could, and secure them for themselves. The clients alluded to have already been informed that, for the first two or three years, you will not have access to our private ledger, so that the confidential transactions in which their credit might be implicated will not incur any additional risk of transpiring."

So then, thought I to myself, a pretended regard for my comfort in the first instance, and for the credit of the customers in the second, is, in reality, a plan for rendering me a merely nominal partner, a cypher, and for concentrating in the head of the firm not only all the power and influence, but even all the insight into the business. It was

evident that I was considered still a boy; I felt nettled at the humiliating position in which I had been placed, and my looks must have expressed my strong dissatisfaction, for my father hastily added—

"It is now too late to retract, or make any alteration; I have given my pledge, but it is only, I repeat, for two or three years. In the mean time, you are a partner as to all essential points. The stipulated portion of your profits will be scrupulously placed to your credit at the end of every twelve months, and you are authorised to draw against them, whenever it suits you, at the rate of a thousand pounds a year. So long as you reside with your parents, I presume this will be more than sufficient. If you should hereafter marry, or wish to have a separate establishment, which I should hardly think desirable or likely at present, you will of course expect a more ample provision."

That I was quite satisfied with the first part of these arrangements I did not pretend; but, as the immediate income assigned to me was liberal enough, as I knew that fathers in general never have ceased, and never will cease to consider their grown-up sons as boys, and as I was well aware that I was but deferring power and profit, since I must eventually succeed to the whole accumulated wealth in the paternal coffers, I made a virtue of necessity, and expressed my acquiescence in the conditions proposed.

"Sir, you have every reason to be satisfied, and even grateful," said my father; and, making me a formal bow, he left the room. Gazing from the window a few minutes afterwards, I saw him march into the Bank-of England, a file of transfer papers in his hand, and a huge cocked hat upon his head, that made him look as dignified, though quite not as manly and majestic, as a life-guardsman.

I have said that I received bundles of congratulatory letters on my accession to my majority, and, having stated my father's address to me upon that occasion—an address of which I detected the selfish motives, spite of all his endeavors to conceal them—I ought, as in duty bound, to give precedence in the next place to the following dainty

epistle from my mother. Hereafter, I may perhaps paste more of her communications in my chronicle, that I may read them at leisure, for I cannot promise to give a properly filial perusal, at the moment of their reception, to such long-winded and discursive letters.

The introductory paragraph in the following is really too good! As if I did not know that, regularly as the season approaches, a haunch of prime venison from Beddington is despatched to Dr. Jeffery, who prescribes in consequence a short residence at Bath as the likeliest means of preventing the return of the chronic rheumatism to which my good mother is *not* subject—rheumatism. *Return*, indeed! He should have said the first visit, for I never remember her suffering from the malady, though she certainly labors under the periodical apprehension of its appearance. Thus runs the maternal missive, I had almost said *pamphlet*.

"My dear Mark,

"What a shocking thing it is to be liable to these rheumatic attacks! Shocking in every way; for you who know the tenderness of my feelings towards all, and more especially the depth of my maternal affection, will easily believe that I have suffered ten times more in this compulsory absence from your birthday festivities (your twenty-first birthday, too, only think!) than if I had undergone the most acute and racking agonies from my old adversary. Had I consulted only my own gratification, I should have braved everything, and have remained in London; but I have nothing selfish in my disposition; I know that it is my duty, both on your father's account and your's, to preserve my health, and, once convinced that I am doing what is right and proper, I can endure anything. O, my dear Mark! there is nothing like the satisfaction of an approving conscience!

"In obedience to Dr. Jeffery's positive orders, I have brought my poor sickly body to Bath, but my mind is constantly with you and your father in London. How interesting is your situation at this proud moment—heir to your father's wealth, a partner in the house of Hawkwood, and related, through me, as you should never forget, to the Aberdeen Gordons, or, at all events, to the Hansons of

Wakefield, who intermarried with the Gordons. Day and night, early and late, I have thought of nothing but you and your prospects, and your future plans, so that I have been living a dull life enough, as you may well suppose, since my arrival here, and I need not tell you that the society of your poor moping sister, Edith, is little calculated to cheer one.

"I am more convinced than ever that the girl is sadly deficient. Indeed she hardly seems to possess the instinct of self-preservation, as she showed t'other day at Bath-Easton. Only fancy! She sees a screaming child pursued by an infuriated cow, and, rushing between them, the poor simple-witted girl throws a valuable shawl over the animal's head, which sent it scampering away blindfold into another field. She herself fortunately escaped without injury; so did the little brat; but her shawl was of course torn to rags. After getting into the carriage she began crying, and when I asked her whether she was fretting for the loss of her beautiful shawl, she told me she had never thought of it, but that she had been overcome by the sight of the little girl's blood, as she had wounded her arm in scrambling through a hedge. Ridiculous weakness! However, she is going to write to you herself, so you will hear all about it.

"Of course I have been to all the assemblies and concerts, and occasionally to the theatre; on the other nights I have generally had a card-party at home; and, after the morning's lounge at the Bath, I have driven over to Prior Park, or to Lansdown, or the Claverton Downs, or to Bath-Easton, where my poor friend, Lady Miller, died. You remember my giving you the volume of beautiful prize poems recited at the literary festival she established at her pretty villa. Ah! we have had no genuine poetry since her death. You remember Miss Seward's Elegy on that event? Beautiful! Heigho! There are no real enjoyments for a domestic woman away from her family. You will see how much I have been thinking of you by the advice I am about to give you on the occasion of your coming of age.

"First and foremost, my dear Mark, do not marry at present, at least do not be entrapped into a marriage with a girl of no birth or no fortune, for, as you can lay claim to

both, you are entitled to demand both in a wife. You are a great catch, Mark, the greatest in the city, and no manœuvre, no artifice, no seduction, will be left unpractised by mothers and daughters to win the golden prize. I must know my own sex better than you, and I tell you to trust none of them—they will all be in a conspiracy against you —each struggling for herself, but all, I repeat, against you. The best preservative against your throwing yourself away is to entertain a proper sense of your own value. Recollect that, in addition to the advantages I have stated, you have luckily inherited from me the Gordon face and figure, as well as a certain nobleness of look and deportment, of which you would have possessed little enough had you taken after your father. By the by, I invited his relation, Mrs. Deputy Thompson, to my first card-party, as I know she is very fond of a game at quadrille, loo, or casino, when (would you believe it?) she had the bad taste and vulgarity to bedizzen herself out in a new diamond aigrette, which the Deputy had given her on the success of his great brandy contract. I saw through her object: it was a pitiful attempt to eclipse me—the frog and the ox—ha! ha! ha! If you quarrelled with young Kennet upon this subject, I am very glad you did, what would you have said to *her*? Resolved to punish this low and mean ostentation, I invited her to my next party, when I wore about my person the whole contents of my jewel-box, and thus read her a lesson of humility which I flatter myself she will not soon forget.

"But I was writing about you, my dear Mark, was I not? Indeed, I think of nothing else. Let me repeat that I would not have you marry just at present, for you are not to suppose that wedded life is always the happiest. Experienced people know better. Above all, let me hear no more of your dancing with Fanny Hartopp, for I believe her to be an artful, designing girl, and I should not wonder if she were bad-tempered, spite of those dimples, which may be all put on. At all events, her father is only a junior partner, and the house is in no credit whatever—the Bank refuses their acceptances. If I can read eyes aright, Augusta Maynard has a decided penchant for you, and, as one of our greatest heiresses, she may be well worth your attention by and by; but, just at present, you are too young.

"Now don't run away with the notion that I wish to deprive you of any of the enjoyments proper, or at least natural to your age. Youth is youth, and we must wink now and then at a few peccadilloes, just to show our hatred of puritans and all that class of canting, hypocritical people. So long as you show yourself to be a loyal subject by opposing all Jacobins and democrats, and a sincere Christian by attending regularly at morning service and opposing the claims of all brawling *non-cons*, as your uncle calls them, nobody, I am sure, would be illiberal enough to quarrel with you for a few excesses and irregularities.

"I don't know that you could do better, dear Mark, than to imitate in all things, as far as you can, my model of a fine gentleman—the Prince of Wales. Not that I would have you run in debt as he has done, though that is rather the fault of the shabby Parliament, who have not enabled him to support his princely station with a becoming splendor; still less would I have you follow him in his opposition to his parents, and some other matters which one cannot *quite* approve, though they are all the acts and deeds of his evil counsellors—but look at his elegance, his dress, his address, his bow, his fascinating affability. Oh, how beautiful! And how correct he is, after all, in essentials—frequently seen at church, and, last Palm Sunday, as I see by the papers, he received the sacrament. Your's is quite as fine a head of hair as his, and I wish you would always have it dressed in the same style.

"O, my dear Mark! was ever any thing so delightful as that grand party at Carlton House! As you were at Beddington when I left London, I never told you how I succeeded in getting a ticket to it. Lady Campbell, you know, although connected with the Gordons, never thought proper to call upon me, until about a fortnight before the party, when she left her card, and a flummery letter, pretending she had forgotten my address, and requesting that I would oblige her by getting my husband to discount a long-winded slave bill, at twelve months, on a West India house in Mincing Lane, which she inclosed, not doubting my kindness in accommodating a relation. Was ever such barefaced cajolery! As if I were to be flammed so easily. How she could descend to such meanness I cannot at all

understand. However, I determined to be even with her, and, as all the world was talking of nothing but the grand party, and I knew, from her connection with the Prince's household, that she could get me a ticket if she chose, I wrote her word that I would *endeavor* to get the bill cashed in a few days, and that, in the mean time, I should feel highly obliged if she could procure me a ticket to the Carlton House entertainment, 'not doubting her kindness in accommodating a relation.' Wasn't that beautiful! Well, so far from having the spirit to take offence, she brought the ticket, her bill was discounted, and I went to the party!

"What a splendid affair! The temporary conservatory, and the oriental tent, and the colored lamps, were quite magic. And yet, even in this gorgeously-dressed circle, I can assure you that my silver-spotted tissue, and the diamonds in my high-cushioned head-dress, were not without effect, especially as I kept as close as possible to the great chandelier, that I might have the full radiance of the light, and did not even go out for a moment to see the dancing in the garden. If I quitted my position it was to stick to Lady Campbell, for I hardly knew a soul in the room, and I wouldn't let her shake me off, though I saw she was annoyed at my perseverance. What impertinence! However, I can be proud as well as her ladyship, so I stuck to her like a leech during the latter part of the entertainment.

"You remember to have heard of the great sensation excited at a former grand festival at Carlton House by Lady Beauchamp, her sisters, the Miss Ingrams, and the Miss Talbots, all beautiful, and all attired alike in Spanish dresses of white crape spangled with gold. Well, Lady Beauchamp and her unmarried sister were at the present party with Miss Brudenell, and the two Miss Howards, all in a Scottish costume, and you cannot think how much they were admired. Quite beautiful! After staring rather rudely at my diamonds, I heard her ladyship inquire who I was. Several others paid me the same compliment, which was very flattering, wasn't it?

"Nothing was talked of for some days afterwards but this grand festival; even Phillidor playing at chess blindfold was forgotten; and you may well suppose that not a little envy and *jealousy* was excited in the city by my hav-

ing procured an invitation, when nobody else could succeed. I thought it better to be humble than over proud upon the occasion, so I gave out that the Prince wanted to see my diamonds.

"What a long epistle have I been spinning; but, when I am writing to and about my dear son, it is difficult to be very concise, for the pen will follow the thoughts, and the heart will promote them. However, I must come to an end at last, and so, my dear Mark, I subscribe myself, with a thousand congratulations on your brilliant prospects,

"Your affectionate mother,

"MARY STUART HAWKWOOD."

A few lines (before I insert any more letters) on this curious maternal homily, if such I may venture to call it. Writing about herself is an odd way of proving that she thinks of nothing but her son; and an incessant round of amusements seems as strange a method of showing how much she mopes and pines in his absence. With all her clever management, she cannot escape my skill in penetrating motives.

Wedded life not always happy! Can I have a better proof of this fact than is afforded by my honored parents? My father, indeed, was taken in as to his wife's expected fortune, and had good reason, if I have been correctly informed, to be dissatisfied; but he is too fond of ease and quiet ever to quarrel, and my mother is too proud to resent or even to notice his coldness; so they live in a state of polite indifference, not disagreeing when they meet, and not thinking of each other when they are apart.

A pretty opinion I ought to have of the world, my father cautioning me against all the men, and my mother against all the mothers and daughters! Am I to believe them both, and am I to include themselves in this sweeping condemnation? Here is a dilemma worthy of the old Greek sophists. If I am a dutiful son, I must believe and think ill of my parents; if undutiful, they may still retain my good opinion: but relations, I suppose, like present company, are always to be excepted. And what a singular morality my good mother inculcates! If I will but observe appearances, I may neglect realities; if I sacrifice

to the graces, I need not make offerings to the virtues; and the Prince of Wales is to be my model and my Mentor!! Truly, if I had any turn for dissipation, I should not be altogether without excuse for its indulgence.

That sister of mine *is* an odd girl, certainly. Have I said any thing about her yet in my chronicle? I rather think not, and no wonder, for she keeps herself so much in the back-ground, that we see or hear very little of her. To be sure, she has been at school until last Christmas, when she completed her eighteenth year, and my mother has such an impression of her imbecility, that she has not been very anxious to produce her. But this is totally erroneous. Although Edith is shy, retiring, eccentric, and remarkably taciturn for a girl, she took the lead in all the graver studies at school; she plays well; and for drawing has exhibited a decided genius. Her voice, too, is exceedingly sweet, and I am sure she would sing very pleasingly, could she conquer her timidity, and her nervous objection to what she calls the exhibition of a vocalist. And yet this timid girl, we see, can be courageous enough upon some occasions. Strange that she should select such an opportunity for the display of her bravery; but she *is* eccentric in every thing.

My mother is certainly prejudiced against Edith. She complains that she does not dress fashionably enough, and that, in society, she seldom takes a part in the conversation: but the first of these charges I hold to be utterly groundless, and the second only occasionally applicable, and always excusable in a girl so new to the world. Her quiet, unobtrusive prettiness would little accord with the ultra-fashionableness of a professed *elegante;* she adapts her dress to herself, and no one can deny that she exhibits, upon all occasions, an appearance of perfect gentility. Silent and retiring she certainly is; and yet, when she likes her company and the tone of the conversation, she can not only take a share in it, but maintain it better than most girls. That at her age she should be such an enthusiast upon the subject of the Slave Trade is, indeed, an infatuation, a monomania, which none can regret more sincerely than myself; she is deluded by a mere chimera; for slavery has existed in all ages and contries; the physical and moral inferiority of the Negroes shows that they were intended for

subjection, and, to attempt to defeat this natural destination is tantamount to an arraignment of the decrees of Providence.

Edith, however, is very young, and there can be little doubt that this morbid delusion will pass away, for she is totally free from any sanctimonious affectation or pretended austerity. Placid and staid she may be, and occasionally pensive, but she is never moping or melancholy, as my mother is to apt too suppose. I should say, on the contrary, that her disposition is one of quiet cheerfulness. Thus runs her letter.

"My dear, dear brother,

"You will be so overwhelmed with congratulations on the happy occasion of your coming of age, and being received into the banking-house as a partner, that you will hardly find time, I fear, to read any thing so uninteresting as a letter from 'poor Edith.' And yet, though all will be more eloquent, none can be more sincere in the expression of their good wishes than I am. O, my dear Mark! how sorry am I that my absence from London prevents my giving utterance to my affectionate feelings by word of mouth, and with a cordial embrace, for a warm heart finds but cold interpretation in a pen. What shall I wish for you? Not wealth and prosperity, for these you can hardly fail to possess, and there is as little reason to doubt that health and happiness will also be yours'; but I will pray for that without which all these great advantages will be in vain—I will pray that you may deserve the good opinion of the world and of your own conscience. Is this too serious and solemn a wish for a younger sister? Consider me, then, 'a premature old maid,' as mamma sometimes calls me, and allow me the supposed privilege of the class—that of being grave and admonitory. How is it that, when I am particularly happy, or my affections are much excited, I cannot for the life of me be gay, but lapse unconsciously into that mood of tender and grateful pensiveness which mamma terms moping?

"O, my dear Mark! with the talents that God has given you, with the influence which your wealth and station will command, with your great oratorical powers—for I have

heard of your unbounded success at the Ciceronian's Debating Society—what a career of present glory and of future renown would be opened to you, if you dedicated all these gifts to the suppression of that crying abomination—the Slave Trade! Knowing that you differ from my views upon this subject, I will say no more; and perhaps it is presumption in a girl like me to have said so much.

"Mamma is as usual very gay, and I have accompanied her in several of her excursions, but I cannot say that I have been very much gratified, except in a visit to Mr. Thicknesse's Hermitage, as it is called, where a monument has been erected to the memory of the unfortunate Chatterton, whose poetry I have always admired, and in whose unhappy fate I have ever felt such a deep interest. When not otherwise engaged, we have generally little card parties at home; but I am sorry to say that I am still too dull to understand, or perhaps too idle and indifferent to learn, the mysteries of drum, pam, spadille, basto, and the rest. I fear I shall never be an adept at casino or quadrille,

"never own a soul
That pants for loo, or flutters at a vole—"

a circumstance which I only regret on mamma's account, who is much vexed at what she calls my incurable stupidity.

"We do not talk of leaving Bath for some time, so, when your festivities are all over, pray run down and pay us a visit, if it be ever so short a one, for I quite long to see you. God bless you, my dear Mark! Again and again accept the heartfelt congratulations and good wishes of

"Your ever affectionate sister,
"EDITH HAWKWOOD."

The writer of such a letter cannot surely be deficient in the qualities of either head or heart, and to accuse her of imbecility is sheer nonsense. "Poor Edith" she may still be called, for nicknames are adhesive; cold and phlegmatic she may *appear*, but, though I may be laughed at for the assertion, I cannot help thinking that, when she shakes off her odd ways and fantastical notions, she will be rather above than below the average of her sex and class. Not one word about having risked her own life to save that of

a peasant's brat: a foolish action, I admit; but what a parade, nevertheless, would have been made of it by any other girl! Very likely it may have slipped altogether from her memory, for, though seldom unmindful of others, she is very apt to forget her own acts and deeds. And yet she is half contemptuously pitied and "poor thing'd" by the whole of our circle, not one of whom, I suspect, has found out her real character, except myself. In return for her good advice, I sent her a handsome gold watch made by Chater, a *fausse-montre* of Derbyshire spar, and a kind letter, which I verily believe that odd girl will value more than my present.

How different from her's is the following epistle, coming from a man, too, whom I might call one of my most intimate friends, until, some five or six weeks ago, I objected to the admission of his great Danish dog, with its dirty paws, into my mother's drawing-room—an irremissible offence, as it would seem. He must have written in one of those fits of intoxication into which he is so often betrayed, or in some intermediate state between sobriety and drunkenness. It savors palpably of the place from which he so appropriately dates it.

"The Rummer Tavern, Wednesday.

"Sir,

"I have not called upon you for some weeks past, nor do I intend to renew my visits until I receive an apology for the indignity offered to my four-footed friend, Tycho. 'Love me love my dog' is an ancient and very sensible adage. I have called Tycho my friend. I might have truly said my best, nay, my only friend. Never differing from me, whatever opinions I may maintain—loving me for myself alone, and sometimes even when I hate myself, he neither fawns upon me in prosperity, nor deserts me in adversity. Think you I would exchange such a friendship for that of man—for attachments, or rather freaks of feeling capricious while they last, bitter when they are broken, treacherous and tricky when they are patched up again? Why does one man select another for his regards? Because this other chances to agree with him in opinions, tastes, pursuits. Were it not so, the pact of amity would be quickly exchanged for dislike or indifference. What is this but

self-love at secondhand—hatred wearing the smiling mask of circumstance and contingency? Away with these sphynx-like friendships, that place a front of loveliness upon a beast of prey!

"Know, sir, that my friend Tycho, upon whom you insultingly shut your door, never did me an injury, except when, by rescuing me from being accidentally drowned in the Severn, he condemned me to the continued wretchedness of life. Poor fellow! he knew not what he did—an excuse which cannot be pleaded by those who inflicted upon me, in the first instance, the curse of existence, and have done little or nothing since to alleviate its miseries.

"But your *friend* Hammond, whom I met last night at the Mitre, tells me that I ought to congratulate you on the attainment of your majority, and of a partnership in the banking-house. I cannot agree with him. What have you done—where is your merit, that I should felicitate or flatter you? You have taken the trouble to be born; you have exhibited the rare talent of living for twenty-one years; you have, with admirable skill, contrived to be the only son of a rich banker. Prodigious! In short, sir, you are the accident of an accident. And for this you are to be honored with a living apotheosis, for this you are to sit enthroned upon your money-bags, and receive homage and congratulatory letters, 'like full-blown Bufo puff'd by every quill.' Not from me need you expect any of this sordid adulation.

"Dream you that wealth is an unalloyed blessing—that it has not its cares and its duties, as well as its privileges and luxuries? If thus deluded, Fortune's favorites must be as blind as herself. Is it an advantage to be placed in a situation where you have every thing to fear and nothing to hope; where it would be misery to lose that which does not confer happiness in the possession; where the enervating satiety that deprives prosperity of its sweetness would infuse additional bitterness into adversity; where, in short, you derive no real enjoyment from to-day, and yet dread the possible changes of to-morrow? Poor rich man! It would be a mockery to wish you joy. You are entitled to my compassion, and you have it.

"Though I dislike idle falsehoods, I wish to observe the courtesy of society, and I therefore subscribe myself,

"Yours,

"Guy Welford."

This is the letter of a sour, splenetic, proud, envious misanthrope, or of a testy, vulgar humorist,

> "Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect
> A saucy roughness."

Yet, in his happier moods and sober intervals, who so courteous, who so enlightened, who so fascinating a companion as Guy Welford! His vocal powers alone impart an irresistible charm to his society, for his fine tenor, in its rare union of power, sweetness, and pathos, is quite unrivalled, unless I may except the delightful singing of Master Braham, whom I heard two or three years ago at the Royalty. Good need has Welford of his great talents and attainments to reconcile people to his still greater delinquencies and irregularities. Subjecting all the usages of society, all domestic arrangements, to his capricious wildness, he is offended if his companions, nay, if all the world, do not conform to his own world-opposed habits. Utterly does he repudiate the control of hours and customs; sometimes he will sit up all night, and sleep all day; at no time will he break up a drinking party; he never passes a tavern if he can prevail upon a companion, however casually encountered, to talk and tipple with him; nor can the soberest always resist his solicitations, for there is a charm in his conversation that blinds them to all his bibulous foibles, and makes them even submit to the fellowship of Tycho, from whom he will not suffer himself to be separated, day or night.

Many, however, are the redeeming virtues of Welford. Unlike most topers, he is scrupulously nice in person and attire, nor was he ever known, even in the riotous excesses of intoxication, to ejaculate an oath or pronounce an indelicate word. Poor as he is, and is ever likely to remain with such unthrifty habits, his proud and techy spirit of independence will not suffer him to lie under obligations of any sort, and he has been known to remain in prison for weeks rather than solicit pecuniary assistance, even from parties

who would have been delighted to tender it, and from whom he might have received it without the smallest degradation. Good offices of any kind must be rendered covertly, or managed with infinite address, for he resents favors as other men do injuries.

Desponding in disposition, and leaning towards misanthropy in his opinions, Welford is yet fond of society, and convivial even to excess; but he seems to turn towards his fellows to get rid of himself, and has recourse to a forced hilarity, or to the oblivion produced by wine, to conquer his constitutional melancholy. To the same causes, probably, may be attributed his fondness for flowers, and for animals of all sorts. A little garden at the back of his humble lodgings in Duke Street, Westminster, enables him to gratify both propensities by cultivating a few roses, and feeding pigeons and puppies. Neither bird nor beast, however, will he keep in confinement, alleging that he has suffered too much from imprisonment himself to inflict it voluntarily upon others.

Here, too, he keeps his large telescope and his scientific instruments, for he devotes his sober hours to astronomy, and even gives lectures upon that subject whenever his means are exhausted, and he has need of an immediate supply. His tipsy propensities would probably deter audiences from availing themselves of his astronomical lore; but he never lectures except in the provincial towns, where, his infirmity being unknown, his success is proportioned to his unquestioned talents, musical voice, and ingratiating appearance.

In his strange and somewhat impertinent letter Welford alludes to the cruelty of his parents, thus confirming the suspicion I have long entertained that some mystery attaches to his birth; but upon this subject he will not bear questioning. As to his attempted disparagement of my position and my prospects, it is mere vulgar envy and jealousy —the old story of the Fox and the Grapes. "I see your pride through the holes in your cloak," said Plato to a brother philosopher, who affected a sordid raggedness; so may I well say to this penniless moralist, when he pretends to set himself above me, and talks of my being entitled to his compassion. Poor, *poor* man! *I* pity *you!*

Had I been studying contrasts I could hardly have hit upon a more complete antithesis to the foregoing, both in spirit and in style, than the following epistle from my quondam tutor.

"Sigismund Hoffman to Mark Hawkwood, Greeting,

"My dear pupil—I mean my dear young friend,

"Me, whom you have so oft accused of a Lethean obliviousness, when, in my rapt rambles with Ovid, Virgil, or Theocritus beneath mine arm, I came not back in time to carve the dinner joint for my expectant scholastikoi; me must you henceforth acquit of all forgetful tendencies, for, lo! this is the morning of your twenty-first birthday, and behold I am in my study before the sun, inditing to you my felicitations and congratulations, as the Romans phrase it, or wishing you a good angel, as an ancient Greek would have said. To these social and cheerful southerns, and not to the cold and stern genius of the Saxons, must we recur for all phrases of benevolent aspiration. Accept them, nevertheless, my dear Mark! in all the languages with which I am conversant, believing that, though they may come in many tongues, they proceed but from one heart, and that heart unalterably attached to thee.

"Although with sincerity, not without fear and trembling do I offer them. Great wealth, great influence, perhaps great distinctions, await you—and all these are great temptations. Oh! take heed lest you fall. From those to whom much has been given much will be required; a strict account must you render of your talents, in every sense of that word. A good christian has it been my paramount object to make you; this endeavor of your poor preceptor let not wealth and the world annul. When I reflect that our Saviour assumed the station, and wore the garb of comparative poverty; that all his principal coadjutors and ministers were poor men; that the gospel, while it is filled with threatenings and warnings to the rich, breathes the sweetness of hope and consolation to the humble and the needy—I repeat that I tremble for the fortune-favored Mark Hawkwood.

"Neither do Pagan histories and records inspirit me, but

rather tend to corroborate my misgivings—for you cannot have forgotten the letter from Amasis, King of Egypt, to his friend Polycrates, given by Herodotus (iii. 40).

"Me you will not suspect of imitating the base selfishness of the Egyptian monarch, even were I not fortunately placed so near to the ground that I can neither fall myself nor be dragged down by the misfortunes of a friend; but to the over-prosperous Polycrates your own fate so nearly approaches, that I would counsel you in all seriousness to cast into the open sea of oblivion the Sardonyx of your prides, your passions, your luxurious habits, if ever you should find yourself attaching too much value to them. God grant that you may never yield to their corrupting influences! I believe not that you will, but I would guard one whom I love so well, even against hypothetical dangers. Religion, virtue, simple and natural pleasures, literature, and, above all, the classics—these are delights, of which fortune cannot deprive you, and which a wise man will, therefore, value more then all her fickle and ephemeral lavishings. Heavy, though golden, is the crown she has placed upon your head; and I would remind you that he who walks the most uprightly always carries his burthen the best; a dictum equally true in its figurative and literal sense. Dixi, Vale! As a christian minister I will not say, pursue your course *auspicio fausto*, nor *auspicibis Diis*, nor *benigno Jovis astro*, but *Auspice Christo*.

Iterùm, Iterùmque vale,

SIGISMUND HOFFMAN."

Have I not called this letter an antithesis to its predecessor? Ay, in manner as well as feeling—for Hoffman is a kind, simple-hearted creature—but not so marked a contrast in its matter, both of wealth writers still harping upon the vanity and the instability of fortune. All men, I see, are equally philosophical in decrying what they have not got, and can never hope to obtain. Envy! envy! manifest and avowed in Welford, unconsciously latent in Hoffman. What have I to do with Polycrates—with ring-enamored favorites of the wheel-supported goddess, or with selfish and superstitious kings of Egypt? Adzooks! one would think I was a gambler, suddenly enriched by hazard, and as

likely, therefore, to be impoverished by the next throw of the dice, instead of the inheritor of a laboriously-acquired fortune, and the successor to a safe, long-established business. "These tedious old fools!" exclaimed Hamlet. What would he have said "had he the motive and the cue for passion that I have," in being schooled and catechised by tedious *young* ones?

Turn we now to the fairer, but not less jealous sex, and let us place two rival mammas in juxtaposition. What an admirable *pendant* does one of these extracts form to the other. Punning Jack Taylor would say that they ought to make a match; for that is their object. After the usual congratulations on my brilliant prospects, thus writes the crafty mother of Augusta Maynard:—

"What has come to my daughter I know not; but reserved and guarded as she usually is in discoursing of young men, she can talk of nothing latterly but your elegant appearance, and the becomingness of your archery dress, at the meeting of the Toxopholites, at Blackheath. Your manner of drawing the bow, and the gracefulness of your attitude, she declares to have been quite unrivalled, adding that her heart quite fluttered when she learnt that you had won the second prize. To a mother there can be no harm in revealing these matters, but I ought not, perhaps, to repeat them. Of course they will not go any farther.

"Poor Fanny Hartopp! have you heard that she is going to marry young Ned Simmons, the Cocket-writer, in the Custom House? a wild fellow, I fear, and with very little business. But what *could* she expect? Not a guinea of fortune, nor ever likely to have, and some of her connections, as I have been given to understand, quite discreditable. Poor thing! I wish her well, with all my heart."

And thus, in a ludicrously similar strain, does the other mamma—the worthy Mrs. Hartopp—wind up her felicitations: "What a charming night we had at the last City assembly! Fanny never passed such a delightful time, she says; but then, to be sure, she never had such a partner before! It isn't your dancing, she tells me—though she admires that particularly—but your wonderful powers of conversation that render you such an enviable partner. Poor dear! she has been rather low and pensive ever since,

and has asked me several times whether you mean to go to the next. Do you, and can you get me a ticket for my son William? If so, perhaps you will call: we shall be delighted to see you.

"Miss Maynard, they say, is going to obtain her wish, after all, by being married to an offshoot of nobility, a rakish young man, who wants her money, I suppose, to pay some of his debts. With her violent temper he must submit to be thoroughly henpecked, or he will have no peace of his life. After all, it is, perhaps, the best choice for her, since she professes to despise citizens, and has often declared that she could never be happy with a husband in business. What presumption for one born and bred within the sound of Bow bells!"

Not one word do I believe of all this jealous tittle-tattle, except the assertions that bear reference to myself. These maternal Machiavels! Never is their immorality so corrupt and shameless as when it wears the mask of some virtue. It is their duty to make advantageous settlements for their daughters. The end sanctifies the means: and evil-speaking, lying, and slandering, are but proofs of affection, and exercises of motherly adroitness and vigilance. Precious doctrine truly! Do they take me, too, for a simpleton, a gull, a gudgeon, that I am to be so easily caught? Worthy mother, and most undesigning daughters! In vain do ye set your traps and bait your hooks. I detect all your manœuvres, and defy all your cunning machinations.

Said I that such a register as mine might hereafter conduce to improvement? I doubt it. Dr. Barnard, Dean of Derry, maintains that no man improves after forty-five. With submission to the very reverend doctor, I venture to opine that our mental faculties, whatever may be the case with our corporeal organizations, seldom assume a more matured and perfect development than at the age of *twenty-one*. Law and custom, founded, doubtless, on the experience of ages, have decided that we then arrive at years of discretion, and are competent to undertake all the great du-

ties of life. What more can we achieve, or even desiderate?

But some prosy greybeard will twaddle about the advantages of experience. "Young man, young man! distrust your own judgment, and recollect that I have the experience of seventy years!" Ay, and the superannuation, the fatuity of seventy years, which renders your boast of no more value than the memory of a parish idiot. I, too, have the experience of age—of the world's old age—of the accumulated wisdom of bygone centuries, transmitted to me in the annals of historians, the writings of sages and philosophers; and all this I possess in vigor of my youth and intellect, while I can clearly understand and efficiently execute their suggestions. Dotage and feebleness are not very likely to form a just theory of life; and if they do, they cannot reduce it to practice. Old age may as well boast the superior puissance of its limbs as of its intellect. For all the real and available purposes of experience give me youth, give me the enviable age of twenty-one!

CHAPTER V.

1791.

"He who enters into a contest with Time," says Dr. Johnson, "has an adversary not subject to casualties;" an apophthegm of which I have already learnt the truth: for in the fussing and feasting, the greetings, visitings, and engagements incident to my coming of age, I find several months have slipt away, and a new year has made some progress since I have written a line in my biographical Chronicle. Such *lacunæ*, I foresee, will be of frequent recurrence, and probably of longer duration, for, being neither methodical nor industrious, I hate every thing that bears the semblance of a regular, stated, obligatory tie, even where it has my own actions or sentiments for its object. It is like being bound apprentice to one's-self. No;—it is by

throwing time away that we prove it to be our own. Independence is but a synonyme for idleness; and I should hardly feel myself my own master, were I compelled to make an entry weekly, monthly, or even yearly in this Record. If I continue to keep it at all, it shall be for present amusement, however it may conduce to future edification. If I drop it—so! For neither course will I give a reason; leaving it, nevertheless, to be surmised that when I say nothing, I have nothing to say.

Even now I might not so soon have resumed my pen, were it not for the jealous and malevolent insinuations about that fascinating little creature, Fanny Hartopp. Whether from a spirit of opposition or of independence I know not, but certain it is that all the machinations of my mother and others to prejudice me against her have only served to sharpen my curiosity as to her real character, and eventually to raise her in my estimation. That the mother is vulgar, forward, and a clumsy, transparent husband-hunter for her daughter, I willingly concede. How Fanny *came* to be her daughter, Heaven only knows; for if Heaven can write a legible hand writing, *she* is all innocence and simplicity.

To me that girl is a complete puzzle—an anomaly; for, though she has not one really handsome feature, she is without exception the most winning, captivating, bewitching, irresistible, loveable little sylph I ever beheld. How much more beautiful than beauty is a sweet countenance—that heavenly halo which irradiates the features with an emanation from the soul! A mingled amiability, intelligence, and affectionate tenderness constitute Fanny's unrivalled expression, which is heightened by a very characteristic peculiarity in her soft dove-like eyes. If they chance to encounter those of any other person, they beam with a look of benevolence almost amounting to fondness—a slight suffusion tinges her cheek—and a many-dimpled smile, like a soft flush of sunshine, animates the silent eloquence of her face. Nor is that regard withdrawn, from any sense of timid and mistaken bashfulness; for, although it says as plainly as looks can speak—you are a fellow-creature, and my heart yearns towards you with all the sympathy of an affectionate nature—she is too pure, too simple,

too innocent to dream that there can be any harm in conveying such a sentiment through the eyes.

Whence comes it that although I have noticed this demeanor to be invariable towards others, yet, if her eyes accidentally encounter mine, they are immediately withdrawn, and cast upon the ground? Poor girl! I suspect that her feelings in my case are of too deep and tender a nature to be entrusted to her eyes. She fears they may reveal too much; she dares not trust the secret of her susceptible heart to their guardianship. If my conjecture be true, if I have indeed awakened her sensibilities, it has been involuntary on my part, and I should regret it the more because it can only cause her pain and disappointment.

Fanny, I must confess, is exactly the confiding, fond, gentle, appealing, feminine sort of girl that I should like in a wife; one who would be always looking up to a husband for love and protection, not competing with him for intellectual pre-eminence, still less contending with him for authority: but as to my marrying the penniless daughter of a junior partner in a second-rate house, the idea is too preposterous. I do not wish to depreciate Fanny when I say that I know my own value *rather* too well!

And yet what a wife, what a mother, Fanny *would* make! In the latter capacity, perhaps, she might be too fond, too indulgent. It may appear a fantastical or false criterion, but I am mainly influenced in judging of a girl's character from her behavior to children. At the very sight of infants or young folks, Fanny's dimpled cheeks, and fondling eyes, and beaming smiles, seem actually to run over, in obedience to the yearnings of her affectionate heart. Nor is this confined to an admiration of beauty, such as one might bestow upon a painting or a statue, and which often passes for tenderness—still less is it limited to the well-born and the well-dressed, the picturesque-looking scions of gentility—for I have seen Fanny, unable to withstand the loving impulse, snatch up a little unembellished brat in the public walks, and half smother it with kisses. Her's is the homage of a maternal heart to the undeveloped blossoms of nature; an ebullition of that truly feminine feeling, which makes her look upon all children as her own.

From the idea, however, of her being thrown away upon

Ned Simmons, the cocket-writer, I cannot help recoiling with a deep repugnance; nay, with an unspeakable loathing. I hate that little, smart, flippant vulgarian; and I was delighted when Mrs. Hartopp assured me, in answer to my interrogatories, that there was not a shadow of foundation for the report. The art of concealing art seems to be a very rare one, and yet how many people imagine themselves proficients in it! Not without difficulty could I avoid the rudeness of laughing in her face when this good lady, with a most unsuccessful attempt at looking unconscious, and of seeming to be totally innocent of all personal allusions, proceeded to inform me that her daughter was by no means anxious to marry, until she could meet with a suitor who, if he did not come *quite* up to her standard of imaginary excellence, should at all events bear a close resemblance to her *beau ideal* of a husband, which she forthwith proceeded to describe and depict by drawing a most minute and accurate likeness of myself—"a palpable hit, egad!"

Oh! what a relief and what a contrast it was to her loud tongue, and the coarseness of her manner, matter, and aspect, when, with a voice as soft as an oboe, and a face radiant and mantling with smiles, Fanny flitted into the room, and greeted me in a style of gentle and graceful, yet earnest cordiality. Her mother, with a boisterous, open-throated cachination, repeated the rumor of her marriage to Ned Simmons—a statement which excited the risible faculties of the daughter also—but, heavens! what a contrast! *Her* laugh was silvery and jocund as a chime of bells at a fairy wedding—almost the only laugh I have ever heard which was spontaneous and hearty, without the smallest intermixture of vulgar vehemence; for, though many ladies like mirth, there are very few whose mirth is *lady-like*.

"Ned Simmons," said I, thinking that I might now safely abuse him—"Ned Simmons is precisely the sort of man that I abominate—a little, low-bred, pert, flashy, second-hand Birmingham buck, who, with a showy chain and seal hanging from each fob, carries his bell-crowned, narrow-rimmed hat on one side, to show off to full advantage the powder and pomatum of his best whisker, wears three or four gay-colored satin under-waistcoats of a morning, rises on his toes, cocks up his chin in the air, and, as he walks

jauntily along, slaps his topped boot with a smart silver-twisted rattan. These are the Jackadandies, Israelitish or Christian, whom one sees smirking and dangling about the door of the Royalty Theatre, or of the Bermondsey Spa—whipper-snappers, who—"

"Nay, nay," interposed Fanny, "if all this be directed against poor Ned Simmons, I cannot hear any more, for he has many redeeming points about him that lift him out of his vulgarity—ay, even out of his topp'd boots. Not only does he support his widowed mother and three sisters, but he makes their home happy by his invariable, though, perhaps, not very refined, cheerfulness."

"This does not impart any gentility to his manners," said I; "nor does it improve the fashion of his Cheapside-looking coat."

"With me it does," resumed Fanny. "As Desdemona saw the Moor's complexion in his mind, so do I look at Ned's costume through the embellishing medium of his domestic virtues. With a fashionable, heartless rake I should reverse the process, and see nothing in his modish and elaborate coxcombry but vulgarity in disguise."

As I had dressed myself that morning with more than ordinary care, and had been making a little parade of my recent dissipation, I should not have quite relished this remark, but that I had recently been so surfeited with compliments as to relish even *an appearance* of candor. I felt flattered in not being flattered. Besides, no man's self-love is really hurt, and I doubt whether any girl's regard for him is really diminished, by the insinuation of his being a well-dressed rake.

"In short, then," I resumed, "you survey modes through morals, and could not admire the handsomest or best dressed man in the world, unless his character were spotless."

"Nay," replied Fanny, mantling with dimples, "I said not *spotless*, in which case I should find, I fear, but few subjects for admiration. I am no Puritan, and it is very difficult to ascertain real character in this age of mental masquerade; but I do not think that I could permanently admire any man whom I could not permanently respect and approve."

Whatever was intended by this remark, I took it, know-

ing she admires me personally, as a great compliment to my morals, a fact which was confirmed by her downcast eyes as she finished her speech—for men invariably show their admiration by looking *at* its object, women by looking *from* it. To relieve her evident embarrassment, I requested her to sing me a song which I had sent to her a few weeks before. It was written by myself, and had been set to music by Leoni. Glorious as it is to hear a fair songstress "warbling immortal verse to Tuscan air," I like not the *verse* to be Tuscan, for so few pronounce Italian correctly, and so few can catch its meaning when pronounced, that the poetry and the sentiment are lost, and the mouth is only an addition to the instrumental music—the best of which is a merely sensual pleasure. In listening to English, on the contrary, we can enjoy the beauty of the poetry and the sentiment—the adaptation of the music to the words, and the sympathetic feeling of the singer; we combine intellectual and moral delight with that of the sense; and, gratifying at the same moment the head, the heart, and the ear, enjoy perhaps the most exquisite treat of which our mingled nature is susceptible.

With what grace and good humor does Fanny always take her seat at the harpsichord the moment she is requested, and what a pleasure it is to gaze upon her fair round arms and hands, so full of dimples that they actually seem to be smiling at you as she plays! It might have been fancy, but I could not help imagining that there was a more than usual pathos—a tremulousness, as if the tones came from her very heart of hearts, as she warbled,

When twilight's parting flush
  Turns to purple shadows dim,
And the sea, with gentle hush,
  Breathes a dulcet vesper hymn,
'Tis sweet to hear the breeze
  Join the lullaby above—
But oh! more sweet than these
  Is the voice of one we love.

'Tis sweet to wake in June
  To the skylark's matin lay,
To hear the thrush at noon
  Pouring music from the spray;
At eve to lend our ear
  To the wooing of the dove;
But naught so sweet and clear
  As the voice of one we love.

Although, when years are flown,
A change of scene or lot
Each other cherished tone
From our memory may blot,
A sound there is that yet,
Whatever change we prove,
We never can forget,
'Tis the voice of one we love.

Fanny's is neither a very fine nor a very cultivated contralto (the quality of voice to which I have always given a decided preference), but, like her face, it is made charming by its expression; while it possesses a simplicity, an ease, an apparent spontaneousness, which give you the notion that her warbling, like that of a bird, is but the involuntary outpouring of her feelings. She sang this song divinely. There must be something, however, in the words, for, when Guy Welford adapted some stanzas of Lady Craven's to the same music, they did not sound half so well, spite of his delicious voice.

Fanny, it must be confessed, is a most captivating little creature, and I should say that she was perfectly artless and unaffected, did I not know that all unportioned girls, especially in the society of such an acknowledged *catch* as myself, must be hollow, and designing, and manœuvring, and husband-hunting, from the very nature of their position. Needless are my mother's warnings against their siren wiles. Not to me will belong the blame should poor Fanny lose her own heart in trying to entrap mine. Perhaps my frequent visits may subject me to the imputation of being a dangler, a Philanderer; but am I to exclude myself from all female companionship because the dear creatures, whenever I encounter them, think fit to spread their snares for me, and, like the nymphs of Calypso playing with Cupid, are made to suffer for their amusement?

In leaving the house, which faces the west side of Tower Hill, I crossed that wild-looking, open, ragged, civic Common, whose aspect combines such a mixture of moral and material picturesqueness. The scattered trees and patches of grass—the piles of dirty, irregular, old-fashioned buildings—the sound of martial music from the weather-beaten moat-encircled Norman fortress, on whose walls the centinels were pacing—the forest of masts seen through every opening in the direction of the river—all these crowd-

ed objects, so varied in their aspect and character, were yet in some kind of keeping with the living picture presented by the groupes upon the Hill itself, which, in this very heart of the metropolis, bore some resemblance to a country fair.

Conspicuous among the dispersed booths was that of a celebrated quack doctor, dispensing his medicines from an elevated platform to some miserable objects hired for the purpose, and enlarging on the miraculous properties of his nostrums to a gaping crowd below:—ginger-bread stalls, thimble-rig conjurers, carpet-beaters, tumblers, old clothesmen, and venders of lollipops, were intermingled with an awkward squad of soldiers headed by a drill-serjeant, parties of eager-looking women and children wending their way to see the lions in the Tower, and starting, somewhat awe-struck, at the roar that occasionally issued from their dens—knots of sailors gazing and laughing at every thing and nothing—together with a succession of promiscuous wayfarers, such as must be constantly supplied by so busy and so densely peopled a neighborhood.

While gazing upon this strange scene, I was startled by the words "Cousin Mark! is that you? I am delighted to see you:" and, looking round, I beheld my old schoolfellow, Matthew Plummer, wearing a low-crowned hat over his smug, powderless hair, square-toed shoes with little tiny buckles, and a brown coat with small brass buttons, of a most civic, or rather Southwarkian cut, betraying by its odor that he had just emerged from the neighboring tobacco-warehouses.

"Bless me!" he exclaimed, walking round and surveying me with a stare of admiration, "what a man of fashion you have become!—laced frills and ruffles—a plaited tail to the very bottom of your back—(you always had fine hair)—your natty coat half covered with scented powder—a couple of watches—an amber-headed cane!—Positively I should hardly have known you again, though you were ever the smartest of the smart at the Charter-House."

Taking my hand and shaking it with great cordiality, an action in which I was by no means a participant, he congratulated me on my having become a partner in the banking-house; adding, that he should have done so sooner, but

that, having suggested to his father the possibility of materially extending their business, the profits of which were now shared equally between them, he had been traveling for several months, forming new commercial connections, chiefly in Ireland, an object in which he had been so eminently successful, that he might fairly anticipate the realization of a handsome fortune in a very few years.

"I did not like to call upon you," he continued, "for you had pretty broadly intimated that my presence would not be acceptable, but I wanted to see you, for we have just been setting up in Guy's Hospital a statue of its founder, and are in want of a suitable Latin inscription for the pedestal, which you will perhaps be good enough to furnish, as you are such an excellent classical scholar. We had thought of applying to Mr. Bishop—the Merchant Taylors' Bishop—but I am sure you will do it quite as well, if not better."

That I felt flattered by this compliment to my Latinity I will not deny; but, as I immediately suspected the application to be a mere subterfuge for renewing an acquaintance which I am determined to drop altogether, I gave it a short and decided negative, and turned upon my heel in such an unceremonious manner as to discourage all future intrusions of a similar nature. In fact, I was pointedly rude to him, but I cannot help it. I hate Plummer; always did; and more so, because I am conscious that I behaved somewhat cruelly to him at the Charter-House.

Hatred may be the cause of injury in the first instance, but the injury always doubles the hatred. Nor is this unnatural; the detestation in such cases being merely a sort of self-justification for the wrong we may have inflicted, if indeed it be wrong to act upon an instinctive aversion, which would not have been implanted in our bosoms if we were not meant to exercise it. Such natural antipathies are but an anticipatory self-defence; perhaps a long-sighted sense of self-preservation, which is the first law of Nature.

How came such a stupid fellow as this Plummer to have any thing to do with Guy's statue and its inscription? Strange! that such a plodder should have had wit and energy enough suddenly to expand his father's trumpery busi-

tion into a large commercial concern that promises to enrich him in a few years. Well, indeed, may this be the case, if he is to receive half the profits. And what am I in the meanwhile? A nominal partner—but, in fact, a mere stipendiary, without a possibility of being enriched until my father dies, and he may live these twenty or thirty years—nay, more. Small, spare, sinewy men like him never die: they get such a habit of living that they can't leave it off.

He must be a poor, mean-spirited, despicable fellow, this Plummer, or he never would so tamely endure all the oppressions, slights, and contumelies which I have heaped upon him. Or, perhaps, he does feel them, and plays the hypocrite that he may circumvent me in some way, and so wreak his long-smothered revenge. Yes, yes, this is doubtless the clue to his pretended meekness. He will find that I know mankind rather too well to be very easily caught in so very palpable a trap. I repudiate his friendship, and defy his hostility.

Two capital dinners and several morning-visits at Alderman Maynard's have confirmed my admiration both of his cook and of his daughter Augusta. Yes, admiration is the word in the latter instance. She is not winning, ingraciating, bewitching, like Fanny Hartopp—she does not steal unconsciously and irresistibly into your good graces, and creep into your heart of hearts by almost insensible approaches. No; she strikes you suddenly and vehemently; but the first impression is the strongest—at least it has proved so in my case, though I still fully admit her to be one of the handsomest girls I have ever encountered. Her commanding figure, her aquiline nose, her somewhat proud-looking blue eyes, her dignified walk, her undeviating self-possession, the air of distinction, almost amounting to stateliness which characterizes her, have always appeared to me, fanciful as the idea may seem, to be in single accordance with the noble mansion in which she resides—a mansion of which

every feature attests the elevated taste, as well as the great wealth of its occupant.*

Even the bridling peacock, strutting up and down the stone parapet of the terrace during my last visit, and the richly-gilt harp flashing through the trelliswork of the summer-house where she had been playing it, seemed to harmonize with the sumptuous and majestic character of Augusta's beauty. Every thing surrounding her bespoke the presence and the power of wealth, no mean attraction to one who had, like myself, been educated in the reverence of riches.

What money must have been squandered by the founder of this mansion to purchase so spacious a site in so valuable a locality, and to rebuild all the surrounding houses, so that not a window should look towards his garden, and disturb its privacy! Few men are less susceptible than my-

* As these old abodes of the civic aristocracy, since the westward migration of their former proprietors, are now rapidly disappearing, it may not be uninteresting to give a brief description of the house in question, to the courtyard of which the great gates of a double *Porte-cochère* gave entrance from a narrow street. Without any claims to architectural beauty, the plain brick edifice had, nevertheless, an air of grandeur from its extent, its solidity, and its all-defying seclusion, even in the heart of the city; for, when the great gates were closed, it was completely isolated, and might almost have stood a siege. The principal portal opened upon a hall sixty or seventy feet long, terminating in a large glass door, through which might be seen the lofty trees of the garden beyond. From the middle of the hall you ascended the principal stairs, terminating on the first floor in a spacious picture-gallery, ornamented at the time in question by paintings of the Flemish masters, and communicating with a suite of numerous and handsome rooms.

The garden, which might be termed extensive, considering its situation, was bounded by an elevated terrace, ascended by a flight of stone steps, and shaded by a row of venerable lime-trees. At one end of the terrace stood a handsome summer-house, paved with colored marble; and beneath this, having an entrance door from the garden below, was a grotto, studded all over with shells, and decorated with two stone Cupids perched on the edge of a shell-shaped basin, from the centre of which a mimic *jet d'eau* threw up a slender column of water.

This may read like the description of most cockneyfied *Rus in urbe*; but its real beauty, when glowing with the freshness of spring, and the surprise of being ushered into such a green, spacious, and quiet seclusion from the noise and bustle of the surrounding city, effectually lifted it out of any common-place or vulgar associations.

Alas! for the deserted mansions of the civic magnates! After an interval of many years, this well-remembered spot was lately visited by the writer. *Ehen! quantum mutatus!* The northern *Porte-cochère* was enclosed and converted into a counting-house; the principal entrance was blocked up; the grand staircase had been pulled down to make space for new rooms; the whole building was parcelled out into counting houses and small apartments; the beautiful lime-trees had disappeared; the terrace and garden were covered with warehouses and outbuildings; the bustle of clerks and porters, and the creaking of cranes, were substituted for the stilly hum alluded to in the text. It was a melancholy scene, especially as it served to recal the former occupants, who, like the glory of the mansion, had now passed away for ever.—*Ed.*

self to impressions from inanimate objects—and as to sentiment and romance, I despise them both, yet must I confess that the sudden plunge from the deafening streets into this urban retreat, where, amid the perfume of flowers, and in the shade of overhanging trees, I heard nothing but the tinklings of the little fountain in the grotto, the twittering of birds, and the muffled hum of the multitudinous city, in the very core of which I sate secluded and embowered, invariably produced a most soothing and delicious effect upon my mind. A secret sense, perhaps, that the real *Genius Loci* was Plutus rather than Pan, may have contributed to this impression; nor is it unlikely that the sympathetic influence of Augusta Maynard, the great heiress, may have heightened it.

As we paced the terrace on my last visit, accompained by her friend Miss Ward, she alluded to a speech I had made a few nights before at the Ciceronians, of which a report had reached her.

"Can it be possibly true?" she inquired, "that in discussing the comparative advantages of wealth and poverty, you pronounced an opinion in favor of the latter?"

"Yes," I replied, "I like to make people stare, and one can display the most talent by defending the worst cause. The poor, they say, have no friends; but this is not the case, you see, with Poverty, for I gave my judgment in her favor."

"Your *judgment?*" smiled Augusta, with a significant accent on the word. "How *can* you judge of that which you have never known, and which I sincerely trust you never will know. If you merely wanted a scope for your ingenuity or eloquence, you did well, perhaps, to become the champion of poverty; but I suspect that few persons would be less willing than yourself to try the practical effect of your own arguments."

"Really I don't know," said I with an air of assumed nonchalance. "We seldom value that to which we have been accustomed from our birth; and you must be perfectly aware, as well as myself, that wealth does not always secure the happiness of its possessor." Here, I believe, I made an awkward attempt at a sigh.

"I know not any thing that will invariably *secure* hap-

piness," was her reply, "but wealth has at least one great and certain source of enjoyment unknown to Poverty—it can make others happy."

"Ay," cried the toady companion, "and few have proved this more often and more completely than Miss Maynard. The sums she gives away in charity alone would——"

"Nay," interposed Augusta, "it would be hypocrisy to say that I value riches solely on this account. No such thing. I like them for the power and the distinction that they confer, for the position they give us, for the enlightened society they enable us to command; nay, I will be so unsentimental, so selfish, if you will, as to confess that I like them for the personal luxuries, indulgences, and enjoyments which they place at my disposal. From my birth I have been accustomed to these; use is second nature; and I feel that I should not have philosophy enough to forego them, without a most bitter struggle."

"Then," said I, "you acknowledge wealth to be your master, whereas, I myself, without undervaluing its services, would still treat it as a slave. Opulence and affluence are pretty sounding words, and no mean accessories to a man's position: but I am vain enough to think that I could achieve distinction without their aid, and I had much rather be valued for my personal recommendations, than for the recommendations of my purse."

"But, do you think," asked Augusta, "that the world would take you at your own valuation? Be not so overweening: nothing of the sort ever occurs to a poor man. The English, as a money-making people, attach little value to the talents or even to the virtues which have failed to enrich their possessor. It was only yesterday that, in looking over a volume of Chaloner's Extracts, I was struck with an observation made by Montesquieu. 'Had I been born in England,' he says, 'nothing could have consoled me for not being rich, but in France I do not regret my mediocrity.' Depend upon it, he well understood the character of the English."

"That he did," sighed the companion, "and for my part I am sure I should regret mediocrity, or at least poverty, in any country of the world. Heaven knows what

would have become of me had I not met a benefactress whose generosity——"

A look of marked displeasure from the party about to be eulogized, immediately silenced the speaker, when Augusta, turning to me, exclaimed with a smile, "Confess, Mr. Hawkwood, that you have been maintaining a paradox, without feeling or believing it."

"If I confess the fact," I replied with a laugh, "may I safely throw myself on the mercy of the court, and hope for pardon? Your silence gives consent. Well, then, I cry *peccavi*. Presumptuous, indeed, must I have been, had I been in earnest, for, to question the glorious supremacy of wealth on this spot, and in your presence, were little less audacious than for an ancient Pagan to deny Diana at Ephesus."

"If the recantation is not more sincere than the compliment, I can hardly call this a confession."

"Nay, Miss Maynard, this is hardly fair; I must admit, however, that you have been more frank and straightforward than myself. You make no concealment of the high value that you attach to the possession of wealth. It may not be true, therefore," I continued, determined to discover whether any foundation existed for the rumor of her marriage, "it may not be true, although your own fortune would, probably, gratify all your wishes—that you are about to give your hand to a nobleman without a guinea."

"I know not," replied Augusta coloring, and drawing herself up with a look of some *hauteur*, "who may have invented this idle tale, but if I know myself, I am not likely to realize it. If I am to be taken at all, it shall be for myself, and not as an appendage to my money. It is not very probable that noblemen should seek me, and still less that I should seek them. No; it is honor enough to me to remain in the rank I have always occupied; and I had much rather be at the head of my own class, than at the foot of an aristocratic one."

"Hem!" thought I to myself—"the murder is out—the girl loves me—what can be broader or more manifest than this most significant hint—'the head of her own class'—precisely the position she would occupy if she were to marry me! She has too much dignity, too proud and coy

a spirit to confess the secret, but her looks as well as her words have suffered it to transpire."

Determined to obtain, if possible, still more conclusive evidence of this interesting fact, I made a slight encomiastic allusion to Fanny Hartopp, when her face became instantly suffused with an angry blush, and her humble companion lost not a moment in seeking to gratify her by a disparaging mention of her supposed rival in my affections. Thus I construed her officious interference, and I cannot doubt that my recent attentions to Fanny had formed the subject of their conversations. Augusta, however, too generous or too discreet to encourage such petty jealousy, defended Fanny, and even went so far as to honor her with an animated encomium. I doubt its sincerity, and I do *not* doubt the secret motives that prompted it. Still it was, like herself—handsome.

Augusta certainly possesses a dignified mind, which reconciles one to a certain degree of *hauteur* in her carriage and deportment. Not less certain is it that she has a decided predilection for me, and that such a face and figure, with such a fortune, are not unworthy even of *my* attention. And yet, though I admire her more, I cannot like her half so well as Fanny.

Fair damsels! I will not sing with Macheath—

> "How happy could I be with either,
> Were t'other dear charmer away,"

since I mean for the present to be happy, even while I reject ye *both*—

> "I will not my unhoused free condition
> Put into circumscription, and confine,"

either for the golden and majestic Augusta, or the portionless and fascinating Fanny. Enough that I have detected the secret of their hearts—that I see their object—and that I have too much knowledge, both of women and of the world, not to be proof against their wiles and their manœuvres.

Augusta is certainly clever. There was great knowledge of life, at least of English life, in the observation, that we seldom attach much value to the talents which have proved

valueless to their possessor. For classes of which the general lot is poverty, one feels compassion only; but for the poor individuals of a rich class, I myself have always entertained a profound—though of course an undeclared—contempt, proportioned to the depth of which has been my respect for the wealthiest among the wealthy. Were I even strictly to scrutinize my filial affection, I fear it might prove to be mainly based upon a deep sense of my father's great opulence. Pleasant as well as dutiful is this sensation, since it inspires a reversionary respect for myself.

CHAPTER VI.

1791—CONTINUED.

WHAT *can* have become of Gui Welford? For several weeks past, indeed I might say months, I have seen nothing of him, nor can any of his compotators and boon companions "prate of his whereabout." They tell me that they can gain no tidings of him at his lodgings, though the decrepit hag, whom he has left in charge of them, occasionally gets a letter from him, enjoining, in peremptory terms, the most unremitting attention to his flowers, birds, and animals, and enclosing the pecuniary means for keeping up his strange establishment. Probably a tipsy bout of longer continuance than usual retains him in some low purlieu, in which he would not wish to be recognized, and whence he does not choose to emerge until his fit shall have worn itself out, for it is one of his odd maxims that the best way to conquer your passions is to exhaust them, just as you may cure a runaway horse by giving him his head, and suffering him to pursue his wild course till he is thoroughly jaded. What singular infatuation! That an intellectual and refined man, and Welford is both when sober, should willingly, and even complacently, sink into companionship with low revellers, mountebanks, and merry-Andrews in obscure suburban pothouses, making it his pride

to be the vocalist and the Symposiarch of such a disreputable crew for weeks together, is one of those practical paradoxes for which there is no other method of accounting than by attributing it to temporary monomania.

Some months ago I encountered him and his inseparable companion Tycho in Cannon Street, when the latter, instantly recognizing me, ran towards me with a wagging tail, and a most intelligible look of welcome, as if anxious to make up our late quarrel. Less placable than his dog, Welford called him off by a single sound, which was instantly obeyed, and then, turning down a street, gave me the cut direct! What ludicrous insolence! and all for a supposed slight to his four-footed friend. And this, too, from a penniless fellow living by his wits, to a person in my position, and with my prospects! Ha! ha! ha! One can only laugh at such outrageous sanciness. And yet I feel piqued that a pauper should presume to affect to be independent of a partner in the house of Hawkwood. Shall I confess the truth? I have even been mortified sometimes at the independence of his dog. Moody, testy, and humorsome as his master, Tycho, if the choicest viands be offered him by my hand, or by that of any stranger, receives the tender as an insult, bares his formidable teeth, and says very plainly, both by his look and his snarl, "How dare you think me a subject for bribery and corruption?" Let the rejected delicacy pass into the hands of his master, and he immediately squats upon his hind quarters, gives two thumps upon the floor with his ponderous tail, and looks at the prize with an assenting expression, and a short affirmative bark; as much as to say I am willing to receive it from *you*, but even from you I scorn to solicit it by any undignified fawning.

Welford has been brought to my recollection from my wish to engage him in a party which he might have contributed to amuse by his conversational powers; or, at all events, by his vocal talents. It would have been gratifying to exhibit a man of such varied attainments as my friend; but there are some people so wayward, waspish, and perverse, that they will not suffer you to do them a service. However, we had a very pleasant, perhaps a pleasanter party without him.

As the watch of which Alderman Watson had been rob-

had at Covent Garden Theatre, in the manner already related, contained within the case a miniature of his mother, painted by Crevetti, he had used every endeavor to recover it, but hitherto without success. Barrington, the noted pick-pocket, whom he had good reason to suspect as its purloiner, was now on board a transport ship in the river, about to take his departure for Botany Bay, for an exactly similar offence committed at Ascot Races, wherein Mr. Hare Townsend had been the sufferer. It occurred to the alderman that he might obtain some clue to the stolen property by questioning the suspected thief, and, as I had been present at the time of his loss, he invited me to accompany him. After visiting the transport, which had dropped some way down the river, it was agreed that we should return to dine upon white bait at Greenwich, an arrangement which quickly drew several brother aldermen into the party, and procured from the Lord Mayor the loan of his own barge and watermen, together with a small band of music; so that we presented altogether a very gay and dashing appearance. O rare occurrence for an English party of pleasure! the weather proved bright and propitious; we ourselves, although we had five aldermen aboard, were sprightly and hilarious; the musicians enlivened the intervals of our laughter with merry tunes, or we had a song from Arrowsmith of Vauxhall, who had been engaged for the purpose. I myself made several capital jokes; our watermen were vigorous and willing, and the tide and wind were favorable, so that I was hardly conscious of our *rapid* progress down the river, until, upon looking back from the deck, I saw Greenwich behind me, and the mighty metropolis beyond it, sending up into the air innumerable spires, domes, and cupolas from a superincumbent vastitude of smoke, tinged by the sun with a yellow wax-like hue:—

Greenwich! thy gilded fane afar,
Cresting the foliage, like a star
Flash'd rearward in the sun;
Beyond—but half reveal'd to eye,
Veil'd in her hazy panoply,
Still fading as our way we won,
The towers and cupolas were seen
Of England's and of Europe's queen,
So dim and yet so grand withal,
That to the musing it might seem
Some visionary capital,
Traced in the clouds at evenfall,
Or conjured in a dream.

From this reverie I was aroused by the eager cries of many voices, when, upon turning round, I found we were alongside the transport, from every window and porthole of which, as well as from the crowded deck, were thrust hundreds of inquiring faces, vociferating in every variety of thrilling anxiety, "Who is it for? who is it for?" It seems that our approaching barge had been recognized as the Lord Mayor's, and from the gay and triumphant mode of our rowing up to them, with colors flying and music playing, a cry ran rapidly through the ship that we were hurrying towards them with a pardon for some of the convicts. As the vessel was merely waiting for its sailing orders, the mistake was natural enough, especially to condemned men, ready to snatch at anything to which they could attach a hope of escape. Not for a long time shall I forget those impatient, those irrepressible, those furious cries, those passionate and convulsed countenances as we ascended the vessel's side; nor the blank and altered looks, the sullen and scowling expression, and the curses, not loud but deep, with which the grim-visaged rogues saluted us when they learned the real nature of our errand. Nothing more strikingly illustrates the wonderful mobility of the human countenance than a sudden transition from hope to despair, the two most exciting passions of our nature; and here I had an opportunity of witnessing that change upon every variety of character. To me it seemed that the effect was more signal where the parties relapsed into their former calm despondency, than where they vainly endeavored to show their defiance of disappointment by a forced sardonic laughter, or by venting their rage in maledictions.

Barrington, however, upon being introduced into the cabin, betrayed very little emotion of any sort. Tall and thin, and gentlemanly in appearance and deportment, spite of the convict uniform which he had been compelled to assume, he bowed politely to our party, telling us, in a soft and gentle voice, that he anticipated our purpose, as he never could believe that government would send a person of his talents and habits to Botany Bay, in company with such a set of low-lived blackguards.

Not without difficulty could we undeceive him as to our real object, and then for the first time did I perceive

a flush pass over his features, and a slight twitching in the muscles of his face. It was but momentary, for that indomitable determination to rise above his situation—an ambition, which, by prompting all his depredations, had brought him to his present disgraceful plight, sustained him, and made him even affect an air of philosophical indifference to all the frowns of fate. From the moment that he began speaking, I had been puzzling myself to recollect upon what previous occasion I had heard his low pleasing voice, and I at length remembered the fracas with the smugglers some years before, when I had nearly lost my life upon Blackfriars Bridge, and had been rescued by a soft-spoken stranger. On my mentioning the circumstance, he immediately confessed himself to have been my preserver on that occasion; interrupting me, however, with a smile when I said that I should ever feel indebted to him, he exclaimed:—"Nay, sir, you owe me nothing, for, as it has always been my maxim, that short reckonings make long friends, I took good care to pay myself at the time by easing you of your watch and purse. Your life was saved as many have been lost, by a gold chain; for, had I not caught a glimpse of your's as you lay prostrate upon the ground, I should hardly have been philanthropic enough to drag you to the footpath."

As I had no reason to doubt the truth of his declaration, I could not help shuddering at the thought that the most valuable lives may depend upon accidents of so trivial a nature. What a frightful thing is a mob and a riot, where the richest man has no more, nay, perhaps, less chance of escape than a mere pauper!

In answer to Alderman Watson's inquiries, Barrington declared that he could give him no clue to the recovery of his valuable gold watch, as, in all cases where his booty was of too marked or valuable a nature to be easily sold in England, he wrote to a Dutch Jew, who immediately came over to treat with him for the purchase. "For instance," he added, evidently taking a pride in the relation of his exploits, "when I went to court on the king's birthday, dressed as a church dignitary, a character, by-the-bye which I sustained remarkably well, and succeeded in cutting off the diamond orders of a knight of the Bath and a

knight of the Garter, do you think I could have sold them in London? No, no; they found their way to Amsterdam in less than a fortnight. You have, doubtless, heard of Lady Cust's cleverness. To secure her valuable diamond buckles, she had them stitched to her shoes. Well, sir, I followed her one night out of Ranelagh; a rush was made by the link-boys and the servants with their flambeaux, in the midst of which my confederate lifted her for a moment from the ground; I whipped off her shoes in a trice, her ladyship had the pleasure of walking through the mud to her carriage, and the buckles were quickly on the way to Amsterdam. The diamond buttons that I snipped from Prince Orloff's coat at Covent Garden would have traveled the same road, had I not found that I could make a better bargain by returning them. I boggled that affair sadly; and as to Alderman Le Mesuriers at Druty Lane, I confess that I am quite ashamed of it."

"When you were discharged from the Hulks," said Alderman Watson, "owing to the kind interference of Mr. Erskine and Mr. Campbell, may I inquire what became of you, for you disappeared for several months."

"I was laboring under a complaint, Mr. Alderman, to which I dare say *you* will never be subjected. I had acquired too much fame; I was too well known in London; so I set out upon my country travels, and I don't know that I ever passed a pleasanter or more profitable time. Judge of the variety of company I saw when I tell you that I journeyed and picked up a handsome livelihood in the different characters of a mercantile rider, the keeper of an E. O. table, a quack doctor, and a reverend missionary, in which last I enjoyed a sort of sinecure, people being more anxious to pick their own pockets to fill mine, than I was to save them the trouble, so that my fingers got quite out of practice. In none of these characters did I ever betray myself by a want of ability to support them. How should I, when I had passed muster at court as a most orthodox and unsuspected bishop!"

"And now, Mr. Barrington," said Alderman Trecothick, in his usual patronizing and pompous manner, "allow me, sir, to inquire why, with your education and talents, and

gentlemanly deportment, you ever betook yourself to the low and disreputable calling of a pickpocket."

"Will you allow me to ask, Mr. Alderman, why I was ever born a poor man with a rich man's tastes? why I ever found myself without a shilling in my pocket whilst I wanted to spend guineas? Had you been placed in my situation, and I in your's, will you, can you undertake to say that we should not have changed fates as well as fortunes? Not you! you rich fellows are none of you half grateful enough for the guineas which, by removing temptation, have saved some of you from the Hulks and Botany Bay, and, perhaps, from the gallows."

"God bless me!" ejaculated the Alderman, evidently not relishing such an uncomfortable suggestion; "do you mean to say that I, or my worthy friend, Mr. Alderman Watson, or Mr. Deputy Birch——"

"Ay, Mr. Alderman, even so. I do mean to say that money is morality, and that the mammon of unrighteousness, which I used to denounce when I was acting the missionary, ought, in truth, to be called the mammon of righteousness, since it is the best security for honesty. *Give* me guineas, and I have no need to filch them."

"But the disgrace of being a common pickpocket!" persisted the Alderman.

"I flatter myself," said Barrington, proudly "that some of the gentlemen now present will acquit me of being altogether a *common* pickpocket; and, as to the mere act, why the whole world is divided into pickpockets, legal and illegal. What are the polite smugglers of both sexes?—what are the titled Greeks, with their Faro tables in May-fair?—what are the blacklegs at the gaming-houses, or on the turf?—what are the ladies who cheat at cards, or the gentlemen who will take in their own father in the sale of a horse, but so many unprosecuted pickpockets?—what are quacks and regular doctors, who take fees when they know they cannot cure?—what are lawyers, who set people by the ears for the sake of plundering them?—or parsons, who take tithes for duties which they do not perform, but so many pickpockets? Nay, what are our merchants, and dealers, and shop-keepers, in this commercial country; men whose every-day business it is to take every possible ad-

vantage, both of buyers and sellers, but pickpockets? They sneak to the safe side of the law! I defy it—what is the difference between us? They are cowards and hypocrites; I am neither."

"A precious piece of sophistry truly," growled the Alderman. "Then in fact you consider yourself a superior character to myself and these worthy gentlemen."

"Unquestionably; you are legal pickpockets, I am an illegal one; and you outnumber me, which accounts for my being here."

A laugh from our party was the only reply to this saucy sally, when Alderman Watson, expressing his regret that our appearance had excited hopes which were doomed to disappointment, asked whether he had any immediate wishes that we had the power to gratify.

"I should feel eternally obliged to you," replied the convict, in a tone and with a look of much feeling, "if you could get me separated in any way from the scoundrels and blackguards with whom I am compelled to associate, and whose language and manners are so utterly disgusting to a gentleman. I am also most anxious to resume my own fashionable clothes."

Curious instance of the artifice and casuistry of the mind in the process of self-reconciliation! Barrington had actually wrought himself up to the belief that he was a superior person, a gentleman, an honest man cruelly ill-used in being thrown into a nest of thieves. Regretting his inability to procure any remission of his sentence in these respects, the Alderman generously prepared to offer him a few guineas, whereupon the superintendent apprized him that none of the convicts were allowed to receive money, but that he would take charge of it and deliver it to the prisoner on his arrival at Botany Bay. It was placed in his hands accordingly, when Barrington exclaimed, with a bitter smile, "Another legal pickpocket—you are all alike—all alike!" and walked out of the cabin with an air of offended dignity.

To me it was manifest, that in the whole of this scene he had been acting a part, endeavoring to impress us with a notion of his cleverness and superiority, not only as a pickpocket, but as an ingenious maintainer of paradoxes, just as

he had chosen the occasion of his trial for a flashy display of his oratorical powers. On his own account I should not have honored him with any notice in my chronicle, but it is by no means impossible that he may obtain some little share of future celebrity as the individual who rescued me from such an imminent danger, upon Blackfriars Bridge. Again must I notice upon what trifles the most important results sometimes depend. It is said that Sir Thomas Gresham took a grasshopper for his crest, because, when he was exposed in the fields in his infancy, the chirping of those insects drew the attention of a passenger, who rescued him from his danger. With the same feeling I ought to emblazon a watch-chain over my coat of arms. When I come to launch carriages of my own, and to have a fresh service of plate (my father's is quite antiquated), I may take this into consideration.

On returning along the deck, I noticed one of the convicts seated upon a reversed tub, and smoking a pipe with the same air of imperturbable phlegm which had excited my attention when our first appearance had thrown his companions into such a fever of excitement.

"How comes it, my poor fellow," I inquired, "that you sit here so unconcerned? Had you no thought that we might be bringing you a pardon?"

"Not I, for I haven't a friend in the world to ask for me."

"Then you have been spared the disappointment experienced by your companions?"

"I have not been spared much in this life," said the fellow, taking two or three careless puffs before he replied—"so little, indeed, that I have nothing further to fear."

"Have you not, then, the more to hope?"

"No; I have left off hoping, because I am sick of it—which is the worst of all sicknesses. I have become indifferent to every thing; to life itself."

"This fellow should be watched," whispered Alderman Trecothick; "or he will be throwing himself overboard during the voyage."

"Not I," replied the man, who had overheard the remark; "though I don't care about life, I am equally indifferent to death. One is not worth the trouble of preserv-

ing, the other is not worth the trouble of seeking;" and he resumed his smoking with a look of fixed and dogged stoicism that seemed to attest the sincerity of the sentiment.

This strange being, I was informed by the superintendent, had once been in decent circumstances, had run through a course of reckless dissipation, and, after having been ruined by a lawsuit, had become usher at a school, and subsequently clerk to the lawyer who had been the original adviser of his suit. Defending himself upon the fanciful plea that he was only stealing back his own, he defrauded his employer, an offence for which he had been sentenced to transportation. "As he writes a good hand," continued my informant, "and is a remarkably quiet, steady, silent fellow, we employ him as a sort of clerk and deck-watchman, an office for which he deems himself well paid by the privilege of smoking a pipe whenever he is on duty."

The ancients, thought I to myself, would have honored this man as a philosopher of the Stoic school. I compared his situation and prospects to my own—what a contrast! The interview of Alexander and Diogenes occurring to me, I was half tempted to address this impassive convict in the well-known words which the conqueror applied to the tenant of the Tub. Poor fellow! his countenance is now before me. Even its stern resignation was frightful. His face was a cemetery of bad passions; the crater of an extinct volcano: its repose was that of a violent death.

Our dinner at Greenwich went off admirably. The white bait were in prime order; we had brought the wines with us; and Alderman Watson had been our purveyor, a sufficient eulogium upon their quality. Arrowsmith sang us some capital songs; we were all true and loyal Pittites, and drank, with three times three, confusion to the Jacobins and democrats, who had lately dined together at the Crown and Anchor, to celebrate the anniversary of the French revolution, all pledging ourselves that we would never knowingly sit at table with any one of the party who had been thus degraded.* I proposed the health of the Duke of York,

* As the worst horrors of the French Revolution had not then been perpetrated, and many wise and good men in this country hailed with welcome the first appearance of the day-star of liberty, as it shed its long-eclipsed light "o'er the vine-covered hills and gay valleys of France," we find it difficult to believe, at the present moment, that the madness of party-spirit, even in its post-prandial ebullitions, should ar-

and happiness to him in his approaching marriage. Alderman Trecothick, who is a large holder of East India stock, gave "the speedy downfall of Tippoo Saib:" our chairman gave "the safe deliverance of the French King from the hands of his rebellious subjects." In short, so many bumpers were filled and emptied under the influence of our own good qualities and those of the different wines, that when we re-embarked we were rather more uproarious than became so worshipful an assemblage. Two notices from our waterman, that we should lose the tide if we did not start, had been answered by a unanimous shout for another bottle, so that the shades of evening had gathered around us, when we at length embarked.

In the morning, I had noticed the towers and domes of London, emerging here and there from the dim smoke, like vessels riding upon a murky sea and catching the rays which could not penetrate, although they gave a reddish hue to the fuliginous atmosphere beneath them. My attention was now aroused by a much more singular appearance in the sky, which, although the night was moonless, was lighted up with a fierce, unnatural glare. Sparks and ignited flakes were soon seen ascending into the air; and it now became manifest that a great fire was raging in some part of the city. Selfishness, I suppose, is as universal as it seems to be natural, for, instead of compassionating the sufferers, whoever they might be, each began to calculate the probabilities or possibilities of his own loss. On comparing notes, it appeared that the whole party were pretty well insured; but, alas! some held shares of one Fire Office, some of another, and might thus be damaged at secondhand, although unscathed in the first instance. Our various conjectures were soon converted into certainty, for, on hailing a boatman, we learnt that the Albion Mills were on fire, when it was agreed, as our barge could not pass the bridge, that we should land at Billingsgate, get into a couple of wherries above bridge, and proceed to Blackfriars. This we did accordingly, and, as I had never before witnessed a spectacle of this nature, I was not a little impressed

sume so rabid a character. We now contemplate political movements in France with a comparative toleration, which, it is to be hoped, will ultimately extend its moderating influence to our party differences at home.—*Ed.*

with its melancholy grandeur. In approaching the city, the whitened Tower of London reared itself out of the surrounding darkness with a spectral ghastliness, while the burnished beacon, on the summit of the Monument, flashed ominously in the air, as if to remind the inhabitants that London had once already been destroyed by fire. The illuminated dome of St. Paul's hung in the sky like an eclipsed sun, surrounded by spires, and turrets, and pinnacles, in the lower space, which seemed to lift up their terror-stricken faces and to look out of the black night, as if to inquire why their dark rest had been disturbed. The fitful gleam upon the shipping, the flushing of the river, which bore the hue of molten copper, the burnished housetops, many of them covered with spectators, the confused hurrying of boats, the irradiated faces and eager voices of the crowd upon Blackfriars bridge, and the furious crackling and blazing and hissing of the devouring element, as with its fiery fangs it seized, and shook, and tore to pieces the solid timbers of the massive pile, and then leaped triumphantly to the adjoining buildings, constituted a scene not less terrible than magnificent. How fortunate that the river prevented its extension to the heart of the metropolis, and how humiliating to human pride to reflect that a single spark may, in a single night, destroy what it has required many ages and many generations to build up!

As I walked home I recalled Seneca's laconic account of the total demolition of Lyons by a dreadful conflagration. "Inter magnam urbem et nullam nox una interfuit!"

CHAPTER VII.

1792.

The mystery of Guy Welford's long disappearance is at length solved. I have had a visit from Hammond, one of his boon companions, who, with no little difficulty, has succeeded in ferreting out the place of his retreat, and none need now wonder that his seclusion has been so pro-

fect. This Hammond, a poor portrait painter, lodging somewhere in the purlieus of Soho, and picking up a sorry livelihood from cheap sitters, has really some good points in his character, one of which is his attachment to Welford, whom he calls his living Vandyck, from his striking resemblance to a portrait of Charles I. by that artist, and whose incarceration he seems the more bitterly to regret on that account.

"What a pity, sir," he exclaimed, "that such a fine head should be shut up in the Fleet, where there is nobody to admire it, and where, even if they did, they could hardly find a good light in which to view it. Those large, melancholy, dark eyes, the curling hair parted on the forehead, the half aquiline nose, the sedate mouth, the oval outline of the face, the expression so grave and intelligent when serious, so gracious and pleasant when he smiles! Sir, he only wants a tuft on the chin, a ruff, a doublet, and a rapier, and you would swear that he had stepped out of a Vandyck frame."

"But you do not tell me what has become of him."

"Oh! what a glorious full length," continued the artist, not hearing or not heeding my remark, "could I paint of him, with his dog Tycho by his side!—Splendid head, sir, that Tycho! Half Danish, half English mastiff, fine mixture of power and repose; dignified when tranquil, and terrific when roused—good subject for a Schneider—and then the coloring——"

"But I want to hear about Welford, not about his dog."

"Well, sir, and don't they always go together? that's why I wish to have them on the same canvass—the reddish brown of the dog and the——"

"Pray, Mr. Hammond, give me to understand where you last saw Welford."

"Why, sir, you know the rich city-knight, Sir Gideon Higgins, lives at Hackney—sumptuous house—painting a family picture for him: sad screw—beat me down in price—seven children, all to be introduced. Lady H—— confined while the work was in progress, and now he wants me to throw in the baby in a lace-cap for nothing, because I agreed for a family picture."

"So far as I am concerned, you are throwing in the whole picture for nothing, since it brings me no nearer to Welford and his fate."

"Ay, that's what I was just coming to. Lad having recovered, and the painting being nearly c (it is a great deal too good for the money), Sir Gid a turtle-dinner to some of his brother-citizens—yo servant was asked that I might hear the opinio company upon the likenesses; and Guy Welfor might sing to them after dinner, Sir Gideon havi him a few days before at the anniversary of the A Dispensary. Touchy Guy Welford, I suspect, we have gone but that the knight, getting the hint gave a special invitation to Tycho. Well, sir, c ner, of course—plenty of turtle—all very agreeat ford particularly pleasant, till the ladies retired, chairman, after a variety of loyal toasts, which s afford prodigious satisfaction to his guests, if I m by their clamor, announced that the notorious Dr. had lately become his near neighbor, at Hackney, that he should never call upon him, and ended philippic against him by giving as a toast, "The ple of Birmingham, and may they always have Priestley sauce ready for all Jacobins and demoer

"This would hardly suit Welford, who is hims of science," said I.

"Suit him, sir! I wish you had seen the lightn eye, as, with a vehement dash of his hand upon he started up, exclaiming, 'Never will I drink su worthy toast, and never did I think that I should li it proposed in any society calling itself civiliz drunken ruffians who lately tore down the hous philosopher, and tossed his precious instruments into the flames, acted like what they were, a se and infuriated barbarians; but you, who are not —you who ought to know better, however gross may be your ignorance—you who are only fit—— en! I know not what you are fit for except the one another, and to that I most willingly consign saying, he made a stately half bow, and stalked c

* At this period men of de ent station could applaud a brutal rabb down the house of an eminent philosopher and philanthropist, merely his political opinions. It is well to recall such facts occasionally, tha warned by the past of the debasing influences of party-spirit, when it unchecked.—*Ed.*

room, just as Charles the First might have done, slowly followed by Tycho, who, plainly seeing that his master was offended with the company, glared back upon them with a subdued snarl, as much as to say, do not give either him or me any further cause of displeasure, or you may chance to rue the consequences. It was really a fine subject for a picture, wasn't it?"

"And Welford, I suppose, with his usual rudeness and impetuosity, rushed out of the house?"

"Why, sir, I should have thought he would, but he is really a queer fellow. After hurrying to the gate, he must have recollected that the ladies had given him no cause of offence, for he returned, made his way to the drawing-room with an unruffled air, sang several songs, was pronounced a charming person by the whole coterie, and finally withdrew when he found that the gentlemen were about to make their appearance."

"What has all this to do with the mystery of his own disappearance?"

"You shall hear—you shall hear. Little Dick Snell, of Crosby Square, the lawyer, was one of the party. You know Dick—undersized, bloated, red-faced, coarse, like a bad Rubens—well, I met Dick two or three days ago, who told me that my saucy friend, Welford, would now have time to cool his courage, as he had been arrested for a debt of thirty or forty pounds, and had been doing penance in the Fleet Prison for some time."

"What! for such a paltry sum!" I exclaimed; "I should have thought that, either by myself or his friends——"

"But he will not see his friends," interposed Hammond. "I went to the Fleet immediately, and, although I sent in my name, he positively refused me admittance; nor has he answered a letter which I wrote to him on returning from my useless visit, and so I am come to consult with you what is best to be done. Welford is such an honorable chap in money-matters that I should not mind lending him the cash; but I am as poor as a rat, Sir Gideon's money having been all spent before I got it. Not a shot in the locker. D'ye understand, hey, how?"

"Has Welford no relatives?" I inquired. "Have you,

who are so intimate with him, never heard him make allusions to his family?"

"Never; nor have I dared to ask him a question on the subject. Some mystery attaches to his birth, but upon this point it is quite dangerous to interrogate him. That he is a gentleman, spite of his oddities and his tipling propensities, is manifest, not only from his manners and attainments, but from the smallness and whiteness of his hands, which, to an artist's eye, settles the question at once. Were Charles I. still living, I know what I should suspect."

"But the question is what we can do for your living Vandyck, as you call him. Forty pounds, you say, will be sufficient to liberate him. Well, Mr. Hammond, in that case I think I can promise that his imprisonment will not be of long duration; but, remember, mum's the word; if he is to be set at liberty my name must not appear in the transaction."

"Mute as a fish—dumb as death—I never blab—a secret buried in my bosom may defy the resurrection-men. Ha! ha! I shall be right glad to see my living Vandyck again—fine head your own, sir; make a capital kitkat—Bank of England in the background—scores of money-bags on a side table—charge you nothing extra for them—work cheap."

"We will talk of that another time, Mr. Hammond; for the present I must wish you good morning."

After having picturesquely arranged his hat and curls in the glass, off went my artist, flaring in bright colors till he resembled one of his own bad portraits. Like all chatterboxes, this fellow finds an especial delight in the fancied importance attached to the revelation of a secret. Tell him that your communication may be published at Charing Cross, and his mouth is sealed; impart it to him in strict confidence, and it is whispered to every soul he meets, which, I foresee, will be the fate of the injunction I have now given him.

Forty pounds will not be ill-bestowed in punishing Welford for his last saucy letter: his arrogant, contumacious spirit really requires humbling. To him who detests an obligation at all times it will be doubly mortifying to receive an important favor from one whom he has presumed

to address in such contemptuous terms. If I can at once gratify my spleen, get credit with the world for having performed a generous action, and not lose my money after all, for I dare say Welford will eventually repay me, it will be no bad stroke of policy. There's the advantage of knowing the world!

All is accomplished as I could wish, if my attorney has duly observed my instructions. By this time I presume that our high-mettled jail-bird has got back to his old woman, his flowers, his menagerie, and his astronomical instruments. My man of law is pledged not to reveal the name of his employer till the prisoner is liberated; by a preconcerted *lapsus linguæ* he will then suffer it to transpire, as if accidentally, and Hammond will of course hasten to confirm the statement. My delicacy and magnanimity will be wormwood to his high mightiness, the Don of Duke Street.

An occurrence, which I shall relate exactly as I have gathered the circumstances from the parties concerned in it, has taken me for several days to Beddington Park. In consequence of the favorable news from India, and the surrender of Tippoo Saib's children as hostages, the Lord Mayor gave a grand entertainment at the Mansion House, to which my father and myself were invited, with a request that we would send as many of our livery servants as could be spared, that they might assist in waiting, which was done accordingly. On the same night, my mother went to a party at Croydon, decking herself out as usual in all her diamonds, and even making a display of them to the townspeople and others as she stood at the door, waiting for the carriage to take her back to Beddington, although Edith pressed her to retire into the hall. Unluckily, some linkboys were in attendance; and, as my mother never could resist the temptation of parading her brilliants in a strong light, she retained her post, which, as a matter of course, brought on an attack of her *diamond ague*.

Still more unlucky was it that, among her gaping admirers upon this occasion, there must have been some of the numerous gang of housebreakers who have so long infest-

ed the neighborhood of Croydon and Epsom, for, in the dead of the night, Edith, awakened by a noise in her room, started from her pillow, when, by the glare of a lantern suddenly flashing into her face, she saw a ruffian holding a pistol to her head, swearing that she was a dead woman if she cried out, and demanding with an oath where she kept her diamonds. Ere her terror would allow her to give an answer, she perceived another robber with a crape over his face, hastily ransacking the drawers, which he as suddenly discontinued, exclaiming—

"Why, Jack, this is the girl's room, not the old woman's."

The other hurried to the bedside opposite to his companion, and, pointing a pistol at Edith, said in a hoarse whisper, "Hark ye, my dear! tell us which is the old lady's room, and where she keeps her jewels, or we shall just take the liberty of blowing out your brains."

How wonderful must be the activity of the mind in moments of urgent demand upon its resources! Brief as was the interval since her first disturbance, Edith had sufficiently recovered her self-possession to reply—

"Swear to me that you will not hurt my mother, or I will never reveal to you where her jewel-box is secreted."

"Oh! it 's secreted, is it?" resumed the last speaker. "Look ye, miss, we 're not particular nice about swearing; so you may consider Jack and I as sworn not to meddle with the old woman, if so be we get the sparklers; and now tell us where she hides the box—quick, quick."

"And do you, sir, consider yourself sworn to the same conditions?" asked Edith, turning to the first ruffian.

"Ay, ay; anything you like; but sharp's the word, and no gammon, so out with it, if you don't wish to have your mouth opened with a bullet."

"Her room is up stairs, immediately over mine, and her jewel-box is generally kept in the wardrobe," faltered Edith, turning aside the muzzle of the weapon, which almost touched her lips.

"Oh! you call that being secreted, do you?" said the second robber. "I say, Jack, this girl seems no fool. Stand you at the door, and keep a sharp look-out, while I go up stairs, and haul out the box."

As Edith had been trembling all over from an apprehension that one of the pistols might accidentally go off, their removal from her sight, and the withdrawal of the robbers from her room, occasioned such a revulsion of feeling that a sensation of sickness oppressed her, her head swam, a confused hum rang in her ears, and it was only by a violent effort that she could prevent herself from fainting. It was but momentary; she recovered her faculties, sate up in her bed, and, hastily revolving what was best to be done, determined to make an attempt at alarming the coachman, who, from the cause already mentioned, was the only man-servant in the house. Stealing, therefore, noiselessly out of bed, she passed on tiptoe into a large closet, arrayed herself hastily in a roquelaure, softly opened an inner door, which communicated with the back stairs, and ascended to his apartment. Its door was open, and the fellow, who had never undressed himself, was lying upon the floor in such a state of deep intoxication that all her attempts to arouse him were unavailing.

Baffled in this attempt, another expedient instantly suggested itself to this brave and ready girl, whom it has been the fashion to term frigid, torpid, apathetic, and even stupid. Returning down the stairs, she made her way to the back door of the house, opened it without alarming the robbers, and ran across the park at full speed to the dwelling of my late tutor, Mr. Hoffman, who is our nearest neighbor.

All her ringing having failed to rouse his sole domestic, a deaf old woman, Edith broke a pane of his bedroom window by a stone, when, after a short delay, Hoffman threw up the sash, ejaculating scraps of Latin and Greek, with sundry texts of scripture, just as they had been jumbled together in the dream which the sharp summons of his unexpected visitant had dispelled. Recognizing Edith by her voice, although he could hardly trust the evidence of his senses, he no sooner learned the cause of her having so unceremoniously disturbed him than he exclaimed—

"*O Dii majorum gentium!* the nefarious knaves! Who would have thought of their choosing such a night for their attack, when there was only one man in the house, and he drunken as Silenus! The cowards! Tarry a brief space, my brave Miss Hawkwood, and we will chase these

spoilers from their prey, for is it not said in Leviticus, thou shalt not rob thy neighbor?"

In a very few minutes the worthy curate joined his fair summoner, evidently betraying by his costume the haste with which he had attired himself, his legs being without stockings, and the fowling-piece on his shoulder being brought into strange fellowship with his nightcap, which he had forgotten to remove.

Brave as a lion, rather however from absence of mind, and consequent ignorance of danger, than from defiance of it, Hoffman hurried on to the house without a moment's delay, apprising his companion, in utterance as rapid as his march, that although the Ancients had not only a patron Goddess of Thieves, by name Laverna, who had an altar near the Porta Lavernalis, and who is mentioned by Horace,* but, moreover, a God of Theft, whose name of Mercurius was evidently derived from Merx, or merchandize; yet the Jews and Christians, in obedience to the eighth commandment, had always held robbers in a proper abhorrence.

"As a divine and a minister of peace," continued Hoffman, "it becomes me not to take away the life of a fellow-creature, but I will put the rogues to flight by firing over their heads, so shall I fright them from their booty, even as the scarecrow driveth away the birds from the corn."

There was an unconscious propriety in his thus comparing himself to a scarecrow, especially if he could have seen his own look and attitude when, in answer to Edith's inquiry as to the certainty of the gun being loaded, he turned back the trigger, beheld a powderless pan, and exclaimed, in a look and tone of great amazement, "*Euge! mirificum!* I thought not of it, but verily I do now call to mind that it has not been loaded these six months!"

In this emergency Edith was pondering, for they had now reached the house, what would be her best mode of proceeding, when the cook came running out, half-dressed and open-mouthed, to tell them that her mistress, after locking the door of her bedroom so that no one could gain admit-

* ——————— Pulchra Laverna
Da mihi fallere, da justum sanctumque videri;
Noctem peccatis, et fraudibus objice nubem.
Epis. 1—16. Ed.

tance, had been incessantly ringing the bell and screaming, "Murder! thieves—my diamonds, my diamonds!" till she had alarmed the whole house.

"The villains, then," said Edith, "have doubtless got the jewel-box."

"No question, miss; for, as I peeped from my window, almost scared out of my seven senses, I see them quit the house, one of 'em carrying it under his arm, when they sneaked across the Park towards the Pond Gate, and I lost sight of 'em, so in course I ran down stairs immediately to render every assistance in my power before it was too late."

"Then we cannot prevent the robbery," said Edith; "but we may yet be in time to track the thieves, and perhaps to recover what is stolen. If Mr. Hoffman will be good enough to take the pony, gallop to Wallington or Croydon, give an alarm, and get the assistance of some armed men, we will commence an instant pursuit, and may perhaps intercept the robbers before they reach London, which will doubtless be their destination. The coachman, I suppose, is still insensible. You then, cook, must assist Mr. Hoffman in saddling the pony. Quick—quick! we must not lose a moment."

"La! Miss Edith! I'm sure it's not my place to be saddling, and bridling, and dressing, and trussing of a whole team of great, dangerous, kicking cart-horses. Not but what I'm the very last person in the world, as every one knows, to refuse to lend a helping hand at a pinch; but, as to going into the stables, I really cannot bemean myself to any such sort of particularly improper proceedings."

"Hold thy peace, good woman!" cried Hoffman. "I need not thine aid. The pony shall be saddled in a trice. Miss Hawkwood counselleth well—I will ride apace—I will alarm the natives, and we will pursue these spoilers, even as Jonathan did the Philistines, and make them render up their booty." So saying, he hurried towards the stables, as if anxious to atone by his present activity and vigilance for the oversight of arming himself with an unloaded gun.

Edith's first impulse was to hurry to her mother; but, as the cook assured her that her mistress positively refused to let any one into her room, lest the thieves should pay

a second visit to it and cut her throat, she resolved to make an attempt at tracking the robbers in their course, at least for a little distance, so as to afford some certain clue to the peasants or others whom Hoffman might hastily collect. Morning had not yet dawned, but the night was light enough to enable her to trace the footsteps of two men imprinted upon the rain-softened walk; and so far confirming the assertion of the cook that they were pointed in the direction of the Pond Gate. These marks however shortly disappeared, the fugitives having doubtless betaken themselves to the grass, where she could no longer discern their course. Concluding, however, that they must have quitted the Park by the Pond Gate, she proceeded to it, and was again enabled to distinguish the footsteps of two men, crossing the road, and continuing down a miry lane on the opposite side.

Here Edith paused for a moment to take counsel of her own thoughts. So long as she had remained within the enclosure of the Park she felt some degree of security; but down this wild and lonesome lane, which she knew to be skirted by thick copse-wood, opening into an occasional field, she doubted the prudence of venturing, especially when she reflected that the thieves might possibly have appointed a rendezvous with their colleagues in some of its dark coverts. Her natural courage predominating at length over her fears, she determined to explore a little further, but to return as soon as she reached the denser gloom of the overhanging trees. With this intention she had cautiously advanced about a hundred paces, when, through the bushes on her right, she caught a glimpse of a light at no great distance, and, stopping suddenly to examine it more carefully, she distinguished, by the dim rays of a lantern, two men sitting on the ground, within an open cow-shed, one of whom held a bottle for some time to his mouth, and then passed it to his companion.

That these were the robbers she did not for a moment doubt, and a shudder came over her at the thought, for she felt that she was alone in the dead night, defenceless, and a female, within a field's distance of armed desperadoes, who, if they discovered her, might be tempted to secure their own lives by the remorseless sacrifice of her's.

Already, under the influence of this misgiving, had she stolen several paces backwards towards the Park, when she recollected that, by taking a circuitous route through the shaw or thicket that skirted the field, she might reach the back of the shed unperceived, and perhaps be enabled, by overhearing the discourse of the felons, to gather such information as might lead to their arrest as soon as they arrived in London. An enterprise so daring, not to say rash, required consideration, and she stood for two or three minutes, wavering and irresolute, until she noticed that a passing cloud had suddenly deepened the darkness, while the increasing wind was loud amid the trees—circumstances which determined her to make the attempt.

"I know the whole maze of footpaths through the shaw," argued Edith, "so that I think I could elude the villains, even if they were to discover and to pursue me; but, in the gloom of the bushes below, and amid the noisy rustling of the boughs above, I am not likely to be either seen or heard. My mind is made up. I will steal round to the back of the shed."

Owing to the détour, and to the cautious nature of her approach, some time elapsed before, by stealthy and noiseless steps, she reached the spot, a delay which proved highly favorable to the success of her perilous undertaking.

Before they quitted the mansion, the robbers had entered the housekeeper's room, from a closet of which they had purloined two bottles of brandy. One of these they had just emptied, and were commencing their attack upon the second, when Edith, creeping on tiptoe to the back of the wooden shed, and peering, half breathless, through its wide chinks, saw, with an indescribable satisfaction, that their rapid and deep potations had hardly left them in possession of their senses. One of them, hugging his comrade with his left arm, while his right grasped the bottle, was hiccoughing snatches of song, to which his companion replied by a hoarse laugh, and an occasional snatch at the brandy.

Freed, in a great measure, from all apprehensions of being discovered, Edith could now take a more collected survey of the shed, and decide upon her course of action. On the ground stood the red morocco jewel-box, with a pistol lying on either side, and the lantern in front, the whole so

placed as to be within arm's length of an aperture, occasioned by a broken board in the shed.

At the moment when the wind was highest, so that she was least likely to be overheard, she withdrew the pistols one by one, through the opening, and was attempting to get possession of the jewel-box in the same manner, when it proved too large to pass; and the noise she made, in endeavoring to force it through, occasioned one of the robbers to start up with a whispering exclamation of "Halloo, Jack! what the devil was that?"

Rendered desperate by her fears, for she thought she must now be inevitably discovered, Edith snatched up one of the pistols, fired it in the air, and, at the same time, gave such an unconscious wrench to the casket, that she drew it with a crash through the aperture, and rushed, with her prize, into the darkest mazes of the thicket, trembling and panting with irrepressible agitation. Her terrors were groundless; for the baffled ruffians, stupified with drink, and quite as much frightened as herself, scrambled across the field, and were presently heard scudding down the lane towards the wood.

Satisfied that they had taken flight in an opposite direction, Edith hid the recovered prize under her roquelaure, hurried back to the Pond Gate, sped across the park, entered the house, ran upstairs, hurried into her mother's room, the door of which had at length been opened, threw the box upon the bed, sank panting into a chair, and fainted away!

What reliance my sister had placed upon the co-operation of our worthy friend, Heffman, I know not, but she could hardly have formed too low an estimate of his efficiency. After parting from her, he hastened with a rare promptitude to the stables, actually contrived to saddle the pony, mounted, and ambled briskly away. Accustomed to be turned round at Stock Cross, and to be brought back to the park by the lower road, the animal followed his usual route, and his rider, being totally unconscious of the proceeding, the two made their appearance at the stable door within a few minutes of Edith's return to the house.

As soon as the bewildered equestrian regained his recollection, and discovered where he was, his astonishment found vent in a series of classical and biblical ejaculations;

after which he turned his nag's head from the door, and was preparing to evince his alacrity and perseverance by a second start, when he learnt that any further exertions were unnecessary, the stolen property having been regained.

My good mother, who had been screaming with terror for a full half hour, found breath enough for a scream of joy when she saw the recovered casket, which she hastily unlocked, carefully counted its contents over and over, and, having ascertained that all was safe, at length found time to express her wonder that Edith could have the heart to frighten her in that thoughtless manner by fainting away, after she had already suffered so much, adding that some people really had no more feeling than a stock or a stone.

"What a strange girl is poor Edith!" was her first observation after I had arrived at the park, and had learnt all the preceding particulars; "only to think of her telling the thieves where I kept my jewels!"

"Surely," said I, "this arose from her affection as a daughter. It may, perhaps, have been the means of saving your life."

"My life indeed!" cried my mother, whose boldness in the absence of danger was proportioned to her cowardice in its presence, "what would my life be worth without my diamonds? They should have cut out my tongue before ever *I* would have told them! And then how very improper of her to go trampling about the park, and down Pool Lane, all alone, in the dead of night, without ever stopping for her tippet, and bonnet, and her thick shoes!"

"Or her parasol, or her green veil, or her reticule?" said I, smiling. "For my own part, I confess myself to be amazed at her presence of mind, her perseverance, and her heroism."

"But it's all so unlike a young lady—so mannish, just like her foolhardy adventure with the cow—wonderful! And as to her recovering the box, *that* I think was the least she could do, after telling the villains where to find it. Then she seems to have no nerves, which is equally unfeminine, quite indelicate. Would you believe it, Mark? Next morning I found her sitting at her drawing, as cool, and calm, and collected, as if nothing whatever had hap-

pened, while I was trembling like an aspen leaf at
ring of the bell—wonderful! Depend upon it, Mark,
is something wrong about poor Edith, as I always
She is not at all like other girls."

"In the latter half of the sentiment I fully concur,
like poor Edith, as you call her, all the better for
you possessed a vivacious and loquacious daughter,
of one whom you accuse, as I think, unjustly, of
phlegmatic, and taciturn, and moping, I question
you would be now in possession of your diamonds."

"Ah, well, Mark! it is very good of you to say
you always were fond of poor Edith; you approved
attacking a mad cow. As for me, my nerves are sh
all to pieces; I can think of nothing all day lo
thieves, and robbers, and murderers. Dear me! ho
ly your hair is dressed. It never could have been
your own valet. What has become of Maubert?"

Favorably as I was already disposed to think of
this daring exploit has immeasurably raised her in
mation, though she herself, seeming to think that
achieved nothing extraordinary, avoids all allusion
subject, and invariably withdraws from the room
is introduced. Quietude and diffidence like her's s
ly found in union with such decision of character.

When I related her adventure to my father, he
observed, "Poor Edith was always an odd child;
a foolhardy exploit. Did the thieves break open th
in which I kept my papers?"

On receiving an answer in the negative, he gav
of satisfaction, and resumed the perusal of the
Post without further comment. An affectionate
truly, and a most tender-hearted parent! His pape
safe; why need he trouble his head about any thi
why should he bear any ill-will against the robbers
this is what some people call equanimity and good

Ten minutes afterwards I saw the muscles of
working, and his teeth grinding together with sup
rage, because India stock had fallen a quarter pe
His intense selfishness, in fact, renders him both ph
ic and irritable. A precious sample of a fine temp

Extraordinary! that I should not have found, on

sent to London, any answer from Welford! Nor can I get sight of the attorney who, having caught a violent cold in attending the funeral of Sir Joshua Reynolds, has been for some days confined to his room.

At the invitation of our partner, Mr. Poole, I accompanied him to Rotherhithe, to see a vessel of 200 tons, now building by government, under the direction of the crazy Lord Stanhope, who has got into his empty noddle a strange crotchet for navigating ships without masts or sails, by means of a steam-engine. The Navy board is to pay the expense, in the first instance, on condition, that if the experiment fail, the whole costs are to be defrayed by his Lordship.

This crack-brained visionary, so well known for his perilous though successful experiment at the family seat of Chevening, in 1777, when he set fire to a room, upon the basement story, while Lord Chatham and a large party were eating ices in an upper apartment, secured by an air-tight composition laid over the floor, has conceived the fantastical idea that rivers, lakes, and even the mighty ocean itself, whether in calms or in storms, may be brought under the power of steam, until the influence and the intercourse of man shall extend to every country, from the Poles to the Equator. Several nautical persons and men of science were examining the vessel and the details of his plan, which excited no small degree of contemptuous ridicule. There was but one opinion as to its certainty of total failure; and we enjoyed a hearty laugh at his Lordship's expense, in which respect the vessel is likely to resemble our laughter.

CHAPTER VIII.

1792—1793.

At last I have received a letter from Guy Welford, and a pretty specimen it affords, both of his indomitable pride, and of his insufferable impertinence.—Ecce!

"Fleet Prison, Wednesday.

"Sir,

"A slip of the tongue which, if such a suspicion were not unworthy of you and of your agent, I should have taken for a *preconcerted accident*, has revealed to me that you are the party who lately deposited forty pounds with Mr. Snell, the attorney, for the purpose of effecting my liberation. The place from which I date this letter will apprise you that I am still a prisoner, having declined to accept my freedom at your hands. Allow me, sir, to inquire by what right you consider yourself authorized to impose such an obligation on me? Have I recognized your title to the sacred, the much abused name of friend? Never! And even if I had, you, who are always boasting your acquaintance with the world, ought to know that, while small favors cement, great ones disjoin and weaken friendship. This result, like many other infirmities of human nature, may be regretted, but it cannot be avoided. A sense of deep obligation being scarcely compatible with a feeling of independence, we are ever anxious to shake it off, that we may recover our self-respect; and, where this cannot be accomplished by any equivalent return, or practical show of gratitude, we seek to reduce the value of the gift by depreciating the motives of the giver. If the donor be worthless, so is his donation. What casuistry so keen and jesuitical as that of a mind struggling to throw off an oppressive, a humiliating feeling? Invent a quarrel with your benefactor, and you owe him nothing—a mode of payment too tempting to be often resisted. Hence the proverbial saying that he who lends money to his friend loses both. Though absolute equality may not be indispensable to friendship, its continuance must ever be precarious where there is great disparity, for there can be no bond of real amity between a patron and his retainer.

"If I detest to be laid under an obligation, it is from principle, not pride. Need I remind a classical scholar like yourself that the ancient mythic of the goddess Pandora, or *All-gift*, as related in the Works and Days of Hesiod, was one of the many attempts to account for the origin of Evil? All the deities conspired to endow her with their attributes, and the being thus charitably gifted became the means of

out-pouring upon the earth a host of evils previously unknown. What fable could better typify the miseries of dependence upon others? One can almost imagine that these ancient mythologists had a Poor law, with whose mischievous and demoralizing effects they were not unacquainted.

"Cervantes found a prison his best study, and so have I. Long engaged upon an astronomical work, for which I am to be liberally paid when it is completed, I have here quietly, steadily, and pleasantly pursued my task, safe from the instrusion of friends or strangers, all of whom I have rigorously excluded—safe from my own besetting temptation, for I am without the means for its indulgence. In a few days my work will be finished, when my own exertions will have enabled me, not only to clear myself from every debt, but to purchase a small orrery, in addition to my present apparatus, with which I purpose making an extensive tour, and delivering lectures upon astronomy in the principal towns of the kingdom. When I shall return I know not.

"Dream you that I have been dull or depressed in the solitary confinement thus imposed upon myself? Know, sir, that I am never less alone than when companionless, while, upon this occasion, my studies have elevated me into a society incomparably more majestical and august than the purest and the loftiest of foul and man-corrupted earth. Sublimated, spiritualised, holding communion with the sun, moon, and stars, the planets and their satellites, listening entranced to the symphonious music of the spheres, penetrating the wilds of space far beyond telescopic range, mine ears have been ravished with the hallelujahs of the heavenly host, and my awestricken and adoring soul has shrunk within itself, daunted and dazzled by the sight-repelling glories of the Great Ineffable! From such an apotheosis of the Spirit, from such a sublime apocalypse, I could not throw myself "sheer o'er the crystal battlements," that I might fall again into the cares and cavils, the follies, the vices, and the perfidies of hollow, heartless man. No, sir! I had something to break my fall. I had companionship of a higher moral order. Tycho was the sharer of my prison!

"Your favors I have declined, but let it not be said that I have refused to do justice to your motives. *You*, sir, I

and well aware, are not a person who would give a poor hungry prisoner to eat and to drink in the spirit of the twenty-fifth chapter of Proverbs—'For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head; and the Lord shall reward thee;' but in that of the Christian dispensation—'Love your enemies, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.' *You* would not bestow charity with an uncharitable motive—*you* would not smother your victim, like another Tarpeia, beneath your treacherous gifts; still less would *you* 'do good by stealth,' so contriving, nevertheless, as that you may ultimately 'blush to find it fame.' No, sir; you are above such unworthy arts; you are a gentleman—a rich banker; you call yourself my friend, and I cannot, therefore, do less than subscribe myself,

"Your's,
"Guy Wexford."

What fustian and rhodomontade! The sneering, misanthropical, arrogant pauper! Ay, *pauper!* let me repeat the word, for there is comfort in applying to a fellow like this a term that includes every possible discomfort, as well as ignominy. How completely the quick-sighted cynic, the snarling cur, has detected my real motives! This is humiliating, I confess, but I shall live to punish him for his base ingratitude. *He* to set up for a Mentor and a moralist! A drunkard, who can only ensure his own sobriety by locking himself up without a penny in his pocket! A tipsy lecturer upon astronomy will be something new, at all events. He will scarcely need an orrery to make the world turn round. I shall hear of him shortly in some provincial prison, when, high as he now carries himself, I may perchance bring his nose to the grindstone. It is a vulgar phrase, but it expresses my idea and my wish.

Well may I exclaim with Horace,

"Eheu, fugaces, Posthume, Posthume,
Labuntur anni—"

for, behold! here we are at the end of the year 1798, and my chronicle—record—memoir (which shall I call it?), thrown aside in a fit of laziness, is now again taken up in the lassitude and ennui brought on by a fit of sickness. For some time past I have lived in such a vortex, such an incessant whirl of pleasure—say, let me be honest, and call it dissipation—that I have hardly attended to the lapse of time, or to the progress of public affairs at home and abroad, all-important as these have been in the last two years.

Heavens! what an awful period have I chosen for sowing my wild oats, as the phrase runs. These democratic societies and associations of pseudo Friends of the People should all be instantly arrested and sent to prison, preparatory to their transportation to Botany Bay, to keep company with my old acquaintance Barrington, unless they prefer a voluntary expatriation, in imitation of Dr. Priestley. Never do I lose the opportunity of giving the loyal and popular toast—"The land we live in; and may those who don't like it leave it;" but I feel that I ought to have taken a more prominent and active part, considering the torrent of anarchy and infidelity with which we are threatened.

This annoying sickness, its consequent confinement, and a touch of low spirits to which I am little subject, have induced me to take a retrospective glance at my occupations and my pecuniary disbursements during the past year or two, the result of which is not particularly calculated to restore my cheerfulness. How the deuce have I become involved in debt to such an amount, in so short a time? Living chiefly with my father—keeping only a phaeton, three or four hackneys, and a hunter, a valet and a groom, and giving dinners now and then to my chums and cronies at the Turk's Head or the Freemasons' Tavern, I ought not so rapidly to have outrun my income.

To be sure there are other sources of expense for a young man in my circumstances, which are by no means trifling in amount; and, besides, I have never kept any exact reckoning as to my losses at Lady Fludyer's faro table in Gold-

en Square, which I suspect must have run away with all my ready money. But it is worth paying a round sum for the pleasure of her ladyship's acquaintance; and for the introduction which I have thus obtained into fashionable society.

Fat, fair, and forty—the precise combination required for a modish beauty, with bold blue eyes, and a good set of teeth, displayed by an ever-ready laugh, with a free and easy manner, which never degenerates into vulgarity, a rattling vivacity, that sometimes sparkles into wit, a total absence of prudishness either in dress or address, and a cordial welcome, which, in spite of its generality, every one imagines to be personal, Lady Fludyer renders herself agreeable to all her guests, but more particularly to young men, who must naturally feel flattered by her marked attentions. Expensively as her house is furnished, it presents nothing glaring or gaudy; her pictures are few, but by the best masters; and the same good taste is evident in the liveries of her servants, and in the style and appointments of her carriage, a plain dark-colored very low chariot, with crimson blinds and lining, and a bear-skin hammer-cloth. Not redundant in quantity, exquisite in quality, with the best champagne and unrivalled *liqueurs à discretion*, her suppers are faultless; and, as to her visitants, there can be little doubt that they are of the very first class, most of them being persons of title, or in some way connected with the nobility.

Fine as are my mother's diamonds, I have seen a dozen old dowagers at Lady Fludyer's, whose brilliants must have been twice as valuable, though they seemed to think nothing of them; while their daughters and nieces, instead of exhibiting that reserve and *hauteur*, which I had considered the characteristic of the aristocracy, especially when brought into collision with persons whose class they may deem somewhat inferior to their own, are infinitely more frank and sociable, than the cold, starch, prudish misses of the city assembly. In this respect, however, I am hardly a fair judge, for my dress, manners, and appearance, have, doubtless, occasioned me to be taken for a West-endian and a man of fashion. Ill-natured people affirm that her ladyship is entirely supported by her faro table. If so, it

must be very profitable to her. I cannot say it has proved so to me; but then I have had such a confounded run of ill-luck, especially when I play with Arthur Conway.

As I have become very intimate with Arthur, to whom I am indebted for my introduction at Golden Square, I must sketch him for my chronicle, premising that he sits in the House for a close borough, is a staunch supporter of Mr. Pitt's government, being always within call when he is wanted for a division, and an active jobber or agent in close boroughs and election proceedings of all sorts, by which means he has been enabled to accommodate me with an unlimited command of franks. In appearance he bears a striking resemblance to the distinguished family of which he is a younger branch, being tall and rather thin, with a prominent eye, a Roman nose, and the air of a person of quality; in spite of his gait, which is somewhat slouching. His leathers and boots are unrivalled, except, perhaps, by Brummel's, but he seems so little solicitous of further glory, as to be occasionally slovenly in the rest of his dress, his profuse frill exhibiting copious proofs of his fondness for snuff, which is only partially knocked off by the ribbon of his dangling eye-glass; while the back of his coat, owing to the enormous length and substance of his plaited pigtail, is a mass of powder and pomatum. His hat, slightly conical in the crown, with a broad silk band, fastened with a large steel buckle, is worn on one side, for the purpose of better exhibiting his powdered curls, and he invariably swings in his right hand, as he saunters along Bond Street, a stick, or rather bludgeon, almost as formidable as Colonel Hanger's.

More pleasing in manners than appearance, Arthur's mode of accosting you is singularly prepossessing, his smile, and his friendly salutation, and his long continued shake of the hand, being all equally cordial. Never do I walk westward without passing up and down St. James's Street, for the chance of getting a nod from him as he lounges at the window of White's or the Cocoa Tree. Sometimes he will come out to join me, and upon one occasion he quitted my arm, on being beckoned across the street by the Prince of Wales, who was chatting with Sheridan, Fitzpatrick, and Captain Morris. How delighted was my mother when I related this occurrence to her!

Conway, who is really a most good-tempered fellow, has introduced me also to one of his clubs, called "The Ring," consisting almost exclusively of young men of fashion, who hold their meetings at the One Tun in St. James's Market, and patronize the prize-fighters. I am a subscriber, also, to his tennis-court and billiard-table, and he did me the honor last Ascot Races of driving me down in my own phaeton, having first stipulated that I should put four horses to it, and provide two mounted grooms. He is one of the best whips in England, and a wonderful successful better at races, prize-fights, billiards, cards, every thing; always hedging and cross hedging so as to be a winner; and yet, somehow or other, he is generally short of the flimsies—the Abraham Newlands, as he calls them. Besides leaving me to be paymaster upon all occasions, with the old promise:—"Come, Mark, my fine fellow! you are to be our cashier to-day—fork out the shiners—I'll settle with you when I make up my betting-book at Tattersal's," he has twice borrowed a hundred pounds of me, and t'other day, when I did not like to give him a check for a third hundred, my account at the Bank being already overdrawn, he got me to endorse a bill of £250 for him. Though I believe the acceptors to be perfectly safe, I do not by any means relish these frequent attacks upon my pocket. For the sake of obtaining a complete introduction into fashionable life, I may submit to them for a while, but, when that point is accomplished, my good friend, Arthur Conway, though I have a real regard for him, must not only excuse my making him any further advances, but must refund every shilling of what he may then owe me. I may give a sprat to catch a herring, but most egregiously art thou mistaken, Arthur! if thou thinkest to find a gull or a gudgeon in Mark Hawkwood!

Needy as he is, or pretends to be, for I sometimes half doubt his embarrassments, Conway is surrounded by a little circle of myrmidons—hangers on of the turf and the ring, the tennis-court, and the billiard-table, some figuring as wags or mimics, and all of them being decidedly *knowing fellows* in their several vocations. Mostly of an inferior grade, ("As Jove's satellites are less than Jove,") yet one of their number, Tom Neville, seems to be

of a better order, both as to birth and attainments, though he now fills the lowest post among them, being the buffoon, comic singer, and sometimes the butt of the party. Dryden tells us that Virgil in his Georgics tosses his manure about him with an air of dignity, a saying of which I have been often reminded in noticing the cleverness with which Tom continues to assume an appearance of independence, and enforce a certain degree of respect while performing his dirty work. Even while submitting to be the butt of Conway, or of the men of rank and consequence who are his companions, Tom will now and then show them that it is more easy to be his superior than his equal, by a pungent repartee, a sharp personal retort, an apt saying, or a Latin quotation, which from any other quarter might give offence; but coming from him only excite a momentary surprise, or a contemptuous laugh. Woe, however, to the minor fry if they presume to take liberties with this "Triton of the minnows," who is as jealous and irritable in one direction, as he is submissive in another. A coarse and crushing sarcasm, a tweak of the nose, or a knock-down blow, attest his anxiety to extort from the Commons the respect which he has sold to the Lords.

"Really, Mr. Hawkwood," said Lady Fludyer, the other night, with one of her sweetest smiles, "we must positively have you among us; I mean among the select circles, as a resident. Just at this moment there are so few charming young fellows in the fashionable set, that we cannot do without you. The Duchess of Pullborough, who, by the bye, means to ask you to her next route, has just been saying that you are the handsomest and the best dressed—no, I will not repeat what she said; it will make you vain. And Lady Barbara Fancourt has been desiring her son to take a lesson from the exquisite taste with which your hair is dressed."

"After the Prince of Wales's," drawled Conway, "I protest I have seen nothing at all approaching to Hawkwood's *chevelure*."

"They say, Mr. Markwood," resumed her ladyship, "that you ran away with all the prizes at the Charter House; and Lord Asgill was informed by Erskine that he

once heard you speak at the Ciceronians, when you were quite young, and was astonished at your fluency."

"I tell you what, Mark," said Conway, "you ought to get into Parliament—you ought, by Jupiter; and if you were to tip e'm one of your Ciceronian speeches, a hundred to twenty Pitt offers you a place under government in six weeks. Parliament's the sphere, my boy, for talents like your's. Even if you did not distinguish yourself, you would be safe from arrest, and that's no bad thing in itself."

"Capital!" laughed Lady Fludyer; "freedom from arrest for the heir of one of the richest men in London. Mr. Conway's jokes are always so sly!"

"So much so," said I, "that I have some trouble in discovering them."

This remark drew a hearty laugh and repeated exclamations of "Excellent! excellent!" from her ladyship, and a challenge from Conway to the Loo-table, where I presently lost fifty guineas, and walked home, rather out of humor at my bad fortune, and yet flattered at her ladyship's high opinion of me. She is certainly one of the most intelligent and discriminating persons with whom I ever made acquaintance.

Trifling as it is, I may here record an occurrence which gave me some little insight into fashionable life. Finding, after I had quitted the house, that I had left my gold snuff-box on one of the marble consoles, I ran back, and, making my way up stairs, just as the last of the visitants had departed, I found her ladyship carefully removing the candlesticks from the card-tables, and collecting into a little bag the silver which had been deposited beneath them for card-money. This used to be the perquisite of the head servant, who, in return, supplied the cards; but the lady of the house, as it seems, now takes this profitable traffic into her own hands. It must be subject to heavy drawbacks, for I have been informed that people of quality and fashion make no scruple of appropriating to this purpose all the bad half-crowns that they may happen to take.

"What's this? a card from the Duchess of Pullborough? Well, this is getting into high life!"

Foolish enough, the freak to which I am indebted for this bilious attack, and a head-ache, such as I never had before. Our club had been dining at the One Tun, upon which occasion the potations are generally deeper than I like, when, after a full allowance of wine, broiled bones and large bowls of punch were introduced, under the influence of which our whole party soon became uproarious. The aristocracy and democracy were both represented at our symposium, Lord Lackington being our chairman, and his deputy being a man of rank and title, while there was no lack of boxers and blacklegs. The lords soon began to exhibit the mischievous propensities of inebriety by victimizing their usual butt, poor Tom Neville, whereat the commons shrieked and screamed with delight. Opiates were put into his punch, and when he dropped asleep his face was painted like that of a clown in a pantomine, after which he started up in terror from the explosion of a bundle of fireworks, covertly introduced into his coat-pocket.

In this plight he was called upon for a favorite song, of no very decorous character: his health was then given, with three times three, and he was required to make a speech, which, instead of the maudlin imbecility, that might have been anticipated, surprised me by several most pointed and sarcastic hits at his noble patrons and tormentors, delivered with a half-tipsy comicality, that took away all appearance of intentional offence. As he prepared to resume his seat, one of his humble neighbors removed his chair, and Tom fell sprawling on the floor, but, instantly recovering his legs, he knocked down the perpetrator of the joke, exclaiming, "I punish a gentleman with a retort, and a blackguard with a blow."

A hubbub and a scuffle instantly ensued; the professional and amateur boxers began to square their elbows, and we should have had a general fight had not Lord Lackington, Conway, and myself, interfered, separated the brawlers, and broken up the party.

Had we been sober we should now have betaken ourselves quietly to our homes, but, being literally pot-valiant, we sallied forth, accompanied by Tom Neville, reeled to an obscure suburb, smashed windows and lamps, attacked the watch, one of whom very properly broke my head with his

staff, and finally found ourselves, all four, locked up in a small, dark watchhouse.

This effectually sobered me, for the exposure of my name, should we be brought before the magistrates in the morning, might do me serious injury in the city. Bribing the watchman, the usual resource upon such occasions, would not now avail, for the fellows had gone their rounds, leaving us to our fate, and escape seemed impracticable, until it occurred to me that if I could reach the roof I might, perhaps, by removing the tiles, make an aperture sufficiently large to admit the passage of our bodies. Tom Neville offered his back, upon which I stood; the tiles yielded to my hand with very little resistance, the crazy rafters were easily broken, and, in a few minutes, I had pulled myself up to the outside of the roof. By the assistance of Tom below, and myself above, Lord Lackington and Arthur Conway were presently extricated, and I was stretching out my arms in order to pull up the remaining prisoner, when his lordship dragged me forcibly from the roof, swearing that no one should let out Tom Neville; it would be such a capital Joke, such prime fun to have him brought up at Bow Street next morning, with his face painted like a clown, and his pockets full of fireworks.

"Egad, they 'll take the fellow for another Guy Fawkes —they will, upon my soul, so come along, come along, my man of money!" hiccoughed his lordship.

Vain were my expostulations against this gross act of ingratitude. I was pulled away by my laughing companions, and the sight of several returning watchmen induced me to run off in an opposite direction, to jump into a hackney-coach, and to drive home, where I have been a prisoner ever since, with a confounded bilious attack, and a racking headache. But, after all, this is seeing life: ay, and in good company too.

Really that Tom Neville is a clever fellow. Having overheard his lordship at the watchhouse, he has wreaked a practical revenge rather more spirited than he usually exhibits towards his noble or wealthy patrons. On being interrogated at the Police Office next morning, he gave in his name as Lord Lackington; and the papers are loud in reprobating his lordship's scandalous conduct, and in re-

getting the disgrace brought upon the whole aristocratic order by the appearance of a nobleman, painted like a mountebank, so that even his friends could not recognize him, loaded with dangerous fireworks, and arrested in a drunken night-brawl! His lordship will be furious, not so much at the exposure as at Tom's impudence, for it is one of his coarse sayings, "If I pay a fellow for being a parasite, I expect him to earn his money." It must be confessed that if he were not a lord, he might be deemed, by some people, a low-minded fellow.

Poor Tom Neville is out of luck. Last March he lost his friend Lord Barrymore, who was accidentally shot; and now Lord Lackington, offended, as I anticipated, by this late assumption of his name, has cast him off.

Tom has lost nothing, for *I* have taken him up. In common generosity I could not do less, and a most useful fellow I find him. He looks after my horses, dogs, and fowling-pieces, accompanies me, when I have no better comrade, to the Tennis Court and the billiard-table, in the morning; the theatres, Ranelagh, Vauxhall, wherever I like at night. I don't know what I should do without him, especially at my Tavern-dinners, where he enacts the part of purveyor and butler, as well as vice-chairman, buffoon, and butt. In one capacity or other he must succeed, for if you cannot laugh with him, you may always laugh at him.

Lady Fludyer took me in her own carriage to the Duchess of Pulborough's, where I met a most gracious reception, flirted for some time with her niece, and had the honor of finding my name inscribed on her grace's regular visiting list. This distinction is most important, since it enrolls me at once in the fashionable circles; and most flattering, since it is a compliment to my personal merits, without the least reference to my pecuniary prospects. After this I really doubt whether I can condescend to the city assembly, and the vulgar, untitled balls of the Aldermanry. Before long I shall be obliged to cut the city, as a residence. This I foresee clearly.

CHAPTER IX.

1794.

Accuse me not of negligence or disrepect, most reverd Anno Domini 1794, if my chronicle have failed to pay its devoirs to thee until thou hast nearly slipped away, for thine own eventful character is the sole cause of my remissness. Sooth to say, I have been too busy with thee to mind thy business. Pleasure and duty, public claims and private, have scarcely allowed me a moment's leisure for trifling with this plaything, this record of mine. In conjunction with the gentry of the city, and, indeed, of the whole country, who are enrolling themselves as volunteers to repel the threats of invasion so insolently fulminated by the First Consul of France, I have become a member of the City Light Horse, and I think I may without vanity assert, for it is admitted by the whole corps, that my appearance and my manner of going through the cavalry evolutions, when I exhibit myself at the parade ground in Gray's Inn Lane, is *haud omnino spernendum*, as Hoffman would say, or in equivalent English, something worth seeing.

Of my noble black charger it is sufficient to say that he cost me one hundred and fifty guineas! I have named him Telegraph, not from his quickness, fleet as he is, but because he is almost as much talked of as that recent and most ingenious invention.

My enrolment in this corps has dispersed some part of that gathering though silent dissatisfaction which I have recently noticed in my father, not only because it brings me into almost daily contact with my brother citizens, from whom I have been latterly so much alienated, but because my military aspect and figure are avowedly so commanding and distinguished. After our last review, a rare smile relaxed for a moment his sharp, austere features, as Colonel Herries rode up to him, exclaiming, "I assure you, Mr. Alderman, I have not a better horseman, or a more soldierly-looking fellow, in my whole corps, than your son!"

"And I observed," replied my father, bowing, "that, when they dismounted, and all stood together, Mark was the tallest fellow in his company."

In repeating to me the colonel's flattering remark, my father added, endeavoring to look arch and significant, which imparted a rather sinister expression to his countenance, "Sir, I suspect that I can account for your doing your best to-day, for I observed the Maynards among the spectators, and I noticed that Augusta's eye followed you wherever you galloped."

This is likely enough, though it is not impossible that the thought may have been suggested by his wishes, for recently he has lost no opportunity of pointing out to me the great advantages that would result from my "striking up to her," as he phrases it.

Augusta, I find, had been invited by my mother to attend the review. I saw her from the first, but I really soon forgot her presence, for, in another quarter of the field, I perceived Fanny Hartopp and her mother, and from that moment I must confess that I exerted myself to present an advantageous appearance. The poet laureat has lately been translating the Odes of Tyrtæus, that he may inspire our countrymen with martial ardor; but, if I may judge from my own feelings, I should say that a glance from the admiring eye of a pretty—no; they will have it that Fanny is not pretty—well, then, from the beaming, affectionate eye of a heart-stealing and heart-giving girl (for I suspect she has made me a present of her's), is the soldier's most cherished and most efficient stimulus. Poor Fanny! I have thought it right to absent myself from her for some time past, but there was no reason why I should not allow full indulgence to my military enthusiasm at the review.

As to my mother, her admiration was so irrepressible, that she ran from carriage to carriage, and from party to party, pointing me out, and ejaculating, "Wonderful! wonderful! Beautiful! beautiful! Now did you ever?" and, after having exhausted herself with the latter indefinite interrogatory, she turned angrily upon Edith, and scolded her for being so cold and phlegmatic, and not being thrown into similar ecstasies. In the compliments which Edith paid me, I believe her to have been more sincere than some

of her neighbors, who did not like to see their sons and brothers so completely eclipsed; but there certainly is an *apparent* coldness, or rather a sedateness and self-possession about Edith, which are sometimes rather provoking.

Parental vanity has induced my father to have my portrait painted by Phillips, for the next exhibition. It is to be a full length, and I am to be in regimentals of course, leaning my right arm upon the shoulder of Telegraph, whose dark color will make a capital background, especially when relieved by the smoke of an engagement, for your canvas heroes always cross their legs in a becoming attitude, lean perceively against their chargers, and assume an air of peculiar *nonchalance* in the very fire and fury of a deadly battle. The heads of some people would be turned by all this parade and boasting; but I am perfectly aware that I have no real ground for a single vain-glorious feeling, my figure being a mere accident of Nature, and my horsemanship arising from my having been accustomed to it since I was a child.

Most manifest is it that this free and happy country, so truly described by Mr. Pitt as the envy and admiration of surrounding nations, needs all the exertions of her brave and loyal sons, for affairs, both abroad and at home, present a truly threatening aspect. France, our old and inveterate, and indeed our natural enemy, is making rapid strides towards the subjugation of the continent. What a singular spectacle does that formidable republic offer to the world! Conquered in succession by every new faction that springs up at Paris, however contemptible, and yet conquering in succession every foreign enemy, however powerful, the deadly throes and convulsions of her heart only imparting a more terrific and irresistible energy to her limbs, she seems to gather strength from disease, and vitality from the very agonies of death. Even the occasional overthrow of one of her armies is as useless as it is rare, where you contend with a power which, least subdued when most beaten, rises from every fresh prostration with a new Antæus-like vigor.

Thank Heaven! our navy preserves its old supremacy and renown, Lord Howe's victory having shed a glory over the present year, which has already dispersed some of the gloom that had been gathering around it. To celebrate

this event, the Lord Mayor gave a grand entertainment at the Mansion House; after participating in which I took Edith to see the illuminations, which were unusually splendid. What odd notions that girl sometimes broaches! A general illumination, she contends, is the most childish, the most useless, and the most objectionable of all modes of rejoicing, its enormous cost, which might perpetually endow an hospital, being thrown away upon a sort of schoolboy bonfire, at the imminent risk of its being converted in the conflagration of a city, a bonfire which is seldom unaccompanied by riot and disturbance, which inevitably deprives a whole population of a night's rest, and not seldom inflicts an irreparable injury upon the nervous, the timid, and the sick.

"But if we wish to give the swinish multitude a treat," said I, "and they are not capable of any more elevated enjoyment, what would you do?"

"I would endeavor to inspire them with a better taste; at all events, I would not minister to a bad one. Look, brother! Is this the way to civilise the swinish multitude, as you call them?"

And she pointed down a street, where the mob were furiously assailing the house of a poor devil of a quaker, whose war-opposed creed would not allow him to celebrate a victory.

What hypocritical Jacobinism! I hate those Puritans, with their fantastical scruples, and for my own part, I should not regret if the whole rabblement of dissenters were to ship themselves off to some new Pennsylvania. The land we live in, say I once more—and may those who don't like it, leave it!

Short, indeed, has been the duration of my father's complacent mood, if that term may be applied to a slight relaxation of habitual austerity. How it has happened, I know not, but so it is, that my recent engagements, either with the clubs, the Toxopholites, the theatres, the opera, Ranelagh, or my fashionable friends at the west end of the town, have occasioned me to keep rather rakish hours, so much so, that I have not been able to present myself regularly at the breakfast-table.

It was past eleven yesterday morning, when, as I was sauntering out of the powdering room, with my mask in one hand, and a volume of the Mysteries of Udolpho in the other, my father passed, and said with a stern look, "We are well met, sir; I desire to have a few words with you—follow me to the little parlor."

I did so, we seated ourselves, and my worthy progenitor, whose irritation I perceived by his assumption of a more than usual calmness, thus addressed me in a slow, solemn voice.

"You are aware, sir, for I have often told you, that I hate to have my equanimity destroyed—that I cannot bear to have my attention distracted from business, or to be driven into unpleasant altercations, or discussions of any sort. On this account, although I have seen much, very much in your recent conduct, which I considered highly improper, I have refrained from noticing it, because I felt that I could not do so without danger of losing my temper, and becoming agitated and worried for a whole day. To your late hours night after night, or rather morning after morning, I have made no objection, because, as your own servant sits up for you and lets you in without noise, my rest has not been disturbed, though it often awakens your mother, which you ought to recollect. Nor have I found fault with the company you keep, though I am told that some of it is disreputable, and all unsuited to your position in society, because you have never brought any of your boon companions, either to this house, or to Beddington Park, while I have been at home, so that I have suffered no annoyance. Notwithstanding the liberality of your allowance, I have even permitted your account to be considerably overdrawn, because I could not dishonor your checks without injuring the credit of the banking-house. So far, I think, you yourself must allow that I have been a most kind and indulgent father—perhaps to a culpable extent."

"I am sure, sir, that I have never made any complaints of a want of ——"

"Complaints, sir!" interrupted my father, with an evident diminution of his constrained composure, "complaints! No, indeed, I believe not. These should have come from me—they do come from me, for, while I am

toiling early and late, and exposing myself to every sort of anxiety—anxiety which I detest, I abhor, I abominate, in order to uphold the credit of the banking-house; you, sir, by your dissipation, folly, and thoughtlessness, are doing every thing in your power to peril and to undermine it. Nay, sir, not a word—hear me out, I will not be interrupted, nor contradicted, nor bearded by my own son, especially when the proof of his gross indiscretion is in my hand. Is the endorsement of this bill your signature? You do not deny it. Well, sir, this bill is drawn by one notorious gambler, accepted by a second notorious gambler, endorsed by Arthur Conway, a third notorious gambler, under his name appears *your's*, and this bill, after being hawked, perhaps, through half the city, has been this morning brought to me by a broker. What effect, sir, what effect, I ask you is such an occurrence likely to have upon the credit of a banking-house, the most fragile and destroyable thing in existence—a thing that may be annihilated by a whisper? Will our depositors, think you, leave their money in the hands of one whom they may fairly presume to be the comrade of acknowledged gamesters; of one who may make ducks and drakes of their guineas at some of the hells in St. James's; of one whose name, apart from that of the firm, ought not to appear upon a bill of any sort?"

"I confess, sir, that all this did not occur to me at the moment, and I fully admit the impropriety of the proceeding, now that its objectionable nature is pointed out me; but I had reason to believe, nay, I was positively assured that the acceptor was a solvent and a respectable person, and I am confident that Arthur Conway——"

"O yes, sir, nobody can deny that you are confident—very confident of your own cleverness and penetration, and it is precisely on that account that I require, nay, that I demand a solemn promise from you never again to put your own name, or that of the firm, to any bill whatever without my express sanction. This pledge is not less indispensable for your own safety and protection than for mine—will you give it me?"

Humiliating as the proposition sounded, and dictatorial as was its tone, I could not deny that it was reasonable; be-

sides, I had a favor to ask in return, towards which I thought my father might be propitiated by a ready acquiescence with his wishes. My filial duty, therefore, prompted me to give the promise required in the most formal manner, pledging my honor for its faithful performance. It was now my turn to prefer a claim, and I should have insisted upon my admission to a proportionate share in the control and management of the firm, agreeably to our former understanding, and to the tenor of the partnership articles, but that it seemed rather an ill-timed moment, considering the nature of my recent *debut* in banking concerns; nor was I sorry, after all, to be absolved from any close attendance in the city, an exemption which allowed me to pursue my pleasures in more congenial quarters. All that I asked, therefore, was a discharge of the sum for which my account was overdrawn, a request to which the old gentleman finally assented, after reading me the paternal lecture invariably preached upon all such occasions, setting forth my youth, the liberality of my allowance, the dangers of extravagance, of dissipated companions, of a rakish life, of late hours, &c.

Confining my defence, like an able tactician, to his last and weakest charge, I reminded him that my hours appeared late in consequence of the great distance of the city from many of the distinguished mansions at which I had the honor of habitually visiting. Instancing in particular that of the Duchess of Pullborough, (where I had only been once or twice) and, availing myself of this argument to support a project which I had long been cherishing in secret, I submitted that it would be much less annoying to him, (I said nothing about my mother, respecting whose wishes he never troubled himself) and infinitely more agreeable to me, if he would sanction my taking a small house at the west end of the town.

"Never, sir, never!" he exclaimed, reddening with anger, and starting from his seat, which, however, he immediately resumed. "I wonder you could presume to make such a proposition to me. Your course of life cannot be of any very reputable nature, if it is inconsistent with your residence in the city, where your forefathers have lived and died for so many generations."

"I am not aware," I replied, somewhat piqued at this remark, "of any thing dishonorable in my course of life, though I may indulge now and then in the amusements natural to my age. It is not impossible that you yourself, sir, when a young man, may have been occasionally betrayed into similar excesses, if they deserve that name."

Again my father colored, but it was a conscious blush, rather than an angry suffusion—his eyes were averted—there was a minute's pause, and his voice altered as he continued:—

"Your insinuation, sir, is not very respectful, but I will frankly confess that there is some ground for your suspicion. I was *not* free from occasional excesses, they gave much pain to the parent who saw and condemned them, and it is only now, when I am compelled to rebuke my own son for similar misconduct, that I can feel, in its full extent, the annoyance and the distress that I must have inflicted on my father. I would spare you hereafter the humiliation I am now enduring."

After having taken several turns up and down the room in silence, communing apparently with his own thoughts, my father again seated himself, and resumed in a softened voice.

"Why should you wish to quit the city, where the name of Hawkwood has been so long known and respected? Can you have forgotten that five successive generations of our family have been born in the same house, and buried in the same adjoining church? Standing about six years since within that sacred edifice, while it was being demolished for the enlargement of the Bank, I saw their tombs rudely torn away—ay, and their very bones sacrilegiously disturbed, in order that the money changers might be brought into the site of the Lord's house. Can I ever forget this? Never, sir, never. From my childhood I had cherished the hope of becoming Lord Mayor, and of having a monument in the church of St. Christopher Le Stocks, whereon my civic honors should be recorded. The first wish has been indulged—the second is now impossible."

"But there is the neighboring church of St. Bartholomew," said I, "to which two of our family tombs were removed."

What a flash of lightning is thought! Even while speaking it occurred to me that there was some little indelicacy in my making this anticipation, while, at the same time, my mind hurried forward to all the golden visions which would irradiate my own path of life, when the darkness of death should have closed around my father's.

There is nothing unnatural in this. Rich old gentlemen must die, and their long-expecting sons must succeed to them; nor is it any reproach to the latter if they sometimes become a little impatient under the provoking infliction of paternal longevity. A reasonable life interest—a fair usufruct nobody would deny to wealthy seniors; but, to push their claims beyond this, is to usurp the just rights and privileges of the heir. Besides, three score and ten being the allotted number of our years, it is manifestly unscriptural and irreligious to persevere longer in existence; nor is it indeed honest to continue the occupancy of our corporeal tenement after the lease is out. How true is the waggish saying that no book would be more popular among the young nobility and gentry of England than "An Abridgment of the Lives of the Fathers."

"The church of St. Bartholomew," resumed my father, after a pause, "is a very different thing. It does not contain the tombs and the ashes of the Hawkwoods. It has been deemed odd, inexplicable, that a man of business habits, like myself, should often present himself at the wrong office of the bank for the purpose of making transfers, or of accepting stock; but, as I wander about the courts and passages of that vast building, my thoughts will sometimes revert to former days and long-remembered scenes, and I whisper to myself—on this spot stood the old family mansion of the Hawkwoods, the house in which I was born, in which all the branches of our race were annually collected for the Christmas dinner—this is the site of the ancient church of St. Christopher's, where we duly assembled on the Sabbath; here, where I am now bewildered with the clamor of business, we sat in reverent silence, listening to the voice of the preacher; and beneath the flowers and shrubs of this inclosed garden, once the burial-ground, are deposited the bones of my forefathers. The contrast of the present and the past suggested by such reflections—the

world of old memories that will then be conjured up, may well account for the momentary absence of my mind."

Not exactly knowing what to say, for I had never before seen my father in such a sentimental mood, I observed that a little forgetfulness, under such circumstances, was perfectly natural.

"Of all those Hawkwoods," he continued, not noticing my remark, "I am the representative, a thought which may in some degree excuse the pride that has been attributed to me. I had hoped, sir, that when—that at some future—that after my death—"

Here his voice faltered, he paused, and the muscles about his mouth were drawn into involuntary twitches; but, presently recovering himself, he resumed, in a steady though subdued tone—

"I had hoped, sir, that, after my death, you would be left as my representative, as the preserver of my name in the city, which I may well call our patrimonial soil; and that, as you passed along, you might be pointed out by my old friends and survivors, as the son of Alderman Hawkwood, the banker, who had once been Lord Mayor of London."

"It is my earnest wish, I do assure you, never to commit any act that may render me unworthy of such a distinction."

"Then, sir," cried my father, starting up, "you will never quit the city. The Hawkwoods have been born in it, have thriven in it, have lived in it, have died in it, have been buried in it; and I will never give my consent to your flying in the faces of the dead, as well as of the living, by deserting your hereditary house. You know my determination; it is unalterable; and I desire you will never again excite and agitate me by recurring to the subject. How many times have I told you that I cannot bear discussions, or controversies, or unpleasant allusions, or being put out of my usual routine in any way! I have already many sources of anxiety, of unhappiness, which you do not know, which you cannot even guess. You need not add to my annoyances by making a proposition of so foolish and objectionable a nature. Let me hear no more of it."

With these words he walked out of the room, hemming

to give firmness to his voice, and composing his ruffled features into their usual expression of solemn gravity.

I know that it is considered undutiful, and unhandsome, and indecorous, and unbecoming, and all that sort of thing, if a son, reversing the position of Brutus, presumes to sit in judgment upon his sire, and I am the last person to act in any such unfilial manner. Nothing derogatory, nothing that ought justly to offend paternal feelings, shall ever emanate from me; but, on the other hand, I am no Triton to be my father's trumpeter; nor will I, because it may be wrong to act Mr. Critic, consent to perform the part of Mr. Puff. "Praise undeserved is censure in disguise," a dictum that nobody will deny, for every body quotes it. "Plain truth, dear Murray, needs no flowers of speech," is more to the point, and I may therefore state, without glozing circumlocution or intentional disrespect, that, in my humble opinion, my father's conduct in this little tiff has not been particularly creditable to his feelings. It is clear that he cannot have a proper regard for me, and I am by no means sure that I am not a very ill-used young man, for, if I had enjoyed a competent allowance, I should never have exceeded it; and, as to the endorsement of the bill, it was a mere inadvertence at worst.

By the by, as the said bill was in my father's possession, he has doubtless cashed it, to prevent its further circulation. Surely he does not mean to charge it to my account. I must arrange this affair with Conway.

What a gross mistake to call my father a good-tempered man, as I have often heard him characterised! Good temper, like the surface of a lake, while it requires a rare commotion of the elements to disturb its habitual serenity, is rippled into dimpling smiles with every passing breeze. My father's temper is the same surface congealed into ice, and only smooth and equable because it is impassive. Spite of its apparent show of feeling and sentimentality, to what does his conduct amount, when fairly analysed, but to a profound selfishness!

Twist and turn the matter as you will, to this complexion must it come at last. To nothing does he object upon moral principles, or, indeed, upon any principles, except to my rousing him out of his quietism, and disturbing his pla-

cidity. He will wink at any thing if I do not compel him to open his eyes: I may go to the devil my own way, provided it does not interfere with him and *his* ways.

Whence this blind attachment to the city? Because it is the spot upon which the Hawkwoods have lived and flourished. Whence his regard for this family? Not because he belongs to them, but because they belong to him; he is their representative, and, therefore, his constituents must be magnificoes. Whence his regard for me? Not from any paternal yearnings—not from any proper sense of my gifts and attainments, but, as he frankly confessed, from the mere circumstance that, when he is dead and gone, I am to be his representative, and am to be pointed out upon 'Change, or in the Bank Offices, as the son of the late Alderman Hawkwood. Much obliged to him, truly! My celebrity, I flatter myself, will be autocratic, not inherited. I am no potato-plant, only to be valued for what is underground. The "*quæ non fecimus ipsi*," I leave to the "Tenth transmitter of a foolish face." With the distinctions of my ancestors I can well dispense, since I shall achieve them for myself.

This horrid system of pushing round the bottle at dinner parties, and of tormenting the guests for toasts and sentiments, until conviviality is aggravated into a noisy or maudlin intemperance, has really become quite a nuisance. When I slipped away (rather a difficult manœuvre) from the topers at Sir Gideon Higgins's last night, I must have been half tipsy, I suspect; but the cool air soon sobered me, and, ere long, I found myself, I really know not how or why, staring up at the window of Fanny Hartopp's residence upon Tower Hill.

Singular enough, whenever I begin to calculate the profit and loss of marriage, my thoughts betake themselves to Augusta Maynard, though I never dream of hovering about her abode. When I mentally perpend the pleasures of matrimony, a soul-subduing vision of Fanny Hartopp is conjured up, and my footsteps involuntarily take the direction of Tower Hill. Half a dozen different times, at least, after dining out, have I wandered to the same spot, only to gaze

very intently at the windows, and then return home as wise as I went. Augusta, I suppose, has my head, and Fanny has my heart—or at all events I have her's.

Upon the present occasion, just as I was turning away from the house, the door opened, and out came a man whom I recognized by his sharp, vulgar voice—for he immediately began singing one of Suett's "Dickey Gossip" songs—to be no other than the detested Ned Simmons. After all, then, thought I, she may not have ultimately rejected this vulgar fellow, and he may still be a suitor for her hand.

It was a provoking—I may say a maddening idea: for, on the impulse of the moment, and under the excitement of the wine I had been toping, I hastily followed him, and with a sudden blow struck him to the ground. Restored in one moment to my senses by the enormity and wantonness of the outrage I had perpetrated, I took instantly to my heels, and, although I heard Simmons in quick and hot pursuit, I contrived to elude him, and to reach my own house, bitterly accusing myself for my unprovoked and unmanly attack.

What perilous things are these sudden impulses! Instantaneous as mine had been, I had yet time to reflect that it was dark, that there was no watchman near; in short, that I could gratify my revengeful, or rather my jealous, feeling with secrecy and impunity; these being the first words, I believe, which the devil always whispers into our ear when he would surprise us into some unpremeditated crime. No wonder that the night is the chosen season for lawless deeds, and that a state of nature is a state of war; for publicity and police are our chief security, not only against others, but against ourselves. In the phrenzy of the moment I might have killed Ned Simmons; had a sword been in my hand, I verily believe that I should have done so, and this too without malice prepense.

After all, as he escaped without any serious injury, I am not sorry that I knocked the fellow down. There will be a secret satisfaction in reflecting upon it, when I see the jackanapes cracking, and crowing, and swaggering in his usual style. And yet I know not why I should hate the fellow, as I have no intention whatever of proposing to Fanny. I fear my character must be rather selfish.

CHAPTER X.

1795—1796.

UNREASONABLE as was my father's exaction of a promise that I would not engage a house at the west end of the town, I shall adhere to it with a scrupulous fidelity; but, as this pledge does not extend to the country, I have hired a pretty little box at Epsom; a fact, of which I mean to confine the knowledge, as much as possible, to a few of my especial cronies and intimates. Being ready-furnished, the immediate outlay will not be considerable, though even a small stock of choice wines cannot be laid in, I find, without a considerable expenditure. There must be both quantity and quality where Conway and Tom Neville are in the habit of dining; and even Hammond, the artist, glad as he is of a good dinner upon any terms, will smack his lips, hold up his glass to the light, and assume a grave look of epicurean deliberation in giving judgment upon a bottle of champagne, though I suspect the rogue does not taste one oftener than once or twice a year.

At this retreat we have had two or three such jolly parties that I have half regretted my quarrel with Welford, whose vocal and social powers, when he shakes off his sour misanthropy, or when he is propitiated by some act of homage to his four-footed friend, Tycho, make him the very life and soul of a symposium.

However, we have had a literally *fair* substitute in the person of a Mademoiselle De Montmorency, with whom Conway has formed some sort of *liaison*, and whom he has driven down in my phæton to dine at the cottage, where she has sung like a nightingale, or rather like a goldfinch, for I have had to take so many tickets for her concert, in return, that my notes have been as freely disbursed as her own.

If I will get up a *dejeuner à la fourchette*, with plenty of champagne, at the time of the Epsom races, Conway flatters me with the hope that he may prevail upon Lady Fludyer; and even the Duchess of Pullborough and her

niece, who, he says, is half in love with me, to look in for an hour or so. Nay, he even talks of Brummel! This *would* be glorious; but, should it come to my father's ears, would it not entail upon me the only paternal property of which I wish the entail to be cut off—a long-winded and long-visaged lecture?

In the meanwhile Conway has introduced me to another of the numerous myrmidons by whom he is surrounded—a pleasant, gentlemanly fellow, whose imperturbable good temper and invariable bad fortune have so won upon me that he threatens to rival, if not to eclipse, Tom Neville in my good graces. His name is Baldwin; but, from his singular resemblance to Amos Harmer, one of my father's clerks, I have bestowed that appellation upon him as a sobriquet, and he recognises it as complacently as if both the baptismal and patronymic terms had been inherited from a long line of ancestors.

His short and by no means uncommon history I have learnt from his own lips. Having obtained a commission in a costly regiment of dragoons, through the interest of a relative who could command two boroughs, he was turned adrift to make the remainder of his fortune in any way he could. In striving to maintain himself upon a level with his brother officers, he soon became so deeply involved that he was obliged to sell his commission. In the hope of retrieving his shattered finances he took to gaming, and, in pursuing a constant run of ill-luck, he was not only speedily ruined, but acquired such an incurable propensity for haunting the hazard-table, and playing at other games of chance, that his frequent, earnest, and strenuous exertions to shake off this incubus have been utterly unavailing.

All this, as I said before, is nothing unusual; the singular part of his character consists in the frankness with which he confesses his faults and follies, the modesty and the manifest sincerity with which he regrets his inability to resist the fascination of play, and the gentlemanly, honorable bearing which he contrives to preserve in the midst of all his reverses.

Though he may be termed one of Conway's many satellites, Baldwin moves in a very different orbit from the luckless butt, Tom Neville; nor has he altogether lost his self-

respect, which, to a certain extent, insures him the respect of others. He never gives offence; and he will not tamely receive an insult. To the latter, indeed, he is not much exposed, as he is known to be a man of courage, and a good shot. Whether he can maintain his character, such as it is, remains to be seen. Already has he come to the borrowing stage, which, in these unhappy cases, invariably marks the progress of degradation; but so heavily is he ashamed of the process, that his eyes and his looks appeal to you for a small loan long before he can summon courage to make the humiliating request by his tongue. If driven to the extremity of speech, his blushes, his stammering, and his confusion evince the mental distress that accompanies the operation, so that you can neither grant nor refuse the poor fellow's request without participating in his painful embarrassment.

As a matter of mere curiosity, and as a study of character, for I, myself, thank God! never had the smallest disposition for gambling, I have twice accompanied Harmer, as I call him, to Doyley's gaming-house in Bury Street, when the very sight of his agonized suspense, the perspiration oozing from his forehead, and the convulsive twitchings of the muscles of his face, confirmed my resolution to avoid the fearful vice to which he must inevitably fall a victim.

On both occasions I lent the poor fellow a few pounds to try his fortune: his usual, his invariable ill-luck pursued him, and the misery of his look attested the truth of the averment when he declared that his immediate inability to repay me aggravated a thousand-fold the wretchedness of being thus relentlessly persecuted by the blind goddess. His gratitude is unbounded, and he refuses any further loans till he can repay me what I have already advanced. If I have any insight into human character, and my penetration seldom fails me, this infatuated but honest-hearted fellow, when he can no longer resist the assaults of adverse fate, will fall, like Cæsar, bravely, honorably, and decorously.

Excepting the festivities consequent upon the marriage of the Prince of Wales, little has occurred during the present year to relieve the deepening gloom of public affairs, and, as if these real evils were not sufficient, Brothers, the

crazy prophet, has been scaring the people with denunciations and vaticinations that threaten to drive half the old women of both sexes out of their wits. Strange! that his prophecies as to the approaching day of judgment should terrify the old, with whom this world must soon end in the common course of nature, much more than the young, whose term of life is only just commencing. But so has it ever been. Those who are nearest the expiration of their lease, are the most apprehensive of its curtailment.

Too dignified to exhibit misgivings of any sort, my father betrays it by his irritation when any allusion is made to this subject, and would fain conceal his fears beneath an angry contempt. More frank, if not more sapient, my mother avows her tribulation of spirit, reproving my ridicule of the half-witted seer, by wonders at my impiety, by quotations from Scripture as to the ursine fate of prophet-mockers, as well as by her own recollection of supernatural manifestations.

"Oh, my dear Mark!" she exclaimed, shaking her head as tremulously as if she wore her diamond tiara, "we live in wonderful times—wonderful! and those who have seen the king and queen of France, and all the glories of this court come to an end, need not be surprised if the whole world were to follow their example. Have not the very nobility been beheaded? But the young are ever so headstrong, and so hard of belief! For my own part, I have no particular reason to fear the end of the world, even if it were to come at Christmas, as Mr. Brothers seems to fear; but I certainly *had* intended to give a grand ball at Beddington in the spring, and Rundle and Bridge had promised to render my tiara still more magnificent by new setting it, without any additional diamonds, which I confess I was rather looking forward to, not on my own account, but for your sake and poor Edith's, for I am always thinking of my dear children. It's very shocking, but we must all submit to our fate—all. Heigho!"

CHAPTER XI.

1796 CONTINUED.

WHAT a singular adventure! The present Lord Mayor, being an old friend of our family, had given me a ticket for any companion whom I might wish to take to the grand ball at the Mansion House, and, as Conway always talks of the city as if it were a Terra Incognita, and its inhabitants a sort of aboriginal savages, somewhat resembling Pidcock's ouran-outang at Exeter Change, he gladly acceded to my proposition that he should accompany me, and judge of the barbarians with his own eyes. Being myself engaged at the theatre, to see Cumberland's comedy of the Jew, it was arranged that I should call for him at Doyley's in Bury Street, where he has been passing several evenings, following up a run of good luck at *Rouge et Noir*.

Thither I accordingly betook myself about ten o'clock, and was watching the progress of the game, which was now becoming rather unfavorable to Conway, when the door opened, and Baldwin hurried in with a flushed and agitated face. No sooner, however, did he perceive me than, clasping his hands passionately together with a hoarse exclamation of "Gracious Heaven! Hawkwood here!" he rushed out of the room with every mark of perturbation and alarm.

Knowing his sensitive temperament, and taking it for granted that his agitation proceeded from his not having yet repaid me the sums he had borrowed, I ran after him, exclaiming as I seized him by the arm:—

"Why, Amos, my hearty! have you seen a ghost, or a scarecrow, that you bolt out of the course like a frightened filly? Surely you could not imagine I was going to dun you. Not I, my good fellow! Friends must give and take, and settle old scores when they make a lucky hit. Perhaps you may do so to-day, who knows? If I mistake not, I have a flimsy in my pocket, which is much at your service, if you choose to try your luck once more at *Roulette*, or *Rouge et Noir*."

With these words I placed a note in his hands, which he unfolded as fast as his trembling fingers would allow him, while the color left his cheeks, and the tears glistened in his eyes.

"Twenty pounds!" he hoarsely exclaimed; "twenty pounds from you! O God! this is too much—I cannot, cannot bear it!"

For a few moments he stood irresolute, evidently torn by conflicting emotions, when he suddenly grasped my arm, stammering out in an agitated whisper, "Swear that you will forgive me, and I will confess all, restore all; only swear that you will forgive me."

Perceiving that he was hardly conscious of what he uttered, I led him into a private room, pointed to a chair, into which he sank, placed myself beside him, and assured him of my perfect forgiveness, whatever might be his offence. After two or three vain efforts to speak, a gush of tears came to his relief, and, having again obtained from me a solemn pledge of forgiveness, he thus proceeded to make his confession, though his manner was still incoherent and agitated.

"Villain, villain that I am! but I must have been mad at the moment—I am mad now, driven to insanity by my cursed passion for play. O, Mr. Hawkwood! I have robbed your father to a large amount, and have thus infamously defrauded you—my friend, my benefactor! Tempted by your repeated declarations of my singular resemblance to your father's clerk, I conceived a diabolical scheme for robbing the bank. By looking attentively through the glass door, I soon recognized my likeness, Mr. Harmer: I dressed myself exactly like him—I became his fac-simile. Scoundrel as I am, I decoyed him from the house by a forged letter, stating that his brother had been seized with a fit, and was lying at a chemist's in Aldgate. In the dusk of evening, just before the candles were lighted, I walked boldly into the banking-house, took my seat at Harmer's desk, watched my opportunity, purloined two packets of bank-notes, pretended to be passing to the back counting-house, made my way to the door, escaped without suspicion, threw myself into a hackney-coach, and drove to my lodgings, where, on opening the packets, I found myself the possessor of bank-notes to the amount of ten thousand pounds."

"Ten thousand pounds!" I ejaculated, starting from my chair with a mingled feeling of indignation and amazement at the magnitude of the sum.

"There they are—there they are," faltered the wretched man: "count them—not one is missing; and remember that you swore to forgive me on my making full restitution."

Not feeling particularly prone to take the word of such a self-convicted rogue, I carefully counted them twice over; and, having ascertained that nothing had been subtracted, I inquired what had been his object in bringing them to Doyley's.

"It was my intention," replied Baldwin, "to have staked the whole, or as much as the bank would allow, on the hazard of the dice, hoping that for once I might make a large and lucky hit, in which case I should have sent back the ten thousand to the banking-house, under a blank cover, before the business-hour in the morning.

To trust the assertions of an incurable gambler is somewhat perilous, but the man's look and manner bore such an unequivocal impress of sincerity, that I verily believed he would have followed up his good intentions.

"And, if Fortune had still continued unpropitious, and you had lost the whole?"

"The whole amount I could *not* have lost, for I had determined to reserve two hundred pounds, with which, after exchanging the notes for gold, I should have immediately started for America. Most thankful am I that your unexpected appearance has frustrated this base, this most nefarious design. Had you dunned me for my debt, had you spoken harshly, I should have quitted the house without making a confession; but your kindness, your generosity overcame me, and I felt that I could not wrong my friend, my benefactor. Dishonest, unprincipled, iniquitous, as I must now appear in your eyes as I do in my own, indeed, indeed Mr. Hawkwood, I have never perpetrated a base act, except in this single instance, when I repeat the devil must have set me on."

"Perhaps, Harmer (Baldwin, I mean; no more playing at nicknames; the joke has led to too serious a result) per-

haps your guardian angel has interposed to defeat the tempter, and to save you from perdition. You might have terminated this desperate adventure at the gallows; let your narrow escape serve as a warning, and induce you, by one manly struggle of your better nature, to break through this enslaving, infernal habit, and become a new man."

"Heaven knows that I desire it with my whole soul! If I could only raise the funds for conveying me to America, the spell might be broken. I would bind myself by a solemn oath never again to touch cards or dice, and I might, perhaps, by my future life, make some atonement to society for my past follies and misdeeds. But no, no; I am a doomed man—a ruined, disgraced, irreclaimable—" Prevented by his agitation from completing the sentence, he gave a loud sob, covered his face with his hands, and wept like a child.

Affected by his deep distress, delighted at the safe possession of the ten thousand pounds, not for their intrinsic value only, but because their recovery, accidental as it was, would afford me a triumph over my father, who has always piqued himself on the caution and good management of his business; and, really feeling that an act of generosity at this critical moment might save a deluded fellow-creature from ignominy and despair, I drew two notes of a hundred pounds each from one of the parcels, and thus addressed my trembling and weeping companion.

"Look ye, Baldwin! If you had lost what you purloined in a moment of madness, it was your intention to reserve bank-notes for two hundred pounds, to have changed them for gold, to have fled to America, and to bind yourself by a solemn oath against all future gambling. If I give you that sum, are you still willing to carry both those intentions into immediate effect?"

"O, Mr. Hawkwood! most thankfully, most gratefully will I bind myself, body and soul, to their performance."

"It is a bargain, then," I exclaimed, holding out my hand, which he covered with tears and kisses. "I will get you guineas from the croupier in the next room, and, if you will follow my advice, you will start for Liverpool to-night, as I doubt not that a hue and cry has already been

raised by the banking-house, and the morning papers will probably contain a full description of your person, with a reward for your apprehension."

I gave him the gold in rouleaus, when the poor fellow, after a few incoherent expressions of gratitude, rushed from the house, as if resolved not to lose a single moment in making his escape and hastening the execution of his double vow.

On returning to the gaming-room I found that Conway had gone home a heavy loser, leaving word that he had altered his intention of visiting the Mansion House; and as I myself, after this somewhat exciting scene, felt little disposition either for dancing or sleeping, I have devoted a portion of the night to this record of my adventure.

There is a considerable pleasure, I find, in doing magnanimous things, and I am well pleased to think that the recovery of this most important sum is entirely attributable to my kindness and liberality, by which Baldwin was melted into compunction, and even moved to a voluntary surrender of his plunder. But, after all, the fellow's robbery of the bank was a deuced rascally, as well as a most ungrateful act, for *I* should have been the eventual sufferer, and I begin to think that a single hundred would have been enough to take him to America, and a great deal more than he deserved. To be sure I was in some degree the suggester of the roguery by mentioning his striking resemblance to Amos Harmer; and his spontaneous return of the bank-notes, although he was betrayed into it by the surprise and agitation of the moment, fairly entitles him to some sort of salvage.

Two hundred pounds upon ten thousand is no very heavy per centage, and even my father, I suspect, will admit that this, my *coup d'essai* in banking affairs, is no unpromising augury of my future achievements, should I ever set up for a man of business. My worthy sire must excuse my crowing a little to-morrow morning. Will he ever venture to twit me again for the paltry debts he has paid, when I am making good the losses of the banking-house, owing to their own culpable negligence, at the rate of ten thousand pounds at a time? For once and away I will enact the mentor, and dad shall perform the character of the prodi-

gal. Often as he has accused me of carelessness and mismanagement, may I not now exclaim, "Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur?" I long for to-morrow!

Although my slumbers had been short and broken, and my dreams made hideous by visions of thieves and housebreakers, owing, probably, to the precious pile of banknotes which I had deposited beneath my pillow, I presented myself at the breakfast-table in good time, anxious to discover what effect had been produced upon my father by the alarming and heavy loss he had sustained. A very slight observation convinced me that it had not yet been imparted to him, his manner retaining all its usual calm and grave austerity. He talked of Crossfield's committal to the Tower, scolding the Foxite journals for terming his dangerous conspiracy a popgun plot, as well as for their unfeeling ridicule of the unfortunate stadtholder, because he fell asleep at the theatre during the performance of Macbeth, and while Mrs. Siddons was on the stage. So gracious was his mood, that he even condescended to express a hope that Brothers, the crazy prophet, who had been placed in confinement, would be treated with proper kindness: and, although he rarely lost his time in dabbling with books, he acquiesced in my mother's opinion that there were some very pleasing papers in Mr. Pratt's Gleanings, from which Edith had latterly been reading extracts, when he wanted to be lulled into his evening nap, an effect which they never failed to produce.

When, however, my mother and sister had withdrawn, a cloud began to lower over his countenance, and, turning to me with that look and voice of forced calmness which invariably denoted his displeasure, he said:—

"So, sir! your father's friend, although he is Lord Mayor of London, and although he sent you an extra ticket for his ball, is not, I presume, worthy the notice, or even the common civilities of a man of your high fashion. You were not at the Mansion House last night; you did not come home until a very late hour. May I venture to inquire what worthier engagement prevented your accompanying your father to visit the Lord Mayor of London?"

"I can assure you, sir, that I had fully intended paying my respects both to yourself and to his lordship, and meant to have taken with me a gentleman of distinction, a member of Parliament, had I not been prevented by a circumstance, which, I am happy to say, has enabled me to render a most important service to the banking-house."

"A service to the banking-house," sneered my father, "and from you! Excellent!"

"You yourself shall be the judge of its importance. Have you been apprised of any deficiency in the balance last night or this morning?—of any robbery appearing to have been committed by one of your clerks?"

"No, sir; nor would any one dare to conceal such a fact from me, had it actually occurred."

"Perhaps I am better informed upon this subject than you seem to think possible. Attention to the business I have never professed, your own restrictions upon my taking any share in its management, and my aversion to the subordinate duties of a clerk, having naturally turned my attention to other pursuits." (This was both a hint and an excuse, which I thought a good opportunity for advancing.) "But lookers on sometimes see the most of the game, and it is my painful task to inform you that you were robbed last night of bank-notes to the amount of ten thousand pounds—ay, sir, you may well start—robbed, I repeat, of bank-notes to the amount of ten thousand pounds."

"Utterly impossible!" ejaculated my father, reddening, however, to the tips of his powdered ears at the very thought of such an outrage.

"It is perfectly true, nevertheless. I told you that I had a painful task to perform: I have now a not less pleasant duty to discharge. Most delighted am I to tell you that I have recovered the whole sum thus purloined. Here are the identical bank-notes."

So saying, I deliberately spread them out upon the table, briefly stating the extraordinary accident by which I had recovered them, and assuming, perhaps, a little more merit in the transaction than was fairly my due.

Utterly dumbfounded, my father stared alternately at me and at the notes, as if doubting the evidence of his senses, a momentary bewilderment of which I took advan-

tage to retort upon him some of the sapient maxims with which I had been schooled in the last lecture he read me.

"This is a sad business!" I gravely exclaimed; "the credit of a banking-house is the most fragile thing in existence, destroyable by a single whisper, and our depositors will hardly trust their money to parties who suffer it to be purloined in the very face of day, and to such a fearful extent. Allow me, sir, moreover, to point out to you that there must be a still more dangerous collision or conspiracy among the clerks, otherwise this large defalcation would not have been so long concealed from you."

Recalled to his recollection by this remark, my father started up, rang the bell, and desired Mr. Poole to be sent to him. Obsequiously bowing his powdered head as he entered the room, and not presuming to take a chair, the snug man of business presently stood before us.

"Was the balance all right last night and this morning?" asked my father, in a voice rendered tremulous by anxiety.

"Perfectly right, sir!" bowed Mr. Poole.

"And the tellers and checquers all agreed?" The previous answer and bow were repeated.

"Who counted over the bank-notes this morning?"

"I did, and Mr. Davis checked me."

"And you found no deficiency?"

"None whatever, sir," (a third bow.)

"This is most mysterious—there is some foul play, which must be sifted to the bottom," said my father, who again hastily pulled the bell, and desired Mr. Harmer to be sent up.

"Where is the letter," he inquired of the clerk, "which you received last night, informing you that your brother had been suddenly seized with a fit, and was lying at a chemist's in Aldgate?"

A pause ensued, after which Harmer exclaimed in a tone of utter amazement,

"Letter, sir! I never received any letter last night—I never went to Aldgate—I never left the house. My brother is in perfect health, and living at Chichester."

Another pause, during which we all gazed at each other with looks of increasing embarrassment and wonder.

"Recollect yourself, sir," cried my father, sternly, "your life may be in peril. I will have no shuffling, no prevarication. Look at these bank-notes. Do you recollect entering them in your duplicate book, or leaving them upon your desk last night?"

"I did not make up a single parcel of notes last night. I reckoned and tied up the gold and silver."

"Mr. Poole," continued my father, "do these notes appear to have ever passed through our books; are any of our marks or numbers upon them?"

After having deliberately wiped his spectacles, Mr. Poole took the notes one by one, examined them minutely, held them up to the light, and then exclaimed with a countenance of considerable dismay:—

"These are no real Abraham Newlands! there is no watermark to the paper. They are, every one of them, forgeries! downright, rank forgeries!"

"Palpably!" said my father, after having inspected two or three of them. "I should have seen it at once had I looked at them carefully. And did you actually give two hundred pounds for this bundle of waste paper, palmed off upon you with such a cock-and-a-bull story for genuine bank-notes? Truly, sir, you have been preciously bubbled; ludicrously swindled and out-witted; but I cannot say that I am in the least surprised, not in the least."

The sneering look that accompanied these words, spoken too in the presence of Mr. Poole and the clerk, was truly mortifying; but I was so humbled, stung, overwhelmed, by the ridiculous figure I cut, and the consciousness of my having been made a most egregious dupe, that I was utterly unable to utter a single word.

"Well, sir, are you still of opinion that lookers-on see the most of the game?" asked my father when we were again alone. "Never did I hear of a gull more thoroughly, more absurdly cozened and bamboozled. But they who frequent the haunts of blacklegs and sharpers must expect to be swindled, and most richly do they deserve it. Understand, sir, that this two hundred pounds is your own loss; not one shilling of it do you get back from me."

And then came a lecture. Oh! *such* a lecture! I might have defended myself, but I had not spirits to make

the attempt; nor have I patience to record the sarcastic taunting reprimand to which I was doomed to listen for thirty or forty mortal minutes.

No; I cannot get over the humiliation of having been made such a contemptible gudgeon. The more I reflect upon the transaction, the more galling is it to my feelings. To the loss of the money I could reconcile myself, but to be made a victim and a laughing-stock, to have been so completely pigeoned and outwitted from first to last, is really intolerable.

Nor is the actual loss, in the present dilapidated state of my finances, by any means inconsiderable. First, there is the previous debt which the knave owed me; then the £200 which I have been obliged to refund to the croupier; and lastly, the twenty pound note, which, in the very whirlwind of his passion and remorse, in the midst of his tears, his blushes, his stammerings, and his agitation, he took special care to secrete and secure, probably when he clasped his hands together and bowed down his head in an apparent agony of shame.

One thing, and one only, may be urged in my defence: a more consummate, a more exquisite piece of acting has never, perhaps, been exhibited! The fellow would have made a fortune on the stage. But my father knows nothing of all this; unaware of the circumstances that extenuate my dupery, he does not conceal his contemptuous estimate of my talents, an erroneous impression which I find it difficult to bear, and impossible to remove.

Humiliating enough was it to endure the quiet derisive smile with which Conway gazed at me through his slowly uplifted eye-glass, and, after drawling out, "Why, Mark, my boy! you are done—regularly done—done as brown as a toast"—offered to bet me an even hundred that I should not catch the culprit in the next three months.

Tom Neville condoles with me, and calls Baldwin an ungrateful villain, and even offered, if I would pay the expenses, to run down to Liverpool to arrest him, in case he should attempt to embark for America from that port; but I cannot help suspecting at times that he laughs at me in

his sleeve, and covertly enjoys Conway's coarse jests when he terms me the knowing banker, who gave real Abraham Newlands for forged ones, and declares that Baldwin, after all, was literally a man of ten thousand.

It must be confessed that I have been most scandalously deceived by this "honest-hearted fellow, who was to fall, like Cæsar, bravely, honorably, and decorously;" but there is consolation in reflecting that I am twenty-five years old, and that this is the very first time that I have been wrong in my judgment, or have ever suffered myself to be overreached.

That I should have been betrayed in this instance by my own generosity of heart and a misplaced confidence is less excusable, for, although Baldwin's account of his early history turns out to have been perfectly correct, I ought to have known mankind better than to have been gulled by appearances and professions, however plausible. I thought myself tolerably keen and cautious, but "Aliquando bonus." Psha! the proverb's somewhat musty.

CHAPTER XII.

1797—1798.

I see, by the True Briton newspaper, that Matthew Plummer, *Esquire*, (!!!) has been taking the lead at a Borough Meeting, for procuring the abolition of the Slave Trade, when he made "a brilliant and impressive speech," which is reported at considerable length. "A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind." I suppose Matt recollects his own slavery, when he was my fag at the Charter House, and wishes to exonerate his sable brethren from similar inflictions.

What falsehood, as well as hypocrisy, in stigmatizing the Slave Trade as anti-christian, when it is notoriously practised by every christian nation in Europe! Besides, if there had been any truth in the charge, it would have been condemned, of course, by our Church, which has rarely lifted up a finger, or wagged a tongue against it. Our Liverpool

and Bristol merchants, men of great wealth, and, consequently, of the highest respectability, who have embarked their capitals in it, under the direct sanction of the legislature, would be exposed to very serious loss were it to be abolished. But what care those innovators, these pharisaical pretenders to superior humanity, for the sufferings of gentlemen, or for vested rights? Being mostly pauper philanthropists, who have nothing to lose themselves, they feel not for the losses of others. If there be any good sense, fair play, or common honesty, left in Old England, this idle clamor will pass away unheeded, like Major Cartwright's annual motion for reform, or the equally absurd sessional propositions for emancipating, as it is called, the Catholics, and other dissenters. If these gentry want equality of civil rights, why cannot they conform to the established Church? Truth is no such great price to pay for the boon they solicit.

Plummer's, however, was really a good speech; an excellent one, considering the badness of his cause. Who wrote it for him, I wonder? That he composed so much good sense himself I never can believe, when I recollect how he used to hammer and boggle, even at his Latin nonsense verses. And yet I have been told, on authority less questionable than his own assertion, when I met the quiz upon Tower Hill, that he has given a wonderful impulse and expansion to the business, is unquestionably making a rapid fortune, and is so much looked up to in the trade that he was selected to head a deputation appointed to wait upon Mr. Pitt, on the subject of a proposed reduction in the tobacco duties. This seems almost incredible. How Mr. Pitt must have stared at his quizzical cut, his smug, powderless head, and his little brass buckles!

The vulgarian! It is well that he has made no further attempts to intrude himself upon my notice, for, hating him with a more rooted aversion since I have learnt his successes, I cannot listen with common patience to the blockheads who "wonder with a foolish face of praise," as they talk of his industry and his talents. *His* talents!!! Ha! ha! ha! And yet it is galling to think that the bustling dunce has actually made more way in the world than I have. To be sure his is the vulgar, and mine the fashionable world. Yet

would I not wish him to prosper, even among the merchants of the Borough; for his success, casual as it must be, will make him conceited, and the conceit of a thriving blockhead is absolutely intolerable.

After the great review of the volunteers, given in Hyde Park, in honor of the Prince of Wurtemburg, feeling fatigued with the heat and dust, I took the innocent liberty of disobeying the order of Colonel Herries, not to disperse till we reached Gray's Inn Lane, and, giving my charger to my groom, whom I had directed to be in attendance, I walked towards Piccadilly, in search of a hackney-coach. Several others did the same, a deviation from the strict rigor of military discipline, upon which the Colonel has thought proper to animadvert. This is really carrying the joke a little too far! In the field, or during a review, especially in fine weather, one would not think of quitting the ranks; but after the Prince, and all the members of the royal family had left the ground, it is too much to expect the same blind obedience to orders, however unreasonable, which would be exacted—and very properly too—from a common-*paid* soldier. We are *not* common soldiers. The Colonel would do well to recollect that we are not only volunteers and gentlemen, but many of us persons of great opulence, or heirs to undoubted wealth, while he himself is a man of no fortune whatever. Should he so far forget himself, or presume upon his situation, as to exhibit any more of these impertinent freaks, I myself, though one of his Majesty's most loyal subjects, shall not hesitate to resign, an example which several others, persons of the first eminence in the city, are prepared to follow. Men worth a plum or more will not be schooled and dragooned by a copper captain.

Upon this occasion, I was about to jump into a hackney-coach, when I was accosted by Ned Simmons, who quickly betrayed himself by the loud familiarity of his voice, and his cocking, self-satisfied strut, or I should hardly have recognized him, so completely was he disguised by his uniform, and the towering semi-circle of bearskin that surmounted his helmet, giving a most disproportioned height of capital to the under-sized column of his figure. Recollecting the

monstrous and unprovoked outrage I had perpetrated in our last encounter, I cannot say that I felt quite at my ease when he followed me, without invitation or apology, into the hackney-coach; especially as he might deem it incumbent upon him to be particularly pugnacious to justify the war-like fierceness of his military costume. Most gratifying was it, nevertheless, to reflect that I had knocked down this presumptuous aspirant to the hand of Fanny Hartopp, although I had no reason to believe that he entertained any suspicion of his assailant, since he made no allusion whatever to the adventure, although he favored me with a long account of the services he had rendered to his country and to Colonel Kensington, as a captain in the Third Regiment of Loyal London Volunteers.

By way of feeler, and to make assurance double sure, I inquired of Simmons whether it was true that he had been attacked one night by a thief or a vagabond of some sort, as he was returning from Mr. Hartopp's.

"Too true to be quite agreeable," was the reply. "Some cowardly bully came behind me, and laid me prostrate by an unexpected blow; but I was up again before you could say Jack Robinson; and if the scoundrel had not been favored by an uncommonly quick pair of heels, and an unusually dark night, I should have pummelled and kicked him to a jelly, as sure as you are sitting there."

"Should you know the fellow again?" I inquired, with an affected nonchalance.

"No, I never saw his face; but by the glimpses I caught of his figure, I should say he was about your height and size."

To hide my confusion at this remark, I poked my head out of the window, pretending to nod familiarly to a passing friend, though I was only reflecting, at the moment, how completely the law of honor depends on the publicity of its proceedings: how sensitive and bellicose we sometimes are as to the opinions of others; how callous and cowardly as to our own. Here had I, bristling in my regimentals, and looking as martial as Mars himself, been termed a coward, a bully, a scoundrel, and threatened, to my very face, with a kicking and a beating of the most gelatinous tendency, feeling all the time the greatest possible

satisfaction that, owing to my incognito, I was not in any way called upon to resent these complicated insults. How eagerly we all avail ourselves of the privilege when we can be base and contemptible with impunity. Truly this is a precious world!

By way of turning the conversation, I inquired of my companion whether he had lately seen any thing of the Hartopps. "What!" exclaimed the communicative little cocket-writer, ever ready to talk upon any subject, and particularly about himself, "have you not heard? It is all off; I never go near them now. Popped the question to Fanny a month ago, when the silly girl sent me to the right-about, without a moment's hesitation. You may well stare; true, nevertheless—honor bright! Father and mother, all in my favor—no wonder. Shewed 'em by my books what I was making every year—next in rotation to the collector outwards, at whose death my fees will be doubled, and the fellow weezy as a broken-winded horse. Old ones up to snuff—would have given their ears to have me for a son-in-law, but Fanny obstinate as a mule, though she has not a button for her portion; not likely to have salt to her porridge when her father hops the twig. Ever hear of such inexplicable conduct? That girl must either be mad, or she must have some attachment to another; though she denies the fact, and I cannot find that any young fellow has been much of a visitant there, since you have cut the concern, and deserted the hill."

Oh! with what avidity did I devour this welcome information, for though I should scorn the idea of fearing Ned Simmons as a rival, so long as Fanny might cherish a hope, however faint and distant, that I had any serious views in my attentions to her, I could not but fear the effect of his solicitations and importunities, after I had given up the field to him. Vulgar as he undoubtedly is, the dapper little fellow is good-tempered, vivacious, thriving in his business, and irreproachable in his character, spite of all Mrs. Maynard's insinuations to the contrary. Considering her father's present circumstances, and her own future prospects, Ned would have been an excellent match for her—if she could have loved him in return.

Ay, there's the rub. Simmons's suspicion that she must

have some attachment to another, does credit to his sagacity, and I *think* I could name the party. Poor dear, tender-hearted little Fanny! I am truly sorry that I cannot exchange hearts with thee; and yet I am delighted that thou hast refused Simmons. Why should this be? It is most selfish and ungenerous, but so it is nevertheless. There is such a thing as jealousy without love; at least without marriage, and, I suppose, *that* must be my feeling. In these affairs all men are alike; all are unreasonable, inconsiderate, heartless, seeking rather the gratification of their own pride and vanity, than the happiness of the object whom they have taste enough to admire, but not spirit enough to woo and win. Now that I know Ned Simmons to have been refused, I feel doubly vexed that I knocked him down. *Mem.* not to yield to such perilous impulses in future.

I have read in some book of a rich old father who used to sham illness on purpose to tantalize his prodigal and impatient heir. Far be it from me to insinuate that there is any thing analagous in the case of my own father and myself; but he has recently suffered an attack of influenza, from which, considering the alarming nature of the symptoms, the rapidity of his recovery was really calculated to excite a suspicion that he could not have been in such imminent danger as he gave us reason to suppose.

Dr. Babington and Dr. Sims, both of whom I have consulted as to the present state and future prospects of my father's health, assure me that I need not be under the least uneasiness, his stamina being remarkably good, his small, wiry frame of that conformation which indicates long life, and the Hawkwood family, in general, being prone to longevity, which is commonly hereditary. And this information they couple with the complaisant assurance that I need not be under the least *apprehension!* Indeed! how do they know? More undutiful than other heirs I would not wish to be thought, although I have more excuse for wishing to succeed to that fortune, which must eventually be my own, and in which I am denied a fair participation during the life-time of its present possessor. Paternal injustice like this amounts to an usurpation, and has, doubt-

less, been the source of many a parricidal wish, if not deed. Horrible demoralization, and all attributable to the avarice of sires! Many, however, are the honorable instances upon record of fathers who, by rendering their sons independent during their life-time, have removed this shocking temptation from their path: a wise generosity altogether foreign, I am sorry to say, to the selfish and antiquated notions of Alderman Hawkwood, who not only refuses me that larger share of the banking profits to which I consider myself fairly entitled, but has angrily, I might almost say, fiercely forbidden all future recurrence to the subject, a monstrous mandate to which I cannot long submit.

That imperturbable, phlegmatic coldness and impassiveness which my father so sedulously cherished, and flattered himself that it was equanimity, has been latterly exchanged for strange fits of excitement and irritation, alternating with moods of deep and gloomy sullenness, the only evidences now left of his recent malady. These, indeed, seem to be aggravated by the removal of his bodily ailments.

My mother, who, instead of soothing his infirmities, avoids his presence as much as possible, attributes his splenetic temper to his constant fretting and fuming about the unfortunate course of public affairs. That my father's patriotic feelings, or his sympathies of any sort, should prey upon his mind seems very little in accordance with his character; but, if he be truly rendered wayward and choleric by the present prospects of the British empire, Heaven knows that he has warrant enough for his moroseness and caprice, however morbid may be their aspects.

Well may the stoutest heart quail, and the most confident worshippers of our prime minister be smitten with sore misgivings when, within the compass of two fatal years, we have witnessed the stoppage of the Bank of England; the appalling mutiny at the Nore; a sanguinary and wide-spread rebellion in Ireland; and the signal and irrecoverable overthrow of all our continental allies. Here are calamities enough in a few short months to have stamped a whole protracted war with misfortune and disgrace, and to have unseated the strongest administration that ever held the reins of power; yet the nation rebounds with a more buoyant vigor from every fall, and the opposition to

the ministry is so weak, so helpless, so hopeless, that the few whig members who still cling to their party have given up the contest in despair, and have actually seceded from the House.

If my father's spirits are depressed by the state of public affairs, mine might well be plunged in a deeper dejection by the posture of my household concerns, my pecuniary embarrassments assuming every day a more alarming aspect. I hold myself to be tolerably vigilant in money matters, yet the expenses of the cottage at Epsom are unaccountably heavy and constantly increasing. But I *must* live in a style commensurate with my position and prospects, and I ought not to complain, since I have had the distinguished honor of receiving beneath its roof the celebrated Brummel, an honor which gives me an acknowledged passport into all the fashionable circles.

For this I am indebted to Conway, who managed the whole negociation, difficult as it was, with consummate address. I trembled for the result, recollecting that when a mutual friend undertook a similar mission for R——, by carrying an invitation to a dinner at a distant day, accompanied with a notification that Mr. Brummel was at liberty to name his party, he looked coolly up in the face of the ambassador, and quietly asked—"Does Mr. R—— dine at home himself on the day mentioned?"—"Of course," was the reply. "Then I cannot accept his invitation," bowed the great *arbiter elegantiarum*, and, beckoning to a couple of dukes lounging at the window of Brookes's, he condescended to give an arm to each, and to patronize them up and down St. James's Street.

In his visit to me, Brummel's manners were those of a perfect gentleman, betraying neither arrogance nor affectation, as if he were totally unconscious of the pre-eminent and commanding station he occupies in society, so that I am half disposed to doubt the current anecdote about R——. To be sure, there is some difference between R—— and myself. It seems to me that Mr. Brummel's coxcombry and his lofty pretensions are not natural to him,

but adopted for some particular purpose, which time perhaps may develop. He appeared pleased with his entertainment at my cottage, which certainly combined every luxury that money could command.

Arthur Conway is perpetually harping upon the decided predilection of the Duchess of Pullborough's niece in my favor, and enlarging upon the immense advantages and distinctions that I should secure by so exalted an alliance. The girl seems willing and forward enough, I must confess; but it is acknowledged that she has not a shilling of fortune, an insuperable objection to an embarrassed man, though I have not made him acquainted with my troublesome state of impecuniosity. No, no! an offshoot of nobility, with high notions, expensive habits, and an empty purse, is no wife for me. Since my affairs have become involved, my thoughts have frequently reverted to Augusta Maynard, and her large fortune. I believe I might obtain both by asking, and, as a man at my time of life ought really to be settled and out of debt, it is by no means unlikely that Augusta may be the happy woman after all. *Nous verrons.*

Indebted as I am to Conway for my first introduction into fashionable life, I must say that I find him in every way a most expensive acquaintance, and somewhat too free and easy, even for an intimate friend. Without so much as asking my permission, he has invited Mademoiselle De Montmorency to spend some time at the cottage, on the plea that her health requires a little change of air, and the lady certainly gives herself airs enough in her new domicile. My tea-equipage she pronounces too shabby for a gentleman, and, as I hate imputations of this nature, I have sent in a breakfast-service of plate. Her broad, and by no means very delicate hints have compelled me to present her with several articles of jewellery, to which she took a particular fancy; and, as to my carriage, horses, and servants, she puts them in such constant requisition that I am almost deprived of their services.

Although Mademoiselle De Montmorency came here for the benefit of country air, she frequently orders my man to drive her in the phaeton to London, where she goes shopping, pays visits, and returned t'other day an hour af-

ter my customary dinner-time, without any other apology than a laughing declaration that she had been deceived by her watch, which was always too slow, and she really wished some kind creature would take compassion upon her, and give her a better one. On this hint I spake, and presented her one of Moss's handsomest gold repeaters; but I cannot say that I find much improvement in her punctuality.

In other respects I have no complaints to make. She sings to me whenever I wish; plays cards, backgammon, and chess; makes capital fun of Tom Neville, who is also at the cottage; renders herself agreeable by a thousand little attentions; and pays me compliments which are evidently sincere, or they would not gratify me, for I hate the fulsomeness of flattery. In fact, she seems to be mightily taken with me; and, on my part, I really find her a most fascinating person. Odd enough! that Conway has never visited the cottage since her arrival. She tells me he went into Somersetshire, to assist a friend in a contested election; but he must, surely, have returned before this. The lady, who seems perfectly happy without him, intimates no present intention of taking her departure, nor have I any particular wish that she should leave me, though I find that her protracted stay is beginning to excite some tittle-tattle in the neighborhood.

After performing a preliminary round of duties, yesterday, by visiting my mother and Edith at Beddington Park, and paying my respects to my father at the banking-house, I strolled westward, and turned into the Cocoa Tree, where, to my no small astonishment, I found Conway lounging at the window, reading the Anti-Jacobin, and betraying, by the quantity of scattered snuff upon his voluminous frill, that he had been sitting for some time in the same position. He was alone in the room, and, after slowly uplifting his eyeglass at my approach, he drawled out—

"Ah, Mark, my fine fellow! is that you?—Well, have you gathered any tidings yet of your old friend, Captain Baldwin, the man of ten thousand?"

Conway never laughed, but his features curled as he now

spoke with a [illegible]ve, not to say a contemptuous, sneer, that was [illegible] offensive.

"You should have been here five minutes sooner," he resumed—"you would have heard Jekyll's last joke. Talking of the proposed repeal of the tax upon clocks and watches, I expressed a hope that it would be carried into effect, as I believed the duty had seriously injured the trade. 'Ay,' said Jekyll, 'and seriously altered the manufacture; for, ever since its imposition, the most prevalent *case* among the watchmakers has been *shagreen*.' Have you read the account of poor Jack Palmer's death? He will be a great loss—what a leg and foot he had! and how well his fine head of hair was always dressed and powdered, though the brown Mareschal was apt to predominate. I went to see Bluebeard last week. Have you heard what Colman said about Kelly's music?"

"Last week! why I thought you were electioneering in Somersetshire."

"No—the Whig candidate gave in, so I was not wanted."

"How comes it, then, that we neither saw nor heard any thing of you at Epsom?"

"Really, my dear fellow, I can hardly tell you: I suppose I never thought of it. These midnight debates upon the Irish rebellion have put every thing else out of my head, and I thought I might be wanted for a division. We really ought to have you in Parliament, Mark! In these alarming times, when the country needs all the assistance of all her loyal sons, men of talent and eloquence, like you, ought not to shrink from the performance of their public duties. Why don't you buy a Borough? Why don't you purchase a seat, and come among us? You would be sure to distinguish yourself, and would find it both pleasant and profitable, if you had a fancy to share in the scramble for the loaves and fishes, though these are beneath *your* notice."

By a singular coincidence, the very idea thus suggested had been frequently occurring to me of late, for I was naturally anxious that my oratorical and other powers should be rendered subservient to the interests of the empire, as well as that I should obtain present protection against the insufferable impertinence of duns, though I had never dreamt of being enabled to carry my purposes into effect

until after the death of my father. Then I frankly confessed to Conway, entering into a full statement of my pecuniary affairs, and even acknowledging that I was at "hard up," to use a vulgar phrase, as to have been threatened with arrest by an impertinent creditor.

"The best and the most common of all possible reasons for getting the protection of Parliament," said my companion. "Why, there are scores of young fellows who come into the House for no other earthly reason; and who delight, as they drive about in their dashing equipages, to scatter the mud over their vulgar pedestrian creditors. But, really, Mark! I can hardly trust the evidence of my own ears. I am utterly lost in astonishment at what you have just told me."

"I thought you would be surprised at my father's unhandsome, niggardly, and unjust behavior."

"Pardon me. My astonishment is limited to the behavior of the son."

"I do not understand you."

"Nor I you. What! the son, and heir, and partner of Alderman Hawkwood, the richest banker in the City, in pecuniary difficulties, and actually assailed by duns!"

"I have told you that I have only a fixed stipend of a thousand a year."

"True: but 'I think you write a reasonable good hand, Val.;' as old Sir Sampson Legend says in the play. Give me your acceptance, your note of hand, your endorsement, and I will get you the Abraham Newlands to any amount—(genuine flimsies, none of Baldwin's flash notes,) in less than twenty-four hours, without compelling you, as is the case with most heirs, to take out part of the amount in borax, beeswax, barilla, slops, smilcloth, Dutch cheeses, logwood, fustic, or any rubbish of that sort. No—you shall have the whole in money, save and except the moderate commission to which I shall think myself fairly entitled. How many thousands do you want?"

"Of course I must be well aware that money could be easily raised in this manner; but, unfortunately, I am under a solemn engagement to my father never to put my hand to note, bill, or draft of any sort."

"As he had no right to exact any such condition, you are

not bound to observe it. "Surely you may say, as Ben the Sailor did of his father, 'I am not bound apprentice to him; and, as to my being undutiful, why was he undutiful first?' Besides, you cannot help yourself, and—*nemo tenetur ad impossible*—there, I have not forgotten all my Eton Latin, you see."

"Upon this point I am immoveable. I am sorry I gave the promise, but I repeatedly pledged my honor to its observance, and break it I never will."

"Mark! Mark! if you go on in this way, you will never be a complete man of fashion, never be one of us. What say you then to a post-obit? It will eventually cost you a deuced deal more; for, as your stingy dad is evidently a tough, stubborn, long-lived piece of goods, the terms will be high, very high; but in this way you may raise the wind without signing bill, note, or draft, and consequently without any violation of your vow."

Delighted with so simple an expedient, which had never before occurred to me, and declaring that the exorbitancy of the terms was a secondary consideration, as I should be rolling in wealth when called upon for payment, I empowered Conway, who declared himself to be completely *au fait* at such proceedings, and well acquainted with all the money-lenders, to raise for me, in the first instance, a sum of five thousand pounds; of which, at his strenuous and repeated recommendation, I agreed to appropriate one thousand to the purchase of a seat in Parliament, for the remainder of its term. As it is probable that there may be two or three more sessions, the price is temptingly low. Conway says such an opportunity may never recur, the selling party merely accepting such a trifle because he is suddenly compelled to go abroad, and must necessarily vacate his seat.

"As to the purchase money," continued Conway, "I will ensure you getting it back before a dissolution, either in meal or malt, if you choose to push the ministers, and pledge yourself to come in again. I myself, to be sure, have not done half so well as I might, having scandalously neglected my own interests, as all my friends declare."

"Then I must have been misinformed. I understood you had provided for some of your family."

"Why, yes, to a certain extent; for two younger brothers, who were entirely dependant upon me, I procured comfortable situations in the colonies; and I myself might have got a tolerably good apointment at home; but, as it was not a sinecure, and I hate all trouble, I consented, instead of taking office of any sort, to be placed upon the pension list."

"Nay, then, Conway, I cannot think that you have done very much amiss, altogether."

"No!—why I have been thirteen years a member, during the whole of which time I never once voted against the minister, and was never out of call when I was wanted for a division—no, not even during the Ascot or Epsom week, which is sharp practice for an idle fellow like me. I might and ought to have done more for myself, and have no doubt you will turn your time and your talents to better account—that is to say, if you choose. There's the advantage of being a staunch Pittite! No wonder the poor Whigs have thrown up their cards; they have been playing a losing game these ten or twenty years."

Strange to say, during the whole of our colloquy, which lasted for nearly a couple of hours, Conway never mentioned the name of Mademoiselle de Montmorency, nor did I, fearing he might think I was tired of her visit. This is the more remarkable, as he stated that he should not be able to visit me at the cottage just at present, since the important commissions with which I had entrusted him would detain and fully occupy him in London.

A few days, it seems, will suffice to accomplish the whole affair of the seat in parliament. What inestimable advantages result from this system of close boroughs! None but men of fortune can purchase them, which is a security for the respectability of the representative; while enlightened statesmen, brilliant orators, and profound thinkers, who would otherwise be lost to their country, are thus enabled to develop their talents, and assist the public counsels of the nation. Conway is to manage the qualification for me, another happy contrivance, without which, philosophers unpossessed of real property, and our largest funded capitalists, would be equally incapacitated from becoming parliamentary candidates.

How to conduct myself towards my father in this matter occasions me some little embarrassment. As I am not calling upon him for a single shilling, but merely dealing with my own prospective fortune, over which I have a clear right of control, I do not feel in any way bound to communicate my proceedings to him, nor should I like him to know that I have been raising money upon post-obit. It is my present intention, therefore, to leave him entirely in the dark until I am actually returned, when it will be too late to offer any objections, even if his pride and his parsimony, when he finds that my return has cost him nothing, do not rather lead him to approve the step I have taken.

That this will be the case, if I can make a brilliant maiden speech, I do not doubt, for he piques himself upon his own speeches at the Common Council, pompous and wordy as they are; and I can fancy him strutting up and down the Bank offices, with a newspaper in his hand, and exclaiming to his friend's, "Sir, have you seen my son's speech in the House of Commons last night? He was always fond of imitating me when quite a boy, and it certainly is a remarkable fact that great powers of oratory are generally hereditary. Yes, sir, generally. Look at Lord Chatham and Mr. Pitt.

Most worthy, but certainly not most eloquent dad, your paternal pride and my filial duty shall both be gratified. I will endeavor to exemplify the *latter half* of the precedent you have quoted!

CHAPTER XIII.

1798 CONTINUED.

My anticipations as to the immense advantages to be derived from raising money upon post-obit are considerably diminished. Golden visions gleamed before mine eyes; an Eldorado unfolded the portals of its exhaustless treasury, bidding me gather up wealth at pleasure; I was a modern Crœsus, or rather a Midas, for I must have had ass's ears to listen to such auriferous music, without ever inquir-

ing how much I was to pay the piper. The terms of usurious money-lenders are exorbitant, monstrous, ruir and all these enormous sacrifices are at my own ulti expense! My fortune will, doubtless, be large, very l and it must remain so. This is the great object to wl have been always looking forward.

Through life I have been taught to consider wealt first, the only consideration, a lesson which has not, I been altogether thrown away upon me. Neither will up the goose for the golden eggs, nor imitate the imp dent savages, who root up the tree for the sake of ge at the cocoa-nuts. No, no, I love money too well to t it away needlessly and wantonly. Conway tells me post-obit advances are generally raised much more eas the life of an alderman, the lenders calculating, with a tainty that is seldom disappointed, upon the comon r of civic feasting—obesity and apoplexy; but that my fa temperance and spare habit, combined with the knowr gevity of our family, have sadly aggravated the ter my case, although he urged that my father had lately fered a sharp, indeed he said a *dangerous* attack of ill The extortioners replied that at his age such a malad removing the superfluous humors, often improves the h as a storm-beleaguered vessel is rendered the more b ant and seaworthy by throwing all her worthless m weights overboard. On the whole, he strenuously re mends my acceding to the conditions, hard as they and I have desired him to get all the papers prepared out delay.

The recent pressure of my pecuniary embarrassme the growing alienation between myself and my father, ing to his inflexible determination not to render me further assistance; my conviction, since his late reco that, though my final stores may be accumulating, the pect of their happy possession is indefinitely deferred; the feelings of proper pride, which are perpetually u that, at my time of life, I ought to be placed in a situa not only of independence, but of opulence, have ind me to turn my thoughts more seriously towards Au Maynard and her large fortune, and I have, accordingly some time past, been both assiduous in my visits,

pointed in my devotions. In short, I have been dangling with the golden prize. Had I seen any prospect of a successful competitor, I should have made a dash for it at once; but though there are many candidates, I have sufficiently ascertained that none of them are formidable, and that their chances diminish in the exact proportion that my attentions increase.

In good sooth, I believe the *donzella* has been waiting for me all along, and, as I have now pretty well made up my mind not to have any further dealings with the post-obit gentry beyond the £5000 for which I stand committed, I have also determined not to keep the young lady much longer in suspense.

My father will, of course, make the most vehement opposition to my becoming a member of Parliament, considering my present stinted income, and will, doubtless, pester me with all sorts of inconvenient questions as to the ways and means by which it has been accomplished. I shall, therefore, keep him in the dark until I have secured the hand of Augusta Maynard, when I shall communicate both pieces of good fortune at the same time, so that one amazement may neutralize the other. As he has been repeatedly urging me of late not to suffer the great heiress to slip through my fingers, he cannot be otherwise than gratified at my *compliance with his wishes*, for I may as well put it down to the score of duty; and should he advance any objections to my parliamentary project, I shall plead my independent position, declare that I shall not look to him for a shilling towards the election, and carry it off with a high hand. He will find that at twenty-nine years of age, with the income of Augusta's portion, for I shall not object to its being settled, I am no longer to be treated as a boy.

Ovid! Propertius! Catullus! Cornelius Gallus, *et hoc genus omne!* Oh! what a pity that ye are all dead, leaving behind ye no successor worthy to bind my brows with amaranth and myrtle, and to compose an undying Epithalamium upon the auspicious occasion of my approaching marriage. Duns and creditors, avaunt! I defy ye all.

Post-obit usurers! down, down to Tartarus, to mingle with your bygone predecessors. Fortune! instant, tangible, embraceable, Fortune! come to mine arms, that I may kiss thy blind, but not undiscerning eyes; and hither hie ye joys voluptuous and exquisite delights that wing the gladsome hours of youth and opulence!

Well may my language be triumphant, for I have achieved the victory, distanced all competitors in the Argonautic adventure, and borne off the golden fleece. In plain English, the handsome, the stately, the wealthy Augusta Maynard, has consented to be mine. For several days past, at the invitation of the mother, who, doubtless, saw and wished to promote my object, I have been a constant visitant or guest, thus obtaining opportunities for advancing my suit, which I failed not to turn to good account; and this morning I determined to propound the all-important question.

Augusta's eyes and complexion, owing perhaps to the excitement occasioned by an anticipation of my purpose, were more than usually brilliant, while methought there was a softening of that rather dignified carriage and look, which some people mistake for *hauteur*. Her dress and ornaments were, as usual, of the most costly yet least showy description, arranged, however, as it appeared to me, with a more than usual attention to becomingness. Alone upon the terrace, there were no objects to distract our attention, but the peacock bridling in the pride of his own enamelled gorgeousness, and the occasional flashing of a passing servant, whose splendid livery glittered through the bushes that screen the offices from the garden and the house. All objects in this establishment, as I have before observed, are in perfect accordance: every thing attests the presence and the power of wealth, the feature which did not by any means form the least attraction of the spot, although the contrast between the quietude of the garden and the hubub around it, to which I have already alluded, was particularly striking upon the present occasion. From the midst of crowded and noisy streets, I had been suddenly transported to this leafy seclusion, where I found myself making love beneath the boughs of trees to the accompaniment of the little fountain that sent up its gentle plashings from the grotto. The whole scene was a picture

of tranquility, set in a framework of obstreperous commotion.

Some officious fool, most likely one of my numerous rivals, having insinuated to Augusta that I had been lately leading a very dissipated life, she slightly alluded to it, generously rejoining, when I made a hesitating attempt to exculpate myself,

"Nay, nay, Mr. Hawkwood! give up the defence; you are a bad advocate, I see, when you have yourself for a client, and I like you all the better, for I prefer an honest rake to a hypocritical one."

Bless her condescension! I knew that beforehand, or I should not have made such a lame defence. All girls, whatever may be their diversity of character in other respects, like a certain degree of gentlemanly rakishness in their lovers, the only general rule applicable to the sex, which does not admit of a single exception.

"I have been informed," pursued Augusta, "or perhaps, I should rather say *mis*-informed, for I pretend not to any knowledge upon the subject, that all young men of fortune indulge, at first, in a certain degree of irregularity and wildness; and I have heard it maintained that this propensity is best cured, as horsebreakers subdue an unruly colt, by suffering it to run away until it is exhausted, when both the biped and the quadruped will become much more easily reconciled to future restraint.

"The comparison is not particularly flattering to the rational being," said I.

"Not in the least," smiled Augusta, "if you apply that term to the young man; but remember that it did not originate with me. I cannot see the smallest necessity for such an irrational experiment, although I can believe that where there is a basis of good sense and proper principle, however both may be forgotten for the moment, their possessor will quickly emerge from the vortex of dissipation with a confirmed resolution never to be betrayed into it again."

"Very just and very true, Miss Maynard, and the sooner he purchases this salutary experience, the better."

"Unquestionably, youth is the only excuse for so puerile a process, and, if it must be gone through, let it be done

by all means *before* a man settles in life, for the mischief is then confined to its perpetrator."

Here was a hint, methought, of which it behoved me to take advantage. Augusta, having pretty well admitted that she liked a reformed rake, it was evidently my province to merit the character. Assuming, therefore, a semi-penitent tone and look, I confessed that, like other thoughtless young men, I had been tempted into various irregularities and a gay course of life, of which I was now heartily sick, being both ashamed of its frivolity, and convinced by experience of the regrets and self-reproaches that it inevitably entails. I was now anxious to fill a more useful and honorable station in society; my father, attached by long habit to the whole and sole control of the banking business, did not wish me to interfere in its management; and as both Mr. Bearcroft and Mr. Mingay had expressed a high opinion of my oratorical powers, I had been induced to make arrangements for immediately coming into Parliament, that I might lend my abilities, such as they were, to the support of Government, in the present perilous state of the British empire; a resolution, I added, which, for various reasons, must be kept a profound secret for the present.

Here were two master-strokes of policy at once! First, all women are flattered by being made the depositories of a secret, knowing that they cannot keep it, and valuing your confidence the more, the less they feel it to be merited. Secondly, Augusta is ambitious, not aspiring to rise beyond her sphere, but to be the first in it; a position which she would unquestionably occupy, were her husband to be distinguished among his fellow-citizens, not only for his superior wealth, but for his talents and his senatorial honors, to all of which claims she is keenly sensitive.

That some anticipations of this sort were floating in her mind I cannot doubt, for there was an unusual agitation in her look and voice, and earnestness in her manner, as she expressed her approbation of my virtuous resolutions, and confidently predicted that the success of my public career, by giving me an absorbing and honorable object to pursue, would afford a certain security for the future prudence and decorum of my private life.

"Here is another proof," said Augusta, "if more were wanting, of the great advantages of wealth; advantages which I have always duly appreciated, though you have affected, upon one or two occasions, to undervalue them. It corrects its own corrupting influences by enabling a man to purchase and to substitute honorable occupations for debasing pleasures, although, in this instance, as in almost every other, the chief benefits are usurped by your sex. To a woman great opulence is generally a great evil. Besieged by adventurers and fortune-hunters, a rich heiress is frequently avoided by men of delicate and refined mind, from an apprehension that their honorable love of the person may be attributed to a sordid regard for her purse; and thus she must either remain single—generally her wisest course—or marry a man whom she cannot but mistrust, in the first instance, and who rarely fails to justify that mistrust afterwards."

"Nay, Miss Maynard," I exclaimed, "you are really too hard upon the poor rich heiress. Cannot you suppose an intermediate fate between old maidism and marriage to a fortune-hunter? May not her charms and her good qualities (*you* are the last person to deny these possessions to a rich heiress) may they not win the heart of a man equal to herself in wealth and station, of one who loves her for herself alone, and who would be not less proud to declare that love, were she unexpectedly reduced to poverty, than when he comes forward with an independent and devoted spirit to propose a union of their hands and fortunes?"

"One reads of such things in romances," said Augusta, looking down and twiddling with her massive gold chain.

"Ay, dear Miss Maynard, and they occur in real life. I myself am a proof of the averment. Forgive me if I seek to turn your own words and admissions against yourself; forgive the still greater boldness, if I confess that I love you ardently, passionately, even as you have wished to be loved—for yourself alone. Pardon me if I add, that by a fortunate concurrence of circumstances I can lay claim to many of the qualifications which you seem to think eligible in a husband. A few years experience of their emptiness has for ever redeemed me from the dissipations of youth; a fortune equal to your own raises me above all suspicion of

interested motives. I am about to commence a new and an honorable career, and, if I might be confirmed in that more useful and more dignified course of life by the hopes of a domestic felicity, which I can never, never enjoy unless I may aspire to the hand———"

"Nay, nay," interposed Augusta, in considerable agitation, but without withdrawing the hand which I had ventured to take, "this is really not fair, Mr. Hawkwood! I never meant my thoughts and opinions——I did not suspect that you were laying a trap for me: my admissions bore no reference whatever to—to—"

"I am not vain enough to imagine it for a single moment, but, as you must confess, that I have made out a fair case for my presumption, may I, may I hope, dear Miss Maynard, that it is forgiven, that you do not reject my suit? that you will allow me to devote my whole future life to your happiness?"

"As I despise all insincerity and coquetting," replied Augusta, coloring deeply, and speaking with a dignified reserve that sought to qualify the confession, "I will frankly acknowledge that there are many particulars in our respective circumstances which seem to point us out as intended for each other. Perhaps I ought not so readily to make the avowal, but you will acquit me, I trust, of all forwardness except straightforwardness, when I declare that, so far as I myself am concerned, I accept your proffered hand."

Here I pressed her's, of course, to my lips, and kissed it with a tender enthusiasm.

"Let it, however, be distinctly understood," resumed Augusta, "that every thing is entirely dependent upon the approbation of my dear father, who has been summoned to Bristol by urgent business, and whose return I do not expect for several days. To me he has ever been the kindest, the best, the most indulgent of parents, and, should he refuse to sanction the conditional engagement into which I have entered, it is to be considered from that moment as totally dissolved."

"Most willingly, most gratefully do I accede to these terms; but you have no reason, I trust, for anticipating his opposition to our joint wishes."

"On the contrary, I have every reason to expect his

glad acquiescence, and I am solely influenced, in the stipulation I have made, by a deep sense of gratitude and duty."

Again I expressed my cordial concurrence in all her arrangements, and, after repeating my thanks and my devotion, vowing eternal constancy and so forth, and again pressing her unresisting hand to my lips, I quitted the summer-house where this tender scene had occurred, and took my leave.

No; the most astute and practised negociator that ever lived could not have conducted this affair with more consummate address. How skilfully did I lead her on, step by step, insidiously winning her to compromise herself by admissions from which she could not afterwards escape, and thus adroitly paving the way for her acceptance of my suit with the least possible shock to her self-love! To be sure, where the negociator is admired, the difficulties of his task are incalculably diminished. And how rich was her ready credence of the averment that I wooed her for herself alone, and not *pour les beaux yeux de sa cassette*.

Well, she might have done worse. I dare say I shall make her a very good husband. She really looked uncommonly handsome when her eyes sparkled, and her face flushed up with the excitement of our colloquy. Yes; I feel confident that I shall discharge my marital duties in the most exemplary manner, for did we not both agree that a reformed rake makes the best husband! This was capital! But am I reformed? "Mass! I cannot tell."

My mother and sister are both delighted with my plans, which I have imparted to them, stipulating only that they are to be kept secret for the present. Edith is very partial to Augusta, whose only fault, she says, is an over-estimate of wealth as a means of happiness, and an undue reverence for its possessors.

"That is so like you, poor child!" cried my mother, who had overheard the observation. "Why, what *are* people

to be valued for but their fortunes? You wouldn't think highly of a beggar, would you? And yet I shouldn't be at all surprised, for you never were like other girls! Poor thing! wonderful!"

The good lady herself can think of nothing but the probable amount of the marriage portion—the money down, which she anticipates will be large, very large, as old Maynard is a liberal fellow, and quite devoted to his daughter. She reminded me, too, with a smile of satisfaction, that he is subject to attacks of gout, and that his father died of it before he was sixty. Happy augury! If he possesses a single spark of filial duty, he will make a point of following so praiseworthy an example.

At my mother's earnest solicitation I have promised that my maiden speech in the House shall be a motion for increasing the income of the Prince of Wales, to whom she still looks up with an admiration almost amounting to idolatry. This is an office which I shall discharge *con amore*, having a fellow-feeling for his Royal Highness's pecuniary embarrassments, as well as for the cruel disappointments arising from a paternal senility unreasonably prolonged. How shabby has been the conduct of the king, or rather of the ministers, towards the heir apparent! His Royal Highness has actually been obliged to decline receiving a city address, because his reduced establishment and narrow income would not allow him to assume the state usual upon such occasions. Scandalous! When I shall have drawn public attention to this subject—and I flatter myself my maiden speech will create some sensation—I cannot believe that the grievance will be suffered to exist afterwards.

I have just seen Conway, who informed me that the party with whom he had been negociating for the borough *has declared off*, urging that he has not yet definitively made up his mind to go abroad, and that, if he does, he must have a higher price for the seat, the sum he had mentioned being much below its real value. Guess my astonishment when Conway interrupted the expression of my indignation at this unhandsome conduct by exclaiming,

"It has been infamous! the fellow has behaved like a

blacklegs; but make your mind perfectly easy, you shall not be disappointed. As I had undertaken to manage this affair for you at a fixed price, I felt bound in honor, my dear fellow, to bring you through, so I have accepted the Chiltern Hundreds, and shall procure your return for my own borough at the stipulated sum. Nay, nay; no thanks, no flummery; I couldn't do otherwise, after what had passed."

On my expressing a fear that his own interests might be damaged by his secession, he replied—

"Not in the least, not in the least! They will not require me; and, besides, I shall soon be in again. Some of the officers ordered on foreign service will be wanting to treat for a substitute, and I am always the first person applied to on these occasions."

Notwithstanding these assurances, I cannot but feel his behavior to have been highly generous and friendly, and so I told him, with many assurances of my gratitude.

Conway highly approves my choice of a subject for my *début*, declaring that, if I acquit myself well, of which he entertains no doubt whatever, I shall probably be introduced by Sheridan or Fox, or some of the party, to the Prince of Wales, an honor which may lead to future and more important distinctions. Looking at the precarious state of the king's health, he considers it infinitely more politic to court the rising than the setting sun, an additional motive for my constituting myself the Prince's champion in the House.

With the brilliant, the flattering, the glorious prospect before me of possessing Augusta and her large fortune, of being distinguished in Parliament, and received into personal favor at Carlton House, I need no longer feel any jealousy of the vulgar plebeian, Matt. Plummer, and his dirty dignities at Southwark. I should like to catch him calling me "cousin" when I am thus elevated above him!

As I shall probably be looking out, after my marriage, for a mansion with extensive grounds in the vicinity of London, for old Maynard has got no country house, I shall give up the cottage at Epsom, taking my leave of that vi-

cinity with a *fête champêtre*, conducted upon a small scale, but in a style worthy of the auspicious occasion. It will be restricted, of course (my establishment in this quarter being altogether *sub rosâ*,) to my bachelor coterie and their associates; and, as my hands are so full of business at present, for my love-making and other money matters will keep me in London, Conway and Tom Neville have kindly undertaken to manage it all. I have desired that nothing may be spared, and they are not the men to be niggardly when another pays the piper. They have invited troops of their own friends, including old Charles Bannister, Arrowsmith, and two or three other singers; while Mademoiselle de Montmorency, who still very coolly keeps possession of her quarters, has bidden several of her female associates; so that, with the assistance of the champagne, we shall have a jovial party, I doubt not, and perhaps be able to get up a little dance. It is fixed for Wednesday next. On the day following I am to sign the post-obit papers, touch the money, and pay Conway for a seat in Parliament, and on the succeeding night old Maynard is expected in London, so that I shall have a busy week.

To the intervening time I would say, "*I, pede fausto!*" fly as quickly as you can, for I hate suspense, and ever wish the firstlings of my thought to be the firstlings of my hand. I wish Guy Welford were discoverable. His fine singing would give additional eclat to my rural *fête*.

Wednesday, the appointed day, came, and a glorious one it was—cloudless, sunny, sparkling as my prospects. The guests, more numerous than I had expected, were all gaily dressed; a band of music had been provided; the dinner, laid out in a handsome marquee upon the lawn, was superb, every thing went off famously, and we were all as happy as youth and beauty, wit and wine, music, song, and rampant mirth could render us, when my valet whispered me that a post-chaise had just driven up to the door at full speed, and that the gentleman who had jumped from it desired to have instant speech of me in a private room.

"Blockhead!" said I, "it is doubtless one of the guests,

he is somewhat of the latest, but he is not the less welcome. All are welcome to-day. Show him in, show him in!"

"No, sir, he is not one of the visitants; he told me so himself; his business, he says, is of the last importance, and he must positively see you immediately."

"My good Harrison, you have now confirmed my resolution not to budge from my seat. If he came about pleasure I might have seen him; but for business—zounds, fellow! pleasure is our business to-night, and to none other will I listen."

To say the truth, I began to suspect that it was some smucy dun, and I was just weighing the propriety of calling upon my guests, all of whom were in proper cue for such a freak, to toss the fellow into the neighboring pond, when, on looking towards the cottage, I recognized at the parlor window the lachrymose face of Amos Harmer, the only one of my father's clerks who was acquainted with the secret of my Epsom retreat.

"Amos Harmer here!" I muttered to myself, "what's the matter now?" with which words I hastily apologized to my guests, and hurried to the parlor. My unexpected visitant looked so pale and terrified that I threw myself almost unconsciously into an attitude, elevated my hand, which still held a champagne glass, and ejaculated in the words of Macbeth:—

> 'The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon!
> Where got'st thou that goose look?'

"Oh, sir," said Harmer, shaking his head somewhat reproachfully, "this is no time for merriment and jokes. I bring you sad news, very sad news, and I wish you to be prepared for a great misfortune."

"Lay on, Macduff!" I exclaimed, in the same theatrical tone, for the champagne had begun to exercise its exhilarating influence. "I defy Fortune and all her malice. I have taken a bond of Fate, and made assurance doubly sure, so 'leave making your damnable faces, and begin!'"

"The Alderman, sir, has had a fit, and is dangerously ill."

"The Alderman! *what* Alderman, whey-face?"

"Your worthy father, sir, Mr. Alderman Hawkwood."

"Indeed! I am sorry to hear it, but you know, Harmer, that my good father has a wonderful knack of rallying after these attacks. T'other day he was at death's door, and a week afterwards he was better than ever. I shall never believe that he has been seriously ill, till I hear of his death."

"And if you were told that such was really the case, could you receive the intelligence with as much calmness as you now display? Could you bear it like a man?"

"Why, Harmer, my father has attained a good old age, you know; we must all die when our time is up, and it is the duty of survivors to submit to the dispensations of Providence."

"Nay then, sir, I may as well tell you the whole truth at once. Your father is dead!"

"Dead!" I ejaculated, letting the champagne glass fall from my hand. "Gracious Heaven! when? how?"

"Mr. Poole found him to-day, lying on the floor of his own office. He must have gone off suddenly, in a fit of apoplexy. We had a surgeon in the house in the course of five minutes, who instantly declared that life must have been extinct for more than an hour. Attempts were made to bleed him, but all in vain. He was cold when I untied his stock, and assisted in laying him out upon the sofa, after which I set off as fast as I could to give you the first intelligence. I have always felt a great anxiety for your welfare, and you will, of course, be wanted in London immediately."

Flustered and excited as I had previously been, this startling news sobered me in an instant, so that I saw with a keen and shrewd rapidity all the importance to my fate and fortunes, with which it was fraught. A thousand thoughts chased each other through my brain, while I muttered, with an utter unconsciousness of what I was saying, "This is a sad affair, a sad affair!"

"Yes, sir," resumed the clerk; "it was sad indeed to see the Alderman stretched out, all stiff, and cold, and silent, just at the busiest and most bustling time of the afternoon, when he was generally hurrying over to the Bank to make the transfers. It made him look so unlike himself somehow."

Taking advantage of my temporary absence, the guests

beneath the marquee had been drinking my health with the honors ever lavished upon a champagne-giving Amphitryon, and the preliminary "Hip! hip! hip!"—the vociferous "Hurrahs!" and the final clattering upon the tables, resounded at this instant through the cottage, placing in thrilling contrast the description I had just heard of the sad and silent chamber of death, in which my father lay outstretched. Harmer, who, like all vulgarians, has evidently a mysterious awe of a corpse, seemed surprised and shocked; and, as I wanted to get rid of him as quickly as possible, I desired him to procure fresh horses at Epsom, and return immediately to London, preserving a strict silence as to all that he might have heard or seen at the cottage."

"As Mr. Davis will now retire," said Harmer obsequiously bowing, "I hope, sir, you will be good enough to give me his situation of head clerk, with the same salary."

To this request I acceded at once, although it betrayed the whole secret of his great regard for my interests, as well as of his extraordinary celerity in finding me out; and the worthy clerk, divided between grief for the loss of his old master and satisfaction at the gain he would make by the new one, quitted the cottage with a Janus countenance, that reminded me of Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy.

What a rascally thing is human nature! Amid all the emotions that hurried through my mind, elating it with triumph and exultation at the thought of the fresh fortune thus pouring in upon me, I did not feel a single pang at the death of my father—of the author of my being, thus unexpectedly summoned to his last account, "unhouseled, unannointed, unannealed!" True, we had not been upon very friendly terms, and it is natural that old men should die; but still it does seem strange that I should scarcely have adverted to him at all, my whole soul being absorbed in conjecturing the amount of the riches to which I should succeed. The gift, in fact, swelled to such large proportions that it hid the giver.

One of the very first feelings that shot through my mind was delight that I had not signed the post-obit papers. With a malicious pleasure I pictured to myself the chapfallen disappointment of the usurers, when I should send them

word that I had no occasion to submit to their extortions. It seemed as if the total removal of all excuse for covetousness had suddenly subjected me to its grasping fangs, and that in my newly-born hunger for money "increase of appetite did grow with what it fed on." A few minutes before and I should have been enraptured to marry dear little Fanny Hartopp, had I been affluent enough to take a portionless wife. I was now independent—wealthy; and yet, even if Augusta had offered to release me from an engagement to which my affections were no party, I could not, would not, have abandoned my claim to her fortune. Strange that the accession to unbounded opulence should so suddenly have contracted my mind. Still more strange that all these ideas and calculations should have sped like lightning through my brain, in the brief interval that elapsed between the departure of Harmer and my return to the marquee.

There was no use, I thought, in disturbing the festivity of my friends. They did not, could not, know what had just been communicated to me. On all accounts it was highly desirable that I should appear to be ignorant of it myself, so I pretended to have been called out by mistake, commanded a bumper of champagne to signalise my return, called for a convivial song from that fine old bacchanalian, Charles Bannister, again pushed round the bottle, and, under the excitement and exultation of my feelings, soon elevated the hilarity of the party into a rampant and shrieking revelry. Comic songs were sung, or rather shouted, fresh bumpers were rapidly proposed by fellows whom I had never seen before; some of the party became hiccoughy and pugnacious; others indulged in a thick-speaking maudlin fondness, and a few had already fallen asleep in corners, when the shades of night gathered around us; the vehicles arrived, the guests rode and drove, and staggered away; the cottage was left to its usual repose, and, at midnight, I gladly retired to my room, severed, heated, and with a racking headache, but, strange to say, quite free from inebriety. The intoxication of wealth must have neutralized that of wine, for I felt the full and clear exhilaration of opulence, with none of the fuddled and muddled and flatulent buoyancy that characterizes drunkenness.

CHAPTER XIV.

1798 CONTINUED.

To my no small surprise, I arose on the following morning free from illness of any sort, and even from all sensation of fatigue, although my night had been nearly sleepless. The mind had triumphed over the body. Ambitious schemes and glorious anticipations had lifted me aloft, rendering me insensible to corporeal ailments. "My bosom's lord sate lightly on its throne;" never had I felt more alert in frame, more sprightly or exuberant in spirit. Formerly I had maintained that life began at the age of twenty-one. Ay, if the young heir attains his fortune with his majority; but my existence hitherto had been an irksome state of vassalage and dependence, with present restrictions to which I could not be reconciled by the prospect of a future and indefinite emancipation.

Poor and crippled as I had been, I had certainly indulged in some little gaiety and licence; but it resembled the saturnalian liberty of a slave, or the dance in chains in the Beggars' Opera. Now that I had become for the first time my own master, now that I was free and unencumbered, now that, like Sindbad the sailor, I had shaken the old man from my shoulders; now that, instead of living in the humiliating apprehension of duns, I should revel in the ennobling possession of boundless wealth—now, and now only did I feel that my real life was about to begin.

How rapidly does the mind change with our circumstances! Mine had undergone in one night a wonderful expansion and development. I arose a new man—at least in my sensations—the inward sunshine was so bright and cheerful, that it even seemed to irradiate external objects of the murkiest hue.

"What a beautiful morning!" I exclaimed to my valet, as he was dressing my hair.

"I dare say it will clear up presently, sir," replied the man, thinking I had spoken ironically, for it was pouring with rain. Had I been aware of the fact, I should have

held myself as independent of the elements as I was of all the world; but, feeling as if it *must* be fine weather, I ordered the groom to bring the horses to the door, and left the cottage before the guests, who had staid with me for the night, had made their appearance.

There is something inspiriting in a stormy violent rain; it exhibits vigor and animation; while a continuous drizzle is dull, drowsy, and oppressive. The morning had now assumed the latter character. At any other time, the warm, heavy, spongy air would have hung around me like a wet blanket, weighing down and oppressing both the body and the spirits, but now these saddening influences were unfelt. As the superfluous activity of the mind, in moments of excitement, generally communicates itself to the frame, rendering us impatient of slow movements, I rode at full speed to Beddington Park.

Spite of the gloomy atmosphere, the place looked much more beautiful than I had ever seen it. It was *mine!* The deer were mine; all the horses grazing in the paddock were mine; every thing I passed was mine; that is to say, if I chose to retain the park; but I should, probably, require something on a grander scale, after my marriage with Augusta.

I reached the house; the shutters were all carefully closed; the wind was sobbing, and the drooping trees, saturated with rain, wept around it; no servants, no dogs were moving about; no sound was heard, but the mournful and monotonous cooings from the dovecot; in any other mood, I repeat, the whole scene would have assumed a woe-begone aspect; but I looked upon all I saw as property, and I looked upon that property as *mine*, a magical word, that gilded every thing with a cheerful radiance of its own.

I found my mother in the breakfast-room at the back of the house, the windows of which were open as usual.

"Dear Mark!" she exclaimed upon seeing me, "how glad I am that you are come! I hope you mean to remain here, for poor Edith, you know, is nobody, and I shall be moped to death. All the front windows closed, and the drawing-rooms quite dark, I am obliged to sit in this poky little parlor. No going out—nobody calling. Shocking! I declare I feel quite ill."

Giving her credit for her assertion, although it was unsupported by her looks, I expressed my sorrow for her indisposition, as well as for its truly melancholy cause.

"Oh, ay! dear Mark! Only to think of your father dying in that dreadful manner, when he never had a fit before in all his life! Wonderful. If it had been fat Alderman Goodchild, now, or Sir William Curtis, after all the turtle-eating on board his yacht, one would not have been surprised. And of all times in the world to die just now. Was ever any thing so truly provoking!"

"You must recollect that my father was not young, and, though he appeared to have recovered from his recent attack, it is probable ——"

"I was not alluding to his age," interposed my mother, "*that* was nothing—he was not an old man—by no means—in fact very near my own standing: but only to think, dear Mark, of his dying on the very week when I was engaged to the long-promised party at Lady Campbell's, at which the Prince of Wales is to be present! And my diamond ear-rings are gone to Rundle and Bridge's to be set in the new fashion on purpose for this party. He was quite aware, too, of the fact—I had mentioned it to him repeatedly: but I must say, Mark, your poor dear father was too prone to be selfish—always was, I cannot understand it!"

"Surely you do not suppose that he could have postponed this fatal attack, to suit your convenience."

"O dear, no! not in the least; he never consulted my convenience in any thing, which is the very matter I am complaining of, and proves what I was saying; and you know I never could abide a want of proper consideration for other people's feelings; but I am not vexed, for I was born to be disappointed in all things, and I know it is my duty to submit. Your father was a very good man in every other respect, and of course I must be deeply distressed at his loss. I have just been writing to Lady Campbell. Heigho! the ear-rings were to have been exactly like Lady Jersey's; but there is no dependence upon happiness in this world!"

At this instant Edith entered the room, and, hurrying up to me with an emotion which I had rarely seen her exhibit,

whispered softly: "I have been thinking of you, dear Mark, and hoping you would call, for I feel that I love you now more than ever—as a father as well as a brother, and I longed to tell you so, because I hoped you would love me better in return."

Edith never complained of the coldness and contemptuous treatment of her mother, but I understood the meaning of this quiet appeal. It was to remind me that she would now be left completely in her power, unless she might look up to her brother for sympathy and protection.

"You may ever depend upon me, dear Edith!" I replied, pressing her to my bosom, and I feel that I have made her no vain promise. Hitherto I have partly patronized her from a spirit of opposition, because she has been too much slighted and undervalued by others; but she well deserves my best regards for her own sake—she is entitled to my protection, and I am determined that she shall not be exposed to any additional annoyances, because the head of the family has been changed. Poor girl! she hardly spoke after my mother resumed her bewailings about the uncertainty of human happiness, and she made no reference whatever to the recent death, though her eyes and looks betrayed that she had passed a weeping and restless night.

"Poor Edith is such a mope," said my mother, who always spoke of her, even in her presence, as if she were absent, or deaf, or unable to comprehend, "that you must not forget your promise to pass this miserable week at the park. I shall have nothing to amuse me, you know, but ordering the mourning, and even that will be a melancholy business to me."

"Is it not so to every one?"

"No; some people look particularly well in black, but to me it is excessively unbecoming—shocking! Besides—some people have no diamonds, and are not, therefore, obliged to forego the pleasure of wearing them. Odd! that men should not understand these things better."

On my arrival at the banking-house, whither I soon proceeded, I found the front shutters partially closed, and the diminished light, for it was a dark day, supplied by candles; but the bustle of business, in every other respect, was just the same as usual. My reception, however, was manifestly

different, so sudden is the influence of wealth, and so deeply-rooted our reverence for its possessor.

The acquaintance whom I passed, and who used heretofore to recognize me with a nod, bowed, or touched their hats; and the air of profound homage with which the clerks used to greet their old master, had now descended to their new one. I endeavored to meet this deferential reception with a mingled expression of humility and woe: how far I succeeded Heaven only knows; but my face, I fear, was not a very faithful index of my heart.

In private counting-house I was presently joined by Mr. Poole, at whose apparition it became difficult to suppress an untimely smile, so ridiculously lugubrious and grim was his whole aspect. Having discarded for the nonce the powder which served to redeem in some degree the hardness and vulgarity of his features, his wiry-grizzled hair, his furrowed bronzed visage, wearing a look of overacted woe, the upturned fishy eye, and the deep groan, not far removed from a grunt, of which he delivered himself on entering the room, presented a combination which, instead of exciting my sympathy, only reminded me of Mawworm in the "Hypocrite."

After a few lachrymose and commonplace ejaculations of wonder and regret at the sudden death of his ever-to-be-regretted partner, he inquired whether I would wish to see the body—a pleasant invitation, which I declined, although, I believe, the process is usually gone through upon these occasions, at least by females. It will sooth their affectionate feelings, they urge, to have a last look of the dear departed. My dear madam, or miss, (as the case may be) lay not that flattering unction to your soul; you may imagine that you are evincing great tenderness of heart, but your real motive, although you may not always be aware of it, is nothing in the world but a feminine curiosity, or a morbid love of excitement, perhaps a mixture of both. The only image which a rational affection would wish to fix for ever in the memory, that it may be referred to in the retrospective heart-yearnings of after-years, should be the last living look; the last gleam of love-beaming eyes responsive to our own; the last smile of mingled intellect and feeling, expressive of dying gratitude and attachment; and,

therefore, constituting an ever-grateful vision for future recollection; and all this you would supersede, that your mind may be haunted by the revolting grin of an insensate corpse!

But the wish of gazing once more upon the face of a beloved object is so natural. Is it? Then why not have the grave opened, and the coffin unscrewed, a month after interment, that you may enjoy the satisfaction of a still later last look? No, no; the dead were never meant to be contemplated by the living. Cherish their memory, and let your love of them survive as long as it may be made to endure; but dream not that you are testifying your regard by gazing upon their inanimate remains. Some three years ago, after the celebrated Mrs. Phipoe had been executed for murder, I went to see the body, which was deposited in a house in the Old Bailey, and exhibited to the public. A perpetual stream of people, admitted at one door of the room, walked round the table upon which the corpse was extended, and passed out on the opposite side, not edified or affected by the ghastly spectacle, but venting ribald jokes upon the self-inflicted wound in her hand, the discoloration of the throat produced by the fatal rope, and similar trivialities.

It was a brutalizing exhibition, and I then vowed never again to become a willing gazer upon a corpse. Three fourths of the spectators were females, actuated, of course, by mere curiosity and love of excitement, and with a much better excuse for their indulgence than the madam or miss whom I have just apostrophized, inasmuch as they had no affection for the deceased, and, therefore, ran no risk of having painful or harrowing reminiscences substituted for previous impressions of a contrary character.

Strange as it appears, even to myself, there is no denying the fact that in this, the very earliest moment of my enrichment, I feel, for the first time, the touches of an economy totally opposed to all my previous habits. When Mr. Poole asked me whether I had any instructions to give respecting the funeral, I replied at once—

"As the body has so small a distance to be conveyed, for I know that my father wished to be buried in St. Bar-

tholomew's church, it would be absurd to incur any unnecessary expense. I have always understood that undertakers' charges are quite preposterous; indeed, I have heard my poor father say so, and I am sure that he would not wish money to be thrown away for their benefit. I would have every thing conducted in the most respectable manner; but no extravagance—no waste—for pomp and display upon such occasions are but a melancholy mockery."

"There may possibly be some directions upon this subject in the will," observed Mr. Poole; "had we not better look for it?"

"Certainly, certainly," I replied," eagerly, for, to say the truth, my main object in hurrying to the city had been a desire to inspect this important document.

For a considerable time we searched accordingly in all the safes and desks likely to be its depository, but without success, and I was at length unwillingly obliged to depute the continuance of that duty to my partner.

Were we not forbidden to speak ill of the dead, I should say that this is an unpardonable piece of negligence on the part of my father, and not less strange than inexcusable in a man of such regular habits of business. In cases of intestacy, the law makes a far too liberal provision for the widow, at the expense of the heir; but, in my own instance, I do not apprehend that I shall be long kept out of the full rights of my succession, my mother being advanced in years, and her health by no means good.

As to Edith, however, much as I love her, I must say, in justice to myself, that the proportion awarded to her by the law, and which must be deducted from my share, is unreasonably large. She already possesses four thousand pounds, left to her by her godfather, old Mitchell; I am in debt to nearly that amount, and yet, such are the blind and arbitrary dispensations of the law, neither of these circumstances are taken into consideration. A small sum, in addition to her legacy, would have been quite enough for Edith, especially as she might always have depended upon the generosity of her brother.

Such numbers of friends called in succession to offer me their condolences, that I was obliged to run away from the

banking house. Kind-hearted hypocrites! think they that I did not penetrate their motives? Half of them were never in the habit of calling upon me before; and, spite of their professions of regard for my worthy father, it was manifest that they came to pay court to the rising sun, not to do homage to that which had just set.

Annoyed beyond sufferance by the necessity of assuming a woe-begone look and demeanor, as these sad actors, in every sense of the word, went through their respective parts, and hating all the lugubrious formalities I should have to endure, if I remained in the city, I returned to Beddington, desiring Mr. Poole, if he found the will, to forward it to me immediately, and if not, to give instructions for a plain but respectable funeral, sending me a summons when it was necessary that I should attend, and not pestering me with applications upon any other subject.

Most glad am I to have a few days' seclusion at the park, for custom requires that I should abstain from all my usual amusements, and I have, besides, many immediate arrangements to make, and many future plans to consider and decide upon. To Conway I have already written, desiring him to inform the parties concerned that I have now no occasion to raise money upon post-obit.

The more I reflect upon this subject the greater cause do I find for congratulation in having saved so heavy a sacrifice by a single day. Truly this is a most auspicious commencement of my new career, and augurs well for its future prosperity. As to the borough, however, I have desired that all the previous arrangements may be confirmed, as I shall assuredly take my seat as soon as I can decently do so after the funeral.

To Augusta I have also despatched an epistle, lamenting that the late melancholy and most deplorable bereavement must inevitably postpone, for a short time, the happiness I had anticipated, a delay to which I should endeavor to reconcile myself by the conviction that it was only temporary; adding, that as I felt too deeply affected even to enjoy society so delightful as her own, and was anxious, moreover, to administer every comfort in my power to my afflict-

ed mother and sister, I had determined on shutting myself up for a week at the park.

Meo periculo I venture to assert that this missive was a most ingenious composition, for Augusta cherishes so blind an attachment to her own father, that she cannot fail to be gratified by a manifestation of similar feeling upon my part. In this respect we are all hypocrites, and have been ever since the days of Persius. Augusta seems too proud and independent to act a part of any sort, yet I should be sorry to become security even for *her* sincerity. She may argue, indeed, that, as her father never refuses her any thing wealth can command, his death would hardly place any new luxuries within her grasp; and so she may, like many others, dignify indifference with the name of affection. My position, with reference to my father, has been very, very different; my real feelings, therefore, whatever outward signs of grief I may assume, cannot be of any very acute or inconsolable nature. Sudden emancipation from a long-endured and galling thraldom—the transition from debts, duns, and a paltry stipend, to boundless wealth, are not particularly calculated to make a man miserable, and I will not pretend that they have had any such effect upon me. To the world I must of course put my mind, as well as my body, in mourning, but I need not be a hypocrite to myself.

Upon one thing I have fully determined—I will possess land; I will purchase an estate; there is nothing like *terra firma*. Some one has said that funded property is interest without capital, while land is capital without interest; but, in these revolutionary times, the former may be nothing better than the shadow of smoke upon water, as we have recently seen in the fate of the French stocks and assignats; while the land can neither burst like a bubble over your head, nor run away from beneath your feet. You may be compelled, indeed, like the unfortunate French emigrants, to run away from your land; but some fresh revolution may give you back your acres, though it can never restore your bankrupt stocks. Land carries an importance with it; it gives you weight and influence; it makes you a part and parcel of the country: besides, I may purchase

a borough, and make it return my money by returning me to Parliament.

On this subject old Maynard must be consulted. Like most citizens, he prefers stocks on account of their easy convertibility into money—a vulgar prejudice; but I must not offend him. Although Augusta is his only child, and he is doatingly fond of her, I must recollect that he has testamentary powers which it behoves me to conciliate. This will be a thraldom, *pro tanto*, but I trust it will be a short one. Augusta once mine, and the old gentleman may follow the example of his gout-sacrificed sire as soon as he pleases.

Visions of a splendid new equipage have already passed through my mind, for I suppose the lumbering old family coach will be appropriated to my mother. What it shall be I have not yet exactly decided, but that it shall eclipse every thing recently launched, I am fully resolved. Conway must consult Brummel, and I shall then desire Tom Neville to superintend all the details. In this department I shall not suffer Augusta to interfere, and so I shall tell her at once, for it is well to begin as you mean to proceed.

By way of a joke, I once talked of assuming a watch-chain for my crest, my life having been saved by that appendage when I was rode over by smugglers upon Blackfriars Bridge, and I am by no means sure that I shall not realise the idea. It would be something new, and would draw attention. My plate I shall get from Rundle and Bridges, and I think of having it all made in the Prince's pattern, with some little improvement, perhaps, of my own. Such is the quaker-like monotony of dress nowadays, that a man of real taste and refinement can only evince his superiority to the million by some minute trait of elegance in his appointments.

A letter from Mr. Poole apprizes me that he has still been unable to find my father's will, though his search has been unremitting, and he therefore suspects it must be locked up somewhere at Beddington Park. Acting upon this suggestion, I opened the black cabinet in the breakfast-parlor, where I found the large tin box, which he occasion-

brought down from the city, and carried back with him
e morning. Disappointed as I was at not discovering
vill within it, I was delighted at the number of re-
s that it contained for stocks of every description—
, South Sea, Navy 5 per cents, Long Annuities, Con-
and Reduced—some belonging to trust accounts, but
reater part in his own name, and many of remote
, so that a pleasant process of accumulation must have
going on for may years past.
ese are glorious anticipations, and more remain be-
for there must be an immense capital embarked in
usiness. Remote as is the date of its occurrence, I
not forgotten my boyish visit to the strong room with
the clerk, and the golden predictions, now about to
re their full accomplishment, to which I then listened
such a hungry ear. When last I saw him, the old
r seemed to be quite worn out; from his advanced
he cannot live long; and I think, therefore, I shall
on him off, for I always liked him, and it will be poli-
signalize my *debut* in business by an act of generos-
It will render the other clerks more attentive to their
s. That I shall continue in the business, however,
s very problematical, opposed as it will be to all my
s and tastes. Many are the capitalists who would
ly come forward to buy it. In that case, I shall pur-
a handsome mansion at the West End, as near as
on will allow to the House of Commons, of which I
se being an assiduous attendant. Honorable as it is,
fice under government has its duties and responsibili-
some post or place may perhaps be offered to me
ss I am sadly disappointed as to the effects of my ora-
l powers), but I think I shall prefer liberty and inde-
ence to official distinctions of any sort.

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ank Heaven! the funeral is over. It was a tiresome
ony, several of the aldermen and a few old friends
g requested permission to attend, so that I shall have
tty bill for scarfs and hatbands. In these lugubrious
meries and paraphernalia of woe, the actors exhibit all the
y without any of the fun of a pantomime. Did they

imagine that the deceased was immortal? If not, why should they pretend to deplore his departure? Does death come so very prematurely at the age of threescore and ten, or upwards? The "dear deceased" is always represented by the women, upon these occasions, as having gone to heaven. A strange subject for regret and tears. Oh! but they weep for their own sad and irreparable loss! Then their grief at best is purely selfish. Besides, there are many inconsolable widows who have found the loss of a husband by no means irreparable.

Of all farces a modern funeral is unquestionably the most farcical. With what a tender solemnity did the lackadaisical undertaker gently draw on my black gloves!—with what a mysterious look and stealthy tread did his assistant purloin my hat, and restore it to its place when its silken band had been duly adjusted!—with what a profound sympathy and considerate softness was the sable scarf insinuated upon my shoulder!—amid what grave silence, and with what woe-begone looks, were the awkward squad of mourners marshalled into their places by the black corporal, before we commenced our slow march to the church-yard! If this outward show were the type of an inward grief, one might respect it; but it is sheer hypocrisy and pageantry, both of which I despise.

In these matters the ancients were much wiser. Looking upon the death of an individual as a part of the life of the world, they surrounded it with all sorts of cheerful and reconciling associations. Every burial-ground was provided with a pleasant triclinium, wherein the funeral supper was prepared, its walls being decorated with paintings emblematic of the soul's transition into a higher and happier state of existence, while the guests, after due offering of propitiatory sacrifice, congratulated each other and the shade of the deceased on his deliverance from worldly cares, and his happy induction into the joys of Elysium. Surely this is the more rational mode of contemplating death. We are prohibited, of course, by our religion, from adopting any of the rites of paganism; but I am not aware that Christianity enjoins either "the inky cloak and windy suspiration of forced breath," or the fantastic mummery which I have been reprobating.

However, all is over! My father is dead and buried. Peace to his memory! If I have alluded to him in any unfilial or disrespectful tone, I am sorry for it; but I will not affect a woe that I do not feel. In other respects I scarcely yet know my feelings. My mind is in a tumult—a chaos: it seems as if I had but two ideas—one that my father is dead, the other that I have succeeded to all his wealth, and am only *now* beginning to live.

CHAPTER XV.

1798 CONTINUED.

Gracious Heaven! Where am I! what dreadful calamity has befallen me! Stunned, bewildered, stupified, I know that a terrible catastrophe has happened—that I have been its victim, that I am crushed to the very earth; yet my brain is so confused, my ideas so wandering, every thing so chaotic, that, while I retain a sense of having been overwhelmed by some unutterable misery, I cannot distinctly recall its nature. Can it be possible that I have been attacked by sudden madness, from which I have only partially recovered, my mind being left in an intermediate state between sanity and delirium? I can write collectedly; I can throw my thoughts forward; I can recognize persons, places, things; but when I endeavor to recall the events of the last two or three days, my recollection fails me—a cloud, a fog, a mystery, envelops me; I see nothing clearly, and yet I feel conscious that my vision has been recently scared by some appalling, some soul-withering spectre. Were it possible to undergo a temporary annihilation and still to survive—to have been scathed and seared by some lightning blast of misfortune so benumbing, so withering, that, while I am mentally blinded, I can yet——

Yes, yes! one thing is manifest—I have drained some cup of misery until my faculties are drunken—I am smitten with that worst species of fatuity wherein the mind

still retains a dim consciousness of its own humiliating imbecility.

Ha! my brain is on fire—my head reels—Away! begone! avaunt! thou hideous and abhorred nightmare! Off, off, accursed incubus! away, thou lying vision, thou monstrous impossibility, thou spectral falsehood! Shake not thy gory locks at me, thou gorgon!—Phantom! shadow! grinning devil of the air! I can gaze upon thy ghastliness without flinching. I am neither to be fooled nor frightened by the phantasmagoric coinage of mine own bewildered brain. "Why so!—being gone, I am a man again."—Go! and delude some other with thy frantic forgeries. Me you cannot hoodwink—me you cannot cheat. I a bankrupt! I a ruined beggar! I, Mark Hawkwood, the only son and heir of the wealthy Alderman Hawkwood—I, a partner in the great city banking-house, a houseless, penniless pauper! Ha! ha! ha! I laugh at the very thought—I dash it away from me with bitter mockery—I look down, I trample, I stamp upon it with a smile of contemptuous and derisive insult.

Many days have elapsed since I have had the courage to to take up my journal, and O heavens! what days of misery have they been! I could not have touched it sooner, for I fear my wits have been wandering, but I am now comparatively tranquil, tasting the grim calmness of despair, even as the condemned criminal, who knows the worst, resigns himself to his dark cell, and awaits his horrible fate with a sullen sternness.

Hateful, revolting, humiliating is the task, but I will make a record of the recent occurrences while I can yet recollect them, not feeling by any means certain that my present composure, if such it can be called, will be permanent. When the stunning effects of this dreadful blow shall have passed away, I may relapse into confusion and bewilderment, perhaps be assailed by some violent convulsion. What is to become of me, either as to body or to mind, I know not, care not. I am a lost man. Life is now hateful

to me—to nothing can I look forward, either with hope or with desire, but to death. Quickly, quickly, may it come!

Said I that I could recollect the late frightful events? Not altogether, for the day or two that followed my last departure from Beddington Park seem to be blotted from my memory, as if the subsequent mental concussion had acted retrospectively upon my faculties, partially obliterating the previous hours.

But to my statement.—I was at the cottage at Epsom, when my midnight slumbers were abruptly broken by a violent ringing at the garden-gate, accompanied by loud shouts, and I had scarcely started up in my bed ere my valet hurried into my room, telling me that a gentleman of the name of Poole, who had arrived in a post-chaise and four, desired to see me immediately upon business of the utmost importance.

"What!" said I, adverting to the recent and somewhat similar irruption of Amos Harmer, "another messenger come to enrich me with his glad—I mean his sorrowful tidings? Why, my good Harrison! I have no more fathers to lose. Is it a smug-looking gentleman with a brown face?—Ay—my worthy partner, no doubt. What can the blockhead mean by this unseemly intrusion? Light the candles in the parlor—I will be down directly."

Hastily arraying myself, I descended to my visitant, whose haggard and excited looks, aggravating his natural ugliness, instantly proclaimed that he came upon no pleasant errand.

"In Heaven's name, sir," he ejaculated, his usually obsequious tone being exchanged for one of angry expostulation, "in Heaven's name, sir, why have you hidden yourself; why have you concealed your address at a moment of such dreadful anxiety as this? No one, either in London or at Beddington Park, could tell me where to find you."

"Harmer could have enlightened your ignorance, had you inquired among the clerks."

"Harmer is absent; he has been laid up for several days with severe illness—and I am not much better; no wonder—I am harassed to death—torn to pieces—not a wink of sleep these two nights."

"And so, as I am your partner, I am to share your

sleeplessness on the third night. Is that the purpose of your visit?"

"No, sir; as I am your partner, I come to tell you, what you would have known sooner, could I have found you out, that you are, like myself, a ruined man—that the firm of Hawkwood, Poole, and Hawkwood, is insolvent—that there has been a run upon the house for several days—that we can face it no longer—that we must stop payment to-morrow morning!"

"If you are drunk, Mr. Poole, I must request you to vent your ravings elsewhere; if you are jesting, allow me to tell you that your jokes are not less ill-timed than impertinent."

"Drunk, sir, drunk! it is you who have been too long intoxicated, and high time is it that you should become sober. Your father's sudden death occasioned dark rumors to be circulated—it was whispered that he had recently incurred heavy losses by large speculations—that you—nay, sir, don't start; yes, that *you*, sir, *you*, had been a frequenter of gaming-houses and the turf—an associate of blacklegs, by whom you had been extensively pillaged—people's minds misgave them—a run upon the bank commenced on the very day of the funeral—it has been unintermitting ever since—every thing convertible has been turned into banknotes—we locked up this night with only a few hundred pounds—to-morrow morning we must stop payment!"

Convinced as I now was by my partner's look and manner that he was perfectly sober and, in earnest, I was yet unable thoroughly to comprehend his appalling tidings.

"Any bank," said I, "when exposed to a sudden rush of this nature, may be compelled for the moment to suspend its payments, as we have recently witnessed in the case of the Bank of England; but this does not destroy its property, does not affect its ultimate solidity. What has become of all the various and large amounts of stock standing in my father's name? Does any technical difficulty, consequent upon his death, prevent their sale?"

"Yes; the worst of all difficulties, their non-existence," was the abrupt and surly reply. "Your father held *no*

stock; he has deceived me, you, himself, every body; he has died insolvent—I tell you insolvent."

"Absurd! impossible! you must be laboring under some strange delusion, for, in searching for the will at Beddington, I found in his large tin box a profusion of stock receipts of all sorts."

"All has since disappeared—all is gone! Whatever he might have once possessed, he has died a beggar, of which no one has a greater right to complain than myself. Yes, sir, his conduct to me has been most scandalous, most perfidious. Engage in immense speculations upon his own separate account, he has paid the frightful losses thus incurred out of the partnership funds, artfully concealing their amount by excluding me from all participation in the management of the cash, and by other trickaries. On the rupture of Lord Malmesbury's negociations for peace, on the Irish Rebellion, on the Bank suspension, he operated wildly, desperately in the funds, and was obliged to pay enormous sums to his broker, for, by some strange fatality, he seems to have been always wrong. Not content with this wholesale gambling, he speculated in various articles of merchandize, of which the results were equally disastrous; so that for years past he has been in an insolvent state, and has yet lived on in the same expensive style, defrauding me, and cheating the whole world."

"Upon what authority, sir, do you presume to apply these injurious terms to my late father? Recollect that you are speaking to his son, to one who will not suffer his memory to be aspersed with impunity."

"I speak on the authority of his own handwriting in his own private ledger, which I have discovered within these few hours, which I had never seen before, and which suggests more than I dare tell you, so you had better return with me to London, and examine it yourself. This was one of the objects of my visit."

"Mr. Poole! Mr. Poole! depend on it you are blinded by some strange, some fatal misapprehension, and therefore is it that I am most anxious to avoid the irrevocable disgrace of suspending our payments to-morrow, though I feel quite confident that we should soon be enabled to re-

sume them. What exertions have you made to avert this dire calamity?"

"I have done every thing in my power. More I could not have accomplished, even had I been honored with the valuable assistance of my surviving partner."

A sarcastic sneer, which was not less new than offensive, accompanied the utterance of these words; but I was too much agitated to resent it.

"The bankers of London, as you are doubtless aware, are ever anxious to prevent the stoppage of any of their brotherhood, because it generates a distrust which may extend to the whole fraternity. They were called together this afternoon—our affairs were submitted to them—they decided that our's was a hopeless case—that no assistance which they might render could be permanently useful, and they unanimously recommended that we should stop payment to-morrow morning. There, sir, now you know to what extent I am drunk, and to what extent I am jesting. It's no jesting matter to *me*, I can tell you."

Aghast and astounded as I was, a secret hope, a lurking incredulity, a stubborn conviction that there must be some enormous error in the statement I had just heard, still buoyed me up, and inspired me with a degree of firmness. To me, however, suspense has always been more annoying than the most dreadful certainty. The agony of doubt upon a question that involved the whole future happiness of my life was more than I could endure, and, in the resolution to end it as quickly as possible, I started from my chair, exclaiming:

"Come, sir, let us be gone; I will accompany you this very instant; I will examine this private ledger, and I shall then be enabled to judge for myself. Nothing but ocular demonstration will ever satisfy me that my father's immense wealth can have been thus mysteriously dissipated."

"'Tis for this very purpose, I repeat, that I have sought you out. The post-chaise is waiting; we can be at the banking-house in an hour."

Heavens! what an hour! what a revolting, what a disgusting journey! What a soul-sickening contrast for one just awakened from golden dreams of the brightest ambi-

tion, the most rapturous, the most unbounded felicity, to be thus suddenly plunged into the double darkness of deep night and anticipated bankruptcy.

That my companion fully believed the dismal tidings he had brought was manifest from the insolent way in which he spoke of my late father, as well as from his unceremonious demeanor towards myself, for this sordid, this abject, crawling, gold-worshipper would have bitten off his tongue rather than indulge in such reflections, had he thought that his late partner had bequeathed riches, or that his present partner had succeeded to them. Here is a precious specimen, thought I, of what I am to expect from the world, if I am to sue for its tender mercies *in formâ pauperis*. Once or twice I was tempted to chastise the vulgar vituperator, but my heart sank within me, and I cowered into the corner of the chaise, feeling like a poltroon, because I feared that I was poor.

Rapidly as we drove, my ideas travelled so much more fleetly, that I thought we should never have arrived. At length, however, we reached the banking-house; the door was opened by the old porter, who slept in the hall, when Mr. Poole, lighting two of the large office candles, marshalled me upstairs to my father's counting-house, unlocked the desk, drew out the private ledger, and opening it at a particular page, placed it in my hands, pointing silently but significantly to its contents.

In the stiff, formal, legible characters of my father was written an account current, apparently drawn up with a minute accuracy, setting forth on one side all his various losses and pending liabilities; on the other enumerating his assets, which, after including every other description of property, and a trifling amount of East India stock, left a heavy balance against himself. In short, his debts exceeded his means to the amount of several thousand pounds.

"Read the pencil memorandum at the foot of the account," croaked Mr. Poole, with a repeated and energetic pointing of the finger. It was in the same well-known handwriting, and to the following fearful purport.

"*I die as I have lived—the first banker of the city of London. I have made no will, for I have nothing to leave.*"

All doubt as to my utter ruin, and the total downfall of our family, was now removed for ever. The accursed book dropped from my hand, and I fell back in the chair with a sickening prostration of soul, such as I had never before experienced. Had I been stricken with a thunderbolt, I could hardly have felt more helpless and horrified. In the first hurried perusal of this woe-fraught memorandum, I had not noticed the appalling deduction that might be drawn from it, an oversight to which my partner quickly called my attention.

"Do you observe, sir," he hissed close to my ear, as if shrinking from the sound of his own suspicions, even in the dead silence of night, "do you observe that, when your father made this entry, written in his usual firm hand, he must have contemplated his own immediate death?"

I made no reply, for, when I recalled the mysterious suddenness of his decease, a frightful misgiving flashed across my brain.

"The private ledger," pursued the grim raven at my ear, "was so carefully concealed, that I only discovered it a few hours ago. I have already apprised you that it suggested more than I dared to tell you; but it is right that you should know the whole truth, terrible as it may be, in order that you may draw your own inferences. This, sir, is what I found beneath the private ledger."

So saying he placed in my hand an empty phial, labelled with the words, "Laudanum—Poison."

Dreadful as it was, the conviction that my father's death had been suicidical restored my prostrate faculties, for I foresaw that an additional disgrace would attach to our name and family should these suspicious circumstances become publicly known, and I felt the necessity of instantly suppressing and crushing, since I could not refute them.

"You may be mistaken, sir," said I, "in the dark and sinister impressions which you seem to have formed, and I trust you have not imparted them to others."

"Not to a living soul," was the reply.

"It is well, sir, and it will be at your own peril if you give utterance hereafter to any such insinuations, for thus do I destroy the only evidence that can lend them a shadow of support."

With these words I stirred up the smouldering ashes of the fire, and, thrusting the phial into the midst of them, it presently flew to pieces with a sharp cracking noise, after which I completely expunged the pencil memorandum with a piece of rubber.

"Now, sir," I resumed, "there is no earthly evidence of the crime which you would insinuate against my late father; none but ourselves are justified in harboring any suspicions as to his death. *My* lips will be sealed for my own sake and that of our family; if, therefore, a whisper of the sort transpires, I shall know to whom it will be attributable, and that man I shall hold strictly accountable, even with his life, for a hint or an inuendo on this most painful subject."

"Upon my word, sir," exclaimed my irritated partner, bristling up and assuming a swaggering tone, "you seek to carry it off with a high hand. It is not enough to be ruined by the knavery of your father, but am I to be browbeaten by you—by you, sir, whose wanton extravagance and known connection with sharpers and gamblers have contributed not a little, as I verily believe, to the run upon the house?"

This insult was the more stinging and intolerable because my own self-reproaches told me that it might very possibly be true. Irritated almost to madness by the sense of my miserable, my humiliating, my irrecoverable downfall and ruin, I was delighted to find an object upon whom I could wreak my maddened anger, and, in one of those uncontrollable bursts of passion which had made me fell poor Ned Simmons to the earth, I seized a candlestick, and hurled it at the head of my astonished partner, accompanying the action with such frantic gestures, and such a torrent of execrations, that he made a rapid escape from the room, fortunately without injury.

God help me! I believe I was mad for the moment, and that I should have followed up my attack to some desperate result, had he not hurried from the apartment. Most thankful am I that he withdrew himself from my fury. These are the unbridled paroxysms of rage that make men murderers, even without enmity or premeditation. Raving like a maniac, I rushed out of the house.

How I got thither I know not, but I found myself in Gracechurch Street, now solitary, dark and silent, for the few night-wanderers had been driven from the streets by the rain; the exhausted lamps had mostly given up the ghost, while here and there a drowsy watchman, roused by my hurried footfall, lifted the aged head that was nodding over the front of his box, and muttered in a hoarse, feeble voice, "Past three o'clock."

Even in this busy thoroughfare, so thronged and so noisy by day, there was a momentary hush, a deep serenity around and above, but, alas! not within me, for my bosom was a tumultuous arena of all the angry passions. My assault upon Mr. Poole had only acted as a stimulant to my desperation; boiling with hatred of myself and of all mankind, I still longed for some victim whom I might sacrifice to my ungovernable fury; but I glared in vain to the right and to the left, in search of some houseless wretch with whom I might pick a quarrel, and provoke him to mortal combat.

In this excited, this half-frantic mood, I reached the middle of London Bridge, when the rushing noise of the waters beneath, or rather the insidious whispers of the devil, suggested to me a horrible and yet a tempting thought. In the the triumph and drunkenness of my supposed accession to enormous wealth I had recently decided that my life, as to its real powers and pleasures, was only about to commence. I *now* felt, and oh! with what a withering desolation of soul, that my vital course was run, as to all prospects of enjoyment, and that I had nothing to expect for the rest of my miserable days but a ceaseless, a hopeless, a heart-crushing struggle with poverty, humiliation, contempt, trials, disappointments, and miseries of all sorts. A single leap, a momentary splash, a convulsive grasp or two, would save me from all this life-long wretchedness. Burning as I was with the fever of mental excitement, there was something soothing in the thought of an emersion in the cool waters, whose lulling echoes seemed to invite me to their gentle bosom. And oh! how delightful would it be thus to escape from the sarcastic leer, or the chuckling grin of my exulting ene-

mies, and the covert satisfaction of my hollow friends, ill-concealed beneath the flimsy mask of pity; to give the world the slip just as its ruin-scenting and beggar-hunting hounds were about to open upon mé in full cry; to exchange the distractions of social war and the fierce bread-fight of destitution for peace and oblivion!

Uncertain and capricious wretches that we are! Upon what trifling, what momentary impulses does our fate depend! I had grasped the lamp-post with my left hand—my knee was on the balustrade—in another instant I should have climbed the parapet, and, perhaps, have plunged into the waves beneath, when a forlorn, rain-drenched female crawled up to me, and, in a piteous voice, implored charity. Charity from me! Was there, then, a still more miserable, more abject pauper than myself? This question occasioned a sudden revulsion in my mind, which was rendered more signal and electrical, when, by the flickering light of the lamp, I obtained a glimpse of her features. Faded and haggard as they were, they still retained sufficient beauty to remind me of Augusta Maynard, to whom, most unaccountably, my thoughts had hardly once reverted, for several days past.

If I am not mistaken, I left Beddington Park with the intention of visiting her. How or why I betook myself to the cottage, I know not. That period, I repeat, is expunged from my memory. The recollection of Augusta, thus accidentally conjured up, changed the whole current of my ideas. "True, true," I muttered to myself, as I stood musing in the rain; "I may still marry Augusta, I may still live handsomely upon her present fortune; I may be wealthy when old Maynard dies—and he is gouty, and the gout killed his father! He does not look as if he could live long. I wish he were dead!"

In the intense selfishness generated by the loss of my own expected fortune, I felt as if I could have killed old Maynard, or any one else, if I could thus become suddenly rich. So stood I for some minutes, chewing the mingled cud of golden and of desperate thoughts, and totally regardless of the wretched woman still whining by my side; when the recollection that in my present altered circumstan-

ces old Maynard would, probably, prohibit his daughter's marriage, and thus aggravate my subsequent struggles with poverty and contempt, again harrowed my soul with all the rancor of disappointment, all the blackness of despair. Once more I rushed forward as if pursued by a whole host of enemies; an impression so strongly fixed upon my disordered mind, that, on reaching the Surrey side of the bridge, I repeatedly ejaculated, "Thank God, I am out of the city!"

But this was not enough; I must be out of London, out of reach, out of sight, out of hearing of the hubbub and the consternation that would be excited by the stoppage of the coming morning. Whither should I flee? what should I do? *Where*, I knew not, but I must hide my head in some impenetrable fastness of the country.

With this intention I continued to run forward till I reached an Inn-yard, in the Borough, when I seized the bell, ringing it incessantly, till a half-dressed ostler answered the alarum.

"A chaise! and directly, instantly!" I exclaimed, at the same time putting half-a-crown into his hand, a *douceur* which imparted a wonderful alacrity to his movements. "Gallop, gallop the whole way!" said I to the boy, as I jumped into the chaise, "and I will pay you double."

"Where am I to drive to, sir?"

This question caused an embarrassing pause, for I had no specific locality in view, but as it occurred to me that I ought to communicate to my mother and Edith the dismal tidings I had learnt, I at length blurted out the word—"Croydon!"

Thinking he must give double speed for his double pay, the driver galloped the whole way; a reckless rushing through the gloom of night, which, however it might seem to be in unison with my feelings, especially as it favored the notion of escape from some impending doom, rather increased than allayed the dizziness and pertubation of my mind. My head in a vortext, all my faculties in a whirl, the past and present were confused together, forming a jumble of incalculable wealth, the squalor of a debtors' jail, parliamentary honors, a bankruptcy, Bacchanalian revels,

a marriage with the rich and stately Augusta, accompanied with "tipsy dance and jollity"—the funeral of my father, a passionate quarrel with my surviving partner, and an ignominious flight from a whole host of infuriated creditors.

No wonder that in this mood my previous intention of going to Beddington Park never recurred to me. After paying the postillion, I hurried through the sleeping town of Croydon, shrinking from its dim lamps as if they were suspicious eyes peering at me; and, skirring along the deserted road, I plunged down the first dark opening that presented itself, which proved to be a cross-road leading through a thick copse, intersected by winding footpaths. Into the darkest of these I struck, fighting my way with the tangled underwood and the boughs and brambles of taller growth, in the exulting thought that I was thus beating aside and trampling down all my worldly enemies. Invigorated by this delusion with a preternatural energy, I felt no fatigue, notwithstanding the violence of my exertions, and continued wrestling on through the thicket, although the gradually increasing light of day might have shown me the real nature of the struggle in which I was engaged.

Drenched with the profuse dew-drops I had showered down, and panting with mingled rage and exertion, I emerged at length from the dim covert, and found myself standing, in the broad light of day, on the outward verge of a wooded knoll, overlooking a lovely valley, emblazed with the full radiance of a sunny morning. Never, no never, shall I forget the sensations that suddenly overwhelmed me at the sight of that beautiful, that majestic, that sublime spectacle, on which, as I continued to gaze, transfixed with admiration, the throbbings of my heart gradually subsided, the agitation and anger of my mind were appeased, and the gentleness and serenity of the surrounding scene were slowly transfused into my bosom, until, in the recoil of my feelings, my whole frame became penetrated by a thrill of ecstasy.

Triumphant in all his glory and magnificence, the sun had just arisen from the glorious crest of an opposite hill,

heralded by clouds of every gorgeous and tender hue, the winged messengers of light, which, as they were wafted up the sky by a fresh breeze, to the accompaniment of the rustling wood, seemed to be sounding their glad clarions to announce the advent of the god of day. A flood of rosy light, irradiating the valley before me, sparkled here and there upon the surface of a stream, meandering through its clumps and bushes, while its extremities were still dim and grey with receding flakes of vapor. A perfumed, crisp, and bracing air fanned my temples, the birds were carrolling their matin song, sheep were bleating in the dewy pasture, cheerful cries and chirpings echoed from the turf beneath, the leaves that danced in the air above seemed to be clapping their myriad hands in joy and acclamation; all was brightness and rapture, as if heaven and earth were celebrating their hymeneals amid universal smiles and love.

Part of the soothing and magical effect thus produced upon my mind was perhaps attributable to the total absence of man—not a single fellow-creature was to be seen—I stood alone in my deep and holy communion with nature. Part might have been occasioned by the contrast of past and present experiences, for so somnolent and incurious have been the habits of my life that I had never before witnessed a sunrise in the country—and oh! what a profanation of the term to talk of a sunrise in London!—Returning from my balls and Bacchanalian orgies, amid the bad odors of expiring lamps and matin scavengers, I have occasionally seen the morning beams, after they had oozed and struggled through the dense atmosphere, throw a sickly gleam upon pale and jaded revellers like myself—upon the revolting victims of vice, skulking to their haunts from the dim eye of day—upon the wan and haggard sons of toil, hurrying to their tasks—upon suffering animals goaded on by still more brutal and more wretched beings than themselves—such objects had I seen in the faint and sickly glimmer of a London sunrise; but the hideousness of that ghastly spectacle might rather be deemed the painful death of night than the joyous birth of day—rather a spectral phantasmagoria than the heaven-lighted revelation of a living scene.

This distasteful recollection tended, doubtless, to enhance my enjoyment, as I stood gazing in a rapt entrancement upon the pageant outspread before me, indulging, after the first burst of admiration, in reflections scarcely less gratifying, from their nature and their novelty, than the beauty and the grandeur of the prospect by which they had been suggested.

"So then," I ejaculated, "there are natural and simple pleasures, of whose existence I had no previous knowledge; pleasures which a pauper may command, and which are far more exquisite than all the sensual indulgences of the wealthiest voluptuary. No sooner am I shut out from one sphere of enjoyment than another is gratuitously revealed to me. Wealth! rank! honors! I can dispense with your services. I resign ye without a sigh. I despise your poor attractions. I have tried and found ye wanting. To the fickle winds, and to the treacherous waves, do I gladly and eternally resign ye. Never, never did ye waft to my bosom the peace that soothes it now."

What must have been the capricious and disordered state of my mind, when I could feel and reason thus, only a few hours after I had been meditating suicide! That my effusion had not been prompted by a feeling of triumph at the unexpected discovery of a new and costless pleasure, rather than by a calm sense of resignation, I will not now maintain; but it imparted a genuine consolation at the moment, and I know not how long I might have remained on the same spot, gazing and musing, had not my reveries been broken by the approach of a shepherd with a boy and dog. Anxiety to avoid the sight of my fellow-creatures again predominated over every other thought, but with much less wildness and intensity. The spell, the enchantment I have described were broken, but their tranquillizing effects had not passed away. Oil had been poured upon the stormy surges of my mind, smoothing and softening, though not entirely stilling, their agitation.

I recognized the spot where I had been thus electrified, for I had often crossed the valley with my gun; the recent occurrences, although they gradually rose up before me vivid and distinct, excited less consternation and horror;

I thought of my mother and sister; and I made my way towards Beddington Park, by lanes and solitary fields, and obscure footpaths, miserably, unutterably, sad and heavy, but neither with a raging heart nor a maddened intellect.

CHAPTER XVI.

1798 CONTINUED.

THOUGH sunny, the autumnal morning was cool and buoyant, and the lucid atmosphere, purified by the late rains, gave distinctness of outline and brightness of color to every object around me; yet, as I approached the park, methought it had never assumed so sombre and forbidding an aspect. My recent ecstasy had totally vanished, as well as the charm that upon my previous visit had lighted up Beddington with a sunshine of its own; and in its stead a visionary cloud now hung upon the scene, investing it with gloom, as with a pall. It was no longer mine! The wide domain, the swelling knolls, plumed by those noble trees; the deer, the horses, the cattle, the carriages, all the "pride, pomp, and circumstance" that would have conferred a dignity upon wealth, now served only to mock and insult my poverty. The very wind seemed to hoot, and the trees to point their fingers at me. The old clock in the belfry that surmounted the stables struck as I reached the house. Its melancholy vibrations added to my deep despondency. It was the bell tolling for my buried hopes; it was the funeral of my heart and of my fortunes, for it was the precise hour when our banking-house would be opened, and our stoppage announced to the world!

When roused from my sleep by the rough summons of Mr. Poole, I had dressed myself with a haste and disorder which subsequent events had not tended to rectify. Soaked with rain, bespattered with mud, my face and hands torn with the briars through which I had scrambled, my

features wild and haggard with agony and fatigue, I stole noiselessly into the house, carefully avoiding the servants; and, making my way into the room where my mother and Edith were seated at breakfast, I was myself startled at the loud scream of terror that burst from the former, who did not immediately recognize me, and who, as I afterwards learnt, imagined that a second gang of robbers had come to demand her diamonds.

"Mark! dearest Mark! is it you?" cried Edith, running up and embracing me. "Gracious Heaven! how ill you look! what is the matter?—what has happened? You are hurt, you are wounded—let me fly for assistance."

"Why, it *is* Mark, I do declare," exclaimed my mother, staring at me with utter amazement. "How *could* you think of frightening me so, when you know how nervous I have been ever since that horrid affair of the thieves? My dear child! you have had a fall from your horse—I am sure you have—that horrid Telegraph is such a vicious creature—I hope you are not much hurt."

Not sorry to be furnished with an excuse which would spare me much unpleasant explanation, I replied that I might be scratched and soiled, but that I had not received the smallest injury; adding that I was not aware of my alarming appearance, and that I would now retire to my own room to make myself a little more presentable.

Having changed my clothes, and obliterated, as far as possible, the external effects of my night adventure, I returned to the room, and, seating myself between my mother and Edith, while I took a hand of each in my own, I entreated them to summon all their fortitude to their aid, as I had intelligence of the most distressing nature to communicate.

"Mercy on us!" ejaculated my mother, "you are always frightening me. Your poor father is dead and buried: I'm sure I never can forget it, when I see myself in this horrid unbecoming cap: and what can happen worse? Is the will found? have you brought it with you? It ought to have been communicated to me sooner—much sooner—strange conduct!"

Not even hinting a suspicion as to the mode of my father's

death, I broke to my auditors in a hurried manner, but with as much tenderness as my own agitation would allow, the insolvent state of our affairs, and the stoppage of the banking-house.

After a moment's anxious gaze at my face, my mother laid her hand upon my shoulder, exclaiming in an agitated voice:—

"Mark! my dear Mark! you know not what you say—your fall has disordered your intellects—you must go to bed directly. Ring the bell, Edith, and desire George to ride over instantly to Croydon for Dr. Twyford."

"Alas! mother, I am not mad—I almost wish I were. Indeed, indeed, this sad news is all too true. I was in hopes that Mr. Poole might have saved me this painful task. He said he had called here yesterday in search of me."

"He did, but when I learnt that he brought no tidings of the will, I would not be pestered with him. You know how I hate the man."

"I saw him," said Edith, taking her handkerchief from her eyes, "and, though he would not declare the purport of his hurried visit, I felt assured, from his vehement agitation and distress, that some great calamity must have overtaken him, for his nature is too stern and rugged to be easily moved. I am no longer astonished, Mark, at your wild and haggard looks, nor can I for a moment doubt that we are all ruined, utterly ruined. Nay, dearest mother, do not look so aghast—it is a heavy blow—a terrible downfall—but we must endeavor to submit to it with fortitude, as we may well do, for we are blameless. Thank God! it is only a misfortune, not a disgrace."

"Not a disgrace!" screamed my mother, now fully believing the dismal tale I had told her. "Not a disgrace!—the girl's a fool, and always was. Why, we must give up the park, lay down our carriages, dismiss our servants, lose every thing that is worth living for. Horrible! Why, we shall be looked down upon, and trampled upon, and spit upon, by all the world; and we shall deserve it, for I myself hate and despise poor people, and always did."

"If you will only endeavor to reconcile yourself to this

struggle, dear mother," said Edith, "I am sure that Mark and myself will do every thing in our power to comfort and support you, and though it must inevitably be painful at first, yet——"

"I cannot understand this affair," interposed my mother, "it must be all a fable, a dream. What has become of all the money? Surely, Mark! you will not deny that your father was once wealthy?"

A hasty statement of the bad debts, as well as the various large and unfortunate speculations by which he had gradually impoverished himself and his family, only serving to excite her indignation while it satisfied her doubts, she burst into a philippic against her late husband so violent and unmeasured, that I care not to record it, concluding her ebullition with a passionate flood of tears. After a short pause she started up, eagerly exclaiming,

"You do not mean to say that they will take away my diamonds? They shall not. I will never surrender them —never! I will secrete them instantly—I will hide them in the cellar—I will bury them in the garden."

With which words she rushed from the room in a state of the greatest excitement and distress.

With her usual sensible and quiet tact, Edith remarked that it would be useless to attempt soothing our parent in her present chafing mood, which would soon pass away, when she trusted that, by constant and affectionate attentions on her own part, as well as by an unobtrusive example of patience and resignation, she might succeed in tranquillizing her mind, and reconciling her to the surrender of the diamonds, if required.

"At all events," she continued, "I shall dissuade her from concealments of any sort; for, in this sad reverse, it is above all things necessary that we should conduct ourselves with a scrupulous honor and integrity. If, as we have just heard, but which I do not by any means admit, our downfall will occasion us to lose the respect of others, it is the more incumbent upon us to maintain our own respect. Our first duty is to administer every possible solace and succor to our poor mother, and what a blessing is it that the legacy bequeathed to me by my godfather

will enable me to make our change of life less revolting to her feelings! This will, at all events, be saved out of the wreck, and I will take care that it shall be so applied as to render her fall less galling and humiliating."

Tears were in her eyes as she spoke, and her voice faltered whenever she made allusion to her mother; but she did not lose her self-possession for a moment, and still less her judgment, while advising with me as to the proper steps to be adopted in the present emergency. "Advising with me," did I say? Alas! my own mind was too prostrate to offer any beneficial counsel, but it was not required; she had judgment and sagacity enough without my bewildered promptings.

Pointing out the absolute duty of my being present at the banking-house, the pusillanimity of running away from an ordeal which *must* ultimately be encountered, as well as the suspicions and misconstructions which such a course would infallibly entail, she implored me to compose myself, if possible, by retiring to bed for a few hours; to return to the city in the evening; and to attend the meeting of creditors which would probably be summoned without delay.

Alluding next to my conditional marriage engagement, she expressed a firm conviction that its eventual celebration would not only restore me to my proper rank in society, but ensure to me a prosperous and a happy life.

"Nay, nay," she pursued, endeavoring to smile, "shake not your head so despondingly. Remember that faint heart never won fair lady. To doubt Augusta's constancy would be treason against the whole sex: her father, as a man of strict honor, will never sacrifice his daughter's happiness on the shrine of avarice or ambition; so be of good cheer, dear, dear Mark! and let us hope the best. Come, you want nothing but a few hours' sleep, and you will face your difficulties without flinching. I know you will."

Passive rather than acquiescent, I silently suffered her to lead me to my room, where she affectionately embraced me, whispering in my ear as she went away—

"I know not, Mark, whether the world will love us less, but I do trust and believe that we shall love one another

all the more dearly for our losses, and trials, and troubles. God bless and comfort you!"

Friendly and judicious counsels, even though recommended by tones and looks of the most endearing affection, may fall unheeded upon our ear and heart in the giddy heyday of prosperity, but they exercise a double influence when the bosom is softened by sorrow and misfortune. Latterly I have become much attached to Edith, whose gratitude, for I am the only one who notices her at all, more than reciprocates my regard; but not until this day had I fully appreciated the clearness of head, ay, and the warmth of heart, too, which lay concealed beneath all her apparant coldness and reserve. One part of her conversation, however, did not quite please me. Why does she put herself forward by exclaiming, *I* will do this, and *I* will do that, except to announce that *she* is now the richest of the family, that we are paupers, while she retains unimpaired her godfather's legacy?

And why, too, should she proclaim her intention of dedicating it to the service of a mother, who has ever treated her so contemptuously, if not unkindly, when, if it were emlpoyed in purchasing me a partnership in some house of business (supposing me to be rejected by Augusta), it might enable me to restore the fallen fortunes of the whole family? To be sure, she will live with her mother, and thus get the benefit of it. I hope dear Edith is not becoming selfish; but a change of circumstances very often alters the character.

In spite of several hours' refreshing sleep, and the confidence inspired by a long, affectionate, and invigorating colloquy with my sister, I could not summon courage to return to London until the darkness of night would shroud me from observation. My late vain glorious boastings and anticipations, the fool's Paradise in which I had revelled, the golden *Ignis Fatuus* which I had been chasing until it had deposited me in the slough of Despond, all these rose up before my mind's eye, and, in the fear that they might be equally visible to others, I dreaded the universal gibe and mockery that would haunt my footsteps. Slouching my hat over my face, and muffling myself up, I hurried past

the lighted shops, and even winced from the blinking lamps, walking at a rapid pace, that I might ensconce myself as soon as possible in my own room at the banking-house.

How it happened that, with this feeling so strongly impressed upon my mind, I should deviate so widely from my purpose, I know not, but I continued hurrying onwards until I *found* myself (I use the word literally) standing upon Tower Hill, beneath the window of Fanny Hartopp. My heart, in its deep desolation and loneliness, had turned towards her, and my footsteps had unconsciously followed its promptings.

Surprised at my own absence of mind, I could not help ejaculating, "Fool that I am, what business have I here! I am engaged to Augusta Maynard; I have given up all the love and sweetness of life for gold and grandeur; and this is not the moment, Heaven knows, for regretting——"

I paused ere I could complete my soliloquy, for a shaded outline was thrown by the lamp within the room upon the canvas-blind; it became more definite and opaque; it assumed the small, the graceful, the well-known form of Fanny. Electrified at the sight, I sprang forward, and placed myself immediately beneath the window, but the shadow vanished as rapidly as it had appeared, and I could no longer distinguish any moving object upon the blank and envious screen.

As if, however, to make atonement to my ears for the grievous disappointment of my eyes, I presently heard the sound of a piano-forte, and in another minute distinctly caught the following verse of my own song, in that voice of melodious tenderness which, when once heard, could never be forgotten or mistaken.

Although, when years are flown,
A change of scene or lot
Each other cherished tone
From our memory may blot,
A sound there is that yet,
Whatever change we prove,
We never *can* forget,
'Tis the voice of one we love.

"No; we never, never can forget it," I ejaculated, as my

bosom yearned with a fond delight. "Dear warbling syren! who could ever forget thee?"

Quick as lightning the whole current of Fanny's thoughts presented itself to my heated imagination. She had heard of my misfortunes, for the whole city must have rung with the news of the stoppage; and, in spite of my recent neglect, of my known engagement to Augusta (for that, too, had been whispered abroad), the dear girl had been thinking of me and of my troubles with a fond sorrow, had been brooding, perchance, over the secret disappointment of her own hopes, until her bosom had poured out its feelings and its sympathies in the impassioned tones that had just enchanted me.

Oh, how greedily my ear devoured every note! with what eagerness did I listen for a renewal of the delicious strain! But all was again silent; the light was withdrawn from the chamber; the warbling I had heard had been Fanny's good-night to my memory before she retired to rest. My heart thrilled at the thought, and the tears actually gushed from my eyes.

Mental anguish and excitement must have rendered me unusually susceptible, for this was the second time in one day that I had been thus vehemently affected. The occasions, indeed, were not very widely different, for the bright, the beaming revelation of Fanny's undiminished regard, was a sunrise to my soul. Her name still escaped from my lips in whispered exclamations and blessings, when, after having hovered some time longer about her now silent dwelling, I paced slowly and with unwilling steps towards the banking-house.

Wishing to avoid another encounter with my partner, I was hurrying up stairs to my bedroom, when, on passing the parlor door, I saw a newspaper lying on the table. With an irrepressible curiosity I snatched it up, and, running my eye down the columns in search of the city article, read the following paragraph.

"The failure this morning of a great and long established banking-house has excited the most profound consternation in the commercial world. Many rumors are afloat upon this subject, which we trust will not be confirmed.

It is said that the senior partner had incurred immense losses by the most extensive speculations, and that the catastrophe has been hastened by the wild courses and extravagances of his son. It will be seen by our advertising columns that a meeting of the creditors is convened for next Wednesday, when the real causes of this distressing occurrence will doubtless be revealed."

Unless this invidious coloring proceeds from the malignity of Mr. Poole, what a precious specimen does it afford of the candor and kindness of the world! Ay, ay! trample upon the fallen, insult the powerless, malign the bankrupt! Who is the jackass that delights not to have a kick at the dead lion? *My* wild courses! an occasional indulgence in fashionable recreations. *My* extravagance! a few thousands beyond my paltry allowance.

It is too ridiculous. I despise such base and spiteful calumnies.

What an inconsistent, what an inexplicable thing is human nature! Unable to sleep during the greater part of the night, my thoughts reverted to my poor father in a mood of compunction and regret totally at variance with all the previous train of my ideas. When I imagined that his death would not only free me from all restraint, but render me one of the wealthiest men in the city, I rarely looked forward to it with the proper feelings of a son. Nay, I fear that I have sometimes been unnatural enough to yearn with a secret impatience for its occurrence. Now that he is dead, leaving me heir to nothing but almost intolerable disappointments and humiliations, and a lifelong struggle with poverty—now, in short, that I have nothing for which to thank him, I not only deplore his loss, but accuse myself bitterly of having too often attributed to selfish and sordid motives a line of conduct which may have originated in the most disinterested regard for my welfare.

In many, many instances do I suspect that I have been rash and unjust in my judgments. The curtain that veiled the past is now drawn up. The long-standing embarrass-

ments of the house, explaining the real motives of my father's actions, upbraid me for my unfilial and uncharitable construction. His earnest, his importunate entreaties that I would decline the banking business, so full of hazard and anxiety, and adopt some profession in which my abilities might ensure success; his restriction of my income to a fixed sum, which I thought so shabby at the time; his excluding me from all share in the management, or insight into the affairs of the house; his recent great anxiety that I should marry Augusta Maynard, or some other heiress; his objections to my taking a house at the west end of the town; his sudden illness, occasioned probably by mental agony; and the recent moroseness of his temper, attributable, doubtless, to the same cause, have now received a solution very different from that which I had assigned to them.

But who can expect a man to see clearly when he is kept studiously in the dark? Oh! that my poor father had possessed less pride! Oh! that he had given me his confidence! But I cannot wonder at his obstinate reserve, when there is too much reason to apprehend that he took refuge in death from the horrors of a public insolvency.

For the first time I have felt my reverses: the iron has entered my soul. What misery may yet be in store for me, Heaven only knows, but methinks the bitterness of my downfall is over—surely I must have drained the cup of humiliation and wretchedness to the very dregs, and can never pass through another ordeal so harrowing, so degrading, so heart-crushing.

I have attended a meeting—rather say I have been placed in the dock like a criminal—I have been had up before my creditors. How I dreaded, how I shrunk from this excruciating process language cannot tell. Chimerical as was the notion, yet was I for the second time fully impressed with the conviction that every one of these men, before whom I was to stand as a sort of felon whom they might pelt with as much impunity as a Shrovetide cock, was per-

fectly acquainted with my recent triumphs, my premature bragadocio and exultation, when I revelled in the delirium of a golden apotheosis. Oh! with what a scorching blush did my cheek tingle as I thought of my Alnaschar visions of grandeur and magnificence, wherein I was to "bestride the narrow world like a colossus," or rather to be set up like the golden calf which all men were to fall down and worship! Oh! what would I have given for a cup of Lethe's stream, that I might forget these vainglorious swaggerings of my intoxicated spirit—but no—they haunted me in embodied shapes, mocking and mowing, and pointing at me with derisive grins! What would I have given to escape from this accursed meeting! Given? Fool that I am to talk of giving, when I have not a shilling to ransom me from my fate. I was tied to the stake, and I must endure the baiting.

What are the hypocritical long faces of a funeral party, half of whom are generally gainers by the death they affect to deplore, compared to the genuine woe-begone visages of a meeting of creditors, all of whom are losers, while all believe themselves to have been outwitted—the most galling of feelings to a Mammonite! Worse than spectral apparitions moved around me on every side. Smug tradesmen and dealers, naturally hard-featured, and now grim as gorgons—dapper brokers, lately as abject as spaniels, now showing by their supercilious looks that they felt their superiority to a fallen gentleman—merchants, whose condescending forbearance or contemptuous pity were worse than a direct insult—portly bankers affecting to look indignant at the discredit brought upon their order, and, standing as sternly aloof as the pharisee did from the publican, glared upon me with eyes and countenances of every sort, save one; in all that numerous assemblage I could not discover a single friendly face. What right had I to look for one, I who in my mania for fashionable coteries had scorned the society and the friendship of my fellow-citizens? I had been insolent, I confess, drunk with arrogance, mad and blind with confidence; but I had only fallen from a greater height, and was entitled to sympathy from the very con-

trast between my recent culmination and my present downward hurl.

Not finding this sympathy, I was rather vexed at not being more insulted. Harshness and upbraidings would have acted as an anodyne upon my irritated spirit, but the hateful men were civil, if that term can be applied to a contemptuous forbearance. I was questioned, indeed, about my overdrawn account, my cottage at Epsom, and my debts; but my answers elicited no other comments than lifting of eyebrows and shruggings of shoulders.

The only contumely to which I was subjected proceeded from my partner. It had been proposed and carried that Mr. Poole should be employed at a liberal salary to wind up the affairs of the house, including my late father's unsettled speculations in various articles of merchandize, when one of the creditors moved that "*his friend*," Mr. Mark Hawkwood, should be associated with him on the same terms.

"In that case," sneered Poole, "I must decline the generous offer just made to me. Mr. Hawkwood is utterly ignorant of business, and can afford me no assistance whatever, unless I am likely to have dealings in horses and dogs, or French dancers and Italian Opera singers."

Insolent muckworm! There was no candle-stick at hand, nor should I have again hurled it at him if there had been, for my spirit quailed beneath the conscious truth of his rebuke, and I sedulously turned over the leaves of a ledger, pretending not to have heard him. My patron, however, not only persisted in his proposition, but even volunteered a defence of my conduct, urging the great expectations to which I had been educated, and pleading my exclusion from the business as some sort of excuse for my betaking myself to a life of pleasure. His good offices were vain: his proposition fell to the ground for want of a seconder, and its failure was sent home to my heart by a smile of triumphant derision from Mr. Poole.

There might have been consolation in knowing that I *had* one friend in the room, but even this poor solace was embittered by self-reproach; for this unsolicited, this generous advocate, who had, in this moment of my degradation, publicly called me his friend, was no other than Ned Sim-

mons, whom I had invariably ridiculed as a pert vulgar unworthy of my acquaintance, whom I had stolen up and struck to the ground under cover of the darkness!

Sick at soul with these manifold and aggravated humiliations, I continued mechanically turning over the leaves the ledger, hearing and heeding nothing, until the silence of the room conveyed to me the welcome knowledge that I was once more alone.

END OF VOLUME I.